

County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department



PC

Prepared by: Elish Ryan
Park Planner

Reviewed by: Julie Mark
Deputy Director

DATE: November 4, 2009

TO: Parks & Recreation Commission

FROM:

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is "Lisa Killough" and the second is "Julie Mark".

Lisa Killough
Director

SUBJECT: Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Accept status report relating to the Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no fiscal impact on the County General Fund or Park Charter Fund as a result of this action.

CONTRACT HISTORY

On March 20, 2007, the Board of Supervisors approved a Professional Services Agreement with Bellinger Foster Steinmetz, Landscape Architecture (BFS), to provide professional Landscape Architectural and Planning Services for various Parks Department projects.

Under a Delegation of Authority also approved by the Board of Supervisors on March 20, 2007, the Parks Department executed a Project Agreement (PA#4) with BFS to conduct a Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study on August 20, 2008. An amended Project Agreement was executed on September 18, 2009.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

This status report is intended to provide the Parks and Recreation Commission with a summary of work-in-progress on the Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study (Feasibility Study), opportunity to provide comment on the evaluation criteria process developed to examine available sites, and to offer additional direction as the Parks Department extends the duration and scope of the Feasibility Study to seek other potential locations for stables as new parkland acquisitions are completed.

The purpose of the Feasibility Study is to examine the available options for an equestrian stables facility within the Santa Clara County Parks system. The Feasibility Study is intended to address the public demand for equestrian stables and associated activities in County Parks, as supported in the 2003 Strategic Plan for Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation. To date, the Feasibility Study has evaluated the 28 parks currently in the County's ownership to determine if any sites may be feasible to establish a new, long-term equestrian stables facility. In addition, the Feasibility Study has compiled:

- Uses and trends survey results from an on-line questionnaire equestrian use survey;
- Feedback from other local public agencies that provide equestrian recreation;
- Evaluation criteria for selection of new stables facility;
- Design program of essential site needs for a 100-horse stables;
- Generalized costs associated with new equestrian stables facility at full buildout;
- Options not directly associated with boarding that would enhance equestrian use, and;
- Recommendations that an Access Management Policy, under development by the Parks Department, consider conditions whereby private stables operator(s) may access public trails for the mutual benefit of the Parks Department, the stables operator, and general park users.

The Parks Department has also conducted four public meetings to solicit public input on the development of these components of the Feasibility Study at key milestones.

Based upon the extensive background information developed in the past year on the physical needs of a potential stables site, the Feasibility Study identified a preferred site at Coyote

Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park. However development of an equestrian stables at that site would require extensive additional planning. There is also concern from the equestrian community that the preferred site is located in an area already well-served by stabling options. As a result, the Parks Department proposes to extend the duration and scope of the Feasibility Study to seek other potential locations for stables as new parkland acquisitions are completed.

BACKGROUND

The Parks Department provides a wide variety of trails for equestrian users. Currently, there is also a public boarding operation located at Calero County Park. The land on which the stables are located is owned by the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Water District), and leased to the Parks Department. The stables are operated under a lease agreement between the Parks Department and Calero Ranch Stables, an independent operator. The lease will terminate on October 31, 2010. (Concerns about water quality impacts on the adjacent Calero Reservoir and the Water District's desire to comply with California State Department of Health Services guidelines for use setbacks for drinking water reservoirs have resulted in a mutual decision by the County and the Water District to not renew the lease.) Therefore, the Parks Department has undertaken a process to examine the feasibility of providing a new equestrian stabling facility at another park location.

Inherent in the process is a discussion of consistency with County Parks' long-range Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan, approved by the Board of Supervisors in August 2003, recognized that, while not in high demand in terms of total population use, the continuing need for equestrian access and associated facilities ranked among other leisure activities that were strongly supported as part of the heritage of Santa Clara County.

With an extensive system of riding trails and other facilities available, stables, in and of themselves, may not be considered critical to equestrian use in County Parks. However, stables within County Parks are compelling due to the recreational opportunities and programs they support. For example, public stables often provide rental horses and guided rides, which are for many their first exposure to equestrian recreation. In addition, youth summer camps and 4-H Club programs are often provided by public stables. Riding lessons are more easily offered in proximity to a stabling facility. These and other related activities sustain interest and support new generations of equestrians. Without public stables, some of these activities would be difficult to operate in Santa Clara County.

The County's regional parks system contains a number of parks with established equestrian use, including Santa Teresa County Park, Almaden-Quicksilver County Park, Calero County Park, Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park, Mt. Madonna County Park, Ed Levin

County Park, Sanborn County Park, Coyote Creek Parkway, and Joseph D. Grant Ranch County Park. Based upon the known preference to board at stables with access to riding trails, it was determined that the Feasibility Study would study possible sites within these parks. To assist in the physical assessment and planning of possible sites, the Feasibility Study undertook additional tasks to understand the needs of a public facility (a full copy of the Draft Feasibility Study is available on the Parks Department's website: www.parkhere.org). Those tasks included:

1. Collection of background data and resources: review of information gained from the Parks Department's user surveys, park use trends for the State of California, and other feasibility studies that have been conducted for public stables planning.
2. Evaluation of current stables: on-site tour and interview with Calero Ranch Stables management to understand the current facilities (property size, boarding options, arenas, operational needs, etc.), programs offered, critical economic factors, and current use demographics.
3. User survey: questionnaire conducted to gather information from local equestrians on boarding facility preferences, location, siting, price, trail accessibility, programs offered, and any new trends in equestrian recreation.
4. Public agency survey: telephone surveys, web-based research, and site visits conducted with other local agencies to obtain additional background on how they operate public stables, structure equestrian programs, and what trends they see.
5. Community meeting #1: the Parks Department held a public meeting on January 28, 2009, to review Steps 1 thru 4. The meeting also provided an opportunity for additional input on equestrian use and trends, community concerns, and project suggestions.
6. Design Program and Evaluation Criteria Development: based on information collected in the early phase of the Feasibility Study, a stables design program was developed for facility needs. A set of criteria for evaluating sites was established, including size, topography, road access, trails access, available infrastructure, compatibility with surrounding uses, distance from waterways, and other considerations. Criteria for broad-brushed environmental evaluation was also established, based on California's Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Study Checklist.

7. Initial Site Evaluations: using the evaluation criteria, all County Parks were evaluated in three rounds of screening. The first round was based on selection of County Parks with current equestrian day-use and access to trails. In the second round, mapping and analysis of potential County Parks sites was conducted, using Geographic Information System (GIS) data to identify sites that met the minimal size, topography, lack of sensitive habitats, proximity to trails, and appropriate environmental conditions. Based on the first two rounds of evaluations, eight sites were then evaluated in the field.

8. Design Program Study: based on the field evaluation, two sites emerged as the most feasible for further study: Minnis Ranch at Ed Levin County Park and the West Flat Area at Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park. A study of the design program was conducted on each site to ensure that these sites could accommodate stables in an efficient manner.

9. Community Meetings #2 and #3: on June 23 and 25, 2009, two public meetings were held to review Steps 6 thru 8. Public input was sought to assure that the Design Program and Evaluation Criteria was consistent with the needs expressed by the equestrian community. Input was also sought on the two sites identified as having the most potential. As a result of the community's recommendations, a third potential site on Burnett Avenue in Coyote Creek Parkway County Park was added for consideration, and the scope of the Feasibility Study was expanded to include some suggestions for other options not dependent on a stables facility that would enhance equestrian recreation.

