



Morro Bay Open Space Alliance

Summer 2017 Newsletter

Cerrito Peak Preservation

MBOSA has a job to do. Our Board has committed us to help purchase a small piece of open space at the very top of Cerrito Peak, overlooking Main, Acacia, and Olive Streets. Our goal is \$350,000, and we will be working with other organizations and individuals who care about open space to achieve it. This is our very first conservancy action!

How we got to this point is—at least in recent years—a twisty story of private dreams vs. public access to open space with good lawyers involved on all sides. The very short summary is that the City of Morro Bay finally put to rest a long legal action over a plan to build a private residence on the peak by purchasing the land.

The City, as almost everyone knows, is not exactly flush with cash. The opportunity to buy the land came up through on-going discussions, and included the fact that an outside private party was interested in the property. It's important to remember that the original family that wanted to build on the site received most of the needed permissions to do that. The idea that someone might actually be able to build on the spot was not out of the question. This put some urgency on the matter if the goal was to preserve it as open space forever.

Therefore, the City tapped into the emergency reserve of the General Fund to make the purchase (the reserve

fund is still robust, and meets funding requirements). But its intention, expressed in debate at the May 23 City Council meeting, is to have conservancy organizations like MBOSA raise the money to purchase the land from the City to establish a permanent conservancy.

With the support of the MBOSA Board, I expressed our support of the City's action at that meeting. And you will be glad to hear that the audience was filled with residents who wanted the City to take this action.

Very soon we will begin to organize fund raising. We will seek grants, sponsorships, private donations, and any other resource that can help us meet our goal. We hope you will help in any way that works for you.

The key point to remember is that Cerrito Peak is an ancient morro formation that has been important to humans living here for thousands of years. It is sacred in both Chumash and Salinan traditions. It is precious to generations of more recent Morro Bay residents who look back from Morro Rock toward town and see the peak in its natural state. This is worth doing.

We will keep you informed via email and newsletters about our progress. One of these days we will complete a more comprehensive description of the Cerrito Peak's recent history so everyone will know how this all came about.



Annual Membership Meeting

Update on Chevron Conservancy from the Trust for Public Land

Here's one for your calendar: Becky Bremser, who is the Trust for Public Land's project manager for the Central Coast, is going to present TPL's view of the work to establish a land conservancy on the Chevron property over North Morro Bay. This will take place at the beginning of a General Plan Advisory Committee meeting (you won't have to sit through the whole thing!).

**GPAC Metting
4 p.m., Thursday, July 20
Veterans' Hall, Morro Bay**

Please note: This is the event as scheduled. GPAC meetings have been known to have changes, and we will alert our email list immediately if that happens.

Up to now, the only public presentations where we have heard about the Chevron property (may we refer to it as the Toro Hills?) have been from Chevron. The company has been forthcoming about its intent to realize a certain amount of value from the 3000+ acres it owns along Toro Creek. What Becky and TPL are doing is constructing a deal that will allow Chevron to get the value it needs and still conserve as much of the land as possible.

This is a complicated process. Attend the meeting to hear a progress report.

A big heartfelt thanks to all those who turned out for our first annual Membership Meeting / Open House / Coming Out Party! Just over 100 of you came to mingle and converse with like-minded fellow residents about things that matter to us. We met members of the board, heard an update about the Chevron Toro Creek property from our Chair, Glenn Silloway, and enjoyed the wonderful food and ambiance of our local golf course clubhouse.

There was a lot of enthusiasm for the silent art auction, and people seemed inspired by the beautiful art. All in all, an uplifting evening, despite the fog that impaired the view. Let's get together again soon!



Members Hike Up Black Hill

Friday, July 21, 4:00 - 5:00pm

Join your fellow MBOSA members for a hike up Black Hill. Meet at the east side trail junction at the corner of Balboa St and La Loma Ave. in Morro Bay,. We'll leave promptly at 4pm for a quick up and down Black Hill. It's a fairly decent hour workout up the east side, and usually 45 minutes to the summit, and 15 minutes for fast downhill return. Email Janet if you need further directions at: earthearthsteward@earthlink.net





Pismo Preserve Discovery Days

Many of you know about the Pismo Preserve, which was purchased by the Land Conservancy of SLO County. This 900+ acre parcel is a spectacular piece of land overlooking the South County and the Pacific.

