AGENDA
SAN DIEGUITO RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL OPEN SPACE PARK
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Friday, November 7, 2014

Location: San Rafael Parish,
Pastoral Center, Rooms D&E
(The Pastoral Center building is located on the south side of the parking lot)
17252 Bernardo Center Drive, Rancho Bernardo
(north of Rancho Bernardo Drive)

In order to conduct the meetings effectively, the Chair has asked the Citizens Advisory Committee appointees to please sit at the front of the room. Alternates (who are not sitting in for the regular appointee) and others present are invited to sit in the rows behind the committee. Discussion during the meeting will be conducted by the appointees. Alternates and others are welcome to address the committee during the public comment period or if recognized by the Chair during the meeting. Speaker slips are available. It is important that CAC members comply with the Chair's Meeting Procedures and maintain decorum and politeness at all times. A quorum is a simple majority of current members. The Chair cannot start the meeting until a quorum is present. PLEASE ARRIVE BY 10:25 A.M! The CAC may take action on any item listed on the Consent or Discussion/Action agenda, but only when a quorum is present. If a quorum is temporarily lost during the meeting, no further discussion will take place until the quorum is regained. If the quorum is not regained, the meeting will be adjourned. Please advise the Chair at the beginning of the meeting if you must leave before 12:15 p.m.

NOTICE: Agenda packets are distributed by e-mail only. If you do not have an e-mail address, please contact the office at 858 674-2270 to make alternative arrangements.

Roll Call and Introductions
Late arrivals should speak to staff to make sure their attendance is noted.

Approval of August 1, 2014 Minutes

Chair’s Report

Executive Director’s Report

Public Comment
DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. **Committee Reports (oral)**
   a. Project Review Committee
   b. Trails Committee

2. **San Dieguito River Park Interpretive Center** (page 3)
   a. Design & Location
   b. Naming Opportunities

INFORMATION

3. **Park Project Status (oral)**
   a. Ranger Station
   b. Founders Tribute
   c. Pamo Valley Trail
   d. Osuna Valley Bridge
   e. Other

4. **Communications** An opportunity for any CAC member or the public to bring to the CAC's attention a project or activity not reviewed by the Project Review Committee in their reports.

Adjournment

Chair

If you have any questions, please call Dick Bobertz at (858) 674-2270.
TO: CAC
FROM: Staff
SUBJECT: San Dieguito River Park Interpretive Center

RECOMMENDATION:
Discuss and Provide Recommendations to JPA Board

SITUATION:
At the September 2, 2014 JPA Board meeting, the Board discussed the need for a Capital Campaign to raise funds to build the future San Dieguito River Park Interpretive Center at the Lagoon. A number of issues were identified during the discussion, which were referred to the CAC for discussion and advice to the JPA Board.

The direction for nature center/visitor centers in the park is documented in the San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan, adopted in 1994, and updated in 2002:

- p.41 – calls for a nature center/ranger office at the lagoon. “Develop a Nature Center and ranger offices in Landscape Unit A that in addition to administration, could serve as a park information and visitor's center; Provide a ranger station, a central location for docent and volunteer programs, and could provide a base for scientific research and educational programs on coastal wetlands.”
- p.53 – calls for a visitors center/park offices at Sikes Adobe
- p.56 – calls for a visitors center/interpretive facility in the San Pasqual Valley
- p. 3 – calls for park facility concepts to be developed with the County, which has been initiated with the Santa Ysabel Nature Center plan.

A. When the design for the Center was done in 2009, the focus was on the lagoon restoration, and the intention was that the story of the lagoon restoration would be the primary interpretive message at the Center. And accordingly, the Center was designated the “Lagoon Center”. Since then a number of people have pointed out that there is no other Visitor or Interpretive Center in the San Dieguito River Park, and have recommended that the Center should be an Interpretive Center for the whole San Dieguito River Park, featuring interpretive information about the watershed and all the natural and cultural resources of the San Dieguito River Valley. Among those stories would still be the lagoon restoration, which is an important, relevant topic, but would not be the only or primary topic presented. Please discuss whether you agree with this shift in emphasis, and if you think the name should be changed to "San Dieguito River Park Interpretive Center".
Agenda Item #2
November 7, 2014

Please note that there are designs for another Interpretive Center in the San Dieguito River Park, to be located on County property in the Santa Ysabel area. This eastern Center is tentatively called the Santa Ysabel Backcountry Nature Center. See attached information sheet (Attachment 3). The Santa Ysabel Backcountry Nature Center would be 6,000 square feet in size and cost between $7 to $7.5 million to construct.

