

Neighbor to Neighbor

June –September 2020



Bel Marin Keys
Community Services District

Ph: (415) 883-4222 Fax: (415) 883-3683
www.bmkcsd.us

Board of Directors

Vince Lattanzio, President

Darrick Chase, Vice-President

Mark Montobbio, Director

Cheryl Furst, Director

Mercy Angelopulos, Director

Flushing Schedule

October 12-14 and 19-21

November 2-4 and 16-18

December 1-3 and 15-17

** the flushing schedule is subject to change due to weather conditions** VHF Channel 16 is monitored during flushing events. **FLUSHING DO NOT ENTER** signs are placed on both creek and lagoon docks during the event, if you have questions please call the District office 883-4222.

TEMPORARY OFFICE HOURS

Monday: closed

Tuesday: 10-2pm

Wednesday: 10-2pm

Thursday: 10-2pm

Friday: closed

If you need ramp, lock or multi court keys please email ncamargo@bmkcsd.us to make an appointment during the temporary office hours.

IMPORTANT: 2020 POLLING PLACE CHANGE-This year the BMK Community Center will **NOT** be your local polling place. The polling place will be the Hamilton Community Center at 503 South Palm Drive.

Road Safety: Calming Stripping Proposal

Over the years, the District has received numerous complaints with regards to visibility and speeding at the intersections of Bel Marin Keys boulevard & Montego Key. The County Traffic Division has provided two alternative solutions addressing the concerns raised by community members. To increase visibility at the intersections they proposed adding a red stripe to the curbs of the intersections two cars in length (see diagram 1). This would prohibit cars from parking on the corner of the intersection, thus allowing more visibility.

To reduce speeding along Bel Marin Keys boulevard, the County proposed a new “traffic calming” lane striping. Consisting of a buffered bike lane with a double layered yellow lane (see diagram 2), a 24-foot median with striping, and an 11-foot travel lane. This method has been implemented at Millers creek and received positive feedback from surrounding residents.

The main and most important benefit will be the traffic calming effect. The extra cushion in the bike lane improves visibility for those merging at corners and for residents backing out of their driveways. The new traffic striping is planned to be dashed through the intersection. Although this proposal creates a buffer on the moat side this is not an area that will be opened for pedestrian foot traffic, all foot traffic should remain on the sidewalks and out of the bike lane. The County anticipates implementing these changes in the fall and would appreciate feedback prior to striping. Please forward your thoughts to admin@bmkcsd.us.

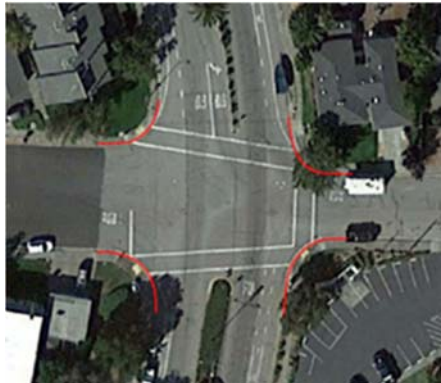


Diagram 1

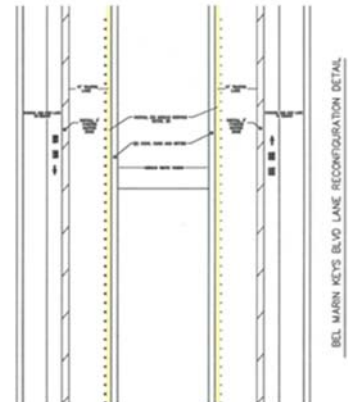


Diagram 2

Emergency Response Team Disasters Don't Wait-be Prepared

National Preparedness Month is recognized each September to promote family and community disaster planning now and throughout the year. Subscribe to Nixle Alerts. To receive the latest emergency updates from the County, and Sheriff’s Office text your zip code to 888-777, go to Nixle.com. We encourage all resident to prepare and review their go bags in the event of an emergency. Given the bad air quality we urge those with a compromised immune system to stay indoors as much as possible. Keep informed to the ever changing weather conditions. Stay safe!

District Managers Report

The last few months have been extraordinary, and not in a good way and current events had put a toll on all of us. Although best practices for hygiene and social distancing are established the rules for businesses and activities continue to evolve. Please keep up to date with the health orders in effect for Marin County at <https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/stay-home-order-effect-marin-county>. A link to this page can be found on our website. Let continue keeping our community safe and follow those guidelines.

Thank you to the BMK Yacht Club for putting on a modified Fourth of July boat parade for the community.



The Bocce courts are completed and ready for use. Please make sure you adhere to the COVID-19 health guidelines while using the courts and only play with immediate members of your family. The court are first come first serve,

however, be respectful of those wanting to use the courts and limit your use to allow them to use the courts. We do not supply playing equipment so you will need to supply your own. The next phase include plantings and additional seating benches.