Work is still ongoing to get the Preserve ready for open access, but in the meantime LCSLO has organized "Discovery Days" so you can get an up close and personal look at the property. You will be able to explore the trails on your own, without a guide.

To get onto the Preserve, you will need to take a free shuttle ride from one of 4 locations. The dates are:

Saturday, July 8, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Friday, July 21, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The 4 shuttle locations are:

North loop:
Pismo Beach City Hall
Dolphin Bay Resort

South loop:
Grover Beach Elementary School
Oceano Boys & Girls Club

The last shuttle for the north loop will leave City Hall at 3:15 p.m. The last shuttle for the south loop will leave the Oceano Boys & Girls Club at 3:20 p.m. Return shuttles will run until 6 p.m. but please be sure to confirm timing and pickup when you exit the shuttle.

As always, be careful out there! You may find rattlesnakes, poison oak, ticks and other biting bugs, and lots of sunny heat. No lemonade stands up there, folks: carry water.



The California Coastal Conservancy is a state agency created to assist in the implementation of the goals of the Coastal Act. One of those goals is maximizing recreational opportunities along the California coast. Developing a California Coastal Trail (CCT) is one of the agency's highest priorities. The Conservancy provides funding to public agencies and private nonprofit organizations to acquire land and construct new segments of the CCT. Although this is not a current project of Morro Bay Open Space Alliance, we thought our members would like information about the progress of the CCT.

Montana d'Oro State Park contains the longest section of the CCT in San Luis Obispo County. The trail connection through Los Osos is not identified, however access is feasible and takes you to Morro Bay State Park where the trail becomes an urban experience. From Morro Bay the trail follows the beach area into Cayucos.

Coastwalk California is a nonprofit public advocacy group whose main mission, for over 20 years, has been to heighten awareness of the CCT through such activities as leading hikes along the coast. Coastwalk California also has published a two volume series entitled Hiking the California Coastal Trail which includes a series of maps depicting Coastwalk's currently recommended hiking route along the coast. To learn more about Coastwalk California, check www.coastwalk.org.

SAVE THE DATE!
CERRITO PEAK BLOCK PARTY
SEPTEMBER 16, 2017

Come add your support to the Cerrito Peak preservation efforts at our neighborhood party on Sept. 16. We need your help planning this to make it a successful event. There will be many jobs, big and small, from neighborhood organization to work at home on your computer. Contact Janet at info@mbopenspace.org



BIG POND, SMALL POND?

No matter what your preference, we have a job for you! As a member-driven organization, we run on the enthusiasm and work of our many volunteers. As a helper with the **Education and Events Committee**, you could help organize big deal events, or contact a few people for a hike up Black Hill. If you're a big pond person, you could help with fundraising efforts for our new Cerrito Peak project, or with any grant writing skills you may have picked up. If you're a small pond person, we would love your support with many little tasks at home on your computer, or with phoning our members.

Have some interesting ideas that you'd like to suggest? All of us can be reached at info@mbopenspace.org

A Note From the Membership Chair

Our organization is strengthened with each new membership. If you are not as yet a member, please consider joining today. If you're a current member, share your enthusiasm for this glorious place we call home on the Central Coast, by inviting other friends to join our ranks. Together we will work to preserve the beauty of our coastline.

It has been a year since the founding of Morro Bay Open Space Alliance. We will start sending out renewal notices on a quarterly basis to everyone whose membership is expiring and will very much appreciate all renewals as well as

Yes, I want to help!

☐ new ☐ renewing

- ☐ \$25 Individual
☐ \$50 Family/Household
☐ \$100 Contributor or Business
☐ \$250 Advocate
☐ \$500 Patron
☐ \$1000 Steward (lifetime member after 3 years)
☐ \$2500 Guardian of the Land (lifetime member)

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

www.mbopenspace.org

NAME _____
STREET _____
CITY, STATE, ZIP _____
PHONE _____
EMAIL _____

Make checks payable to : MBOSA

Mail to: Morro Bay Open Space Alliance
PO Box 1029, Morro Bay, CA 93443