B. At the JPA meeting, several members of the public commented that they thought that the proposed Center would be too large. In the discussion, it became apparent that there are a number of members on the Board and on the CAC who did not know or did not recall the history of the public planning process that had been followed in developing the Center designs. Following a 3-day, on-site design charette in 2009, the architects came up with a design concept that included a proposed layout and location, and interpretive themes for exhibits. Following comments from the CAC, the JPA directed the architects to come back with a down-sized version of the plans, which they did. See Attachment 1 Site Plan and Attachment 2 Concept Design. Attachment 4 is the staff report from the JPA meeting of October 16, 2009, which provides this background information in more detail. Consequently, the concept that the Board approved, Scheme B, is smaller than what the architects originally proposed, is one level (instead of two) and is designed to have a partial earth roof. However, from the comments made at the September 2nd JPA meeting, there was some indication of support for a yet smaller building. The Project Review Committee (PRC) of the CAC discussed this at their September 15th meeting. The PRC was asked whether, given the time that has passed, whether they still support the design or if they want to review it further. In summary, they unanimously felt that the center is too large but not because of any concern of its physical impact to the site, but because they are concerned about long-term sustainability. Here are their comments in more detail:

- Should scale down the overall size and number of rooms because they fear the JPA could not keep it occupied or it would be too expensive to run and maintain.
- Concern over the lack of a sustained budget to staff, operate and maintain the center. Even though the plans are to raise an endowment for staff/operations as part of the capital campaign, the PRC wasn't confident that an endowment would actually happen or that it would be enough.
- Concern about the demand for a large visitors center and whether visitation would be enough to justify the size/cost/keep. Used San Elijo as example because some felt that it is often empty of visitors.
- It was suggested it should be a more "passive" experience and more limited in scope; wait to see how use of the ranger station and amphitheater evolves. Cited Buena Vista lagoon visitors center as an example of a smaller and simpler facility.
• Don’t want private parties/events (such as weddings) to be the driver and concern over the need to generate revenue to run the facility.
• Wanted to know if it could be built in phases (to start smaller and add on only if needed).
• They did think there is demand for community meeting spaces but questioned the amount proposed (and felt that the new ranger station would already fill some of that need).
• They agreed that the focus of interpretation should be on the entire SDRP and watershed, not just the lagoon.

Please review the issues listed above, and then discuss the following questions:
1. Do you think the proposed Center is too large for the site, and if so, why?
2. If there were a sufficient Endowment to run the Center raised concurrently with the Construction funding, would you still feel that the Center is too large?
3. Do you feel that an active emphasis on science and education (which is the purpose of the lab space, teaching lab and classroom space) is appropriate for the Center, and is more desirable than Exhibit space?
4. Would another location in the vicinity of the lagoon be a preferable location for an Interpretive Center of this size?

C. Naming Opportunities.

Because there are no grant programs on the horizon that would fund Nature Education Facilities, it is necessary to look in other directions for funding for the Center. The San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy is contemplating launching a Capital Campaign to raise funding for the construction of the Center as well as an endowment that would generate funds to pay for staff and operation costs for the Center. While the Business Plan that was written in 2009 identified revenue-generating ideas for the Center sufficient to cover a minimally staffed operation, JPA staff does not recommend moving forward on such a speculative basis. Persons with experience in this field have advised that it is important to have sufficient funding to run the Center and not rely that additional funding will become available when it is needed. That is the reason for including a non-wasting endowment in the Capital Campaign – to earn annual income from the invested funds that can be depended on year after year to pay for a Center Director and another staff person, plus programming, operating and maintenance expenses. The combined amount that would have to be raised is $12,400,000 (includes $7,200,000 for construction, $750,000 for exhibits/furnishings, and $4,500,000 for the endowment). Even if a smaller Center were constructed, the desired endowment amount would remain at $4,500,000. That amount would generate $225,000 annually.

