Oakland Tribune (Oakland, California)
1972 › August › 2

East Bay Parks Budget Approved for 9 Months

The East Bay Regional Park District board yesterday adopted a $7,081,013 budget for 1972-73 which includes $921,985 in acquisition funds for the Coal Mines Regional Park near Antioch.

The directors also gave final approval to the proposed Arroyo del Cerro Recreation Area, a flood control project on the north flank of Mt. Diablo where it plans to have a swimming complex ready by 1977.

The new budget covers only a nine-month period July 1 - March 31 and marks the transition to a new fiscal year, which hereafter will be April 1 to March 31.

A total of $1.74 million in new revenue will be generated by a legislated five-cent tax increase, 80 per cent of which must go for acquisition. The one priority project for these monies is Point Pinole.

How the money will otherwise be spent will be determined by an advisory committee of citizens working with the planning firm Overview, which is scheduled to complete the district's long-range master plan next year.

Another major item in the new budget is $133,788 for acquisition and development of land in the Huckleberry Trails botanic area, the subject of a controversy some months ago. In its action on Arroyo del Cerro, the district committed itself to about $550,000 in acquisition and development around the future $5 million reservoir.

Approval by the district was necessary before the Contra Costa County Flood Control district could get federal funds for the $5 million flood control portion, which did not meet the cost-benefit requirements by itself.

The district budgeted $84,000 for Arroyo del Cerro, which will go toward buying the approximately 150 acres which will be needed for recreation around the future reservoir.

A salary increase was budgeted for General Manager Richard C. Trudeau, but he turned it down.

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this week to decide the projected route and hear the non coverage complaint of the 82-retailer Main Street Business Association And once the system begins operations its first broadening of service will be into high density apartment neighborhoods adjacent to downtown

In other matters the council stressed its desire to block residential development near the proposed Arroyo del Cerro recreation project planned midway up Mt Diablo and agreed with a staff recommendation that the city no longer can afford to maintain a street tree program for residential neighborhoods.

The 150-acre recreation area to include two lakes totaling 25 acres would be built by the East Bay Regional Park District in conjunction with the Contra Costa Flood Control District along Upper Pine Creek in the vicinity of North Gate Road.

The project, 10 years in preparation, probably will cost double the 1972 estimate of $900,000 if built in 1978, a park district official said That district has committed $552,000 and $1,138,000 in federal funds have been earmarked for the job

Councilwoman Peg Kovar won backing for her proposal that utilities should bring only minimum sewage and water lines to the project to prevent housing hookups

Mayor Sanford Skaggs said the 300-car parking lot for water sports would tax Ygnacio Valley Road "now that a freeway no longer is planned"

A Skaggs question about seismic danger to the two flood control dams from the Concord earthquake fault brought assurance from Bob Lowe of Flood Control that engineers insist the design will be such that no danger will be involved.

Flood Control will begin building emergency spillways next year but the recreation project will not be started until 1976 at the earliest

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1975 › February › 27

Lake, Recreation Project Near Mt. Diablo

By FRANK WOOTTEN
Tribune Staff Writer

A $7.3 million Arroyo Del Cerro dam project that will create a man-made lake and bring water-oriented recreation to Mt. Diablo may get under way this year.

The lake will be the common reservoir formed by two 117-foot earth dams on Arroyo Del Cerro and Little Pine Creek, a mile and three quarters up Northgate Road from the end of Oak Grove Road, Walnut Creek.

J. E. Taylor, the county's deputy director of public works in charge of flood control work, said the lake, together with channel work to be done by the Corps of Engineers on the lower stretch of Pine Creek, will end the danger of flooding in Concord, and a portion of Walnut Creek.

The park surrounding the lake will be developed with a $550,000 project by the East Bay Regional Park District. This work, which will include picnic areas and facilities for swimming, boating and fisning, will be done in 1977 and 1978.

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Taylor said work on relocating North Gate Road leading to Mt. Diablo State Park and the construction of an emergency spillway will start this year if clearances are obtained on time from the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Comments are being received now for the environmental inpact report.

The project will be carried out by the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, which has responsibility for the entire Walnut Creek watershed.

The Federal Government is providing $4.4 million through the Soil Conservation Service for the project. Another $1.8 million is being made available in two state grants and $1.1 million is in local funds provided by the park district and the flood control district.

The two dams are scheduled for construction in 1976 and 1977. They will be just outside the state park boundary.

The public works department estimates that the introduction of water sports at the base of Mt. Diablo will increase traffic on North Gate Road from its present 2,600 vehicles a day to 4,930 by the year 1980. But this still would be well below the two-lane road's capacity of approximately 8,000 a day.

Taylor told the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, which adopted a resolution directing the flood control district to proceed with the project, that eight years have gone into the planning.

The two dams will form a common reservoir because a saddle in the ridge between the two streams will be lower than the lake level.

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Del Cerro: Smaller Dam, No Recreation

By FRANK WOOTTEN

Pulling the recreation features out of the Arroyo Del Cerro flood control system has sent the project back to the drawing board for a smaller dam which will cost nearly $2.5 million less.

This could bring a delay in the project at the northwest base of Mt. Diablo of anywhere from one to two years, said Joseph E. Taylor, Contra Costa County deputy director of public works.

The project which it was estimated in 1974 would require $7.26 million to build now will cost in the neighborhood of $4.8 million, still using the 1974 price base for purposes of comparison.

Without the recreation features which would require a larger body of water for boating the primary purpose of flood control can be accomplished with a lower dam to hold the waters of Arroyo Del Cerro and Little Pine Creek.

The county board of supervisors directed the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

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last month to make the modification following objections from the City of Walnut Creek and the Sierra Club.

Both held that recreation activities would generate too much traffic on North Gate Road leading to Mt. Diablo State Park and that extension of utilities would induce residential development.

The Sierra Club also held the project would require objectional scarring of the hillside.

The recreation features would have been severely hurt anyway because the State Water Resources Control Board denied the county's application for rights to store water for recreational purposes.

So now the county has withdrawn its application for a $1.13 million state grant for the recreation phase of the project and for water lines and a sewer system.

The East Bay Regional Park District also had appropriated $500,000 for the lakeside park of 151 acres.

The original project also had included a sediment storage feature which will be unnecessary with the smaller dam.

So there will be a reshuffling of federal funding, the details of which have not been worked out yet with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and the Department of Agriculture.

But federal funds for flood control have been assured, and when the project is completed there will be no more flooding in Concord from Pine Creek, which is fed by Arroyo Del Cerro and Little Pine Creek.