

**Portola Expedition Trail Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
San Mateo County Historical Museum, Redwood City
June 8, 2016 9:00-11:00 a.m.**

Attendees:

U.S. Congresswoman Anna Eshoo – Christina Padilla
CA Senator Jerry Hill – Joan Dentler
CA Assemblyman Kevin Mullen – Zachery Ross
San Mateo County Supervisors - Don Horsley (Third District)
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Staff – Deborah Hirst (Third District), and Juda Tolmasoff (District 2)
San Mateo County Parks Department - Marlene Finley, and Sam Herzberg
San Mateo County Park Commissioners - Neil Merrilees
MidPeninsula Open Space District – Ana Ruiz
California State Parks – Terry Kiser
California Coastal Commission – Nancy Cave, and Linda Locklin
California Coastal Conservancy – Trish Chapman
Peninsula Open Space Trust – Liz Westbrook
Golden Gate National Recreation Area – Christine Fitzgerald, Stephen Haller
Juan Bautista De Anza National Trail – Naomi Torres
Midcoast Community Council – Dave Olsen
San Mateo County Historical Museum – Mitch Postel
Portola Expedition Expert – Paul Reimer
CA State Parks Archaeologist – Mark Hylkema
City of Pacifica – Mike Perez
Pacifica Historical Society - Rick Della Santina
Pacifica Historical Museum – Pat Kremer
Valentin Lopez – Amah Mutsun Land Trust
Mark Hylkema – California State Parks and representing the Muwekma Tribe

1. Welcome and Introduction

Supervisors Horsley welcomed the Committee to its second meeting.

2. Approval of February 8, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Mitch Postel indicated he wanted to clarify in the meeting minutes that the San Francisco Mission was founded in 1776, not 1770. The Mission assistance farm at Sanchez Adobe was established in 1785 and not 1778.

Ana Ruiz clarified that she had attended the prior meeting representing Peninsula Open Space Trust, but forgot to sign in.

3. Presentation of the History of Native Americans Villages and Trail Network in San Mateo County – Representatives of the Amah Mutsun and Muwekma Tribes

Mark Hylkema gave an overview of what was known of the Native Americans population in San Mateo County at the time of the Portola Expedition (aka the Expedition). There were 50 known tribes between Monterey and the San Francisco Bay, which made it one of the greatest Native American tribal populations in North America.

When the Expedition arrived at Waddell Creek in Santa Cruz County its soldiers were in dire straits after travelling from Monterey to Rancho Del Oso at Waddell Creek due to poor nutrition, and wet conditions. The Expedition made its way to Ano Nuevo and a Native American guide led them to the Quiroste Valley where the Expedition was fed by the Native American Tribe in a “Big House” thatched hut. The Expedition continued north to Pescadero where there was a tribe, north San Gregorio where there was another tribe, and north to the site of Sanchez Adobe in Pacifica to another tribe before heading over Buri Buri Ridge to see the San Francisco Bay. The Expedition went into the Crystal Springs Watershed area, camped at the site of what today is the Stanford Shopping Center, tried to go around the San Francisco Bay and returned to Palo Alto and hiked back to San Diego.

Prior to the Expedition the Native American population had a vibrant trade and exchange economy. Historically there were 450 monuments around the San Francisco Bay, or which documented such trade of which only six exist today. The Native American people were socially complex made up of different ethnicities and not one. Exotic materials were traded across the San Francisco Bay and in interactions with other coastal and valley tribes. The Portola Expedition Trail was like a thread of beads tying a variety of tribes together. The Expedition Trail represents an opportunity to interpret this underrepresented Native American history and clarify the impact of colonization.

Valentin Lopez summarized the history of the Amah Mutsun and their perspective on the proposed trail. The boundaries of the Amah Mutsun included five Mission’s territories from San Juan Bautista to Santa Cruz. He indicated that the Native American history has not been told prior to first contact with the Europeans. The Amah Mutsun creation story picked its people to live on their lands and take care of the earth and the different animals that live in the environment. The local tribes were big traders. For example, they used to import Cinnabar, a red material imported into California from the State of Washington, which has been found in tribal areas in Los Gatos.