10. Conceptual Site Design: detailed site designs were prepared for the three sites now under consideration. These site designs assured that all the required facilities would function effectively within the site parameters and provided enough detail to prepare generalized cost estimates for future construction of a stables facility.

11. Cost Estimates: cost estimates were prepared for each of the three sites to identify the potential costs associated with the design and construction of a new stables, complying with code requirements, environmental and regulatory conditions, etc.

12. Preliminary Conclusions and Recommendations: based on the information gathered in all tasks to date, four preliminary conclusions and recommendations were developed for consideration. They include:

- The West Flat Area of Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park is considered the preferred site, due to flat terrain, adequate road access, compatibility with its parkland surroundings, access to abundant and diverse trails, and distance from protected waterways. But prior to proceeding with stables at this site, additional study would be needed of the environmental/cultural/historic conditions of the site. Additionally, as the Feasibility Study focused on only physical site assessment, a fiscal analysis would be required to establish the demand for a public stables facility and potential impact to nearby private stables. The site's status under the Williamson Act contract will also need to be reviewed.
- Should the County decide to implement a new stables on almost any new site, it will take several years (possibly five to ten years) to implement, given the substantial planning, regulatory compliance, and funding requirements for such a project. Steps include: additional environmental review; possible master plan amendment; financial feasibility analysis; a process to secure a viable operator; lease negotiations; design; permitting; funding; and construction.
- Other less costly and shorter lead-time options could enhance recreational opportunities for equestrian use. These options include upgrades to existing staging areas, facilities for equestrian camping, and arenas for lessons and special equestrian events.
- The feasibility of permitting access from private commercial stables adjacent to County Parks should be considered as part of the new Access Management Policy currently under development by the Parks Department. To be considered as a point of access and as a condition of benefiting from direct park access, private stables will need to provide general public benefit. Some examples of public benefit that are typically associated with stables, and have been offered in the past at County Park sites, are publicly accessible staging areas and summer camps, or general public benefit such as the use of restrooms. With such arrangements, the recreational activities that support equestrian use and advance the mission and vision of the Parks Department may be sustained through enhanced public/private partnerships.

The Parks Department held a fourth public meeting on October 6, 2009 to share the preliminary conclusions, recommendations, and next steps for the Feasibility Study with the public. In general, the community feedback focused on the concern that the preferred site was not in an area underserved by equestrian services, the preferred site did not maintain a public stables presence in the Calero area, and that planning and funding challenges would overwhelm the implementation of any new project.

The Parks Department acknowledges that additional challenges exist should the decision to go forward with the preferred site be made. Based upon input from the community, the Parks Department will extend the duration of the Feasibility Study so that the number and type of sites to be considered may be expanded as new parkland acquisitions become available for evaluation. While there are no new sites at this time, it is possible that new sites in the future may offer better opportunity for a successful stables operation.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Without the Parks and Recreation Commission's acceptance of this report on the Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study, the Parks Department may not be able to continue work on the Feasibility Study as identified.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

No steps are required of the Clerk of the Board office as a result of this action. It is anticipated that a final draft of the Feasibility Study will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their review and acceptance in 2010/2011.

ATTACHMENTS

- Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study - Evaluation Criteria
- Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study - Public Input

Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study

Potential Sites Analysis Evaluation Criteria and Site Visit Summaries

For complete explanation, please see full report, available on line at www.parkhere.org

Secondary Analysis of County Parks

The parks that passed the initial round of analysis were then evaluated based on parameters identified in the program, as shown in the table below. These results were generated with geographic information systems, and in-house knowledge of each site. Parks that met all of the requirements received check marks in every category. These sites became candidates for site visit evaluations.

Park or Area	Underlying ownership in SCC park district	Established equestrian use on-site or adjacent to site	Min. 25 acres with less than 15% slope	Min. 25 acres outside of 300' riparian buffer of adjacent streams	Within 1000' of public roadway	On-site Utilities - Well or water electricity septic potential	Adequate Access Road
Almaden-Quicksilver – Hacienda Staging Area	✓	✓	⊘				
Calero – areas outside lease with SCVWD	✓	✓	⊘				
Canada Del Oro – Rancho Area	⊘						
Canada Del Oro – Blair Ranch	⊘						
Coyote Creek – Encinal Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊘	
Coyote Creek – Burnett Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coyote Lake– Western Flat Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coyote Lake– Mendoza Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ed Levin – Minnis Ranch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ed Levin – Sandy Wool Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grant Ranch – Halls Valley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊘
Mt. Madonna – Deer Pen Youth Camp Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
Mt. Madonna – Summit Road	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
Santa Teresa – Pueblo Day Use Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stevens Creek – Villa Maria	✓	✓	⊘				

Site Visit Evaluation Summary

Each of the sites meeting the secondary requirements were visited and analyzed, and the following table was generated. Each column represents an important element for siting an equestrian stabling facility. If a site didn't fully meet the criteria, notes in the column provide additional information. Sites that were the most compatible with the needs and requirements of a stabling facility are shown in green in the conclusions column; those that were less compatible are shown in yellow; and those that did not meet the criteria are shown in pink. Additional comments are provided in the conclusions column of the table.

Park or Area	Adequate Equestrian Trail Access within Park	Regional Equestrian Trail Access	Proximity to other Equestrian Communities	Access Infrastructure	Compatible with Existing or Planned Site Uses	Compatible with Adjacent Uses	No Significant Visual Impact Issues	Minimal Grading/ Site clearing	No Known Environmental/ Historical Constraints	Other	Conclusions
Coyote Creek – Burnett Area *	?	⊘	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	- Historic structure on property; probably not a problem	Potential for flooding	Initially not selected for site design due to limited trail access, but based on community input, was reconsidered Could be used for equestrian day use facilities, such as an arena, training facility or rental string staging
Coyote Lake – Western Flat Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	- Would require modification of existing cattle grazing use Could displace proposed Equestrian/Agricultural Education Center in Master Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	Gas and water mains run through property	Feasible for stable location serving Gilroy, Morgan Hill, & San Martin, but would be a modification of Equestrian/ Agricultural Education Center in Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch County Park Master Plan Could support day use facilities, such as arenas and rental string Given number of stabling options in San Martin, stable demand is unknown
Coyote Lake – Mendoza Area	✓	✓	✓	⊘	- Would require modification of existing cattle grazing area	✓	⊘	✓	-		Not recommended for stables operation or day use due to difficult road access and potentially significant disruption of the environmental / visual potential of the area. Given number of stabling options in San Martin, stable demand is unknown
Ed Levin – Minnis Ranch	✓	✓	✓	- Would require road improvement	- Would require modification of cattle grazing and staging area	✓	✓	- Would require some grading of site	✓	Potential usable buildings	Feasible for stable location, serving the needs of the Milpitas community
Ed Levin – Sandy Wool Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊘ Currently used as hangliding landing zone and for cattle grazing	⊘ Adjacent to dog park and high-use picnic area	⊘	✓	✓		Not recommended for stables operation or day use due to potential impact on existing park uses

