The Resources Agency Project Tracking & Reporting System (RAPTR)

Access and Recreation Workshop
Workshop Purpose

Gather stakeholder input to inform the creation of the Resources Agency Project Tracking and Reporting (RAPTR) System by

- Validating the management questions identified by stakeholders during the Kickoff meeting.
- Utilizing a strategic thinking approach to identify key indicators and metrics for Access and Recreation projects.

Key questions to address:

1. What common metrics could be tracked across similar project types to inform project-, program-, and bond-level analysis?
2. Which metrics are most appropriate and realistic to track in a central system?
Meeting Agenda

10:00AM  Welcome and Introductions
        * Amanda Martin, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance
        * Gina Ford, Senior Environmental Scientist, MSU
        * Jim Falter, Environmental Scientist, MSU

10:25   Commitment to Access, Engagement, and Recreation in California
        * Sedrick Mitchell, Deputy Director of External Affairs, Department of Parks and Recreation

10:40   Access and Recreation Management Questions Overview
        * Rae Eaton, Science Policy Fellow, MSU

10:50   Monitoring and Evaluation on the Ground – A Grantee Perspective
        * Amy Lethbridge, Mountains & Rivers Conservation Authority, Community Nature Connection

11:05   Guiding Principles and Screening Criteria for Monitoring and Evaluation Metrics
        * Elea Becker Lowe, Environmental Scientist, MSU

11:10   Breakout Instructions: Leveraging and Evaluating Indicators & Metrics
        * Project Site Condition, Public Use of Project Site, Co-benefits

11:20   Breakout Session #1

12:15   Lunch Break

1:00    Breakout Sessions #2 & 3

2:10    Report Out and Plenary Discussion

2:50    Wrap Up and Next Steps

3:00PM  Meeting Adjourn
Guidelines for Remote Conversation

Remote meeting. Remote collaboration meetings can be challenging and frustrating – please be patient and flexible.

Audio/Video. We want to see and hear you, but please only have your mic and video on while you’re speaking.

Participation:
• Chat Panel can be used to add comments and questions. We may not go through all of them during the meeting, but we will incorporate your comments and address your questions in the meeting summary.
• Hand raise function can be found at the bottom of your Participant panel. Please use the hand raise to get into a queue.

Collaboration tools. We will use Zoom polls to get your feedback and breakouts for small conversations and collaborative work.

Be comfortable. We will take short breaks throughout the meeting

Have fun and be courteous.
• Honor time and share the airtime
• Think innovatively - We welcome new ideas
What perspective do you bring to the discussion today?

You should see a poll pop-up in your zoom screen shortly- thanks for participating!

- Department of Water Resources
- Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Air Resources Board
- State Parks
- Natural Resources Agency
- State Coastal Conservancy
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy
- Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
- Tahoe Conservancy
- Delta Stewardship Council
Welcome and Introductions

Amanda Martin
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance, CNRA
Update on RAPTR Development

Gina Ford, MSU Supervisor
Gina Ford, Sr. Environmental Scientist

Elea Becker Lowe, Environmental Scientist

Brad Juarros, Environmental Scientist

Jim Falter, Environmental Scientist

Rae Eaton, Science Policy Fellow

The MSU Team
Decision Process

1. Determine highest priority management questions
   - Identify 2-3 management questions that best address projects of this theme

2. Identify indicators that meet those management questions
   - For each management question:
     - What indicators should be tracked for each project?
     - Which indicator best represents that question?

3. Prioritize metrics for each indicator
   - For each indicator chosen:
     - What metrics answer the most management questions?
     - What metrics best inform the indicator (SMART criteria)?

4. Decide on a method to monitor each metric
   - For each metric that best inform the chosen indicators:
     - What methods can be used to monitor that metric?
     - What method is most feasible to monitor?
Overview of RAPTR Design

Jim Falter, MSU
How people describe a project...

