

Newberry Community Service District Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)

12/10/24 Meeting Notes:

Project Summary:

The Newberry Community Service District (NCSD) is working to upgrade their parkland to meet community needs for mobility, exercise, and recreation. This includes urban greening and low impact development strategies as well as interpretive pathways that promote the surrounding public lands including the Newberry & Rodman Mountain Wilderness and the nearby Mojave Trails National Monument.

An upgrade to the NCSD parkland will improve air quality and water retention in the area and make the park more accessible. The renovation will also include features that promote environmental awareness, physical activity, reduce chronic diseases, improve mental health, and foster community connections. These improvements will benefit the local residents as well as visitors to the Mojave Desert region.

Working with Carlos Flores, our project lead from the National Park Service RTCA Technical Assistance Program, we will develop a concept and implementation plan for the parkland improvements. Community partners include the Newberry Springs Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Murals, Inc., Newberry Springs Economic Development Association and Foundations for Future Generations.

Mission Statement:

- To enhance existing parkland for residents and visitors through infrastructure improvements and recreation/education activities.

Vision Statement:

- A vibrant sustainable parkland that enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors, promotes environmental awareness and fosters community.

Notes from 12/10/24 Virtual Meeting:

Present: Carlos Flores (NPS), Mike Matson (NCSD), Margie Roberts (NCSD), Kayleen Vanek (NCSD), Rose Beardshear (NSCOC), Jane Brockhurst (MSM & NSCOC), Gwen Patrick (FFG), and Pastor Charles (NSEDA), Daphne Lanier (NCSD Fire), Rylan Lanier (NCSD Fire), Ted Stimpfel (NS Community Alliance), Paul Craig (NSEDA), Marc Lacey (SVUSD), Robert (NSEDA) & Ronnie Shaw (NSCOC), Keith Stacy Copsey, Karla Claus, and Donna Soller (community members).

The meeting focused on opportunities and constraints for the project. Carlos gave background on the project and reviewed the mission and vision statement. The end goal is a concept plan for the NCSD Parkland. Carlos reviewed the timeline for the project and

Newberry Community Service District Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)

12/10/24 Meeting Notes:

explained the value of the process of technical assistance. The next step will be to develop a construction design that will originate from the concept plan from this process. Below is a list of items that are working well with the NCS D Parkland and what could be improved that were captured by Carlos during the meeting:

What is working well in this park, that we shouldn't mess with, or we should have more of it?

- The Pistachio Festival
- Kickball tournaments
- The ballfield
- The staff
- Dog walkers
- It functions as a town square/community center/hub for the southern part of Newberry Springs – people know about it
- It symbolizes the community's generosity
- NCS D leadership
- It is a community center
- The views
- Access from Route 66
- It is a good place for youth programs (natural and cultural)
- Brings together people who care
- NCS D board collaboration – good communication, good listeners, they care.
- Events
- Wildlife habitat, especially Big horn sheep
- Proximity to Barstow

What could be better in the park?

- The kitchen could be up to spec in order to sell food.
- Could increase revenue
- Parking space
- Expand play areas and family friendly areas
- Water availability
- Dust mitigation
- Wildlife interpretation – talk about the big horn sheep somehow
- Sustainability/low cost/low maintenance

Newberry Community Service District Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)

12/10/24 Meeting Notes:

- Accessibility
- More programs – schools, sports equipment, nature/culture, health, drive in movie night
- Water trough for sheep
- Tap into festivals for funding
- Extending partnerships
- Place to learn the history of human population – heritage
- Acoustics of the meeting room
- Nighttime use
- ADA facilities
- Curb appeal
- Structural integrity/safety
- Wayfinding signage
- Visibility of the park
- No room for ambulance/emergency access
- Road is narrow
- Heat exposure
- Safety hazards – bees
- Shade structures
- Take into consideration the ethnic history of the community – for example, the caves
- Bring 4H to this location
- LED lighting
- Park surfaces, turf (wood chips tend to blow away)
- Parking area surface
- Parking accessibility
- Ball field improvement (surface)
- BMX track, pump track
- Trail
- Basketball
- Skatepark, especially for beginners
- Improve restrooms
- Dog run – clean up
- More seating
- Address vandalism – drug use, graffiti, litter, damaged/stolen lights

**Newberry Community Service District
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)**

12/10/24 Meeting Notes:

Next meeting will be held on January 14, 2025 11-1 p.m. (waiting to hear back from Carlos whether it will be in-person or virtual). We will focus on who we still need involved in the planning process and getting ready for our design workshop scheduled in February. The meeting will be 1.5-2 hours.