Park or Area	Adequate Equestrian Trail Access within Park	Regional Equestrian Trail Access	Proximity to other Equestrian Communities	Access Infrastructure	Compatible with Existing or Planned Site Uses	Compatible with Adjacent Uses	No Significant Visual Impact Issues	Minimal Grading/Site clearing	No Known Environmental/Historical Constraints	Other	Conclusions
Mt. Madonna – Deer Pen Youth Camp Area	✓	⊘	?	⊘	✓	✓	✓	⊘	⊘ Would require tree removal, vegetation clearing	✓	Not recommended for stables operation, due to difficult road access and extent of grading Could potentially support additional equestrian day use facilities, such as an arena or rental string staging
Mt. Madonna – Summit Road	✓	⊘	?	⊘	✓	✓	✓	⊘	⊘ Would require tree removal, vegetation clearing	Seemed better suited to other uses	Not recommended for stables operation, due to difficult road access and extent of grading Seemed better suited to other uses
Santa Teresa – Pueblo Day Use Area *	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	⊘	⊘	✓	⊘ Sensitive habitat, serpentine soils, nitrogen loading, clay soils, potential archeological constraints	Hot in summer; limited shade	Not recommended for stables operation due to environmental constraints, but could be a good site for additional equestrian day use facilities if environmental and archeological considerations were met.

✓ Meets or exceeds criteria

- Some limitations

? Unknown

⊘ Does not meet criteria

* Indicates sites within 20 minutes from Calero

Equestrian Stables Location Feasibility Study

Public Input

Survey Summary of Conclusions: December 2008

Public Meeting #1: January 28, 2009

Public Meeting #2: June 23, 2009

Public Meeting #3: June 25, 2009

Public Meeting #4: October 6, 2009

Appendix C-3

Equestrian Use Survey Summary of Survey Conclusions

Number on left indicates Question Number(s) from Survey

1. Most people (55.4%) own one (28.8%) or two (26.6%) horses. 16.4% of people responding don't own a horse.
2. Most people (56.8%) do not compete or show their horse, although this still leaves a large group (43.2%) that does.
3. 28.7% of people board their horse(s) on their own property. 54.8% board their horse(s) at either a public (27.1%) or private (27.8%) stable.
4. The preference for type of boarding is fairly equally distributed between stall, pipe corral, pasture, or some combination.
5. 31.9% of respondents do not pay for board. 46% pay somewhere between \$200 and \$400 per month.
7. Most people (78.5%) are either very (52.3%) or mostly (26.2%) satisfied with their boarding situation.
8. Location, price and quality of care/facility are the most important factors in selecting a boarding facility. Whether or not arenas are available, and the specific type of boarding (stall vs. pipe corral vs. pasture) seem to be less important than the location and quality.
9. Basic facility amenities are important to be included in a boarding facility. These include: horse washing area; restrooms; safety lighting; tack storage; auto parking area; arena; access to trails; Vet/ farrier access; site security; stall cleaning. Not so important: Clubhouse; Vending machines; Showers; Lessons; Blanketing and Turnout service.
10. Most people would pay between \$200-\$400 per month (65.6%) for boarding.
11. Most people (58.8%) did not have difficulty finding board they are happy with.
13. 37.1% travel less than 10 minutes and 79.4% travel less than 20 minutes from their home to the boarding facility.
14. Most people (55.0%) feel that opportunities for boarding have decreased over the last 5 years. 35% feel that availability of trails has also decreased.
15. 56% travel out of the County three times or more per year with their horse(s).
16. 48% have been riding for 21 years or more. 68.3% have been riding for 10 years or more.

Appendix E Community Meeting Comments Summary

Community Meeting #1

January 28, 2009 6:30-9:00 pm

Meeting Overview

On January 28, 2009, Santa Clara County Parks hosted a community meeting at the Almaden Community Center in San Jose to share the preliminary results of the 600 responses to the 2008 Equestrian Use Survey. At the meeting, attendees were encouraged to ask more questions about the survey, offer additional comments on what trends are emerging in local equestrian recreation, and learn about next steps in the project. Over 150 attendees documented their attendance at the meeting on the sign-in sheets. Copies of the Survey results and the summary of the Survey Conclusions were distributed to attendees and all project electronic mailing list subscribers.

Comments Received at the Meeting

1. Comments regarding Calero Ranch Stables closure – Many attendees expressed general disappointment/frustration with the closure of Calero Ranch Stables. Some had concerns whether equestrian use was truly a source of bacterial contamination for the reservoir. It was clarified that the Water District owns the property and leases it to County Parks. County Parks in turn leases the property to the stables operator. Due to increasing water quality requirements, both the Water District and County Parks have mutually agreed that it is no longer sustainable to continue stabling at the current location. The stables operator was informed of this decision in April 2006 and boarders received additional notice from County Parks. County Parks has opted to evaluate potential locations for a new facility, where it would have full control of the property.
2. Comments regarding equestrian needs and preferences:
 - a. Many recalled that first equestrian experience was from casual exposure through rental horses, summer camp, 4H, and friend's horse that led to a lifelong passion. County needs to support these activities. Today, these and other casual riding opportunities are declining.
 - b. Quality rental horses are needed.
 - c. Many first time exposures are through the grandparent/grandchild relationship.
 - d. Increasing interest in carriage/buggy riding from older equestrians or the training and exercise of older horses. Might require separate area, as carriages or carts frighten many horses.
 - e. Arenas with multi-use purpose are needed, with permits for day events.
 - f. Lighted arenas are needed for night riding.
 - g. Provide adequate trailer parking.

- h. Consider evacuation plans and multiple entry/exit points (more than one road) for fire safety concerns at new site.
- i. Need facilities that can be made available for training and lessons.
- j. Need for reasonable accommodation of environmental regulations for equestrian facilities – current standards are punitive and not scientific. Complying with environmental regulations should be seriously considered and may make finding a new location very difficult.
- k. The new facility has to have easy access.
- l. New facility needs to have space for composting manure, like Webb Ranch.
- m. The County should be looking for ways to simultaneously encourage and expand private stable use, because just as many people board at private stables as at public ones. A revision to the County's Williamson Act policy would easily provide this needed support. The current County policy discourages the Act's use for private stables, as the only way it can be used for property under 40 acres in size is if it is "prime agricultural" land.
- n. Don't rule out the possibility that equestrian needs could be met through smaller facilities, at multiple locations.
- o. Increase horse use access and staging in parks.
- p. Support Therapeutic Riding programs, as there are benefits for both riders and the community, including high school community service programs.
- q. The Calero County Park Draft Master Plan was done in 1992 when the possibility of the water level rise of Calero Reservoir would necessitate moving the stables, and the suggested alternative location was across McKean road – still on Parks Department land.
- r. Golden Gate Park used to have a rental facility.
- s. Riders want facilities in Almaden Valley since that is where the trails are closest to their homes/jobs.
- t. The most important thing is to find a place to house 100 horses. All the rest of the things are fluff.
- u. The boarding facilities in this area have continuously declined since 1980.
- v. Consider keeping the arena at Calero for shows. Perhaps charge a day-use fee. Or use it for just summer camp, rental string, and therapeutic program.
- w. Consider open space to hold competitive rides – NATRC and endurance
- x. Consider a shelter facility to save abandoned and neglected horses – could work at same location as boarding facility.