The Capital Campaign would seek donations from foundations, corporations and private donors with missions compatible with the San Dieguito River Park’s mission. It is likely that most, if not all, donors of sizable donations would wish to receive recognition in the form of a Naming Opportunity. The JPA Board discussed what value should be assigned to each Naming Opportunity and how long should a Naming Opportunity last for (i.e., 10
years, 20 years) before it becomes available for re-use. Attachment 5 is text that would be developed into the Capital Campaign brochure. It contains a Table (see Table 1 below) that lists proposed Naming Opportunities, ranging from $125,000 to have the donor’s name on a particular room or space in the Center to $5 million to have the donor’s name as part of the name of the entire Center.

Table 1. Proposed Naming Opportunity Amounts

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Naming Opportunity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Room</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Store</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibit Space</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Wildlife Conservation Research Lab</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Lab</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-Purpose Space #1</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-Purpose Space #2</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Viewing Deck</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Center</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As currently written, if someone purchased a Naming Opportunity, they have the right to have their name on the facility for ten years. After that time, the Naming Opportunity for that room, or the overall facility would become available for re-use (i.e., could be re-sold). When the JPA Board discussed this issue, some Board members suggested that if one donor were to provide the entire desired amount to build and endow the Center, then the name should be in perpetuity, but otherwise, if they contribute smaller amounts that would pay for rooms or wings, then it was appropriate to have a limited time set for those. Some Board members also felt that the proposed amounts for Naming Opportunities were too low.

These types of issues have been discussed elsewhere. Please see the following attached news clippings: a) “Port Offers Naming Rights to Terminal – For a Price”, September 2008; b) “SDSU Nears Theater Naming-Rights Deal”, November 2013; c) “Concert Site Gets New Top Sponsor”, April 2008; d) “SDSU’s Cox Arena to be called ’Viejas’,” March 2009. Note that in all of these cases, the sponsor agreement is for a limited time period.

Please discuss 1) whether you think the Naming Opportunity amounts are appropriate, and/or suggest other amounts; and 2) should there be an expiration to a Naming Opportunity or should it be in perpetuity? Does it make a difference whether the donor or sponsor is a corporation (as each of the ones listed in Attachment 4 is), or if it is a family or foundation?
Respectfully submitted,

Susan Carter, Deputy Director

Attachments:

1. Site Plan for Interpretive Center at Lagoon
2. Concept Designs for Interpretive Center at Lagoon
3. Concept Designs for Santa Ysabel Backcountry Nature Center
4. JPA Staff Report, October 16, 2009
5. Text of Naming Opportunities Brochure
6. News Clippings about Local Naming Rights Agreements
TO: JPA
FROM: Staff
SUBJECT: San Dieguito Lagoon Center Revised Version

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that your Board approve the revised concept designs (Scheme B) for the San Dieguito Lagoon Center as presented today, direct architect team to prepare detailed cost estimates, direct staff to continue preparation of a Business Plan for ongoing operational and programming costs, and direct staff to pursue grants and other funding opportunities for the proposed Center.

SUMMARY:

At today’s meeting, the architect team will present a revised concept design for your review and approval. As reported last month, the architect team (Roesling Nakamura & Terada Architects and Spurlock Poirier Landscape Architects) has met with numerous stakeholder groups to receive input, held a 3 day design open house, and made multiple presentations to various groups, including the CAC. The designs were uploaded to our website and visitors were encouraged to send comments via a blog set up just for that purpose. Many comments were received, and the architect team worked on revising the concepts in response. The revised scheme was presented to the Design Advisory Committee (DAC) at a meeting this week. The Design Advisory Committee, chaired by Tom Golich, was put together by the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy to provide expertise in several areas, including science, education, architecture and operational experience in running a nature center. In addition, Ann Gardner with the Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley and Dawn Rawls with the San Dieguito Lagoon Committee are on the DAC. The DAC has met three times to provide advice to the Architect Team.

In general, a number of the comments repeated that the original design was too big, had too much hardscape, would require extra staffing due to inefficient flow, had too much space devoted to specialized uses, and had too harsh and modern a look for the site. Comments were also made about the size of the community/class room and the look of the solar chimney and whether a science research lab was necessary.

