

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting  
Oral Communications  
5 August 2019

Included in the Powers and Duties of your Commission as established by its enabling legislation, as well as in your bylaws, is this: "*Advise the Board of Supervisors and the Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services on the preservation of the historic, cultural and **natural resources** of the County ...*"

At the June 3rd Commission meeting, we explained to you the natural resources problems at Scott Creek Beach. We requested the matter be placed on the August 5th agenda as a study session and that each Commissioner be given a copy of the 1996 USFWS Biological Opinion to review well before the Commission meeting. Our goal was for a Commission vote to advise the Parks Director to begin a process that leads to the implementation of the Biological Opinion, complete with a schedule and work plan.

The BO was required for the County to create the visitor access infrastructure it first proposed in 1994. That agreement contained specific mitigation management actions, including Snowy Plover nesting site protections and restoring over three acres of coastal strand and dune habitat.

It is difficult to see evidence at Scott Creek Beach of actions agreed upon in the BO. We're sure there are many reasons for this, none of which are acceptable. Parks must make sure it has a budget to meet its official responsibilities.

This is serious business. County Parks has a responsibility to follow through with its original agreement with USFWS. This is why the Commission must discuss this important matter and act on its findings.

On November 5, 2015 Parks applied to the County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission for a \$2,000 grant for an Informational & Interpretive Kiosk at the access point at the beach. We have a copy of that application. While well-meaning, as seen in the application's description of signage "*to provide visually compelling and easily understood information about species protection, and in particular how dogs (especially off leash dogs) are harmful to the resident Snowy Plovers,*" unfortunately the application was apparently drafted without knowledge of the BO. Also apparently without knowledge of the collaborative ***Where Can I Take My Dog*** County brochure available online that includes Scott Creek Beach as a place where Dogs Are Not Allowed. Period.

The result is there is **no** signage at Scott Creek Beach that says Dogs Are Not Allowed. In fact, it is even worse than that. The Plover informational sign installed there (with the grant funds) **contradicts** the prohibition. One sentence reads "*Disturbance from people and dogs has significantly reduced the number of Snowy Plover at this beach*" and the very next sentence states "***Please be considerate and keep your dog on a leash at all times.***"

Once again, we ask that this matter be placed on the October 7 Commission meeting, as a serious study session.

Jean Brocklebank  
Michael Lewis