A tiny Rufous hummingbird flies thousands of miles from Alaska to Mexico twice a year, stopping over in California during spring. The inner compass of these brilliant birds holds them true to their destination, whatever challenges they face along the way. Entering the third year of a pandemic, we are all tasked with flying through turbulence while holding our course. At Parks, true north has always been caring for Marin's beautiful outdoor spaces, to support recreation and preservation for Marin residents and visitors from across the Bay Area.

Now more than ever, parks and open space support community well-being. There is science to prove it. A recent study found people who spend at least two hours a week in green spaces report better physical and psychological health. The improvement in wellness was universal, regardless of age, ethnicity, or health status. Open space and park rangers see evidence of this every day, in the faces of neighbors hiking, biking, or horseback riding on roads and trails, and in the joy of families giving children room to run across a park lawn close to home.

The constraints of the pandemic have not deterred Parks’ commitment to taking care of what we have. Field staff are on the job seven days a week—maintaining roads and trails, welcoming visitors at the gatehouse, preparing picnic areas. We continue addressing deferred maintenance, advancing larger scale projects aimed at sea level rise resilience, and extending organization capabilities to help manage the risk of wildfire in a changing climate.

As we approach the ninth year of Parks Measure A, and the 50th anniversary of the Marin County Open Space District, we checked in with Marin residents using a county-wide survey. Thousands of survey responses reinforced the deep connection people in Marin have to their treasured public parks, coastal beaches, and open space lands. Whatever storms blow through, that shared connection and commitment will keep us alive to the sound of hummingbird wings. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the Marin community, other Bay Area land managers, and fellow government agencies on taking care of what we have.

Max Korten, Director
Marin County Parks
### 2020–2021 Strategic Achievements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION</th>
<th>Community Engagement</th>
<th>HABITAT PRESERVATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acres treated for fire fuel reduction and invasive species control</td>
<td>Page views on the website marincountyparks.org</td>
<td>Invasive plant populations removed by the Early Detection, Rapid Response team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2198</td>
<td>858k</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres grazed by livestock to reduce fire fuel</td>
<td>Parks Community Survey responses</td>
<td>Wildlife surveys for nesting, roosting, and inventory assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High priority vegetation management projects working in collaboration with Marin County Fire</td>
<td>Public board and commission meetings</td>
<td>Linear feet of decommissioned trail for habitat restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The multi-year COVID pandemic elevated the importance of open spaces and green places. It also **accelerated the use of digital tools** for virtual transactions, communications, and collaboration.

Like many individuals and organizations, Marin County Parks pivoted as needed to strengthen digital infrastructure. This allowed Parks to maintain quality public service, strengthen community engagement, and support public health guidance.

Digital infrastructure initiatives included:

- Migrating **board and commission meetings** to virtual or hybrid sessions, with multi-modal access as needed via digital application, audio telephone, online video stream, public television simulcast, and closed captioning.
- Releasing an **online community survey** to gather and analyze feedback from Marin residents to help guide future priorities for parks and open space.
- Investing in an upgrade to **online self-service group reservations**, designed to make it easier for visitors to reserve park picnic areas and other facilities.
- Collaborating with One Tam partners on **high tech geo-mapping** of the County’s topography, physical and biotic features, diverse plant communities, and habitats to support wildfire risk reduction and other planning purposes.

### OPEN DATA

Open Government Data is a philosophy that promotes transparency, accountability, research, and analysis by making government data available to all.

Marin County Parks participates in the **County of Marin Open Data initiative**, available online at data.marincounty.org.

This includes the **Open Data portal** with a wide range of County data sets, **Marin Compass, Community Indicators**, and **department specific data pages**, part of a performance management initiative designed to foster a culture of continuous improvement and learning, as well as **Marin GeoHub**, which offers geographic information.
2020–2021 Project Highlights

Close to a mile of the heavily trafficked Mill Valley/Sausalito Pathway near Gate 6 Road was improved with micro-resurfacing, for ease of travel and public safety.

Rush Creek Trail Improvements upgraded east side hiking and multiuse trails, improved equestrian access, and decommissioned a steep trail to restore habitat.

Puncheons were replaced in two locations on the popular Deer Island Loop Trail in Novato, for visitor safety and erosion control.

Over twenty Dog Waste Stations were installed, to tackle poo-lution at priority locations in open space preserves. Signage was designed to encourage use of the stations.

100 acres were grazed in Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow, helping to manage mixed vegetation, maintain a fire fuel break, and maintain defensible space near homes. In recent years, Parks scientists have collected data to optimize effective use of grazing in vegetation management.

Black Point Boat Launch received a refresh, with a new metal shade structure, wood picnic tables, bait cutting table, bicycle racks, landscaping, and irrigation system.

With feedback from the community, the conceptual design phase of Evolving Shorelines was completed. These adaptation plans, in collaboration with One Tam, aim to make the rich habitats and public access trails in Bothin Marsh Preserve resilient to sea level rise.

A multi-year initiative to study the reintroduction of a rare clover species (Trifolium amoenum) on Ring Mountain continued. This data, along with other native plant observations, is informing the management of sensitive serpentine grasslands and the rare plants that grow in serpentine soils.

Measure A funding supported these projects.
This table summarizes actual revenues and expenditures handled by Marin County Parks.

### Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PARKS</th>
<th>OPEN SPACE</th>
<th>MEASURE A</th>
<th>CSAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>8,823,102</td>
<td>15,547,563</td>
<td>1,975,185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Use of Money</td>
<td>828,877</td>
<td>86,850</td>
<td>110,189</td>
<td>41,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergovernmental</td>
<td>51,127</td>
<td>33,526</td>
<td>73,183</td>
<td>2,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges for Services</td>
<td>1,713,903</td>
<td>(109,556)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(15,951)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>10,609</td>
<td>246,465</td>
<td>11,025</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeted Transfer In</td>
<td>12,424</td>
<td>445,262</td>
<td>164,331</td>
<td>439,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,616,940</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,525,649</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,906,291</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,572,688</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenditures

**Fixed Costs**

- Salaries and Benefits: 4,649,786
- Budgeted Transfer Out: 112,013
- Interdepartmental Charges: 1,191,053

**Grants**

- Other Charges and Capital Assets: 12,424
- Farmland Preservation: 0
- Cities and Towns: 0

**Services and Supplies**

- Road and Trail Management: 0
- Vegetation Management and Fire Fuel Reduction: 0
- Wetland Restoration and Erosion Control: 0
- Real Estate and Acquisition: 0
- Park Facilities and Landscape: 1,281,193
- Public Engagement and Equity: 18,420
- Science and Research: 0
- Administration: 65,811

**Total**

4,948,594

### Other Use of Fund Balance/Net County Cost

- Fund Balance: (618,739)
- General Fund: 2,331,654

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY BUDGET AREAS**

- PARKS: 40%
- OPEN SPACE: 19%
- MEASURE A: 35%
- CSAs: 6%

**MEASURE A OVERSIGHT**

In FY 2020–21, seven committee members appointed by the Board of Supervision monitored Measure A expenditures, assisted with audits, and approved the annual report:

- Robert Berner
- Michael Dybeck
- Larry Kennings
- Joe Meylan
- Mary Stompe
- Dan Russell
- Jeff Williams

Each year Measure A funds undergo two compliance audits. The Marin County Department of Finance audited organizations other than Marin County Parks that receive Measure A funding. Badawi and Associates audited Marin County Parks and will issue a report in February 2022. Audit reports are available on marincountyparks.org.
FY 2020–21 Financial Information

Marin County Parks Expenditures and Set Aside for Land Acquisition FY 2020–21

Measure A Expenditures and Set Aside for Land Acquisition FY 2020–21

In FY 2020–21, no funds were expended on land acquisition. $2.1M was allocated to land acquisition set aside, with total set aside at the end of FY 2020–21 $6.4M.

CITIES AND TOWNS
Marin's 19 cities, towns, and applicable special districts received $2.3M in Measure A funds in FY 2020–21 for fire fuel vegetation management, neighborhood park renovations, maintenance, and staff.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION
Marin Resource Conservation District (RCD) receives 5% of Farmland Preservation funds to support resources on easement-protected agricultural lands. RCD matches other grants to maintain soil and water quality, water supplies, and fencing. RCD received $145,649 in FY 2020–21.

In FY 2020–21, the Marin Agricultural Land Trust returned $11,025 to the Farmland Preservation program.
Measure A: Caring For What We Have

Measure A protects the parks, open space, and farmland that make Marin County an extraordinary place to live, work, and play. In 2012, Marin voters approved a one-quarter of one percent sales tax (County Ordinance 3586) to support parks, open space, and agricultural lands across Marin. By law, funds raised by Measure A must be spent on parks and open space, farmland preservation, recreation in Marin’s nineteen cities and towns, and land acquisition. Measure A also funds over $100,000 annually in community grants, extending opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy parks and preserves through local non-profit organizations.

As of FY 2020–21, Measure A has been in effect for eight years and has generated $106.7 million. These funds are being used to address deferred maintenance in parks and preserves, finance agricultural easements that protect ranches and farms, support outdoor recreational programs in cities and towns, and help Marin adapt to climate change.

Measure A: Expenditures FY 2014–21

- **Parks and Open Space**: $52.2M (57%)
- **Farmland Preservation**: $15.7M (17%)
- **Cities and Towns**: $16.2M (17%)
- **Land Acquisition**: $9M (9%)

Support for Cities, Towns, and Special Districts

**Measure A provides funding for parks, open space, and recreation facilities across the county.** Measure A helps cities, towns, and special districts maintain parks, open space, and recreational programming. To date $16.2M dollars have been granted for recreation in Marin cities and towns.

**CITIES**
- Mill Valley
- Novato
- San Rafael
- Sausalito

**TOWNS**
- Belvedere
- Corte Madera
- Fairfax
- Larkspur
- Ross
- San Anselmo
- Tiburon

**SPECIAL DISTRICTS**
- Bel Marin Keyes CSD
- Bolinas Firehouse Community Park Agency
- Marin City CSD
- Marinwood CSD
- Muir Beach CSD
- Strawberry Recreation District
- Tamalpais CSD
In the late 1960s, large-scale development plans energized Marin residents to protect the natural beauty of the county. A grassroots group, People for Parks and Open Space, began advocating for a ballot measure. In 1971, the County Planning Department prepared *Can the Last Place Last? Preserving the Environmental Quality of Marin*, which offered a vision for land preservation. On November 7, 1972, Marin voters passed ballot Measure A, creating and funding the Regional Park and Open Space District. Spurred by the will of the voters, the Board of Supervisors then adopted a Marin Countywide Plan by a 3 to 2 vote. The plan outlined the importance of maintaining the County's exceptional recreational corridors, coastal areas, and rural agricultural lands. Check the calendar on marincountyparks.org, and join in on 50th anniversary events that will be taking place throughout the year.