The revised design (Scheme B) is much smaller than the original design (Scheme A) shown to your Board last month. Scheme A was 7475 square feet. Scheme B is 6,000 square feet. Scheme B is one-story instead of two-story, and it has one viewing deck instead of two. The
Agenda Item 4  
October 16, 2009

dedicated classroom was eliminated but there is a still a large multipurpose room that can be divided into two spaces as needed. The archive room was folded into the conference room. A small teaching lab replaced the dedicated classroom. The science research lab was also retained because it will be used for ongoing scientific monitoring of the wetland restoration area and for marine wildlife conservation research. Emphasis on education and scientific research is consistent with the funding guidelines for the upcoming Proposition 84 Nature Education Facilities grant program.

To address the complaint that the design was too harsh, the new design integrates the center into the site in a more organic manner than Scheme A, utilizing a living roof over more of the built areas, and following the contour of the land more closely. The living roof design has the advantage of improved temperature regulation; however, it is more expensive to build than a facility without a living roof.

The solar (or cooling) chimney has not changed, but it is lowered into the center by about 8 feet, reducing the overall height. The purpose of the solar chimney is to enable warm air to be drawn up and released from the building. It promotes ventilation and airflow. This is one of the many “green” or sustainable features that the Center will have. Another purpose of the solar chimney is to provide a recognizable design feature that can be identified with the Center.

The Design Advisory Committee described above voted unanimously in favor of Scheme B as presented. At today’s meeting, Tom Golich, the Chair of the Design Advisory Committee, will be present to describe the Committee and explain their recommendation.

CAC RECOMMENDATION

At their October 2nd meeting, the CAC discussed the revised Scheme B, and voted 16-2 in favor of recommending that your Board approve Scheme B. They proposed that there should be some kind of landscaping feature that would soften the look of the courtyard.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION

Part of the Architect Team’s scope of work on their existing contract is to prepare a cost estimate of the selected design. An engineering firm that specializes in construction cost estimates will prepare the cost estimate for the design that your Board approves. JPA staff is also working with a consulting firm to identify operational costs (staffing needs, programming, maintenance) and realistic ongoing revenue sources. A marketing analysis will be performed. Some of the potential revenue sources that will be evaluated to determine how much income they can realistically generate are donations at the door, book store proceeds, rental concessions, fees associated with student field trips, and proceeds from special events such as lecture series. This information will form the basis of the Business Plan.

State Parks Department, which is administering the Proposition 84 Nature Education Facilities grant program, held a hearing recently on the proposed grant guidelines. The tentative grant
Deadline is April 1st. As currently proposed, applications will be divided into tiers. There will be $40 million available statewide for projects in the highest tier, which will be from $3-$5 million. Based on the criteria, which strongly favor nature education, marine wildlife conservation research, visitor outreach, public access, sustainability, and project readiness, staff believes the San Dieguito Lagoon Center grant application will be very competitive. However, even if completely successful, the maximum grant would not be enough to build the complete Center as proposed. Your Board may desire to initiate a capital fundraising campaign to raise the remainder or seek matching funds from potential corporate sponsors. Alternatively, phasing of the Center construction will be indicated. Information resulting from the cost estimate and Business Plan development will be brought back to your Board when it is available.

**ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS**

1. Approve the revised concept designs (Scheme B).
2. Approve an alternative concept design.
3. Do not approve a design and give staff other direction.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that your Board approve the revised concept designs (Scheme B) for the San Dieguito Lagoon Center as presented today, direct architect team to prepare detailed cost estimates, direct staff to continue preparation of a Business Plan for ongoing operational and programming costs, and direct staff to pursue grants and other funding opportunities for the proposed Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Carter
Deputy Director

Attachment:
1. Site Plan
2. Revised Scheme B Floor Plan (lower)
3. Revised Scheme B Floor Plan (upper)
4. Site Section - through Admin Wing
5. Site Section - through Multi-purpose room
6. Site grading
7. Amphitheatre Design
SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
INTERPRETIVE CENTER

A LASTING LEGACY

For more information, visit www.sdgrp.org or contact us at sdgrp@sdgrp.org (858) 674-2275
THE WESTERN GATEWAY

The San Dieguito River Park Interpretive Center is envisioned to be located at a scenic site overlooking the San Dieguito Lagoon, the western gateway of the San Dieguito River Park, a 55-mile-long regional river parkway. We envision that the Center will interpret the restoration of the lagoon and the value of tidal wetlands, as well as the other natural and cultural resources located within the River Park. The Center will introduce visitors to the entire 92,000-acre regional park and its 71-mile-long Coast to Crest Trail.

