



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Parks
Department No.: 052
For Agenda Of: March 4, 2008
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme: 45 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Daniel C. Hernandez (568-2461)
Director
Contact Info: Jeff Stone, Deputy Director of Parks (934-6145)

SUBJECT: Set Public Hearing to Consider Request from the Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board to Temporarily Close Cachuma Lake to Private Boats Due to Possible Introduction of the Quagga Mussel to the Lake

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors set a public hearing for March 11, 2008 to consider a request from the Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board (COMB) for the temporary closure of Cachuma Lake to private boats due to the possible introduction of the quagga mussel to the lake.

Summary Text:

The Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board (COMB) recently sent a letter addressed to the Board of Supervisors (Attachment 1) addressing the growing concerns regarding the possible introduction of the quagga mussel into Cachuma Lake and the possible operational problems for the Cachuma Lake water purveyors associated with this occurrence at the lake. In its letter, COMB maintains that introduction of the quagga mussel to the lake is very likely via private boats being launched at the lake, which may have previously frequented one of the bodies of water known to have the quagga mussel present. Based on this assertion, it is the desire of COMB to temporarily close Cachuma Lake to private boats until such time as protective measures can be put in place to prevent the possible introduction of the quagga mussel into the lake.

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Background:

The quagga mussel is a non-native aquatic nuisance freshwater mussel originating in eastern Europe that clogs waterways, undermines healthy lake ecosystems, and creates costly maintenance for water resource agencies. Quagga mussels were introduced into the Great Lakes region in 1988 through ballast water emptied from ships and have spread throughout the Midwest and the eastern portion of the United States. Quagga mussels were first discovered in California in Lake Mead and the Colorado River system in January 2007 and have recently been found in several Southern California lakes connected to the Colorado River via aqueducts and canals. The quagga mussel is spread primarily by two methods: (1) Adult mussels that have adhered to surfaces, such as a boat hull, are introduced to a water body or system, or; (2) Microscopic forms, such as “veligers”, that live in the water column and could survive in water carried by recreational boats in bilges, live wells, and other areas where water could pool and remain, are transported into a water body or system. The spread of the quagga mussel in California is becoming a significant concern due to the economic impacts associated with their introduction and proliferation. Quagga mussels cause the greatest economic damage when they infest pipes, pumps, or other components of municipal and industrial water supply systems or power plant cooling systems.

On January 11, 2008, County Parks Department staff met with the General Manager of the Cachuma Conservation Release Board and representatives from the federal Bureau of Reclamation and the Central Coast Water Authority to discuss the quagga mussel and its impacts on both the water purveyors and Cachuma Lake as a recreation resource should the quagga mussel be introduced into the lake. It was an informative meeting, with everyone present acknowledging the pending difficulties related to the quagga mussel issue. Parks detailed the inspection and education programs currently in place for quagga mussel prevention and discussed additional enhancements as future prevention measures. As a result of this meeting, the Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board (COMB) submitted a letter to the Board of Supervisors requesting a temporary ban of private boats on the lake.

It is the opinion of COMB that, should the quagga mussel establish itself in the lake, any economic impacts related to maintaining the water purveyance systems would be the responsibility of the County. This is based upon the assumption that the only way the quagga mussel could be introduced into the lake and water reservoir would be via private boats acting as a carrier. As the County is the responsible agency for the recreation component of the lake, the correlation would be that the costs are directly related to recreation.

Performance Measure:

N/A

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

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Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Fiscal Year 2007-08 Revenue Loss</u>	<u>Annual Ongoing Revenue Loss</u>	<u>Grant Repayments</u>
General Fund			
State - State Boating & Waterways grant funds			\$ 2,700,000.00
Federal			
Fees - Boat-related fees at Cachuma Lake	\$ 186,500.00	\$ 559,400.00	
Other:			
Total	\$ 186,500.00	\$ 559,400.00	\$ 2,700,000.00

Narrative: Closing Cachuma Lake to private boats would significantly affect boating-related revenues for the Parks Department (\$186,500 for the remainder of FY 2007-08 and \$569,400 on an annualized ongoing basis). These estimated revenue losses include those directly related to boating at the lake (daily and annual boat fees) as well as those indirectly related to boating and fishing activities (daily auto entrance fees, overnight camping fees, concession fees, etc.).

In addition to the projected loss in operating revenue, the State Department of Boating and Waterways has indicated that, should the lake be closed to private boats, the County would be responsible for repayment of any grant funds used for recreational boating purposes. Cachuma Lake has previously received approximately \$2.7 million in grants for its boat launching facilities that could require repayment to the State on a pro-rated basis.

For purposes of this analysis, the revenue loss projections included in this report are limited to the Cachuma Lake operation; however, economic losses for local businesses, as a result of reduced business at Cachuma Lake, could also be substantial.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

FTEs:

Special Instructions:

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – January 23, 2008, Letter from Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board (COMB) to the Board of Supervisors

Authored by:

Jeff Stone, Deputy Director of Parks

cc:

Mitch Medeiros, Cachuma Lake Park Operations Manager

Liz Mason, Parks Naturalist

Mike Gibson, Parks Business Manager