

# Save Our Trails!



Promoting trails in Santa Clara County for the benefit and enjoyment of all

Office of the Clerk  
San José City Hall  
200 E. Santa Clara St.  
San José CA 95113

Sent via email

SUBJECT: Support of Staff Position regarding the development of a pedestrian bridge over the Los Gatos Creek as part of the Three Creeks Trail

March 22, 2013

Dear Honorable Mayor Reed and Members of the City Council:

**Save Our Trails: Connecting Santa Clara County Communities** is a California Not-for-Profit Corporation who mission is *“To promote trails in Santa Clara County for the benefit and enjoyment of all.”* On behalf of **Save Our Trails**, I am writing to let you know of our very strong support for the staff recommendation to apply for an RZH (Prop 40) state grant to replace the existing railroad trestle across the Los Gatos Creek with a new structure.

At the time of our establishment, the Three Creeks Trail (or the “Willow Glen Spur Trail”, as it was then called) was just a line on a map. An essential parcel along the right of way was in danger of being sold to a developer and the potential for an essential cross-town trail being lost forever. **Save Our Trails** has been working assiduously since our establishment to help ensure that the land for the Three Creeks Trail is acquired, the trail built, and the links established to four intersecting trail systems: the Los Gatos Creek Trail, the Guadalupe River Trail, the Highway 87 Bikeway, and the Coyote Creek Trail.

In order to connect the Three Creeks Trail with the Los Gatos Creek Trail, it is necessary to cross the Los Gatos Creek. There is an existing wooden railroad trestle that could be used, but making it safe for trail use will require a substantial investment. Unfortunately, the trestle has been damaged both by weather and by fire set by persons camping in the creek bed. The city staff has determined that the best course would be to replace the old trestle with a new, steel structure.

There is a lot of affection for the existing wooden structure, both among Board Members of **Save Our Trails** as well as in the community at large, for its romantic appearance and for its historical significance. It was only after lengthy deliberation, and careful consideration of the arguments for preserving the structure, that the Board determined that the best course of action would be to replace it. One important consideration for us was the anticipated high cost of maintenance of a restored wooden structure; maintenance costs that we recognize would come from a budget that has to be shared among the 100 miles of the city’s planned network of trails.

We would like to preserve the memory of the trestle, however. We suggest that historical plaques be placed in the area close to the ends of the bridge with pictures of the old structure and with text that describes the historical significance of the trestle in allowing the railroad to access the canneries to the north. We also would recommend that some of the wood of the existing structure be preserved and reused in the construction of some structures in the area (such as fencing or benches).

We think that this project is an outstanding candidate for the use of the Roberti-Z'berg-Harris (Prop 40) grant funds.

**Save Our Trails** urges a YES vote on this issue. This will allow the Three Creeks Trail justify its name and fulfill its potential to link the trail systems that San Jose is working so hard to establish.

Sincerely,

Martin Delson  
Secretary, **Save Our Trails**  
Web: [www.saveourtrails-scc.org](http://www.saveourtrails-scc.org)