‘The CNRA Bond Program is overseeing the provision of $500,000 in funding from Prop 27 to Parks ‘R’ Us to develop the Natomas Bike Park through the Improving Bicycle Health Program. This project will provide bicycle owners living in and around Natomas with a fully secure recreational area where their bicycles are safe to socialize as well as roam free and unencumbered; thus, greatly improving the health of both bicycles and their owners. Completion of the project will further provide a direct link between two high traffic bike paths used by residential commuters; thus, facilitating a reduction in street traffic around Sacramento as well as a reduction in net city GHG emissions. The first phase of the project will involve the fee title acquisition of four ~0.5-acre vacant residential lots (156-201-0743, 156-201-0744, 156-205-0613, 156-205-0617) which will then be used to develop the bike park. The second phase of the project will involve the development of various park features including a paved high-traffic bike path connecting two existing bike commuter paths, a fully enclosed special-use area for bikes to move unencumbered, and an open covered community shop equipped with permanently secured bike stands and tools. Development of the project will also involve the planting of 50 native trees as part of a broader climate-change resilient landscaping plan. The total cost of the project will be $1.2 million with additional contributions of $500,000 and $200,000 being made from Sacramento Parks and Friends of Natomas’ Bikes; respectively. Sacramento Parks will further be responsible for management of the park (including all O&M) in perpetuity following completion of the project.’
How computers describe a project...

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Description
Conservation Easement protecting over 7,200 acres of Montesol Ranch

Project Specifications
Project Grant #: E13426-0
Property Name: Montesol Ranch
Area: 7,516.3 acres
County: Lake, Napa
Manager: NA
Access: No Public Access
Program: Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation Program
Funding Source: EEMP
Date Completed: 1/24/2018
Elevation: 691 ft. [433 to 1,110]

Land cover
- ForestEvergreen: 4,785.2 acres
- Shrub: 2,053.9 acres
- ForestMixed: 408.5 acres
- DevOpen: 307.0 acres
- Grassland: 79.6 acres
- ForestDeciduous: 173.4 acres
- OpenWater: 5.5 acres
- DevLow: 0.9 acres

Values shown are in acres

Funding Sources
Class          | Sponsor                      | Amount
---             |------------------------------|------
Non-Profit     | Moore Foundation             | $5,000,000
               | Private donation             | $3,000,000
               | Knobloch Family Foundation   | $250,000
               | Land Value Donation          | $165,000
               | Trust for Public Land        | $56,500
State-Other     | WCB                          | $3,750,000
               | SCC                          | $1,700,000
               | EEMP                         | $500,000
Grand Total     |                             | $11,721,500
Demographics (ACS 2014-18)

Census Data Places

Community Fact Finder
Commitment to Access, Engagement, and Recreation in California

Sedrick Mitchell
Deputy Director of External Affairs
Department of Parks and Recreation
ACCESS is... Community Engagement Division (formerly External Affairs)

California Department of Parks and Recreation

September 2020
ACCESS is...

...Building Close-to-Home Parks in Communities
...Fostering Community Input for Grant Applications
...Ensuring Local Parks Stay Open
...Empowering Youth to Lead and Serve
...Inspiring Communities to Engage with Nature
...Providing Resources for Meaningful Park Experiences
“People need time and financial resources to travel to parks away from their communities. Only the presence of a park within a community can provide immediate daily access for its residents.”

(California’s 2015 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, page 15)
OGALS Access Model

- Technical assistance for local agencies
- Encourage community-based planning for park design
- Grants prioritize projects in underserved communities
- Operation and maintenance oversight
Demand for Close-To-Home Parks: the Statewide Park Program

Between three competitive rounds...

- Nearly 1,400 project applications
- $5.2 billion requested
- $623 million in funding
- $10 requested per $1 in funding
San Francisco
...Fostering Community Input for Grant Applications
City of Perris Mercado Park

BEFORE

AFTER
City of Earlimart’s First Park

BEFORE

AFTER
Lessons Learned:
WWW.Parks.CA.GOV/SPP
Thank You!
Q & A

If we are not able to address your question during the meeting, please email MSU@resources.ca.gov
How far away is the park you most frequently visit?

You should see a poll pop-up in your zoom screen shortly- thanks for participating!
Access and Recreation Management

Questions Overview

Rae Eaton, Science Policy Fellow, MSU
State Considerations for Access and Recreation Projects

- Support healthy, affordable, physical and social activities
- Improve quality of life in communities as a form of social equity and environmental justice
- Provide venues for cultural celebrations
- Preserve historic sites
- Protect California’s natural resources and environments
- Provide economic opportunities

Considerations adapted from 2015-2020 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP); 2020-2025 SCORP to be released this year
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<th>Concerns</th>
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<td>• Increase equitable access</td>
<td>• Capacity issues (offices and grantees)</td>
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<td>• Increase diversity of grant applicants</td>
<td>• Funding sources (for maintenance and monitoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Balance access/recreation with other programmatic goals</td>
<td>• Metrics and methods used to evaluate project outcomes</td>
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Key management Questions from the Kickoff Meeting

1. **Condition of Project Area:** Can visitors safely use the project area and the infrastructure/amenities within it?

