



MARIPOSA COUNTY

Board of Supervisors • (209) 966-3222



RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2018-313

MEETING: July 10, 2018
TO: The Board of Supervisors
FROM: Miles Menetrey, District V Supervisor
RE: Pedestrian-Bicycle Bridge Letter of Support

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Approve a letter of support to the Bureau of Land Management for a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the North Fork of the Merced River; and authorize the Board of Supervisors Chair to sign the Letter.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The Board has approved letters in support of other efforts that will benefit the County.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Do not approve the letter. Individual members of the Board may write their own letters of support as desired.

ATTACHMENTS:

Bike Trail Letter (DOCX)

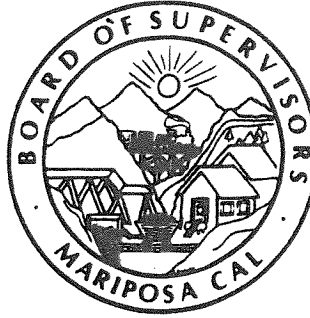
RESULT: ADOPTED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Merlin Jones, District II Supervisor

SECONDER: Kevin Cann, District IV Supervisor

AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey

Mariposa County Board of Supervisors



District 1 ... ROSEMARIE SMALLCOMBE
District 2 MERLIN JONES
District 3 MARSHALL LONG
District 4 KEVIN CANN
District 5 MILES MENETREY

DALLIN KIMBLE
County Administrative Officer

RENE LAROCHE
Clerk of the Board

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July 10, 2018

Mr. William Haigh, Field Director
Mother Lode Field Office
Bureau of Land Management
5152 Hillside Circle
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

Re: Merced River Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge

Dear Mr. Haigh,

Mariposa County is pleased to express its support of BLM's intention to build a year-round pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the North Fork of the Merced River near its confluence with the river's main stem. This bridge is already an identified element of the Recreational Facilities Plan in Merced Irrigation District's (MID) current application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for relicensing its Merced River dams and reservoirs. Bridge construction constitutes a key first step to expanding year-round non-motorized downriver recreation along the Wild and Scenic Merced River. This is an exciting prospect.

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors sees this project as helpful in furthering our brand as a place of varied and outstanding recreational opportunities. This is especially true because the Lower Merced River and the North Fork offer beautiful walks and views, and the spring flowers are closer by than elsewhere, to mention only a couple of remarkable attributes. We see this undertaking as in keeping with our economic development goals and our rural lifestyle. We expect this project would particularly encourage downriver use during non-peak tourist months in Yosemite.

MID's Relicensing Application and its Recreational Facilities Plan includes numerous proposals for recreational development that are of considerable interest and potential impact to Mariposa County in the decades ahead. First and foremost of these is the North Fork Bridge project which is seen as an essential component of a broader system

of interconnected trails in Mariposa County. Historically we have supported the decades old vision of the Merced River Trail which would connect Merced to El Portal. Because of the existing railroad grade along much of the route, imagining a Merced River Trail is not difficult. Nevertheless, little progress has been made in the last quarter century. Construction of a bridge over the North Fork and the subsequent creation of a year-round trail from the North Fork to Bagby would be a significant step forward towards realizing this vision.

Our board has not previously discussed the ways in which our county might support this development, but this letter is a first step. We also note that the Merced River Canyon Trail has a large and growing constituency. We know there will be local volunteers available to help support this and similar projects now and in the future. Significant volunteer activities already occur along the river including trail maintenance, noxious weed abatement, and river clean-ups.

It is likely that in this time of tightened agency budgets, BLM will have many more projects than it can fund. Local support and volunteers should also be considered. We hope this letter can help BLM reach its goal of providing a year-round river trail in Mariposa County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosemarie Smallcombe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Rosemarie Smallcombe, Chair
Mariposa County Board of Supervisors