

# Sly Park's future concerns residents

By **Charlotte Sanchez-Kosa**

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Several Sly Park Area residents who attended a public meeting about the Sly Park Recreation Area Master Plan and Draft Master Environmental Impact Report voiced concerns about trees being cut down for a proposed parking lot extension.

The recent meeting at the El Dorado Irrigation District lasted a little over an hour and residents and directors got the opportunity to hear comments on the plan.

***"There are beautiful trees coming down."***

— Heidi Dehart, Pollock Pines resident

"The purpose of the Master Plan is to basically guide development and any improvements, redevelopments, as well as management at Sly Park for the next 20 years," said Kate Kirsh of Foothill Associates, a consulting firm hired by EID. "The Master Plan has to look at lots of different concerns and that's certainly been one of the challenges of this project, coming up with a good, balanced approach that looks at all these different issues."

She said resource protection and enhancement, fiscal respon-

sibility and public safety are the three highest priorities. Additional priorities include recreational uses, facilities management and community participation.

She said the existing conditions and issues at the park include maintaining the water quality at Jenkinson Lake where there are 11 campgrounds, wildlife, trails, day-use areas and boat launching facilities.

Issues at the park include a lack of definition of campsites, user conflict on trails, compacted soil and vegetation, traffic flow at the entrance, plan for emergency evacuations, parking in non-designated areas, inadequate parking and limited electric and water service.

One proposal within the plan calls for building a new parking area near the marina, but in order to do that, more than 180 trees would have to be cut down.

"There are beautiful trees coming down," said Heidi Dehart, area resident. "And granted, when the lake recedes, you have a shoreline that's barren but you have a beautiful canopy of trees. That canopy will be gone."

She also said some of the neighbors are concerned about the traffic due to the expansion of the park. She also voiced con-

cern about erosion of the shoreline. She emphasized that the shoreline needs protection.

Another resident, Shelly Kern, had concerns about environmental impacts.

***"The lake is a great place but we're sort of on the road to loving it to death. In 20 years from now, it could be a lot worse than it is rather than better."***

— Pollock Pines resident Shelly Kern

"When you look at it, I'm not sure it really does (make sense) because there's environmental degradation from compacting of soil and there's problems with parking and problems with the bicycles. But there's going to be environmental degradation from a whole bunch of new parking lots, a whole bunch of new cabins, hundreds of trees being cut down."

She said that she feels more infrastructure isn't always an improvement and that it's possible "to love a place to death."

"It looks to me like that's where it's going right now," Kern said. "The lake is a great

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place but we're sort of on the road to loving it to death. In 20 years from now, it could be a lot worse than it is rather than better."

EID Director Harry Norris asked Recreation Director Don Pearson whether he saw further degradation other than losing the trees for the parking lot.

"If fully implemented, it would improve the conditions that we currently have," Pearson said. "We do need erosion control around the shore. That is one of the issues that needs to be addressed. If we do a third of the things that are on the Master Plan, it would put us in a better light

than we are today."

"People have to understand that this was a federal facility up until three years ago," said Director George Osborne. "We had absolutely no control over what happened. Now, we're in the driver's seat to make sure it's done and if it's done, it's done right."

Since the update on the plan was for informational purposes only and a public comment meeting, directors Norris, Osborne, John Fraser, Bill George and George Wheeldon did not take any action on it.

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