2. **Visitor Use of Project Area:** Who uses the project area and amenities and for what purpose? If project goals included increasing access or recreation opportunities for a specific demographic or community, have those goals been met?

3. **Co-benefits Conferred by Project:** What co-benefits does the project confer?
What co-benefits are typically included in access or recreation projects funded by your program?

You should see a poll pop-up in your zoom screen shortly- thanks for participating!
Purpose of the Management Question

- Planned-for project benefits and delivered benefits are not always the same
- Monitor the condition of project site to inform whether a project area is usable
- Monitor activity at the project area to inform what benefits are provided by a project area
Monitoring Key Management Questions

1. Condition of Project Area:
   • Physical condition, adherence to ADA requirements
   • Methods: Site visits, pictures, reports from grantees

2. Visitor Use of Project Area:
   • Inform how people engage in outdoor recreation or engage with nature, history, or culture
   • Potential Methods: Demographic info, visitor surveys, observations of visitors

3. Co-benefits Conferred by Project:
   • Depends on co-benefit targeted
   • Some methods exist
Identify indicators/metrics that can:

- Address specific management questions
- Demonstrate that a project met its identified goals
- Monitor our progress enhancing people’s ability/desire to recreate and be in nature
If we are not able to address your question during the meeting, feel free to email MSU@resources.ca.gov
Monitoring and evaluation on the ground: A grantee’s perspective

Dr. Amy Lethbridge,
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
Goal alignment

Are we all trying to do and measure the same thing?

Agency goals +
Partner goals +
Visitor experience

**Bring in the Experts**
Using “outside” expertise to work with agency and partners

**Technical Assistance**
Training partners in best practices and co-designing with specific goals in mind

**Funding**
Covering staffing costs to fulfill E&M goals, especially beyond life of capital project
Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Everyone on the same page

**Framework**

- A monitoring & evaluation framework outlines the objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project and the indicators that will be used to measure all these.
- These should be developed with input from stakeholders

**Assumptions**

Framework should include what assumptions will be adopted as part of implementation and review.

What assumption are made about status quo? What are you trying to measure?

Were these assumptions checked for site specific applicability?

**Communications**

Clear and inclusive communication about this framework to everyone involved with the monitoring and evaluation process but ALSO with planners, implementers, field staff who are maintaining, etc.
Acknowledging and/or creating a baseline

**Baseline data**
Does it exist?
Does it exist in a useable form?
Are there other layers of data?
Do we agree on the problem we are solving?

**Creating new or adding to existing baseline**
Is the goal increasing something i.e. use, protected area,
Decreasing something i.e. damage to resources,

**Recreation and Access goals**
How to tie capital improvement goals with recreation and access goals.

Are you measure numbers? Or experience?
Methodology

There is an opportunity for success

**All about the number**
More people (or less) visiting or engaging in certain behaviors does not always tell you why.
Qualitative tends to be easiest to both manage and implement.

**Narrative and the experience**
Why visitors make certain choices, engage in certain behaviors is an important component.
The experience as part of the evaluation – was it meaningful? Did you grow/change because of it?

**Key questions**
Will you come back?
Do you know how to come back? Tools and knowledge
Are there barriers to you coming back?
Impact of capital projects on Recreation and Access

Vital Signs
National Park Service
identifying important “vital signs”—measurable attributes indicative of ecological health.

Visitor Use & Impact monitoring
Make sure you look at the why and not just the what.
3 Es – Engineering, education and enforcement
Inclusion of users and field staff in determining issues and projects

Barriers to visitation
Understanding barriers to access is critical first step to incorporating goals that decrease such barriers and avoid increasing such barriers
BARRIERS TO ACCESSING THE OUTDOORS INCLUDE...

Lack of PROXIMITY
And/or transportation to surrounding nature can prevent urban communities from visiting nearby regional parks and open space.

Lack of outdoor social or FAMILY NETWORKS

HOW OUR PROGRAMS ADDRESS BARRIERS...

