

GREAT VALLEY GRASSLANDS STATE PARK

GENERAL PLAN

STAKEHOLDER MEETING #1

JUNE 5TH 2024

Discussion Items

1. Welcome/Introductions

Stakeholder Attendees – Representatives From:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW - Los Banos Wildlife Complex)
- Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)
- Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- River Partners (Biologist)
- CALFIRE
- Caltrans D10 (Encroachment Permits)
- Four Rivers Natural History (non-profit)
- United State Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- USFWS (retired)
- Nototomi Cultural Preservation, Northern Valley Yokut Tribe
- American Rivers
- Central Valley Flood Protection Board, (CVFPB)
- Jacobs (DWR Contractor)

2. Project Overview/Presentation

- Duke Heberling (State Parks) gave park overview. Looking to increase visibility and visitation of park.
 - Katie Metraux (State Parks) gave overview of General Plan process and purpose, importance of GVGSP (underserved communities, increase open space in Central Valley), elements of General Plan
 - Adam Lewandowski (Consultant – Ascent) give an overview of the stakeholder engagement objectives
 - Looking for input on purpose (significance of park, key resources/values, framework for management/planning) & vision statement (future desired condition)
 - Slido: What core values should be integrated into the planning and management of GVGSP?
 - Floodplain and wetland reconnection/restoration, equitable access, recreation, cultural management practices, habitat/ecosystem restoration, river access, revetment removal, invasive vegetation management, education, park awareness, history, improve habitat for native species, indigenous/tribal, research (refer to Slido results)
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- Slido: What is your vision for how the park should look in the future (desired conditions, uses, features)
 - Roadway signage, bilingual interpretation, improved visitor access to water and land recreation, resilience to wildfire/flooding, partnerships with schools, citizen science, tribal-led stewardship/interpretation, parking, restrooms, TEK, levee removal, shaded areas, trails, tourism, collaboration with agencies managing adjacent properties, transit, development compatible with natural setting, accessibility (refer to Slido results)
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3. Q&A

- (Four Rivers) requested overview of two projects in GVG and (DWR) requested to see projects on map:
 - (State Parks): Floodplain restoration project: breaching levee to restore floodplain. Currently finishing permitting and looking to start construction. Cannabis remediation and floodplain restoration on north bank of park near 165 (restore areas where illegal cannabis grows were removed – sumps, loss of willows).
 - (American Rivers): WCB has funded American Rivers to work with CSP to conduct community-driven planning and design for building public access infrastructure (trails, boardwalks, swimming access, restrooms, etc).
 - (Four Rivers): asked about the Cannabis remediation and floodplain project at the north end of the park. State Parks mentioned that there have been multiple illegal cannabis grows in the area and they are looking to restore those areas.
 - (Four Rivers) interested in protecting undeveloped areas with vernal pools and allowing access elsewhere to preserve existing functions.
 - (USFWS): contradiction about acquiring land for preservation and interest in developing land. Would like to see controlled access and viewing from only the edges of the park.
 - (River Partners): mentioned a grant with WCB to do locally sourced seed collection using local ecotypes.
 - (American Rivers): very interested in collaboration, can contact her directly.
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4. Large Group Discussion

- **Concurrent and Ongoing Efforts:** What ongoing initiatives or programs in or near GVGSP could potentially intersect with the park's goals? How can we collaborate on them?
 - 30x30 initiative
 - (DWR) – FloodMar (groundwater recharge) and flood protection
 - (River Partners) – Heritage growers locally-sourced seed collection for restoration
 - EcoFIP studies covering upper SJR
 - CVFPP Conservation Strategy
 - Flood attenuation
 - San Joaquin River Restoration Program
 - (American Rivers) – Grasslands Floodplain Restoration, Grasslands River Park Planning Project:
 - **Opportunities:** What opportunities exist to enhance the park's value?
 - Invasive plant management, improve vegetative cover
 - Parking/access on Hwy 165
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- Elk reintroduction
 - USFWS: has herd of tule elk contained in an enclosure (managed by CDFW). Feasibility study conducted in the past will send to the GVG team.
 - Protect undeveloped areas
 - Boat ramp improvements
 - Allowing riverine natural process (erosion/deposition)
 - Fishing access trails
 - Tribal stewardship and use
 - Multi-lingual interpretation and education
 - Trails/boardwalks that avoid resources
 - Safe and accessible water recreation access
 - **Challenges and Concerns:** What constraints might hinder the achievement of General Plan objectives?
 - Funding
 - Regulatory processes
 - Trespass, litter, enforcement
 - Invasive species
 - Climate change
 - Managing multiple access points on limited budgets/staffing capacity
 - Damage and clean-up from storms
 - Conflicting policies from adjacent agencies
 - Return of illegal cannabis grows
 - High traffic speeds on Hwy 140 and 165
 - **Leverage Partnerships and Resources:** How can we work together to address challenges and seize opportunities?
 - Regular coordination, updates, meetings

5. Next Steps and Closing Remarks

- DWR: Are acquisitions/expansions being considered as part of this plan?
 - Not considered yet. Interested in input if there are areas to consider.
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