3. General Questions:

- a. Why can't we enter Park property from our own adjacent property?
- b. Why did other public stables close?
- c. What happened to Grant Ranch?
- d. Does County Parks have funds available to implement this project?
- e. Will the new facility need to pay for itself?
- f. How will the new facility be managed?
- g. Does the County need to provide a boarding facility?

4. Sites suggested for further consideration:

- a. Santa Teresa County Park – already have a few horses there for the Equestrian Patrol; Norred Ranch site
 - b. Ed Levin County Park
 - c. Grant Ranch – expanded facilities needed; some do not see access road as an impediment
 - d. Calero Park – perhaps entrance off Loma Vista Rd or site across McKean Road – could use existing tunnel/culvert to cross road
 - e. Harvey Bear
 - f. Blair Ranch
 - g. Canada del Oro
 - h. Equestrians in Ed Levin area want County to look into acquisition of Chaparral Ranch – recently went through foreclosure and now land is up for sale again. It was a horse facility in the past.
 - i. Diamond W Stables – may change ownership as well
 - j. Fairgrounds
5. Sites for simple equestrian improvements:
- a. Almaden Quicksilver County Park – move cars/bikers to other parking lot, to allow equestrian access
 - b. Calero County Park - day use of existing arena
6. Sites mentioned as nice places for horses:
- a. Jack Brooks Horse Camp, Sam McDonald County Park in San Mateo County is good for camping, even though it is hard to get to and has other limitations
 - b. Ed Hughes Memorial Arena at Charles Howard Park, Lone
 - c. Robertson Park, Livermore
 - d. Webb Ranch – has onsite composting facility
 - e. The Huddart and Wunderlich parks in Woodside

Additional email comments received, in reference to the survey and meeting

1. “My business partner and I are in the early stages of developing lazy R ranch....We anticipate close to 100 horses, lessons, training and horseback guided rides. We are located directly across the street from Pacheco State Park with nearly 7000 acres and 28 miles of trails.”
2. “I have lived in this valley since 1962 and have seen a LOT of changes. I had a horse in my backyard growing up, and used to ride all over the place on him when I was a kid. Fast forward to the past 10 years, when I became involved with horses again, and had to find places to board them. Even since then, many places have shut down in our area. We need a place that can offer many different levels of a) boarding situations; b) lesson situations; and c) can appeal to different levels of experience. The only place that I can think of that near this concept is Webb Ranch up in Portola Valley. There is the Stanford Polo Team, dressage riders/instruction, western riders/instruction, basic through advanced English riding/instruction. They have pasture board, paddock boarding, barn boarding, and small

group/mini-pasture boarding there. The price is a little steep for me but that is I'm sure, inclusive of insurance costs, hay and etc.

I'm assuming that you are gathering information to apply toward the Calero facility. We, as equestrians, cannot afford to lose such a facility, and I certainly hope there are plans to renovate and re-open under new management. We lack a good show facility in this area also. Calero has many arenas that can be used for shows. We have to drive either to Salinas, Gilroy, Watsonville, Woodside, Livermore, and beyond to attend little schooling shows for the kids. It would be great to have a show venue closer to home.

I have 4 horses on a 4+ acre pasture that I lease for free. All it costs me is the feed cost, occasional tractor rental, and my time. I used to board them all out in South San Jose. I prefer to have them be in a nice pasture situation, as it is healthier for them. I also have one horse boarded at Five Star Farms and she is in a mini-pasture there for \$300/month. That price includes manure cleanup of the pasture, and blanket on/off whenever necessary. They have a run-in shed in pasture to get out of the weather, but I don't know if the horses use it."

3. "Thank you for listening to and considering my comments about the value of considering ways to encourage the preservation and expansion of the private stable inventory in Santa Clara County simultaneously with the studying how to replace the capacity lost with the imminent closure of Calero Stables. I believe that a reconsideration by the County of the impact of its decision to implement restrictions on allowed recreational uses under the Williamson Act which it undertook in 2005 might assist in preserving and enhancing private stabling capacity in the County.

Under the Williamson Act, the definition of "agricultural uses" includes recreational uses. ...the State decided in about 2002 to encourage cities and counties to tighten their individual adoptions of Williamson Act rules to exclude recreational uses and limit the Act's application to actual cropping operations or breeding farms. The pressure hit the County of Santa Clara when a state audit found that the county had allowed the subdivision of Williamson Act lands in the South County to the point where there were some "ranchettes" in the Morgan Hill area of as little as 2.5 to 5 acres with just a single family in residence that were under the Williamson Act. ...ultimately the County restricted Williamson Act contracts on non-prime agricultural land to parcels of 40 or more acres. The Act provided that if a parcel was more than 40 acres it was conclusively deemed to be large enough, but parcels under 40 acres were allowable if they were large enough to sustain an agricultural use. (Gov. Code sec. 51222) The change in 2005 did away with this discretion. The Act allows a city or county to have more restrictive rules than the Act provides (Gov. Code Sec. 51240), but does not require them to be more restrictive. The Act speaks primarily of the preservation of "agricultural uses", but it also specifically includes recreational uses (Gov. Code Sec. 51205) within the definition. And Gov. Code Sec. 51201(n) includes a variety of outdoor sports and activities within the definition of recreational uses. All these permissible uses were swept away by the County's actions. The result is that no small private stable can have Williamson Act protection in Santa Clara County, even though the Williamson Act would allow them and other entities (e.g., the City of Saratoga) allow them.

I have attached the Report of the Planning Dept dated 10/5/05 to the Board of Supervisors, which discusses how the County was proposing to respond to the pressure from the State. You will note that it reflects that the County decided to exclude horse stabling and training facilities as commercial agricultural uses (even though that is an allowed use under Sec. 51201 (n). (page 4 of Agenda Item 4). Included in the package is a discussion of substituting open space easements as a way of providing some relief for uses otherwise being eliminated, but imposed limitations such that it made the development of a commercially viable private stable and training facility extremely remote. It was not a viable substitute.

Included in the attachment is a letter dated 3/29/05 from the State Dept. of Conservation, which expresses the State's curious interpretation of the Williamson Act. Note in particular its statement that 51201(n) does not appear to cover horse training/boarding facilities or equestrian facilities. Remember that that statute says: "Recreational use' is the use of land in its agricultural or natural state by the public, with or without charge, for any of the following: walking, hiking, picnicking, camping, swimming, boating, fishing, hunting, or other outdoor games or sports for which facilities are provided for public participation." The letter says if it is purely recreational, it doesn't meet the definition of "agricultural" use, even though Gov. Code Sec. 51205 specifically included "recreational use" within the definition of "agricultural use".

