



NFWF

# Belden's Landing, Fishing and Boat Safety Improvements: Final Programmatic Report (AMENDED)

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*Recipient Organization/Agency: Solano County, Parks and Recreation Division*

*Date Submitted: January 2, 2018*

*Project Period: 09/02/2013 to 12/31/2017*

*Award Amount: \$93,487*

*Matching Contributions: \$130,221.01*

*Total Disbursement: \$88,650.57*

*Project Number: #8006.12.033279*

## **1. Summary of Accomplishments**

Belden's Landing is a boatlaunch and fishing access facility that is very heavily utilized by the public throughout the year. The project provided an opportunity to increase access for existing user groups and attract new users by providing increased safety, more resource appropriate assets such as shade structures and improved picnic tables and an interpretive kiosk. Interpretative messaging was an element notably absent from the location prior to the project completion. The incorporation of interpretive signage provides an opportunity for interpretive messaging, currently showcasing fish and wildlife resources of the Delta with potential future panels covering safe boating practices and stewardship.

## **2. Project Activities & Outcomes**

### **Activities**

High Efficiency LED flood lights and parking lot lights were installed for the convenience of the park users and provided better lighting conditions and an increase in public safety. The introduction of LED lighting allows for better visibility at night for the public as well as our onsite security camera system.

The waterfront plaza is relatively narrow across the front and irregularly shaped on the east end. When combined with the relatively remote location, we were presented with a challenge in seeking shade structure designs that would be appropriate to the resource. We determined the best option was to install two standard seating and one ADA compliant steel shade structures that have integrated picnic tables. The integrated structures provide the best option to provide shade to multiple park users, are of a material that will stand up to heavy use, and are not obtrusive to the views of the marsh. In short they are the most appropriate to the resource.

The plaza itself was demolished and replaced with an ADA compliant surface, with appropriate curb cuts, ramps, cross slope and the addition of a boundary curb with drain cuts. The plaza is now inclusive for use by all ability levels. This presented a challenge as the original plan was for an accessible pathway to be installed, redoing the whole plaza doubled our construction costs for that task but allowed for meeting the goals of installation of shade structures and picnic tables without impeding access.

Interpretive messaging was notably absent until the completion of this project. The installation of a three-sided kiosk with replaceable interpretive panels has allowed for a venue to display information to which the public can refer to develop safe boating practices and become stewards of the lands and seas they recreate upon. The panels are interchangeable with kiosks at our other parks, allowing for information that is not only site specific but is common to the other ecosystems within the county. The Parks staff designed and installed the panels to match the standard found system wide within the county, allowing for ownership by the onsite staff and the opportunity to create experts for the resource out of our ranger staff.

The two interior lighting fixtures allow for restroom use afterhours. The use of solar powered LEDs and motion activated sensors minimizes the impact on the electrical grid.

The original project goals included the installation of bait cutting boards on the plaza. This element was removed as no potable water is onsite. The onsite well only provides water suitable for cleaning the restroom assets (with the assistance of cleaning products). Field observations at other locations indicated that bait cutting boards are often utilized for cleaning fish after they have been caught. As the surfaces would not be regularly cleaned with clean drinking water the idea of installing the bait boards was removed as a public health consideration.

The parking lot LED portion of the project was performed by a contractor who contracts with a PG&E program for energy saving LED retrofits. Parks staff were planning to rent a boom lift to replace the lighting fixtures, having this contractor perform these duties eliminated the need for the boom lift rental and operator line item costs.

The construction project itself was isolated to repair work with no projected impact to the surrounding environment. All work occurred within the same footprint of an existing impermeable surface, between two other impermeable surfaces. No drainage or runoff increase or decrease resulted. As a result of all of these conditions, the CEQA process was not a factor in this project. The CEQA line item was a carryover from when the project included a boat wash station and an additional boat launch dock float.