Mr. Lopez explained that the Mission, Mexican and American periods had very distinct impacts on the Native American populations. Prior to the Mission period the Native Americans were numbered at approximately 150,000, and following the Mission period 40-50% of their population died primarily through the spread of smallpox and venereal disease.

When some Mission's closed 100 people were left out of a population of 30,000 locally, and other Indians were collected to be brought to the Missions to replace them. Mission history tells the story that the Indians were educated, but that does not tell the whole story. The Native Americans were collected as slaves and could not leave the Missions. Women were collected first and the men were collected as a result of looking for their women. There was a high degree of brutality oppressing those in the Missions using shackles and whips. Men and women were separated. Women and children were raped by soldiers. Many subsequent birth records indicated "fathers unknown". Missions tell of how Native Americans were treated like children, but they were not children and they were mistreated, and this has not been acknowledged. California Missions have now been proposed to be recognized by UNESCO as world historical and cultural sites because of Juan De Portola De Anza National Trail, but they fail to interpret pre-Mission Native American history or that the trail routes were previously used by the tribes.

During the Mexican period when land grants were established Native Americans were used as slave labor. If someone ran away they were lassoed by the neck and pulled by horses to demonstrate what could happen to runaways.

The American period was the worst period because it involved an outright war of extermination against the Native Americans. The State of California passed bonds to exterminate the Indians. In 1850, California passed an Act for the Government and Protection of Indians. The Act stated that while both non-Indians and Indians may take complaints before a justice of the peace, that "in no case shall a white man be convicted on any offense upon the testimony of an Indian." In other words, if a non-Indian were to commit a crime, such as murder, rape, or theft, and the only witnesses were Indians, then no conviction would be possible. The act also curtailed Indian land rights.

In 1851 the State of California met with Native American Tribes in Pleasanton to create a treaty which would give 7.5 to 8.5 million acres to the Native Americans and create 18 reservations in central California. At the conclusion of discussions the State of California refused to sign the treaty, despite many newspapers indicating public support. As a result many Native Americans were made landless.

Mr. Lopez indicated he was not opposed to recognizing the Portola Expedition Trail but asked that it not ignore the tribes or routes in the explanation of history or whitewash the history of what actually occurred in the Missions of California. The name of the trail needs to be changed to reflect Native Americans presence prior to the Portola Expedition.

Supervisors Horsley thanked Mr. Hylkema and Mr. Lopez for explaining the history of Native Americans, which was very moving. He stated it is a shameful part of our American history which needs to be told.

Mr. Lopez indicated that these periods caused the destruction of the Native American's culture and environment, and eliminated the true story of their history in California. Great damage has been caused to the Native Americans as a result. Native American populations suffer an epidemic of high levels of suicide, addiction, poverty, homelessness, and lack of self-identity. They cannot live on their lands. In San Mateo County most Native Americans cannot afford to live here.

Naomi Torres indicated that she understands these concerns very well because she is both Apache and Mexican descent. National Trails have the capability to celebrate native tribes along a trail route, and she pointed to the Lewis and Clark Trail as a model. She explained that the Juan Bautista De Anza Trail does interpret Native American tribal history. She acknowledged that that Spanish and American periods eliminated a lot of black and brown people's history.

Mr. Lopez indicated that the Native American tribes actively opposed the Pope's canonization of Father Junipero Serra as a saint. He remembered being told by the United Nations liaison from the Vatican that American history is told by the victor. He urged the Committee not to erase history. He indicated the Catholic Church sought to find a Native American who had converted to Christianity and agreed to the canonization of Father Junipero Serra. He spoke of the importance to work with Native American tribes, and not single individuals.

Rick Della Santina indicated that the Pacific Historical Society captures Native American history, and documents that the Portola Expedition was led by tribal members on their trade route. Local Native Americans gave food to the Expedition in each village. The Expedition gave nothing in return, and demonstrated they were not good citizens. If history were changed none of us would be here.