The bottom line, it seems to me, is that the State was looking for a way to increase property tax revenues and took advantage of the embarrassment caused by its audits to pressure counties into restricting their application of what was allowed under the Williamson Act. The law of unintended (but clearly foreseeable) consequences clicked into gear. Now we are faced with a loss of Calero and no way to replace those stalls within the time left through the development of a new public facility. A partial solution would be to encourage the retention and expansion of privately owned facilities that would be open to the public. While that might cost some property tax revenue, that loss would be offset to some unknown degree by the County not having to commit as much money in the construction and operation of new publically owned facilities, and by increased business taxes and overall economic activity. I encourage you and the Staff of the Parks and Recreation Dept. to consider this alternative and to study whether a fresh look at the County's 2005 decision may not be warranted."

4. "I want to thank you for chairing the equestrian meeting this past Wednesday, to let us know the results of the survey. It was so sad to hear that what came out of the meeting was that what is needed: multi-use place, different arenas for different disciplines (big covered riding arena, jump arena, dressage arena, western arena, round pen), pasture/or stall, kids program, rental string, trails nearby easily accessed, quality care. And to know that we have all that at Calero Ranch Stable and we have to give it up. It seems a crime and such a waste of resources. And with no good alternative!! So sad. It really does make one quite hostile to the water dept. I can only wish that there was some other alternative rather than closing this facility. Again thank you and your staff. At least, for trying and perhaps in the future there will be a place for equestrians in this valley."

5. One of the first comments I would like to make is that I think the size of your audience was phenomenal. It shows just how important this issue is. I hope you will accept any suggestions I make in the spirit they are meant. You and your department have a tough job, but I think it's necessary to make friends and have a good relationship with park users.
...what was coming across to me loud and clear was we need somewhere for kids to learn to ride. I am one of those cases where I grew up with horses around me, had time off to go to work, get married and have children, and then came back to horses AND riding, and then owning my own ranch at the ripe of old age of 50-something; meantime, my children learned to ride, show, and one ended up owning 3 horses and became an Endurance Rider with Quicksilver. Typically, people who are into horses make it their lifestyle and everything else goes by the wayside. I am a Brit and I came over here 28 years ago. I thought there was a LOT of riding going on in the Bay Area and I was thrilled to bits. Since then, I have seen one facility after another close down and typically this was for more housing development or environmental issues – where is this going to end?

My next question is about Calero. This is obviously a very big issue, especially with the diminishing availability of facilities. In light of the information that became available last night, why can't SCCPR put the closure on hold until some alternative plans can be made? In my opinion, it's going to be children and people who are less able to afford some of the few other facilities available that are going to suffer from this closure. Not to mention location: i.e. most children have to be driven to the facility where they keep their horse, and the parent probably has to wait for them to tend the horse, ride, maybe have a lesson, and then take them home again. I have another point. In the current economy – and if it doesn't start to improve soon - there are going to be more abandoned pets and this includes horses. San Martin Animal Shelter have had three horse rescues in the past few months; I have been involved in trying to raise money to help them and find homes for them. I hope the proposed closure at Calero doesn't result in some horses being abandoned and/or euthanized. I hope SCCPR can get a grip on this – and try to think about the quality of life we have now, instead of letting issues like development and environmentalists run amok.

I had my own ranch. I owned a property in the Santa Cruz Mountains where my aim was to always TLC for horses. I provided the best feed I could buy, Veterinary Clinics, blanketing in our extreme weather conditions. Almost anything you can think of - with basically 24-hour supervision. I was on the Castle Rock State Park Advisory Board and helped produce the General Plan of 2000. I am currently on the Trails Committee for that Park. I have had two neighbors who had breeding operations and I assisted in their foaling. I was an original member and Team Leader for the Saratoga Summit of the Santa Cruz Equine Evacuation Unit, and am currently still a member of that unit. As I'm sure you know, this activity comes under OES and we actually were activated during the three bad fires which took place this last summer. I hope I can be of use and have given you some positive feedback.”

6. “Thank you for the great meeting and all the survey information. I thought that you handled the questions and the few heated situations very nicely. I think the meeting was good and productive. Some good questions and ideas came up and it was good to see a lot of the equestrian people get together. Thanks again.”

7. "Thank you very much for an "interesting" meeting. Wasn't quite what I expected! (the whole Calero issue). I want to applaud you and Lee for holding the meeting together; it could have gotten way out of hand, and Lee did an excellent job trying to keep on topic and away from the sub-issues. As you saw, when you get 200 horse people in the same room, you'll get 200 different opinions! Thank you again."
8. "I am a Horse Trainer, Riding Instructor and Boarding manager of a small facility in Gilroy. I am interested in finding out if and what Santa Clara Parks will be offering after Calero Ranch closes if you will be offering anything and in what form? I just was informed of your meeting last night, sorry to have missed it. I have heard many different stories, but I was curious myself to talk with you. So, when you create a new Equestrian Facility will it be more of a public facility where anyone can use it, or will it be a concession? How will that work and what areas or parks are you considering? I do have clients and have taught at Calero in the past and this will make a difference for me. I also would be available to Parks and Rec. in any way if you need help with any horse or horse facility issues or need to bounce things off someone in the horse profession field. Thanks for your time."
9. "I understand the anxiety of all the Calero people. But you should also know that there's a large contingent of NORTH County people who would like to be considered. Yes, Almaden Valley is being built out. I live on the peninsula- Palo Alto- my boarding facilities were built out 20 years ago! In 1977, I had multiple choices of boarding barns within 20 minutes drive, now there are 2. I choose to drive 35 minutes across 237 to Milpitas, in order to afford a barn for my 2 horses. (I really don't count Woodside barns at \$700 or so). I ride in Ed Levin Park, and LOVE it. The Rangers do a great job maintaining the trails. I'm also going to mention Chaparral Ranch, which is currently for sale, abutting the Park- WITH a gate into the Park..., which has unfortunately been locked since the property was sold at foreclosure. Yes, it costs money, but it already has many of the facilities that the County would otherwise have to purchase and build, including an arena and 2 houses for caretakers."
10. "I am encouraged after hearing you speak about the future of the Parks and Recreation Department that the County is still encouraging equestrian use of the parks. In recent years we have seen many parks both State and National discourage us from being in the parks with its adoption of many new environmental rules. For example: You can't camp in the National Parks unless you feed your horse "Certified Weed Free Hay" for at least a week before you go. The problem is that you cannot buy this hay anywhere in California. So it appears to us that they don't want us in the parks. I am sure you understand. We are a minority in the number of parks users and fear being excluded. That is why I am so happy you are including us in your plans for the future.

I am sure after all your years of service you understand people don't like change. They don't like to see facilities close. I am heartened by your willingness to hear the views of the public in such an open manner. Thanks again for putting this together and I look forward to the next meeting, newsletter or email. I volunteer in the parks and would love to do more. If there is anything I can do to help; please do not hesitate to ask."

11. "I wanted to thank you for putting on the meeting, and I hope it was helpful. As I mentioned, I would be happy to help with future surveys, and would be happy to provide additional input if you would like it."
12. "Thank you again for your great communication skills and for trying to help facilitate the development of a new equestrian facility. It's unfortunate the meeting started to go another direction once it was known representatives from the S.C.C.W.D. were in attendance. But, the closing of Calero Stables is a painful scenario for many, including myself, I live in Almaden, board at Calero, my horse is in pasture. I also volunteer for One Step Closer, the therapeutic riding program for children with disabilities, also at Calero. Many boarders' children attended the summer camps when they were kids and as they've grown now work at summer camp. Calero is a special place and offers so much to so many people...not just horse boarders but the local community as well.