The boat launch dock float portion of the initial project, originally listed as a funding match by DBW was removed from the project as funding was not made available in the California State budget FY2013/2014. The idea still persists to move forward with a version of the project, likely through future efforts from Solano County Parks to secure grant funding.

## **Benefits**

The projected benefits have very successfully been met.

Interpretive kiosk panels provide the park users with a variety of seasonally updateable information about the flora and fauna of the surrounding environment, as well as a venue for future panel topics including; safe boating practices, navigational tips, and invasive species awareness and control information.

Access to recreational opportunity has been increased at the park as the plaza allows for persons of all abilities to interact appropriately with the environment.

Beldens Landing has no natural assets that provide shade, in fact until this project was completed there was no escape from the sun during the heat of the summer day. Installing shaded picnic tables allows for a higher quality of recreational opportunity and provides for a safer experience as a side effect.

The installation of high efficiency LED lighting provides an opportunity for safe access for the full 24-hour day while having less of an impact on the environment related to the consumption of electricity. Many times fisherman and hunters launch their watercraft in the dark in order to get to that perfect spot on the water by

dawn, or to come off the water after sunset. Better lighting allows for the park user to prevent falls, mechanical issues and failures, and promotes general safety.

### **3. The Future**

Parks staff have already begun research and development of a Habitat Restoration Plan for Belden's Landing. We have a vested interest in expanding upon interpretive elements established in this current NFWF Project. As we continue to balance public access and resource protection the idea of creating stewards of the park users has shown to be a valuable link to appropriate recreational use of the site. Existing assets, such as the boat launch and fishing pier are identified as needing an update within the next ten years so efforts will be made to perform those tasks, and the areas surrounding the parking lots have been identified as possible areas for restoration with native vegetation.

### **4. Lessons Learned**

This project was started with the idea of improving a facility that has a loyal following who utilize the park for a variety of interests ranging from migratory bird watching, shoreline fishing, as well as an access point to the Suisun Marsh and ultimately the surrounding San Francisco bay area bodies of water for recreational fishing and hunting. With the variety of user groups, we attempted to address the needs that were most appropriate to our resource.

Over the course of the grant, we adapted our goals to meet real world issues, such as (1) no access to potable water or a way to treat waste water for the boat wash, (2) fitting appropriate long lasting assets for such a remote location, (3) finding a way to address identified issues concerning ADA requirements, and (4) securing funding sources in restrictive economic times. We learned that adaptability and communication with our grant management team were going to be our keys to success as we sought to provide the best potential recreational opportunity with continually constrained resources. We discovered that capitalizing upon the resources within our own agency was going to be pivotal to getting the project completed.

The project was plagued with staff turnover and stalls but the end product provides some validation to the intrinsic value of the park. We've seen some indication that the park users have also begun to see the intrinsic value as negative impacts to the site, such as graffiti and illegal dumping, have lessened. Moving forward with future projects we have determined that having input from the public and field staff will help create localized ownership of a project and help provide some drive for the project from more directions than administrative.

### **5. Project Documents**

- Photos are attached

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*Figure 1: ADA Compliant table structure, stop curb, and accessible parking stall interface after construction. Image also contains light pole and interpretive kiosk in distance.*



*Figure 2: Detail of ADA compliant shaded picnic table structure after construction.*



Figure 3: Interpretive kiosk as approached from parking lot traveling toward boat launch, as seen after construction.



*Figure 4: Plaza as viewed from Grizzly Island Road headed south (prior to completion of project). Image emphasizes the lack of shade structures and out of compliance ADA parking stall interface with waterfront and absence of ADA compliant tables. (Photo Credit: Google Earth Image, Street View)*



*Figure 5: Aerial image of Belden's Landing prior to project completion, image includes restroom access prior to ADA upgrades. (Restroom upgrades were part of separate project) (Photo Credit: Google Earth Image)*



*Figure 6: Aerial image of Belden's Landing after project completion, image includes ADA upgrades to restroom access. (Restroom upgrades were part of separate project) (Photo Credit: Google Earth Image)*