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Applicant's Response to Public Comment

Moore Creek Park Expansion – “Dan’s Wild Ride Trail” – Use Permit
Minor Modification P21-00246
Zoning Administrator Hearing Date (March 22, 2023)

From: [Cahill, Christopher](#)
To: [Bordona, Brian](#)
Cc: [Ringel, Matthew](#); [Purvis, Kyra](#)
Subject: RE: Moore Creek - Dan's Wild Ride Comment Letter
Date: Thursday, January 26, 2023 12:08:48 PM
Attachments: [doc08398920230126074243.pdf](#)

Thanks for the opportunity to respond Brian.

The use permit modification currently before the County would sanction a 3.9 mile backcountry singletrack trail connecting the remote northern corner of Moore Creek Park, across the Land Trust's even more remote Okin Preserve, and ultimately through to the trail network at Pacific Union College's Experimental Forest. The nature of such a backcountry trail is that it sees light use; you're 4 miles in to the park along the Moore Creek Trail before you even get to the start of Dan's Wild Ride. The vast majority of Moore Creek Park's users are going to enjoy a full visit to the park, hike many miles of trail, but still aren't going to be making it all the way back to Dan's Wild Ride.

Looking just at the parking impacts associated with the relatively small number of users who are going to be doing backcountry treks or rides on Dan's Wild Ride, we see the project as netting to near zero impact. This is because Pacific Union College has recently installed (and as I understand it is actually now working on enlarging) a parking lot on the Experimental Forest property. With the sanctioned opening of Dan's Wild Ride, backcountry users will now have the choice of parking at Moore Creek or at PUC Forest in Angwin, effectively increasing the parking capacity at Moore Creek by at least 30%. And this is, again, for the very limited number of users who will be through-hiking/biking Dan's Wild Ride. So the parking impacts of the requested Minor Mod are simply not going to be significant.

Mr. Costello is, however, correct that there have been a number of weekend days during the last few years in which demand has exceeded supply in our main Moore Creek parking lot (the same has sometimes been true of the informal parking that happens at the end of Conn Valley Road.) That said, it has occurred rarely and in very specific conditions, broadly:

- Weekends; which were also
- During the Covid shutdown period and immediately thereafter; which were also
- During spring flowering seasons immediately after wildfire years, when Moore Creek received substantial social media attention for super blooms and essentially went viral.

These are pretty specific conditions, and to the extent that the Covid spike in outdoor recreation was a key component we don't expect it to be a substantial ongoing problem. We did not, for instance, see crowds or many full parking lots during the spring of 2022. Broadly, while visitation to our parks and open spaces is up from pre-pandemic numbers it has dropped quite a bit since the 2020 peak.

Here, for instance, is some data derived from the Strava app showing recreational bike trips throughout Napa County in 2020, 2021, and 2023. Note the huge spike in spring and summer of 2020 due to Covid and the much lower numbers in 2022. This is despite all the new bikes that were sold during the pandemic. Of course it's not just cyclists that use our parks, but the Strava trendlines reflect what our eyes are seeing, across user groups.



As of now Chile Pope Valley Road is not a no parking zone. The County has added some additional no parking areas at the end of Conn Valley Rd to address public parking at that location; but there was also a specific condition there- which is a narrow one way road and cars that were parking in the roadway and potentially blocking fire truck access. To my knowledge Chiles Pope Valley Road isn't seeing parked cars block the right of way. It's also worth noting that there have been cars parking along the side of Chiles Pope Valley Rd since long before Mr. Costello purchased his home or Moore Creek Park even existed, as Lake Hennessey has always attracted fisherpeople and other recreational users who utilize the City of Napa owned and managed lands which are not a part of our park.

Again, thank you for the time and the opportunity to respond. Please let me know if you need any further information or have any other questions.

Cheers,
Chris

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