We will continue to address tree pruning or removal throughout the District as some trees and palms have structural issues and need to be removed, while others only need a substantial pruning.

Have received complaints with regards to non common household pets (i.e. chickens), I would advice to check with County Ordinances and Regulations for rules on said animals.

Reminders:

- Please pick up after your pets. The District provides 18 dog waste stations with pick up bags.
- California law requires a person to be **16 years of age or older and in possession of his/her California Boater Card** to legally operate a vessel powered by a motor of 15 hp or more, including personal watercraft (PWCs). It is illegal to permit a person **under the age of 16** to operate a vessel powered by a motor of 15 hp or more, including PWCs, without onboard supervision by a person 18 years of age or older who is in possession of his/her California Boater Card.
- Sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owners and should be addresses to eliminate tripping hazards.
- If you are installing a boat lift or modifying your dock please check your property lines so you are not encroaching on neighboring or CSD owned property.

Progress at Bel Marin Keys Unit V: Phase 1 Restoration

While larger construction activities resumed in April 2020, the warming weather means the season for managing invasive species is here. Under direction from project consultants, a Conservation Corps – North Bay team has cut the expansive stand of Fennel along the South Lagoon levee. This non-native invasive plant is a hardy perennial producing copious amounts of seed. With multiple passes of cutting, the Fennel stand will eventually be limited allowing more room and resources for more useful native plants. This year will see the restoration of seasonal wetlands at BMK which will provide much-needed habitat for wildlife, resiliency in the face of sea level rise, not to mention a beautiful landscape. Management of invasive plants and the propagation of native species will continue this Spring, in anticipation of planting the seasonal wetland in late 2020.



Photo: The Conservation Corps North Bay has recently contributed 13 weeks of service to the Hamilton/Bel Marin Keys Restoration Project.



Waterways Manager Update

Lagoon Water Quality:

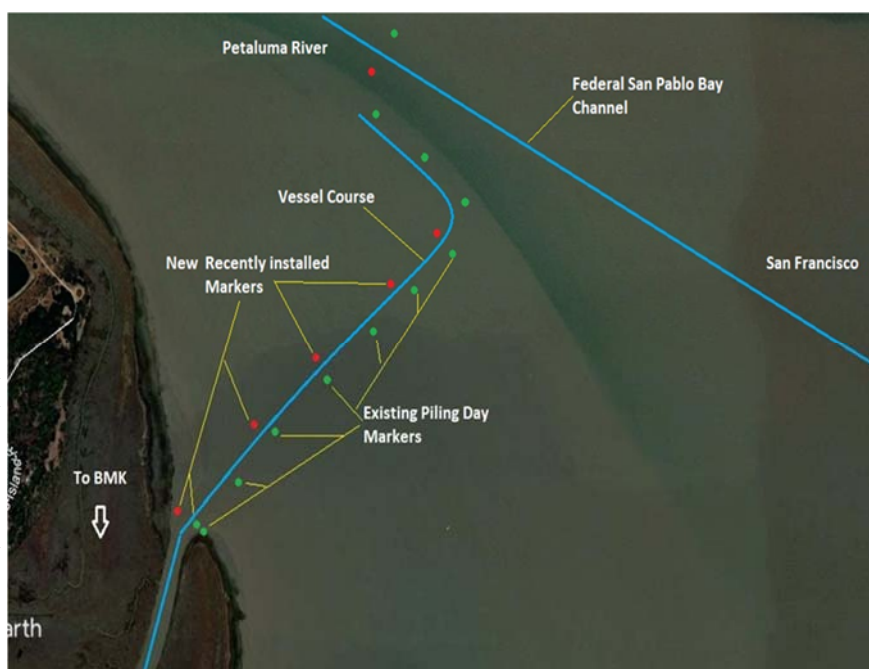
The North and South Lagoon are experiencing an increase in phytoplankton growth (non harmful) coupled with high salinity levels due to the dry winter. This is a normal occurrence in Northern California especially in August/September. This combination coupled with the recent temperature fluctuations result in a brown to red color in certain parts of the Lagoons. There are some species that are beneficial and some that will adversely affect supporting marine life. Due to regulatory restrictions, we are limited to organic approaches when managing the volume of vegetation. Out competing the algae's food source and minimizing nutrient loading are two solutions to eliminating continuous algae blooms throughout the summer. Additional circulation events are underway to cycle out the water for improved clarity.

Improvement Projects:

Dolphin Isle received a facelift with the installation of a new dock. The construction is similar to the floating docks at the North lagoon. The Calypso Shores Boat Ramp replacement dock construction is underway. Installation of the new dock system will not disrupt boating and is scheduled for installation upon delivery later in September.