Purpose for the Interpretive Center

The San Dieguito River Park represents an extraordinary example of a community coming together to preserve the environment. The lagoon, once one of the largest in California, had degraded into a small, highly saline body, but thanks to the dedication and commitment of the surrounding community, it has been restored to a thriving ecosystem that offers a substantial opportunity for ongoing research. This is one of the stories that will be told at the new Center.

The story of the River Park needs to be told through an interpretive center that will be a valuable resource to the surrounding community, visitors, and researchers. The exhibits and educational programs will promote environmental stewardship and scientific exploration, as well as teach the importance of understanding the broader ecosystem. The community programs will bring people together to enjoy and appreciate nature and all that the San Dieguito River Park has to offer.

Donor Recognition

All donations of $1,000 and higher to the Capital Campaign for the San Dieguito River Park Interpretive Center will be acknowledged in a prominent display in the courtyard.

Donors who purchase a Naming Opportunity will receive the following benefits:

- Naming rights to the building or selected amenity/room for 10 years
- Invitation to be on the Conservancy’s Advisory Board
- Name recognition in promotional materials, brochures, and media campaigns (including newsletters, social media, event and program flyers, posters, banners)
- Access to visitor information and visitor demographic data
- Identification on donor recognition wall
- Use of the Center for a company function or meeting annually
- Company name or logo tactfully included in sponsored area(s)
- Recognition at special events

Planned Schedule

The Capital Campaign is launching in August 2014. Implementation will begin as sufficient funds are raised for each milestone. The anticipated schedule is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital Campaign</td>
<td>August 2014 - August 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>60% Construction Documents</td>
<td>August 2015 - February 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Review/Permits</td>
<td>February 2016 - February 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>100% Construction Documents</td>
<td>February 2016 - February 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>September 2017 - November 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Opening</td>
<td>November 2018</td>
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For more information, visit www.sdp.org or contact us at sdp@sdp.org (858) 674-2275
Resources & Programs Offered

The San Dieguito River Park Center will provide hands-on research and classroom-based projects, incorporate students’ findings into public displays, and involve students in monitoring the success of restoration projects taking place throughout the River Park. The Interpretive Center will increase accessibility to the resources of the River Park, promote environmental stewardship, support the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy and River Park’s Citizen Science Monitoring Program, and create a space that encourages an appreciation for nature.

Interpretive Center Operations

The River Park Center will operate under the guidance of the Board of the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA). The JPA represents a powerful partnership in environmental protection, involving cooperation of elected officials from San Diego, Escondido, Del Mar, Poway, Solana Beach, and the County of San Diego. San Dieguito River Park staff will be responsible for managing the Center, which is planned to be built on property that the JPA already owns.

The JPA works with its partner, the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) with over 1,200 members and a history of successful fundraising. The Conservancy has helped establish a permanent open space corridor in the San Dieguito River Valley, and their expertise and relationship will be invaluable in both the building and volunteer staffing of the Center.
The JPA and Conservancy are embarking on a Capital Campaign to raise the necessary funds. With the leadership and assistance of our influential Board and partner organizations, we are confident the San Dieguito River Park Center will become a reality. The target campaign amount is $12.4 million, which will be used to construct and endow the Center.

**Milestone** | **Amount Needed**
--- | ---
Pre-Construction | $1,044,000
Construction Costs | $6,106,000
Exhibits & Furnishings | $750,000
Endowment 1

1For annual operating expenses and 2 staff members, a Director, and an Education/Outreach Volunteer Coordinator.

**Reaching the Target**

The JPA intends to sell Naming Opportunities to private individuals or corporations for various components of the Center, or even for the entire Center to an appropriate individual, family, or organization that shares the JPA and Conservancy’s environmental and educational mission.

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<td>$1,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science Research Lab</td>
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After the Center is built, the Center staff will be able to bring in additional operational and programming revenue through membership donations, business donations, grants, and a combination of revenue-generating programs.

**WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER SUPPORTING THE SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER BY FUNDING ONE OF THE NAMING OPPORTUNITIES.**
Port offers naming rights to terminal – for a price

September 6, 2008

While the city of San Diego is backing away from the concept of selling naming rights to its new City Hall complex as undignified, the Port District is happy to put a name on its proposed cruise ship terminal, thank you.

How about Carnival Cruise Ship Terminal? Or, Celebrity Terminal? Princess Cruise Ship Terminal has a lofty ring? Somehow, calling the terminal Royal Caribbean or Holland America seem geographically out of whack. All of these are cruise lines that home port in San Diego and, hence, might be interested in striking a deal.

But S.D. Unified Port District officials say the sponsor doesn’t have to be a cruise line. It can be a corporation, a product or even a person – “Welcome to the Thor Heyerdahl Cruise Ship Terminal.” The one caveat is that the port has the right to reject something inconsistent with its vision.

The price? A minimum of $5 million for a 10-year run. That cost reflects the difference between the original $23.6 million terminal cost estimate and its current $28 million price tag, with an upgraded design and more environmentally friendly features.

The port will be happy to take more than $5 million, however. A request for bids will go out nationally in the next couple of months. Only time will tell what a name on the Broadway Pier facility, scheduled to open in 2011, could be worth.

End of an era

UC Santa Barbara senior Colin Bruce made a quick trip home to Point Loma for Labor Day weekend because he knew ExpressJet was about to stop operating here. The Houston-based carrier offered the only nonstop flight between San Diego and Santa Barbara.

As Bruce crossed the Lindbergh tarmac to board his return flight early Monday evening, he noticed somber-faced airline personnel snapping photos of the jet. As he took his seat, the captain was taking pictures of the cabin.

Then the captain announced that this, sadly, was the airline’s very last flight and, as such, it was somewhat historic. Therefore, he said, he would fly beneath the clouds all the way up the coast so passengers could enjoy the view throughout the flight.

The captain thanked everyone for their business, paused to control his emotions, and added, “This will also be the last flight on which I serve as captain.”

Passengers applauded him as he returned to the cockpit.
SDSU NEARS THEATER NAMING-RIGHTS DEAL

California Coast Credit Union would pay school $3.25 million in 10-year agreement

KAREN KUCHER • U-T

SAN DIEGO

California Coast Credit Union was named Monday as the intended new sponsor of the Open Air Theatre at San Diego State University under a 10-year agreement that would bring the school $3.25 million. The on-campus amphitheater would be renamed the Cal Coast Credit Union Open Air Theatre starting Jan. 1 if the deal is approved by California State University’s Board of Trustees.

The credit union also plans to place an ATM at the outdoor venue, as well as establish a branch and an ATM in the new Aztec Student Union, which is set to open in January.

As envisioned, the agreement would help the university make key improvements to the 4,600-seat facility, which opened in 1941. This is the first time the theater has had a naming-rights sponsor.

“We are very excited about the idea of a partnership with San Diego State University because of our

SEE THEATER • B2

THEATER
Money will go to renovation

FROM B1

long-term relationship with schools throughout the county,” said Marla Shepard, the credit union’s president and CEO. “This credit union was created by schoolteachers and educators, so we think this is the perfect match.”

Shepard said the alliance would give the credit union greater visibility and create a “wonderful opportunity” to recruit new members and provide services to faculty, staff and students.

She also said several members of the credit union’s board and management team are SDSU alumni, and that the company has supported the SDSU men’s basketball team and other university events in the past.

California Coast Credit Union is the oldest financial institution in the San Diego region.

The Associated Students, the auxiliary that operates the amphitheater, began looking for a naming sponsor because the facility needed a major renovation, said Christina Brown, executive director of Associated Students at SDSU.

“We will use all the proceeds to go right into the venue,” Brown said. She said the repairs would be phased in and would include replacing the stage roof and some seats, and new restrooms, expanding the concourse and improving the stage lighting and sound.

“It will be really modernized and enable us to do even more events there,” Brown said.

The seating capacity will remain the same, she said.

The outdoor venue has played host to a mix of entertainers over the years, ranging from Madonna, Adele and The Fray to Joan Baez and Benny Goodman. It also was the site of a 1964 speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

If the CSU board finalizes the deal, signs reflecting the new name would be installed on the theater’s main entrance and on the large lighted marquee next to Interstate 8.