I assume the gentleman who attended last night's meeting and who has designed horse facilities plans to walk the grounds of Calero, if he hasn't already, to view the several arenas (western, dressage, jumping) which are also used as "turn out" areas, in addition to several other available turn outs (areas to allow stalled horses to run around, roll, play), as well as the tack rooms, club house (used by boarders, summer camp and One Step Closer participants, the trailer storage area, etc., etc. The other HUGE asset is the direct access to trails. I tack up my horse and am fortunate that a trail head is approx. 25 feet away from my tack room.

With Calero so close to Almaden, it's convenient for many of us to get out in the evenings, after work, to care for our horses and/or take a quick ride when the days are longer. Whatever happens, please know that many of us are grateful that the Parks Dept. is looking into alternatives and will support the dept. in any way we can."

13. "Thanks for sending this information to me. I am curious what the motivation was for doing this survey? Is the park system planning on making any changes based on these results?"

I found question 24 ("How often do you become annoyed or frustrated with other types of trail users when riding?") a bit leading and open ended. I would love to know why horseback riders feel annoyed by each of these groups. And how they feel annoyed. What are bikers doing to annoy them, for instance? Is there anything the horseback riders themselves can do to help alleviate the situation (i.e.: only use fire roads, call out at blind corners, etc). I know the bay area is a crowded place and we all greatly value our open spaces to get away from it all. So we all must be courteous to other users. I am an avid mountain biker, a professional, and San Jose homeowner for many years. I am always courteous to others while on the trails, making sure to call out well ahead of time of my approach and stop when needed. I find 99% of the other people appreciate this and are more than willing to share the trail. It always helps to crack a joke as I go by – it's fun to make other people smile! I hope more parks are created that are open to all – bikers, hikers and horseback riders."

14. "I just wanted to take a moment to thank you and your Parks colleagues, for holding the equestrian community meeting last night. I found the meeting very informative, and appreciate your efforts to be transparent. I felt the most effective parts involved when you and the other speaker aimed to look at the "big picture" and to share your findings on the trends affecting the equestrian community in our area.

I did feel frustrated that the meeting became "derailed" by the strong push by a few attendees to discuss the Calero Stables situation. While I understand their concern for personal boarding situations, the issue did not by any means directly affect a large group of us at the meeting. While closing the stables is unfortunate, I completely understand why the County would want to move away from having a property on leased (rather than owned) land, and a year+ notice is plenty of time to find a new barn. In many cases, boarders are giving 30 days or less...and yet they still find a new home for their horses. This happened a few years back when Stanford University finally decided to "reclaim" the facility for school use (it had been leased out to a concessionaire and the students had lost nearly every "right" on the property). While it was a surprise to some public boarders, the end result was a substantially better one for the local community and the boarders affected have moved on and their horses are safe and taken care of elsewhere.

I believe you said it best, in trying to get the meeting back on track - "we don't all live within 10 minutes of Calero". As a resident of Campbell and a boarder in Milpitas, I was at the meeting to learn about the overall condition of equestrian activities in our county - not the specifics on one facility. In the future, it may be more beneficial to halt any Calero-specific conversations during a large public meeting like this, and instead offer a 2nd meeting for Calero boarders/etc, afterwards or at a different time.

I hope to learn more about the findings from the survey - as I felt like you were unable to finish sharing everything that was intended. I will look forward to reading the detailed report that your group is planning to release later this year.

On a separate note, I'd like to know whether you are looking for more insight/help in your planning process. I am interested in getting more involved in the equestrian community in our area, and would invite the opportunity to be involved in a "focus group" or other planning committee if helpful to you. I feel that I could offer a "generalist's" perspective, rather than being so focused on one type of riding or one area of the community, as many of the individuals at the meeting last night were. I grew up in San Mateo County, but have lived in Santa Clara for a number of years. I started riding at age 6 and have continued consistently (I'm now in my 30s). I have lengthy experience in the "English" riding world, but have more recently taken on trail riding, western, and horse camping (more opportunities to use our valuable trails and parks in the area!). While I grew up in a "horse show" environment, I have transitioned more to a recreational-style of riding, as I work to balance horses, marriage, family, etc.

Furthermore, I previously worked in City Recreation (both in California and Nevada), so I am familiar with the stresses you must balance between the community and local government. I

also have volunteered extensively for our national Intercollegiate Horse Show Association, managing the Northern California chapter, as well as coaching local college equestrian teams (including Santa Clara University). I believe these experiences give me a unique view of the equestrian community, helping balance between institutional riding and the private sector.

I'm sure you are overwhelmed with responses from the survey and the community meeting. However, I did want to reach out and thank you for your efforts! Your concern for the equestrians in our area is not going unnoticed - and there are many of us in the community who welcome your involvement in ensuring that equestrians have a solid representation in our county for years to come. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you more, in whatever capacity I may be of help. Please do feel free to contact me at any time."

15. "Excellent, accurate study. I particularly agree that most equestrian boarders are attracted by the proximity and quality of the trails. Most equestrians shun trails that are frequented by bikers due to safety and quality of life considerations."
16. "I missed the equestrian use meeting but would like you know that I have three horses in Santa Clara county. I keep them at Bear Creek Stables in Los Gatos. The manger of the stable does not have a long term lease and we are month to month. Mid Peninsula Open Space owns the land and they may decide not to keep the stables. There are 72 horses at Bear Creek and all the owners worry where about where they will go. I wish there were more horse facilities is this area. Thank you for your interest."
17. "I attended the meeting last week. I applaud your effort to at least address the needs of equestrian community in Santa Clara County. I can be a tremendous resource both with my specific knowledge and my ability to put you in touch with experts in the fields related to horses and barn management. For the better part of the 1990s I attended parks department meetings and sat in with the director and a senior planner in an effort to re-open the stables at Grant Ranch Park.

Now of course it seems probably that they will lose Calero stable. That seems a shame. As a public facility it provides an equestrian site with access to a large number of trails, boarding, summer camps, trail rides and lessons. It has staff and facilities already in place. It seems that it is more likely than not that finding a replacement home will be more costly than abating the potential problems the water district assigns to the stable. I have at various points seen scientific information on environmental effects of horse manure. At other times I have seen what passes for science in relation to stables in the area visa vie the parks department. I have not been impressed with what the parks department has used. As someone at the meeting said, no matter what the site, you must deal with the manure issue.

Over a decade ago a client asked me to put down some thought about what it would take to run a profitable stable. I did so and it turned into a 24 page document. I have attached it for you to review. It will give you an overview and some terms to use when discussing what type of new barn or barns you wish to facilitate. It is important to remember that the numbers

included in this document are over a decade old. So they must be evaluated with that in mind. Referenced in that document is the operation at Golden Gate Park Stable. I was very familiar with the concessionaire at that time. They did what I thought was a very good job running that barn. However, eventually the city of San Francisco was attempting to require them to build facilities and restrict their mix of boarders vs. lessons horses as well as pricing that made no economic sense. They shut down. If you want to talk to one of the partners who ran the concession, I believe I still have her contact information.

