

Portfolio 7

La Honda Creek Driscoll Ranch Public Access, Endangered Wildlife Protection and Conservation Grazing



La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Claire Landowski)

DESCRIPTION

- Open Driscoll Ranch Area; provide biking/hiking/equestrian trails, limited dog access, parking areas and interpretive displays.
- Develop loop and connector trails.
- Restore habitat for endangered species.
- Restore La Honda Creek; remove fish migration barriers.

Portfolio Allocation: \$14,825,000

Portfolio Expenditures Through 6/30/2023: \$12,426,042

NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MAA07-001 Event Center and Apple Orchard Purchase

Prior Years

Purchased the 307.64-acre Apple Orchard and Event Center property, as well as a 3-acre conservation easement from POST to protect and further restore redwood, coho salmon and steelhead habitat along San Gregorio Creek.

Completed invasive weed control work at the Apple Orchard and Driscoll Ranch properties of La Honda Creek Preserve.

MAA07-002 Fisheries Restoration, Design and Permitting

Prior Years

Partially funded by CDFW Fisheries Restoration Grant Program. Completed road and trail upgrades and drainage improvements along nearly 5 miles of road to address priority erosion control sites to reduce sediment delivery to San Gregorio Creek and tributaries.

MAA07-003 Fisheries Enhancement, Apple Orchard

Prior Years

Completed fisheries habitat enhancement project at the Apple Orchard parcel of lower La Honda Creek, installing 13 in-stream, large woody debris structures, in partnership with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District and CDFW Fisheries Restoration Grant Program.

MAA07-004 Fisheries Enhancement, Event Center

Prior Years

Completed fisheries restoration project at the Event Center, installing large woody debris habitat within San Gregorio Creek to improve salmonid habitat.

MAA07-005 Grazing and Water Systems Infrastructure

Prior Years

Completed pond reconstruction to enhance breeding habitat for California red-legged frog and to improve the water source as a cattle stock pond.

Constructed a new corral system at the previous site of the Wool Ranch house to support the conservation grazing program.

Installed riparian protection fencing, water pipe and new water troughs at Driscoll Ranch to support conservation grazing.

MAA07-006 Cunha Land Purchase

Prior Years

Purchased the 30-acre Cunha Trust property at the end of Sears Ranch Road to provide on-site patrol and management oversight and to secure ownership of the private road that now serves as the driveway entrance into the Sears Ranch parking lot.

MAA07-007 Demolitions, Wool Ranch House/Sears Ranch Rd

Prior Years

Completed site clean-up and demolition of numerous dilapidated structures, after completing photography documentation of the structures, to prepare the preserve for public access.

MAA07-008 Lower Turtle Pond Repair

Fiscal Year 2023

Secured San Mateo County grading exemption and identified the programmatic permit of the Open Space Maintenance and Restoration Program as the appropriate permitting vehicle to obtain regulatory clearance.

Prior Years

Completed engineering designs to repair Lower Turtle Pond, which provides critical habitat for Western Pond Turtle and serves as a watering source for the conservation grazing program. Began permitting partnership discussions with San Mateo Resource Conservation District.

Assessed flooding risk and berm stability through hydrological and geotechnical investigations.

MAA07-009 Sears Ranch Parking Area

Prior Years

Finalized deck replacement and installed new rails on the Harrington Creek Bridge, allowing trail users to safely cross a major creek.

Constructed the new Sears Ranch parking area, providing 22 vehicle spaces, a restroom, signage and the main trailhead to access the trails in the southern area of the preserve.

Completed Phase 1 trail and road repairs in preparation for the public opening of lower La Honda Creek Preserve, including installation of signage and self-closing gates.

Completed the permit-only equestrian parking area and equestrian-only trail segment connecting to the new Folger Ranch Loop Trail.

MAA07-010 Sears Ranch Road Repair

Prior Years

Completed over 3 miles of ranch road repairs, including culvert replacements, to the main ranch road in lower La Honda Creek Preserve. These were critical for: opening the roads to public access; maintaining safe passage for patrol, maintenance and emergency vehicle use; and providing ranch access to support the ongoing conservation grazing program.

MAA07-011 Lower La Honda Creek Phase 2 Loop Trails

Prior Years

Completed construction of the Grasshopper Loop Trail and opened the trail to the public, including seasonal on-leash dog access.

Completed San Mateo County Grading, Resource Management and Building permitting processes for a new loop trail.

Performed necessary pre-construction biological surveys and coordinated with the grazing tenant.

Initiated construction, completing 3,400 linear feet of trail construction with compacted aggregate base surfacing.

Completed biological/cultural/wetland reports and provided copies to the appropriate agencies.

Submitted County of San Mateo permits.

Completed trail design at 90% (contracted with Fall Creek Engineering to design and engineer the La Honda Creek Loop Trail).

Completed rare plant survey and wetland delineations to inform the design of the trail alignment.

Completed structural site improvements for the Agricultural Workforce Housing project to maintain critical housing on the coast that furthers Midpen's coastside mission to support local agriculture.

Received San Mateo County permits for the agricultural workforce housing project to repair an existing residence that supports the conservation grazing program/agricultural program.

Completed the construction bidding process. Received board approval to award the construction contract, with construction scheduled to begin in August 2021.

Completed installation of new water line, storage tank and water trough.

Received board direction to repair an existing housing facility and to designate the residence as Agricultural Workforce Housing.

Completed a housing structures assessment for the Driscoll Ranch area of La Honda Creek Preserve and secured board approval to build/repair agricultural workforce housing in partnership with the County of San Mateo.

Hosted groundbreaking ceremony and public grand opening celebration at lower La Honda Creek Preserve.

PROJECT CHALLENGES

None

POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

Implement repairs to the Lower Turtle Pond. Release a request for bids (RFB) to secure contractor services to complete all post-construction mitigation, permit and maintenance requirements.

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Project	Expenditure Plan	Total Through Prior Period 6/30/22	Current Period 7/1/22 Through 6/30/23	Total Life-to-Date Through 6/30/23	Expenditure Plan Remaining	Percent Expended
Total Portfolio Allocation	\$14,825,000					
07-001—Event Center and Apple Orchard Purchase		\$6,007,601	\$0	\$6,007,601		
07-002—Fisheries Restoration, Design and Permitting		\$727,716	\$0	\$727,716		
07-003—Fisheries Enhancement, Apple Orchard		\$16,152	\$0	\$16,152		
07-004—Fisheries Enhancement, Event Center		\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000		
07-005—Grazing and Water Systems Infrastructure		\$189,423	\$0	\$189,423		
07-006—Cunha Land Purchase		\$3,080,705	\$0	\$3,080,705		
07-007—Demolitions, Wool Ranch House/Sears Ranch Road		\$357,803	\$0	\$357,803		
07-008—Lower Turtle Pond Repair—La Honda Creek		\$46,402	\$735	\$47,137		
07-009—Sears Ranch Parking Areas		\$1,147,554	\$0	\$1,147,554		
07-010—Sears Ranch Road Repair		\$557,044	\$0	\$557,044		
07-011—Lower La Honda Creek Phase 2 Loop Trails		\$475,877	\$0	\$475,877		
Subtotal	\$14,825,000	\$12,656,277	\$735	\$12,657,012	\$2,167,988	85.38%
07-002—Fisheries Restoration, Design and Permitting Grant Income		(\$230,970)	\$0	(\$230,970)		
Grand Total	\$14,825,000	\$12,425,307	\$735	\$12,426,042	\$2,398,958	83.82%

