

Boulder Creek Will Have Its First Park

By DENISE SIEBENTHAL
Sentinel Staff Writer

For many years, the word "park" in Boulder Creek Recreation and Park District has had no meaning since this small mountain town never has had a park of its own.

But the word now has meaning as the district recently acquired a two-acre site which will become Boulder Creek's first park.

The park site, located approximately three miles north of town on the west side of Highway 9 just across from Strong's Corner, was partly donated and partly sold to the district by a man who wishes to remain anonymous.

This isn't a false alarm, District Program Administrator Barbara Day stressed, since the seller already has signed the title papers agreeing to sell.

District officials now are waiting for the state to send the \$58,000 the district has been allocated from the 1974, 1976 and 1980 park bond acts, Day explained. These funds will be used to purchase the portion of the site that wasn't donated.

The park, she added, hopefully will be ready for use by next summer.

While the two acres currently are heavily wooded and look nothing like a community park, Day envisions them someday soon containing a soccer field — which can be used for a variety of sports activities — a playing area for small children, picnic facilities and a par course for exercise.

The district, she explained, has applied to Wells Fargo Bank for a \$2,500 grant to build the par course, which would consist of a series of exercise stations. Under this particular grant program, the district would have to put up the other \$4,000 needed to build the course.

To help with some of these additional expenses, the district has applied to the state government for augmentation funds. These funds, Day said, were set aside by the state Legislature to help special districts out from the effects of Proposition

13. Over the last couple of years, they have gone mostly to fire districts, she said.

Since the district must use most of its Park Bond Act monies toward the purchase of a portion of the site, the local Kiwanis Club has agreed to construct the playing field, Day said.

"We hope to have teams practicing at the park for next seasons' soccer and maybe even for softball," Day stated. While everyone is anxious to get started, the impending rainy season may put off work for a while, she added.

While Day seems very relaxed now about the subject of the park, she explained that the effort to acquire the park site was long, hard and sometimes frustrating.

District officials have been searching for a park site for several years, which has proved a difficult search in an area that has relatively little available flat land at the district's price.

About a year and a half ago, Day said, the district was looking at the Strong's Corner property on Highway 9 as a potential park site. However, plans fell through when the property owners asked for \$277,000 and the district only had \$58,000.

At that point, the district began publicizing to attract property owners who might have a piece of land available.

The publicity effort paid off, with the owner of today's park site coming forth last March with an offer to the district, Day explained.

The district now is completing the paperwork to get the \$39,000 allocated to it in 1974 and 1976 Park Bond Act monies.

While the remaining \$19,000 in 1980 Park Bond Act funds won't be available until July 1982, Fifth (San Lorenzo Valley-Scotts Valley) District Supervisor Joe Cucchiara is working with the county administrator's office to get this money in advance.

If the \$19,000 isn't available until next July, then the district board is agreeable to advancing the money from the park and recreation budget, according to Day.



Barbara Day strolls through wooded area that soon will become Boulder Creek's first park.

Dan Coyro/Sentinel