Navigation Day Marker Improvements:

Improvements to the outer channel in San Pablo Bay are complete. New floating red buoys indicate the best course to navigate until reaching the federal channel in San Pablo Bay. The recommended course is to stay equally distanced between the existing piling day markers (Starboard) and the floating red markers (Port). Mariners should always be aware that San Pablo Bay and especially the area in and around the Novato Creek is quite dynamic and is subject to change. The markers are as good as field survey data when obtained so please do exercise caution as this is a dynamic, changing area relative to shoals!



BMK Women's Club 2020 Scholarship Winner

By Lillian McCarthy, President



Congratulations from the Board of Directors and all the members of the Bel Marin Keys Women's Club to CATHRYN OBERMEIER. She will be attending CALPOLY in San Luis Obispo. Cathryn was presented with a check for \$2,000 from the BMK Women's Club at Lillian's home with Treasurer Vickie Ross in attendance. Both Cathryn and her mother Doris were extremely appreciative of the funding that will help with her education. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we were not able to hold our traditional Scholarship Awards luncheon. Thank you Cathryn and Good Luck in your future endeavors. The following Scholarship applicants received an Honorable Mention. We appreciate the time and effort they spent in preparing for the contest: Daniel Bartnicki, Paige Delaney, Maeve Lustenberger and Quinn Robbins. A BIG THANKS to the Scholarship Committee who performed the tough task of selecting the winning student: Scholarship Chairwoman, Madelon Montobbio and Committee Members: Debby Kennard, Linda Panico, Vicki Pennington and Robyn Raschke



Waterway Use Reminder

There a few month left in this boating season and want to remind all residents of the rules and regulations that have been set up to protect the safety of all waterway users and minimize the damage and liability to residents and District property. This summer the District office has been receiving constant calls with regards to boaters not following the **NO WAKE** zones which has increased damage to boat dock, CSD ramps, navigational buoys and Waterways levees. Here is a list of this to remember while using the ramps, locks and the waterways while you continue to enjoy the waterway and still be a good neighbor. (larger map on page 7, full map available at the District office)

BMK Boat Ramp and dock:

- Boat launching area are for the use of BMK residents with access key ONLY. Residents who loan keys to anyone are responsible for that guest's violations and damages.
- No swimming from boat dock or ramp (People/ Dogs)
- No loitering, music, sunbathing, remote control boats, jumping bikes (yes, this has happened)
- No dumping trash or picnicking
- Boat launching requires keyed access - Includes but is not limited to stand up paddle boarders/ kayaks/ small boat/ sailboats/ submarines/ paddle boats.
- No parking boats, dock debris, tubes at CSD docks/ Boat Ramps
- BMK Service Dock should be used for the removal of dock and lift debris on the South Lagoon

Water and Boating Safety Regulations General:

- Ski boat direction MUST follow a counter clockwise direction specified on the BMK water safety map
- NO WAKE areas are marked by signage and buoys - This means no visible wake from your boat (<5mph)
- NO deviation from ski boat course pattern - aka: speeding going in circles, speeding to pick up downed skiers, zig-zagging course and going outside of buoys to create larger wakes.
- NO weighting of boats to create larger wakes (boat inability to plane at speed) - Boats creating abnormally large wakes or damaging docks will receive a warning letter. Reminder boaters are financially responsible for dock damages caused by their boats wake.
- NO ski boats larger than 22 ft pulling tubes or skiers on all lagoon where skiing is allowed
- Boaters are responsible for display of red safety flag for downed skiers or tubers
- Boaters responsible for personal floatation devices as required by US Coast Guard
- Swimmers are required to wear red caps or have visible personal floatation devices and stay within the no wake buoys.
- BMK Islands are protected wildlife habitat and no landing of any kind is permitted on the islands.
- No buoys are to be moved in any of the waterways or used as anchors for vessels, kayaks etc..
- No unauthorized buoys shall be placed in the waterways
- Floating tubes or trampolines may not extend passed the water easement for every parcel or create a navigational hazard.

BMK Navigational Lock:

- BMK Locks are for boat access only - no other activities or trespassing are permitted at the BMK Locks
Residents are required to follow all regulations regarding Lock access and usage.

BMK Parks and Open Space:

- BMK parks and open spaces prohibit fishing, boating and swimming from water or access.

The Bel Marin Keys CSD Board of Directors has established a working group (District Manager, District Engineer, 2 Board members) to review waterways and parks ordinances, many of which date back to the 1960's and have been in need of review and updates. The process to have community outreach, open discussions, recommendations to the full BMKCSD Board of Directors along with the process to have a thorough review in order to move it to the Board of Supervisors is a lengthy process. The BMKCSD Board of Directors would like broad community input as these regulations and ordinances are reviewed and recommendations moved forward. Please check the BMKCSD website for updates on community outreach meetings.