Stephen Haller asked if the Amah Mutsun Tribe would work with the Committee to build consensus. Mr. Lopez indicated he can only speak for his tribe's history, but he is happy to help liaison and bring in tribes. There were historically 35 historic tribes. Of the three large tribes currently recognized are the Muwekma in North and East Bay, Amah Mutsun south of Ano Nuevo, and Esselen in Monterey.

Supervisor Horsley suggested renaming the trail the Rediscovering America Trail to recognize the Native American trail routes prior to the Portola Expedition. Stephen Haller concurred indicating the call the trail the Portola Expedition by itself was not right. He suggested the Ohlone/Portola Trail. Mr. Lopez indicated it was Anthropologist

Theodore Kroeber who came up with the name Ohlone in his book Tribes of California; however, the original tribal name was Oljon and its boundaries were from San Francisco to Monterey. Neil Merrilees indicated the nomenclature of the trail should reflect the people present before the Portola Expedition and suggested the Indigenous People's Trail used by the Portola Expedition. Paul Reimer indicated the Portola Expedition Trail is linear 10 feet wide and is not a claim for grounds as it criss crosses tribal boundaries. Tribal signage is important delineating historical Native American territory. Supervisor Horsley indicated the Board of Supervisors is recognizing the Tanforan Shopping Center as a historical concentration camp for Japanese during World War II. He indicated it is important to tell the Native American history, and suggested that if only calling it the Portola Expedition Trail the tribes would not be supportive.

Marlene Finley suggested designating this trail as a cultural route, a physical feature meant to interpret all people's history. Joan Martel indicated this discussion is broader than only in San Mateo County. Mark Hylkema indicated that California State Park is committed to telling the Native American's story correctly, and this trail has the potential to tie all of these stories together. Mitch Postel indicated that the Portola Expedition was a game changer in the history of the San Francisco Bay Area, and to not reference the expedition would not tell the whole story of why most people live in the San Francisco Bay Area.

4. Review of POST Maps showing the Potential Alignments of the Portola Expedition and California Coastal Trail

Liz Westbrook indicated the maps show sections of the California Coastal Trail that have been and remain to be completed. The maps also show potential historic, recreation and auto routes that could be used for wayfaring the Portola Expedition Trail. She stated that even publically owned lands may have barriers to improvement. Mark Hylkema and Valentin Lopez agreed to look at the trail maps to consider adding historic tribal villages and trail information.

Paul Reimer asked if the County Trail Plan needs to be updated. Marlene Finley indicated that the California Coastal Trail is already referenced in the Trail Master Plan, and the Rivers Trail and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program effort has the potential to help clarify future trails to be identified, and then a decision can be made to modify the Trails Master Plan.

A Subcommittee made up of Valentin Lopez, Mark Hylkema, Liz Westbrook, Deborah Hirst, Dave Olsen and Jo Lo Coco and Sam Herzberg was set up to review segments of the proposed trails and identify who should be responsible for development of each segment.

5. Rivers Trail and Conservation Assistance Program

Stephen Haller indicated the Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program has the potential to help this effort and connect all of the communities. Naomi Torres indicated that the Juan Bautista De Anza Trail started off as a RTCA application.

Paul Reimer asked what the Golden Gate National Recreation Area was going to do to highlight the Discovery Site when the 250th anniversary comes up. Stephen Haller indicated that could be a focus of the RTCA application designating segments on GGNRA lands, and providing staff and signage offsite.

Sam Herzberg indicated that he would draft an RTCA application, but appreciate a Subcommittee to review it before being shared. A Subcommittee was formed made up of Liz Westbrook, Mitch Postel, Deborah Hirst, and Ana Ruiz agreed to review the draft application.

Supervisor Horsley requested the Committee meet again in early July, and that Committee members send in letters of support when the Draft RTCA application is circulated. Valentin Lopez reiterated he will encourage other tribes to participate.