I have also provided to you a business plan for a barn that was once under discussion for a site on the far side of the Guadalupe land fill along Hicks Road. This project ultimately died but one that I was confident enough that had I had cooperation of the land holder, I would have invested my own money. Not included in that plan but among the most profitable aspects of running a barn are summer camps and public trail riding. I have also included a list of barn manufacturers. You can build stall for \$1200 per stall or you can build them for \$4000 per stall. Or you can build them for \$8000 per stall. Which you choose depends on your long-term view. You will have to balance using parks department funds to provide a facility, which can then be leased to a concessionaire vs looking for concessionaires to do the build out themselves. In the second scenario you will have many fewer choices and you will have to provide a much longer lease in order for a concessionaire to have the reasonable belief that they will recoup their investment and profit. No one will invest against their self-interest.

As far as arenas go, I put in a 100' x 200' arena in 2005. It has a pad; above the pad is six inches of industrial fill and 2.5 inches of sand. The arena is graded 1 ft per 100 ft lengthwise and 1.5 ft per hundred feet width wise. It is not domed as you might suspect and I was advised to do it this way by Linda Allen who was the 1996 Atlanta Olympics jump course designer and an expert in the field. The cost of the arena along with a 60 ft round pen was \$33,000. I sent \$2,000 on a sprinkler system to water the arena which is critical to making it useful and another \$10,000 putting vinyl fencing around the arena. Total cost was about \$45,000. That should give you an idea about arena costs. However I used a low cost provider. I received bids up to \$93,000 for the arena construction alone (vs. the \$33,000 I paid). You are essentially building a road and putting some form of footing on it depending on the discipline. The base is usually base rock, industrial fill, or decomposed granite. It can be anywhere for 6" to 2 ft thick depending on your resources and it intended use. I can put you in touch with the vendors I know who could construct arenas as well as Linda Allen who you may want to use as a consultant. She does equestrian facility consulting professionally.

So I wish I had the time I had in the 1990's to help you in this task. If you wish to meet for a early morning meeting some day or call me with your concerns. I have a vested interest in seeing you succeed along with a desire to have as many people who want to enjoy equestrian activities.

18. "We appreciate being sent the materials for last night's meeting and regret that nobody from Balance was able to attend this time. The preliminary summary was most informative, however, and we look forward to reading the final survey results. I confess to being most

impressed by the sample size of over 800 respondents. Clearly your outreach has been effective, and I imagine local equestrian groups have been extremely eager to stand up, be counted and otherwise participate in this effort. It was also interesting (but not surprising) to me that more than 40% of horses get less than 8 hours of care, attention, and use by their owners each week - lots of standing around in stalls, paddocks and pastures."

19. "I am not able to make the meeting tonight, but thanks for sending around the preliminary survey results. They are very interesting. I like the way the top percentages have been highlighted -- easy to read, that way. I look forward to the final document. Thank you."

- 17-18. Most riders (69.5%) participate in trail riding. More people spend more time on trail riding (46.9%) than arena riding (21.3%). Some do both equally (31.9%).
19. 57.9% spend 8 or more hours on horse-related activities each week. 79.4% spend 4 hours or more.
20. A majority of people would participate in guided trail rides (54.1%), riding lessons (63.6%) and equestrian camping (77.6%) if offered.
- 21-23. Most trail rides are typically between 1-3 hours (71.3%). 38.8% ride on public trails twice a week or more. 23.2% ride on public trails once a month or less. Most people ride between 9 am and 5 pm.
- 24-25. Riders are “often or sometimes” annoyed (53.9%) by bikers. Dogs and hikers seem to have fewer conflicts for riders. Nearly half of the riders (49.4%) avoid trails shared by bikers. 20.9% avoid trails shared with dogs, and 4.7% avoid trails shared with hikers.
26. Most who answered the questionnaire use the equestrian facilities at Calero (51.1%). Second and third most popular are Almaden Quicksilver (27.5%) and Henry Coe State Park (25.1%).
27. Most plan to maintain or expand riding in the next ten years (93.6%).
- 28-29. 67.1% of respondents are in the age range of 41-65. 88.1% are female.
31. 80.4% have lived in Santa Clara County for 10 years or more.

Appendix H Community Meeting Comments Summary

Community Meeting #2

June 23, 2009 6:30-9:00 pm

Meeting Overview

1. General Comments/Questions from attendees
 - A new site could benefit from volunteers from the Horseman's Association
 - Revisit idea of purchasing Chaparral Ranch

2. Comments regarding Calero Ranch Stables
 - Existing Calero stables has 8 horses for therapeutic riding

3. Comments regarding Minnis Ranch:
 - Existing Day Use at Sandy Wool should remain
 - Ambulance access to Minnis Ranch – 10 minutes or so
 - Horse camping day use was dedicated in 1973, with 35 sites. Revisit horse camping idea
 - Existing trails are impacted/poor quality; as a contrast, trails at Henry Cowell are good because of volunteer/Horseman's Association work. In general, volunteer programs do not seem to be as developed or welcomed by some in Santa Clara County

4. Comments regarding Coyote Lake - Harvey Bear sites:
 - Preference for site on north side because of no water crossing
 - Possible conflict with cattle and kids at summer camp
 - Possible conflict with residential use on south side site

Community Meeting #3

June 25, 2009 6:30-8:30 pm

1. General Comments/Questions from attendees
 - Need covered arena
 - Need rental string on site all the time
 - Need a site close to the population center
 - Therapeutic riders come from farther away
 - Trails proximity important
 - Horse camping would be great at Mendoza site
 - Consider Norred Ranch as a potential small co-op stable
 - Consider weighting criteria for site selection process

- Don't make the price of the lease for the concessionaire too high
 - Has the County considered a transition or phasing plan? Can some things happen more quickly?
 - Event camping: Almaden Quicksilver, Hacienda, Jacque Ridge, Calero?
2. Comments from users regarding Calero Ranch Stables
 - Can we consider site across McKean road?
 - Look at moving across the street as an interim solution
 - Can we consider Burnett site – the trails are okay
 - Community is asking for a facility at Calero, or a place to go when Calero closes
 - Improvements/stables at Ed Levin and/or Harvey Bear does not meet needs for those stabling at Calero
 3. Comments from parks regarding Calero Ranch Stables
 - Calero day uses may still exist in the future
 4. Comments regarding Minnis Ranch:
 - There are already three facilities near Ed Levin; the area is too saturated with stables
 - Road would need to be improved
 - Parks Department needs to identify what is needed in the community
 5. Comments regarding Coyote Lake - Harvey Bear sites:
 - Concern about significant visual impact – current dust is horrible; would be bad even with only 20 horses
 - Could barns be used for hay storage?
 - Current pole barn is used for special events
 - How long is the cattle grazing lease?
 - Is this site being considered for the County Fairgrounds site? (Answer: Such a use would require a modification to the 2004 County Master Plan.)
 - What would happen to groundwater quality if a stables were put in? (Answer – all environmental requirements would have to be met if the stables were built.)
 - Is there a market for stables at Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear? (Answer: A market study has not yet been conducted.)
 6. Comments regarding Burnett Site:
 - Should be reconsidered – is close enough to Calero to meet some Calero users' needs
 - Coyote Creek Trail is sufficient and trail system could be expanded. Trail access to Anderson Lake is “real close” for public trail connection
 - Loop trail on the creek could be a possibility
 - See if county is interested in improving long-term connections for the site.
 - A new section of the Bay Area Ridge Trail has been dedicated; investigate possible linkage to Burnett Site

Additional email comments received, in reference to the survey and meeting

1. My daughter is 8 years old and benefits from attending the Calero Ranch Stables Horse Camp each summer. This amazing program provides her with an up-close and personal experience with horses that provides and requires a tremendous sense of responsibility, self control, and maturity. She enjoys just visiting the stable when she is not enrolled in the camp since we do not own a horse, and the close proximity of this ranch provides suburban children with the opportunity to be a part of a ranch and wilderness environment that is so uncommon in these modern and fast paced times.