- Public programs such as Transit to Trails provide free transportation to and from regional parks from community hubs. Day-long family friendly programs are promoted in partnership with community-based organizations.
- Interpretive programs such as campfires are held in local parks, activating urban parks as gateways to nature.
- CNC advocates for public transportation routes from urban areas to public lands.
- Multi-generational programming
- Program partnerships with community-based organizations
- Outreach and engagement with groups that serve families

CONNECT ✅ @CNC ✅ @CNC ✅ @OUTDOOREQUITY WWW.COMMUNITYNATURECONNECTION.ORG
- Targeted recruitment for career development and training programs that create a pipeline for youth and adults from underrepresented communities to enter careers in the parks and outdoor fields
- Representational promotional flyers, websites, and other printed and web materials
- Partnerships with college and universities

- Public programs featuring outdoor skills
- Guided hikes and facilitated experiences designed for first time park visitors
- Youth leadership programs that provide an introduction to the outdoor experience inspiring future stewards, advocates, ambassadors

- Free programs with transportation, gear, and guidance provided
- Equipment loan programs
- Maps with public transportation routes
- Resources in multiple languages
Thank You

Contact information:

Amy.Lethbridge@mrca.ca.gov
310-985-5127
Q & A

If we are not able to address your question during the meeting, feel free to email MSU@resources.ca.gov
Are any of the following barriers to access common in your program?

You should see a poll pop-up in your zoom screen shortly- thanks for participating!
Project Performance Guiding Principles and Screening Criteria

Elea Becker Lowe
Environmental Scientist, MSU
PROCESS

PROJECT GOALS

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

INDICATORS

METRICS

Management Questions

Adaptive Management Cycle:
- Plan
- Design
- Implement
- Monitor
- Evaluate

Process Flow:
- Align project goals with objectives.
- Use indicators and metrics to track progress.
- Address management questions iteratively.
SMART Criteria

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Representative

Time-bound/time-specific

RAPTR-ready
Additional Criteria Considered

Cost-effectiveness

Labor Capacity (staff time)

Access to Applicable Technology

Availability of Technical Expertise
Breakout Instructions: Leveraging and Evaluating Indicators and Metrics

Julia Van Horn, Associate Facilitator- CSUS
Breakout Discussion Process

Three breakouts focusing on the three management questions:

**Project Site Condition**: Can visitors safely use the project area and the infrastructure/amenities within it?

**Public Use of Project Site**: Who uses the project area and amenities and for what purpose? If project goals included increasing access or recreation opportunities for a specific demographic or community, have those goals been met?

**Co-benefits**: What co-benefits does the project confer?
Breakout Discussion Mechanics

**Three rounds.** You will be assigned to a group that will rotate together from one question to the next in three rounds of breakouts.

- Round 1: 45 minutes (initial work)
- Round 2: 35 minutes (add on)
- Round 3: 35 minutes (add on)

**Host.** Each breakout room has an MSU Staff who will be tracking the discussion on a template specific to each question.

**Introductions.** Please take few moments to introduce yourselves.

**Reporter.** Before starting the last round, please identify a participant who is willing to report out on behalf of the group on key themes that you discussed. You will have 3-5 minutes to report out. Please be concise!

**Report out.** At the end of the third breakout session, you will be directed back to the full meeting to share your thoughts.
Breakout Discussion Process

Questions to be addressed during the three sessions:

1. What are potential indicators/metrics that can be used to help address the questions?

2. Where can this information be found? Documents, tools, etc.

3. What can we learn from an initial SMART analysis about the appropriateness of incorporating these indicators/metrics into the RAPTR system?

4. Which indicators/metrics show the most promise in responding to the management questions and included in the RAPTR system?
Breakout Discussion Reporting Table
Report Out: What are the most promising metrics to start with (RATPR Ready)?

Plenary Discussion: What is not feasible at this time but should be prioritized for future evolution of RAPTR?
Utility of RAPTR in your work

You should see a poll pop-up in your zoom screen shortly- thanks for participating!
Wrap Up and Next Steps

Gina Ford, MSU
Workshop Series Timeline

April 2020: Kick-off Meeting

July 15, 2020: Workshop 1

September 3, 2020: Workshop 2

Early 2021: Workshop 3

Early 2021: Workshop 4

Spring 2021: Workshop 5

Summer 2021: Wrap-up Meeting
Thank you for joining us today!

Thanks to Rae Eaton for leading this Recreation & Access workshop and her contributions to the MSU

Follow up related to this workshop will come from Elea Becker Lowe; feel free to share additional thoughts and input by emailing us at MSU@resources.ca.gov

Or visit our webpage for more information: https://resources.ca.gov/Initiatives/Monitoring-and-Stewardship-Unit