Under the sponsorship agreement, the credit union would receive hospitality benefits including 10 “best available” tickets per concert event, four preferred after-hour parking passes valid on concert event days in designated parking lots, and the right to buy mutually agreed-upon additional ticket inventory at face value.

The credit union also will be able to host three rent-free corporate events at the theater per year.

California Coast also plans to partner with Associated Students to offer financial seminars for students in the student union building.

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Concert site gets new top sponsor

By Tanya Mannes
STAFF WRITER
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CHULA VISTA — Two months after Coors decided to end its title sponsorship of the amphitheater in Chula Vista, Cricket Communications has secured naming rights for San Diego County’s largest concert venue.

It’s likely that crews will soon remove the Coors nameplate and other signs to reflect the venue’s new name: Cricket Wireless Amphitheatre.

The transition comes days before the first concert of the season on Sunday, a performance by Mexican teen-pop sensation RBD. Other recent acts have included the Dave Matthews Band and Gwen Stefani.

Coors had sponsored the facility since it opened in 1998.

“We’re absolutely thrilled to have Cricket Communications as a sponsor,” said Nick Masters, president of the Southern California office of Live Nation, in a statement Wednesday night. The company owns and operates the amphitheater.

Live Nation declined to provide the terms of Cricket’s agreement, including its cost and number of years. Cricket representatives said they expect to formally sign an agreement with Live Nation today and will comment after signing.

Cricket, a division of San Diego-based Leap Wireless, already has a relationship with the concert company as a sponsor of Live Nation’s amphitheater in Phoenix. “They have been a wonderful partner, and we look forward to a great future in San Diego,” Masters said.

City officials praised the new deal, which ended speculation that the facility would be renamed “Sleep Train Amphitheatre.” Sleep Train was already a concert sponsor but not the title sponsor.

“I think Cricket is a great company with a great name, and I’m glad they’re going to share it with us,” said Chula Vista Councilman Rudy Ramirez, noting that crickets are considered symbols of luck.

The amphitheater’s concert-goers appear to be the type of customer that Cricket is trying to attract. The discount cell-phone company targets a young, urban demographic with its flat-rate phone service available without a credit check.

Coors Brewing confirmed Feb. 1 that the company had decided to end its 10-year deal with the concert venue. Live Nation said the change would have no impact on the 2008 concert schedule.

At that time, a Coors spokeswoman said, “We’re just allocating resources elsewhere.”
In recent years, the Golden, Colo.-based beer company has focused on sports. It has sponsorship deals with the NFL, nine football teams including the Chargers, and NASCAR.

Both the Coors and the Cricket deals are confidential, but the terms of other title sponsorships for new and existing facilities have been disclosed.

Title sponsorship deals vary widely, with the price based on factors including the size of the venue, the length of its concert season and the kinds of performances it offers, said Liz Panich, the director of consulting at the Marketing Arm, a Dallas company that handles entertainment and event marketing.

In 2004, Petco agreed to a 22-year, $60 million deal for naming rights to San Diego's downtown baseball park. In 1997, Qualcomm agreed to a 20-year, $18 million deal for naming rights to San Diego's football stadium.

The amphitheater in Chula Vista was built by Universal Concerts for about $17 million on public land in the southeast section of the city. City officials have described the venture as an opportunity to bring visitors to South Bay and to raise the area's regional profile.

The venue's ownership and management company has changed several times. Live Nation took control in July 2006.

Chula Vista leases out the land in return for a share of the profits. For the 2006 season, the city received $320,000 for the general fund and $50,000 for a performing arts fund, as well as premium tickets.

Ramirez last year invited Mexican government officials to see Vicente Fernandez, who is also on this year's lineup. Ramirez, who hopes to form a sister city relationship with Tijuana, offered about 16 of the city's tickets to council members from Tijuana.

"They really appreciated it," Ramirez said.

Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox said, "I'm pleased that Live Nation has found a reputable title sponsor," and encouraged people to attend this season's concerts.

Pop music critic George Varga, staff librarian Erin Hobbs and staff writer Jonathan Sidener contributed to this report.