It makes no sense to close down this incredible oasis for children at a time when our society is lacking in resources such as this ranch. I urge you to consider the incredible education and positive environment children are experiencing, and the benefits realized that promote their personal development.

Calero Ranch Stables is a unique and valuable community resource that must be protected. Calero Ranch Stables does not cost the tax payers one cent, in fact it pays money to the Santa Clara County Parks for doing business at the site.

Calero Ranch Stables is host to numerous programs that serve the south bay community at no cost to taxpayers. In fact, each year more than 1000 youth from this community use the resources of Calero Ranch Stables:

- Summer Day Camp that serves 600-800 youth per year

- One Step Closer Therapeutic Riding serving special needs riders

- Girl Scouts of America

- 4H

- Private riding lessons for all ages including young people that do not own horses

- Employment for teens as well as adults

I am asking the Santa Clara Valley Water District and Santa Clara County Parks to work with Calero Ranch Stables to help find a solution that keeps these programs flourishing within this community. Calero Ranch Stables has taken measures to protect the quality of water. Now let's protect the quality of life!

Please allow [my daughter] the opportunity to continue to experience this wonderful ranch, and provide her with the opportunity to grow and develop personally – please don't take away this precious resource!! Help preserve it for the children who enjoy it today, as well as those children who can enjoy it in the future.

2. Calero Ranch Stables is a gem in the midst of this valley that needs to be preserved for the whole community. At a time when our cities, counties, schools and state, are cutting programs and services for our children and community, the additional loss of Calero Ranch Stables adds noteworthy insult to injury. Calero Ranch Stables is a unique and valuable community resource that must be protected. Calero Ranch Stable is host to numerous programs that serve the South Bay community at no cost to the tax payer.

We recognize that Santa Clara County Parks launched a feasibility study to evaluate alternative sites conducive to Equestrian Stable Operations. We appreciate this effort, but there is a huge gap between the scheduled closure of Calero Ranch Stables and the opening of an alternate site - - if a site is even available and funded. This gap means that all the aforementioned equestrian programs serving children across the South Bay are lost and many of our animals who can not trailer out will have to be destroyed.

We are asking the Santa Clara Valley Water District and Santa Clara County Parks to work with Calero Ranch Stables and to help find a solution that keeps these programs flourishing within this community until another site can be developed for use. Calero Ranch Stables has taken measures to protect the quality of water. Now let's protect the quality of life and this gem that we all deserve to enjoy!

3. The Santa Clara Valley Water District and Santa Clara County Parks have mutually agreed to close Calero Ranch Stables effective November 2010. At a time when the city, county, state, and schools are cutting programs and services for our young people, the additional loss of Calero Ranch Stables adds insult to injury. Calero Ranch Stables is a unique and valuable community resource that must be protected. Calero Ranch Stables does not cost the tax payers one cent, in fact it pays money to the Santa Clara County Parks for doing business at the site.

Calero Ranch Stables is host to numerous programs that serve the south bay community at no cost to taxpayers. In fact, each year more than 1000 youth from this community use the resources of Calero Ranch Stables...

A few years ago, we had our son's 9th birthday party at Calero Ranch. It was a wonderful experience for him and his friends. Everyone had a wonderful time as did the adults. It was not only a birthday celebration but an experience for the kids to enjoy nature, appreciate their surroundings and learn to ride. I hope that you can consider these things that will be missed should you decide to take the steps indicated here.

4. The concern that I have is that there are no horse sites in San Jose-- we really don't need them in Milpitas and Gilroy-- It's too bad that San Jose is more interested in over development, and not at all concerned about space for horses!

5. I go to the Calero Ranch horse camp and I think it's the best camp that I've ever gone to. I mean if you have to close it at least give the ranch a place to stay for a while. It would be so sad if they had to close. Please let Calero Ranch stay open. It is so much fun.

Community Meeting #4

October 6, 2009 7:00--8:30 pm
Morgan Hill Community Center
Morgan Hill, California

Comments from Attendees regarding Calero Stables:

1. An interim solution is needed by those who currently board their horses at Calero. Consider using site selected for new stables as a place for an interim solution.
2. In searching for potential interim sites, were the areas east of Bailey and Casa Loma Road looked at? How about other sites: Grant Ranch? Blair Ranch? Or the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds?
3. There are not enough stables in the Calero area.
4. Consider providing smaller stables at multiple sites as an interim solution.
5. Consider extending the Calero lease for another year so that the access policy can be worked out and in place prior to Calero closure.
6. Consider revising access policy more quickly so that arrangements can be made for Calero boarders at adjacent private property.
7. Consider using Lake View Stables on McKean Road, which has expressed interest in expanding for Calero boarders, as a prototype for a revision to the access policy.
8. There is an example of an equestrian crossing at Golden Gate Park with a push-button stop light that equestrians can activate while mounted on their horse. This might be a possibility for a potential McKean crossing.
9. What is the County going to do with Calero after the lease is up?
10. Once Calero is closed, current Calero boarders will find other solutions and won't go back to a public facility once it is built.

Comments from Attendees regarding Harvey Bear site:

1. A neighbor is opposed to stables at Harvey Bear; it will damage her open space view.

Comments from Attendees regarding Burnett site:

1. There are more trails than have been shown at the Burnett site.
2. Burnett Site might be a good interim solution for the Calero boarders.

General Comments from Attendees:

1. The program that was developed at the first community meeting is too elaborate, and thus the costs for a new facility are too high. It just needs to be basic.

Comments from Parks regarding Calero Stables

1. The areas east of Bailey Road, Casa Loma Road, Grant Ranch, Blair Ranch and other sites did not meet the minimum program requirements for a stabling facility, whether because of size, accessibility, or ownership by County.
2. The County is currently reviewing the access policy for entrance of the public onto County Park land from private property.
3. Regarding the question of what the County will do with Calero once the boarding lease expires – because the Water District has identified a 1000' setback line from the reservoir, this eliminates the possibility of using the area for boarding and any activity requiring boarding. It does not eliminate trailering in and trail riding. A Calero County Parks Trails Master Plan, scheduled to begin in 2010, will help identify how the land will be used in the future.
4. The only trails shown on the map for the Burnett site are ones that are official trails, maintained by the Parks Department.
5. The design program that was developed is very basic and reflects the current Calero facility. Significant cost factors are current codes and regulations that have been put in place since Calero was built.