Marine Life In Bel Marin Keys.. What lives in our lagoons?

Photos taken in BMK Sunset Lagoon by Sue Lattanzio, founder of Friends of Novato Creek

We have such a wonderful community connected to the San Pablo Bay and the Novato Creek Watershed. After 34 years of living in BMK I've seen so much beauty and being a marine biologist I'd like to share some of that information. Many of you may already know this info so I apologize. Our community is very fortunate to have passed bond measures back in 2003 that have allowed the BMK CSD to maintain the water quality in our lagoons and have restored it to the levels it was back in 1986. The 2003 BMK CSD Bonds funding maintenance for infrastructure (locks, levees, parks, water quality etc. is not covered by your county taxes) have been used for ongoing BMK projects and will expire in 2022.



Not the Caribbean - its under my dock

We are connected via the Novato Creek to the 44 sq. mile Novato Creek Watershed bringing freshwater from above Stafford Lake and saltwater from San Pablo Bay when the BMK locks are opened. Generally two times a month the locks are opened intentionally a specific time to allow water to recycle and circulate in our lagoons "Flushing". This cycle has improved our water quality, as well as, using aeration and algae management. Connected to both the Bay and freshwater, our salinity goal for the lagoons is on the brackish to saltwater side of the range, which is better for our water quality, algae control and habitat.

Our lagoons support hundreds of species of marine life. Many of these you won't see unless you are really looking under the surface. We have so many species it would be impossible to list them all, but here are a few to show you the amazing diversity.



Red, Yellow and Purple Sponges live in BMK Lagoons

Fish (common names) - California Blenny, Oyster Toadfish, Longjaw Mud Sucker, Mottled Sculpin, Bay Anchovy, Bay Pipefish, Striped Bass, Bat Ray, CA Halibut, American Shad, Three Spine Stickleback, Shiner Perch, Green Sturgeon, Starry Flounder, and Smelt Crabs & Shrimp- Marsh Grass Shrimp, Yellow Shore Crab, Harris Mud Crab Other Invertebrates- Orange Anemone, Red Beard Sponge, Mud snail, Horn Snail California Mussel, Ribbed Horse Mussel, Green Bag Mussel, Bay Mussel, Soft Shell Clam, Little Neck Clam, Tubeworms, Acorn Barnacles, Tunicates- Star Sea Squirt-Solitary Sea Squirt, Hydroids, Olympia Oyster, Red Mud Worm- Pile Worms, Isopods, Amphipods, Nudibranchs- Bay Sea Slug. I could go on but you get the idea, basically anything that lives in the SF Bay can survive in the lagoons, providing they can withstand the

salinity and temperature changes seasonally. One reason our lagoons stay so clear and clean is due to our healthy shellfish and filter feeders. When we have a mussel "die off" due to excessive freshwater winter runoff then our water clarity goes down. Every Mussel filters water 1-2 liters per hour, which removes bacteria, toxins as well as sediment. When we have a healthy environment for shellfish it's a win/ win!



Our Feature Fish this month is the Bay Pipefish *Syngnathus leptorhynchus*



This is one of my personal favorites living in our lagoons and tidal marsh areas. Pipefish are in to the seahorse family living in shallow bay waters and blending in with eelgrass and algae. In place of scales, jointed, bonelike rings encircle this fish's body. To eat, a hungry pipefish gets its tubular, toothless mouth an inch or so from its prey — and slurps up its favorite food, small shrimp & crustaceans. Females larger than males and are aggressor in courtship, but the male then carries the (721) eggs and incubates them in a brood pouch which is found under his tail. Pipefish eggs hatch in about 6 weeks and are born as live young. Pipefish can get to be about 13 inches long and if you are lucky you can see them swimming horizontally moving their head side to side to steer. Predators are in the bay are striped bass, herons and egrets. Please take extra care to

release and protect if accidentally caught.



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14-15 ft long Canoe can be used to paddle or use with a low horse power motor. Has wooden back and can hold up to 570lbs and has three wooden seats. It needs some paint or waterproof bottom and will also need some paddles.

Contact B.J Moehnke if interested at 415-382-7789.



Matt Harris
 Owner
 mattharris13@comcast.net

Matt's Boat Detail

415) 233-1352 415) 459-0479

mattharris13@comcast.net
(415) 459-0479

Bel Marin Keys Waterways Map



Community Calendar 2020

September

Sept. 7: Office Closed
Sept.17: CSD Meeting 7:30pm
(teleconference)

October

Oct. 15: CSD Meeting 7:30pm
(teleconference)

November

Nov. 11: Office Closed
Nov. 19: CSD Meeting 7:30pm
(teleconference)

December

Dec. 17 CSD meeting 7:30pm
Dec 24-Jan1: Office Closed (teleconference)

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