



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 9/24/2024

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File #: 24-1345

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Public Works

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**SUBJECT:**

Designation of the McKay Community Forest, Hammond Trail, and Humboldt Bay Trail South under Humboldt County Code Section 271

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Designate the McKay Community Forest, Hammond Trail, and Humboldt Bay Trail South as parks subject to the rules and regulations of Humboldt County Code Section 271; and
2. Designate the Hammond Trail and Humboldt Bay Trail South as trails subject to Humboldt County Code Section 271-16.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: Sustainable Natural Resources & Infrastructure Stewardship

Strategic Plan Category: 5002 - Manage the McKay Community Forest site for long-term sustainable timber harvest, recreation, and conservation

**DISCUSSION:**

Section 271 of the Humboldt County Code establishes rules and regulations for conduct within the county's park system. Section 271-1(g) of the Humboldt County Code defines "park" as "a park, historic preserve, nature preserve, trail, reservation, playground, recreation center or other area in the County owned or used by the County for recreation purposes under the direction of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt." Chapter 5 (Community Infrastructure and Services Element) of the Humboldt County General Plan (adopted Oct. 23, 2017) states that there are 16 County parks and beaches operated by the Humboldt County Parks Division within the Department of Public Works. These parks include:

- A.W. Way County Park
- Big Lagoon County Park
- Centerville Beach
- Clam Beach County Park
- Crab Park
- Fairhaven T Beach Access
- Jimmy Smith Fields Landing Boat Launch Facility
- Freshwater County Park
- Mad River County Park

- Margarite Lockwood County Park (river access in Miranda)
- Moonstone Beach County Park
- Pedrazzini Boat Ramp
- Samoa Campground and Boat Ramp
- Samoa Power Pole Beach Access
- Table Bluff County Park
- Van Duzen County Park

Section 271-1(n) of the Humboldt County Code defines “trail” as “a designated trail in a County park or in the Humboldt County Trails Plan adopted and amended from time to time thereafter.”

Section 271 of the Humboldt County Code contains various rules and regulations applicable to the County park system. In addition, Section 271-16 contains regulations specific to trails in addition to the other provisions of Section 271.

In order to confirm applicable rules and regulations, the Department of Public Works recommends that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors formally designate the McKay Community Forest, Hammond Trail, and Humboldt Bay Trail South as parks and designate the Hammond Trail and Humboldt Bay Trail South as trails subject to the rules and regulations of Humboldt County Code Section 271, as applicable.

The McKay Community Forest is located southeast of Eureka along the urban interface with Myrtle town, Cutten, and Ridgewood Heights. The McKay Community Forest was created in 2014 and expanded in 2020 resulting in a total area of nearly 1,200 acres. The McKay Community Forest is managed for multiple purposes including public access and recreation, timber harvest, and watershed and resource conservation. The McKay Community Forest Trail Plan was completed in Dec. 2020 and describes the network of recreational trails that will cover the property along with the approach for supporting recreational use. The McKay Community Forest Stewardship Plan was approved in Sept. 2022 to complement the Trail Plan by providing the overall framework for managing the Community Forest. The public is currently accessing the McKay Community Forest at several locations including Harris Street near Redwood Acres and the Northridge Road parking area in Cutten.

The Hammond Trail and Humboldt Bay Trail South are county-managed facilities. The Hammond Trail is a multi-use path located in McKinleyville along the coast. The Hammond Trail was constructed in phases over the last 40 years and current extends approximately 5.5 miles, from Clam Beach to the Mad River. Humboldt Bay Trail South is a multi-use path currently in construction along the Humboldt Bay shoreline between Eureka and Arcata. Humboldt Bay Trail South will extend approximately 4.3 along the railroad corridor (and around the Brainard mill levee) between the Target store in Eureka and Bayside Cutoff. The Hammond Trail is currently used, and the Humboldt Bay Trail South will soon be used, for both recreation and transportation purposes.

The Department of Public Works recommends that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors designate the McKay Community Forest, Hammond Trail, and Humboldt Bay Trail South as parks subject to the rules and regulations of Humboldt County Code Section 271 because these properties and the associated facilities are used, or will be used, for recreational purposes. Further, the Department of Public Works recommends that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors designate the Hammond Trail and Humboldt Bay Trail South as trails subject to the rules and regulations of Humboldt County Code Section 271-16 in addition to the other provisions of Section 271-16. Confirmation that these properties and facilities are subject to the rules and regulations in Humboldt County Code Section 271 will assist with enforcement of rules and regulations for appropriate use. The rules and regulations of Humboldt County Code Section 271 include prohibitions against unauthorized open fires, unauthorized overnight camping, disturbing the peace, discharge of sewage, and unauthorized structures within the County park system.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

1710716 (McKay Community Forest) and 1710715 (Bicycles & Trailways Program)

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Narrative Explanation of Financial Impact:

The recommended actions will clarify rules and regulations and support current management and enforcement actions, therefore there are no increased financial impacts anticipated. The recommended actions will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

**STAFFING IMPACT:**

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impact:

The recommended actions will support ongoing management and enforcement activities by county staff. The recommended actions will not affect current staffing levels.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

Not applicable

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Board of Supervisors could choose not to designate the McKay Community Forest, Hammond Trail, and Humboldt Bay Trail South as parks under the Humboldt County Code. This alternative is not recommended because the applicable rules and regulations for these properties and facilities would not be confirmed, and management and enforcement activities would be more difficult and less effective.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1 - Humboldt County Code Section 271

**PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:**

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A