

From: [Marsha Dupre](#)
To: [Santos, Jen](#); [Ander, Emily](#); [Alton, Alan](#); [Manis, Dina](#); [Nutt, Jason](#); [Burke, Jennifer](#); [Jones, Jessica](#); [Smith, Maraskeshia](#); [Dunston, Daryel](#); [Rogers, Chris](#); [Alvarez, Eddie](#); [Okrepkie, Jeff](#); [Rogers, Natalie](#); [Stapp, Mark](#); [Fleming, Victoria](#); [MacDonald, Dianna](#); [Stricker, Teresa](#)
Cc: [Rick Coates](#); [Larry Hanson](#); [NCRWOCB](#); [Misti Arias](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment - Draft EIR - Roseland Creek Community Park
Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024 3:16:37 PM
Attachments: [Madrone Audubon on Roseland Creek Community Park DEIR 06 05 2024.doc](#)

As a longtime member of the Madrone Audubon, Sonoma County Chapter, I echo and support the attached writings and findings of our Pres. Susan Kirks.

Sincerely,
Marsha

Marsha Vas Dupre, Ph.D.
Former Santa Rosa City Council Vice Mayor, SRJC Trustee
3515 Ridgeview Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
707-528-7146

From: Susan Kirks [mailto:susankirks@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 4:36 PM
To: jsantos@srcity.org
Subject: Comment - Draft EIR - Roseland Creek Community Park

Hello Jen,

Please find attached our comment. I hope you are well.

Sincerely,

Susan Kirks, President
Madrone Audubon, Sonoma County
707-241-5548



Madrone Audubon Society

INCORPORATED

Transmitted by email 06/05/2024

June 5, 2024

Jen Santos
City of Santa Rosa
55 Stony Point Road
Santa Rosa, CA 94510

Re: Roseland Creek Community Park – Draft Environmental Impact Report – Comment

Dear Ms. Santos:

We are writing to share our impressions and requests regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). Madrone Audubon is headquartered in Santa Rosa and continues to enjoy a productive and positive relationship with the City of Santa Rosa. Our nonprofit Audubon organization is also a Chapter of National Audubon. Madrone Audubon serves approximately 3000 members in Sonoma County and the Bay Area.

You may recall we have taken an active interest in both the longstanding advocacy for acquisition with conservation of the Roseland Community Park parcels and subsequent planning process. Our interest has been in a balance of protecting and enhancing this ecological reserve with appropriate passive recreation for community members. We shared discussions about a possible environmental task force, offering to lead that, to convene our County nonprofit organizations, sharing in activities and education for this special Nature Preserve in the making. The building to remain on-site was considered as a “Nature Center.”

Like many, we were disheartened and deeply concerned about the outcome of the park design, which included multiple impactful elements in the supposed context of conserving, restoring and enhancing the wild acreage to support habitat, species and the ability to provide an educational Nature area. Indeed, this land should be considered local critical habitat.

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We agree that a formal Environmental Impact Report to document and assess attributes and impacts was both appropriate and needed.

During the public review process, prior to obtaining the DEIR, your City staff and elected officials heard multiple comments from residents and students about the very strong desire to ensure protection of the oak woodland, creek and riparian corridor, grassland and overall habitat. We also heard concurrent support for appropriate passive recreational opportunities that would fit well within the context of an ecological reserve.

When I first visited the Roseland Creek property, I observed a large active Red-tailed Hawk Nest high in a tree on-site. This was a remarkable observation. With many site visits in the past 8 years, even with some detrimental activities occurring on the property, the importance of the Roseland Creek property as the ecological reserve it continues to be, with potential for quiet passive enjoyment and habitat protection and enhancement, cannot be overstated.

Our DEIR review and comments will focus on supporting this continuing experience and opinion by discussing Biological Resources.

In the midst of Roseland, across from Roseland Creek Elementary School, with nearby residences, the Roseland Creek Community Park land is described as follows:

“Seven biological communities were identified on the project site (refer to Figure 3.4-1). Nonsensitive biological communities include non-native grassland, developed/landscaped areas, and disturbed valley oak woodland. Potentially sensitive biological communities observed on the project site include intermittent stream (Roseland Creek), valley oak riparian woodland, riparian wetland, and purple needlegrass grassland, all of which are detailed following Figure 3.4-1. bio resources”... (p. 38)

The variety of habitat types, including the creek with riparian corridor and possibility for ongoing restoration, also reflect the biological resources/species who rely on this area for survival as well as the City of Santa Rosa securing this habitat in a climate crisis where all we can do to support species survival is very important. Your Santa Rosa students from elementary to high school age will understand your positive action in this regard - if you make decisions to support high level conservation. Educational opportunities as well as community volunteering will help connect community members to their ecological reserve – and conservation that is needed will occur. It is not an understatement to say the City of Santa Rosa and the Roseland community can cultivate and support a world-class Nature Preserve while also providing passive recreational amenities for residents of the community.

We encourage you to review and consider the opinion and report of Shawn Smallwood, Ph.D., his report filed from 2021. Dr. is a highly reputable biologist whose observations, analytical and reporting skills are excellent and reliable. Through his report, comparing to the WRA report(s), you will gain insights as to accurate representation and documentation of biological resources on the Roseland Creek Community Park property. Dr. Smallwood's September 2021 report includes:

"...While visiting the site, I detected 38 species of vertebrate wildlife, 5 of which were special-status species (Table 1). The site supports oak titmouse, of which there are many, and Anna's do hummingbirds (Photos 8 and 9). I saw Nuttall's woodpeckers and a colony of acorn woodpeckers (Photos 10 and 11), Pacific-slope flycatcher and black phoebe (Photos 12 and 13), California scrub-jays and mourning doves (Photos 14 and 15), hooded orioles (Photo 16) and turkey vultures (Photo 17), among other species. I also saw invasive species, including wild turkeys and Eastern fox squirrels, both species of which were introduced to California from their natural ranges east of the Mississippi River, and a house cat on the hunt (Photo 18). Occurrences of non-native species, and more explicitly the ratio of non-native to endemic species, reflect on the ecological integrity of a place (Smallwood 1994). In the case of Roseland Creek Community Park, the ratio of 3 non-native to 35 endemic species of vertebrate wildlife, or <8% of the species I detected, indicates a high degree of ecological integrity. Given its interior location within the City of Santa Rosa, I would have expected a higher percentage of non-native species. The Park is relatively intact, ecologically, and it is rich in wildlife"...

The park project design the City of Santa Rosa Council approved is too impactful and unbalanced. Community groups, residents, students and teachers have appealed to the City for many years to create an ecological reserve with passive recreation, cultural elements, and educational opportunities. This direction is what is optimal for the Roseland Creek property. We strongly encourage you to consider changing course to a more positive, balanced, climate-supportive and innovative park design and project. Of course, we remain interested in supporting and participating. Understanding and achieving the balance of human activity with sensitivity to habitat areas can lead to best decisions and outcomes. Madrone Audubon has a 12-year history of nesting support for the West 9th Street heron and egret rookery in SW Santa Rosa. We are expanding our relationship with Lincoln Elementary School, thanks to a grant from National Audubon, for habitat gardening to support survival of birds, butterflies, bees and other species in need. We would, as we have shared in the past, want to support the City of Santa Rosa's change of course and decisions for the ecological reserve in Roseland.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Kirks

Susan Kirks, President

Madrone Audubon, Sonoma County

susankirks@sbcglobal.net, 707-241-5548

cc: Sonoma County Water Agency
Sonoma Co. Ag and Open Space District

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