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SDSU's Cox Arena to be called 'Viejas'

Casino-owning tribe's deal draws criticism

By Onell R. Soto (Contact) Union-Tribune Staff Writer
2:00 a.m. March 18, 2009

The sports and entertainment venue at San Diego State University will be renamed Viejas Arena, seen in an artist's rendering, on July 1. The naming rights will cost the Indian band $6.9 million over 10 years. (SDSU / Viejas)

The Viejas logo will adorn the overhead scoreboard and floor of the basketball court at San Diego State's indoor sports venue, as seen in an artist's rendering. (SDSU / Viejas)

San Diego State University has sold the naming rights of its sports arena to the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, which operates a casino, an outlet center and other businesses at its reservation 22 miles east of campus.

Critics say the deal, apparently a first in the nation for a university, could cross a line and hurt students,
who are particularly vulnerable to gambling problems.

Beginning July 1, the 12,845-seat venue known as Cox Arena will be Viejas Arena. The $6.9 million, 10-year deal includes a proviso against using the word “casino” on signs and advertising or making any reference to gambling.

“We are always paying attention to those issues,” SDSU President Stephen Weber said of the gambling tie. “San Diego State is more than its athletic teams. Viejas is more than its casino.”

Viejas tribal leaders cheered yesterday as a curtain unveiled the new name on the arena scoreboard.

“It’s a great opportunity for our children to see their name up with San Diego State,” said Viejas Vice Chairman Robert Welch Jr.

He said the decision to partner with the university was easy. “We have a culture of giving,” Welch said. “It’s only right to give back.

Most people know the Viejas name because of its casino, said David Ridpath, executive director of the Drake Group, which pushes for academic reform in college athletics. Putting that name on the arena crosses a line, he said.

“You’re still getting that name recognition. It sends the wrong message,” Ridpath said.

The National Center on Problem Gambling says people 18 to 24 are at “high risk.”

Studies have found that 4 percent to 6 percent of young adults have trouble with gambling and an additional 8 percent to 14 percent are at risk, said Alyssa Sklar, a researcher at McGill University in Montreal.

Weber said he didn’t see putting the Viejas name on the arena as encouraging gambling.

“I see it as encouraging education,” Weber said, because the money will support athletics programs, and a big part of sports budgets is spent on scholarships.

San Diego State notified the NCAA about plans to rename the arena, and officials there had “no problem,” Weber said.

The NCAA says it opposes any betting on college athletics. No casino in California, including Viejas near Alpine, has a sports book. The NCAA said it leaves naming rights decisions up to universities.

“It is up to each of our member colleges and universities to determine which advertising partners are a fit for their individual mission,” NCAA spokeswoman Stacey Osburn wrote in an e-mail.

Viejas appears to be the first Indian tribe to put its name on a college sports venue. The Mohegan Sun casino in Connecticut has an arena that is home to a women’s professional basketball team it owns. The University of Nevada Las Vegas plays its home football games at Sam Boyd Stadium, named for one of the city’s most influential hotel and casino figures.

SDSU’s deal with Cox Communications expires at the end of June.
Cox paid $4.8 million for 12 years when the arena opened in 1997. It was built for more than $30 million at the site of the Aztec Bowl football stadium. Cox decided not to renew the deal.

Money from the naming rights will be used to support the arena's operation, which costs about $5.5 million a year, as well as help SDSU athletic programs and student government, Weber said. The arena also is used as a concert venue and for other university activities.

A 30-year bond that financed the construction of the arena and a nearby recreation center is being repaid through student fees.

The naming rights deal came together with the help of Randy Bernstein, a former Aztecs baseball player who brokers such agreements through his Los Angeles firm, Premier Partnerships.

Bernstein said such a deal is a next step for tribes that already advertise in stadiums.

"For other tribes that have such a pristine credibility like Viejas, if they were interested in expanding beyond sponsorship, naming rights is an option," Bernstein said.

In 2000, the Padres backed off the idea of selling their downtown ballpark's name to the Sycuan Indian band after talking with the baseball commissioner.

Bernstein said that the gambling connection cannot be denied but that it can be dealt with in a university setting.

"All parties that are involved need to be aware that one of their businesses is gaming, and in light of that they need to make sure they take all the appropriate steps to make sure there is no direct marketing of the casino on a daily basis to these students."

*Staff writer Brent Schrotenboer contributed to this report.*

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