

MONTEREY AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society; Celebrating, Exploring, Conserving & Restoring the Birds & Ecology of the Greater Monterey Bay Region Since 1943



montereyaudubon.org

Press Release

The following information has been approved for release to all media networks and affected parties. Wide distribution is encouraged.

LAGUNA GRANDE PARK REHABILITATION

Monterey Audubon Society (MAS) is launching a matching campaign to raise \$15,000 to rehabilitate Laguna Grande Park to improve the habitat's health and increase public enjoyment, as well as petitioning Seaside City to prioritize rehabilitation.

PARK HISTORY:

The park was specifically engineered to have riparian habitat and waterways for the purposes of being a multi-use public recreational park. Limited access public trails run through certain parts, but as many as 10 acres of the 11 acre land is inaccessible, unmonitored, and unmanaged. Along with the natural impacts of invasive species, the park has had extensive illegal camping that has resulted in substantial environmental damage, garbage, pollutants into waterways, growing crime, and the result is a park with questionable safety and limited recreational use. Two human bodies have been found in the last few months and there have been multiple fires that have threatened the park and surrounding houses. There is no doubt the time has come for Laguna Grande to be rehabilitated and any delay does nothing but increase dangers to the public.

PARK REHABILITATION:

MAS has reached out to Monterey and Seaside Cities and provided suggestions for how to rehabilitate the park in a way that will retain prime habitat while solving current problems. Suggestions were modeled after success in other similar parks with past similar problems by simply increasing public access. This is easily done by turning the existing illegal trails into true public access trails, providing welcoming sitting and picnic areas, and educational signage. The effort needed to bring Laguna Grande to a prime recreational location is not extensive and does not require further engineering and do not involve extensive planning or complicated approvals by multiple other agencies. The end result would be a healthy park with increased public enjoyment, safer to users and those living nearby, while also increasing nearby property values and tourist appeal to the cities. Monterey city has recognized the need for rehabilitation, Seaside city has not.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN:

MAS will be matching donations from the community until the goal of \$15,000 is reached by February 1, 2015. MAS is also asking for donations in the form of materials and labor for amenities proposed. All donations towards this campaign are tax-deductible. Monetary donations can be made to:

*Monterey Audubon Society
ATTN: Laguna Grande Park
PO Box 5656 Carmel, CA 93921*

For material and labor donations, please contact us.

PETITIONING SEASIDE CITY:

MAS is also asking for the public's help in getting Seaside City to prioritize park rehabilitation and implement true long-term management, which they are refusing to do. A petition has been made asking Seaside city to prioritize rehabilitation and implement true long-term rehabilitation. (<https://www.change.org/p/city-of-seaside-ca-rehabilitate-laguna-grande-park-in-coordination-with-monterey-audubon-society>)

CONTACT:

To find out more about this campaign, contact the coordinator: Chris Hartzell
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