



Morro Bay Open Space Alliance

Spring 2017 Newsletter

WHAT WE'RE UP TO...

Chevron Toro Creek Conservancy Options

As most of you know, a 3000+ acre property along Toro Creek east of Highway 1, and in the hills overlooking Morro Bay, is owned by Chevron. Part of the property is sold; part is on the market; and a very large portion is under discussion by Chevron and conservancy groups (including MBOSA) that would conserve oceanfront, hillside, and riparian open space forever. Conserving these parcels is one of our highest objectives. The city of Morro Bay has a lot at stake, too.

Summary of the Status Quo:

- Chevron wants out. At this point, the company has no plans to develop or continue to own any of these parcels.
- At the request of the conservation groups, Chevron is withholding the oceanfront parcels from the market pending a conservation agreement.
- The lead conservation group, the Trust for Public Land (TPL), is positioned to invest substantial sums into the project if the potential agreement meets our conservation objectives. However, a lot of additional money will have to be raised to meet Chevron's target price of \$30 million.
- The next step is for TPL to write an offer to include ALL of the remaining available parcels. This could take 6 months or more, because there are so many moving pieces. If Chevron and TPL can agree on the broad outlines, it would lock the project into a fund-raising and fine-tuning mode, moving toward conservation.
- **A critical point:** Once an offer is agreed between the two lead parties, there is very limited scope for further change. The reason is that all the various parcels and land uses interact, so that changing one part of the deal forces changes in other parts, causing the whole thing to quickly unravel.

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2017 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Wednesday, April 26
5:00 - 8:00 pm**

Morro Bay Golf Course Clubhouse

Come join the fun at our open house on April 26 at the beautiful setting of the Golf Course Clubhouse. We'll have brief updates on the Chevron property conservancy plans and our goals for the year. You'll be able to meet the board, and some members of our awesome Advisory Council.

Appetizers are on us; the bar is not. Come meet and mingle with like-minded folks dedicated to preserving our open spaces and viewshed. You must RSVP to the Evite email, which will be going out soon to our mailing list. Members will be given 1st priority, so why not become a member today?



Chevron Toro Creek Conservancy Options

(cont. from page 1)

What Should Morro Bay Do?

Chevron proposes that Morro Bay add 6 parcels overlooking North Morro Bay to the city's Sphere of Influence, leading to eventual annexation. This land stretches from Zanzibar to a little south of Del Mar Park, and lies above Panorama Drive to the hillcrest.

Chevron's purpose is to consolidate development rights from a number of its parcels into the areas adjacent to Panorama (a legal action), and to create 10 to 20 residential lots for development. There are many issues with this: Panorama residents know first hand that active landslides are in part of this land. The roads are small and poorly maintained. City services would be expensive to provide.

The flip side is that selling residential lots along Panorama would greatly help fund the conservation deal with Chevron. Mitigation of geological and traffic challenges need to work for the deal to work, and the city needs to see a clear path to funding services. The city needs to define what it gets in return for its actions to annex (eventually).



MBOSA Position and Activity:

In January, MBOSA presented a position at the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meeting

recommending adding the 6 Chevron parcels adjacent to Panorama to the Sphere of Influence and keeping the property as ag land to limit development permanently (to 6 houses - 1 per parcel). It did not anticipate Chevron's plan to consolidate development rights to add more lots to the plan.

Our members have said they strongly favor trails, and would support a public campground in the Chevron Shore Plant area with conditions, but oppose development with more durable impact.

This dynamic process will challenge us to re-evaluate our position as facts on the ground change. A major factor will be the positions taken by the City of Morro Bay in its General Plan update, as well as in the day-to-day responses to Chevron initiatives of a conservancy plan. We need to know if developers of the residential lots, including Panorama, would bear the costs of infrastructure. We'll have to look at the costs and benefits of the trade off between residential development vs. camping, trails, and recreational access. Stay tuned.



MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK



Ever thought you'd like to help our cause, but didn't know where to start? Committees have now been set up for everyone to participate where they feel called. All committees involve outreach and working with other groups, but there are also jobs for those who want to do databases, letters, and organizing. These committees are:

1. ***Advocacy and Policy Committee*** - will research land issues within our greenbelt; complete our parcel map; identify priorities based on set criteria; write position papers and promote our position on open space to the public and local officials; and influence the city's General Plan. Doesn't this sound like fun? Think of the camaraderie after a job well done! Contact Glenn Silloway, Committee Chair at gsilloway@mac.com to join.
2. ***Education and Events Committee*** – will put on both public and member events ranging from public workshops like the one we held in January on the Toro Creek property. This committee is also in charge of our upcoming annual membership meeting and mixer on April 26th, and your help would be most appreciated! Are you good at this? Contact Janet Gibson, Committee Chair at earthsteward@earthlink.net to join.
3. ***Marketing and Promotion Committee*** – will make sure everyone knows who we are and what we stand for. What good is an amazing educational event if no one knows about it? This is the group that lets everyone know what we're up to. Is this your line of expertise? Contact Bill Luffee, Committee Chair at bill@promoplus.com to join.
4. ***Membership Committee*** – will know our members and our own special talents and interests. We're a member-driven organization, so this group is important to create community; grow and retain our membership; and suggest leadership succession. They will run surveys to know the general feeling of issues and priorities, and make sure the ship is being guided in the direction that members want most. Fun member gatherings such as hikes in our local open spaces will be spearheaded by the Membership Committee. What a great group this is going to be! Contact Dianne Bianco, Committee Chair at dkbianco7@gmail.com to join.

Thanks so much to our sponsors of the Annual Membership Meeting!

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Would you like your company logo here? Consider becoming a founding, or event sponsor. Contact Glenn Silloway at gsilloway@mac.com for info.



MEMBERSHIP

Congratulations to all who have joined MBOSA. We are a fledgling group with aspirations to preserve and protect this gorgeous place we call home.

Membership does have privileges. For example, recently about 30 people were invited to a private viewing of the 3,000 acre Chevron property that is up for sale. It's beautiful land that has not been previously open to public viewing. This might be the kind of event in the future in which members will have priority.

Are there events you would like to see MBOSA sponsor? Let us know. Would you like to assist us with special events? What special talents do you have that might benefit our organization? We're here for you. The more we know about our members' strengths and desires, the better we will be in representing you.

If you have not already joined, please consider doing so now. Our strength is in our numbers.

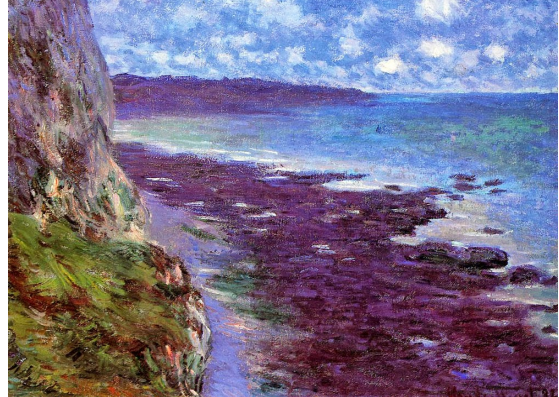
CALL FOR ART FOR OUR SILENT AUCTION

We are hoping for a silent auction of landscape and seascape art at our ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING on April 26. The theme is "open space", including landscapes of open fields, farms, lakes, creeks, seascapes, state and local parks, and other similar venues.

If you are an art appreciator and have any work you would like to donate, please consider adding to our silent auction.

if you are an artist in any medium, we would like to hear from you. You can set a minimum amount to start the bidding, whereby proceeds above your minimum will be donated to MBOSA. Or you can donate the piece and take the full tax deduction. (We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit.)

Please contact Mimi WhitneyHafft at coastoilartist@aol.com or phone 528-1638 to submit a jpg with the title and size.



Yes, I want to help!

Visit the website to join, or copy and return the following:

www.mbopenspace.org

- ☐ \$25 Individual
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