



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-23-119  
Meeting 23-30  
October 25, 2023

## SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA ITEM 1

### AGENDA ITEM

Trail Use Policies and Trail Construction Practices Informational Study Session

### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *den*

Receive an informational overview of the Board of Directors-adopted Trail Use Policies and the agency's trail construction practices. No formal Board action required.

### SUMMARY

This informational study session will review Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District's) existing policies, guidelines and practices for the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of trails. Staff will review the Board-approved Trail Use Policies and associated guidelines that inform trail planning and decision making, current trail construction methodology, design standards and practices. In addition, staff will identify minor, non-substantive out-of-date elements in the current Trail Use Policies and guidelines for which the General Manager recommends an administrative update to the Board policy to be programmed as part of the upcoming Three-Year Capital Improvement and Action Plan (CIAP).

### BACKGROUND

At the March 7, 2023 special Board meeting, the Board President requested an informational session on District trail use policies and trail construction practices. At this same meeting, other members of the Board expressed interest in learning further about the various factors that inform trail planning and construction (e.g., trail user experience, road-to-trail conversion, varying trail widths, sustainability of trail surface materials and environmental site constraints, etc.).

#### *Trail Use Policies*

A key Board policy related to trail planning is the *Trail Use Policies* (Board policy 4.07). The intent of the Trail Use Policies is to "...promote safe and enjoyable experiences for all who use the District's trail system." The Board adopted the Trail Use Policies on November 14, 1990, in part as a guide for establishing trail use designations throughout the District's trail system. The Trail Use Policies states: "[t]he Board of Directors will adopt qualitative and quantitative trail use guidelines to aid the Board and staff in determining trail use designations in the implementation of these policies."

To accomplish this, the Board subsequently adopted *Trail Use Guidelines and Mitigation Measures* (Trail Use Guidelines) on January 27, 1993 with Appendix A that provides

Supplemental Information explaining the application of trail use guidelines and mitigation measures for addressing trail use conflicts. These guidelines establish a procedure for how to designate trail use across the District's extensive trail system. The quantitative factors incorporated into the decision-making process include the physical characteristics of a trail (e.g., trail width and grade) and qualitative factors such as existing trail use conflicts, other preserve activities, trail use on adjacent lands and connecting trails, and past, present and future trail use. The guidelines also include three trail class designations (Classes A, B and C) with varying trail width, grade, side slope and line of sight that are best suited for the different types of designated trail uses (hiking, running, bicycling, and equestrian).

Over the years, the Trail Use Policies have been reviewed multiple times (October 23, 1996, May 22, 2000, July 12, 2000, November 13, 2013 and June 24, 2015) and amended three times (July 12, 2000, November 13, 2013 and June 24, 2015). The Trail Use Guidelines and Mitigation Measures remain constant since 1993.

On October 23, 1996, the first review of the Trail Use Policies took place when the Board charged the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (formerly Use and Management Committee) to review the provision of a wilderness trail experience within the adopted Trail Use Policies and return to the Board with implementation recommendations for how to better implement this particular provision of the policy. The Board voted to add this policy review as part of the 1997 Action Plan and budget.

On July 12, 2000, the Board made numerous revisions to the Trail Use Policies in response to the Trail Use Policies review initiated in 1996/1997 and also in response to rising concerns regarding user conflicts between hikers/equestrians and bicyclists. The Board established a trail use guideline ratio of designating 60 to 65% of all open trails as multi-use (including bicycles) and 35 to 40% of all open trails as hiking or hiking and equestrian use only (R-00-95). In addition, the Board set aside seven preserves for hiking and equestrian use only (Foothills, La Honda Creek, Los Trancos, Picchetti Ranch, Pulgas Ridge, Teague Hill, and Thornewood). These preserves were identified based on their small trail system and low bicycle use levels (if/where bicycles were previously allowed) to provide areas where the potential for user conflicts is avoided and reserve spaces for quiet, nature study that support a wilderness experience for visitors. Finally, the Board included the provision of designating regional trails, such as the Bay Area Ridge Trail, as multi-use trails (includes bicycles) to maintain connectivity along regional corridors for all user types, allowing an exception to the bicycle closures specifically for regional trails.

The trail use designation guideline ratio that was set in 2000 is intended to be a flexible planning tool. It does not commit the District to a definite decision as to any future preserve or trail designation. Rather it is a planning tool available for the Board and staff when new trails are proposed and opened to maintain a reasonable balance of trail access for all user groups. Staff has applied this ratio in the development of long-range plans such as the La Honda Creek Master Plan, Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan, Mount Umunhum Environmental Restoration and Public Access Plan, and Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking projects. It is also used when individual trails are proposed for Board approval. Currently, 64% of open trails are multi-use, and 36% of trails are hiking or hiking/equestrian use.

The last revision to the Trail Use Policies was completed on June 24, 2015, when the Board adopted the *Other Power-Driven Mobility Device Policy* (Board Policy 4.07) to comply with the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA – Title II Regulations, 28 C.F.R. Part 35) requirement allowing the use of Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) by people with mobility related disabilities to access public facilities, including trails.

## DISCUSSION

When the Board first approved the Trail Use Policies in 1990, the District maintained approximately 154 miles of publicly accessible trails (note: early data may have some gaps; the mileage only reflects public trails, versus other operational/legacy roads). Since then, 100 miles of public trails have been added to the districtwide trail system. Based on the District's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database, which tracks annual trail openings throughout the last 15 years, the District has opened 34 miles of trails since 2008, of which 12 miles are multi-use.

### *Trails Planning and Implementation*

To fulfill the Vision Plan priority actions and Measure AA commitments for increasing public access and opening new Preserve areas, and to implement one of the 2015 Financial Operational and Sustainable Model (FOSM) recommendations to expand capacity and expertise in trails construction, the District established two special projects/trails crews in the Land & Facilities Department in Fiscal Year 2016-17 (FY17) and FY18. In addition, a Capital Projects Field Manager position was created in the Land & Facilities Department in FY2017 to bridge trail planning skills with on-the-ground field expertise in sustainable trail layouts and construction. Previously, the Planning Department had traditionally taken the lead with trail planning as part of the use and management planning process. Since FY17, the Capital Projects Field Manager has taken the lead in trail planning, working closely with Planning to integrate trails with other public access improvements, including trailhead parking, restrooms, and interpretive signs, as part of the overall use and management planning process for a preserve.

Inherent in carrying forth the District's Mission, the trails crew ensures resource protection and habitat restoration goals are adhered to during trail flagging and construction. To uphold these values, the District maintains in-house training programs to foster a deep understanding of the surrounding environmental resources and sensitivities, as well as of the permitting requirements and restrictions, and the details and standards for trail construction and ongoing maintenance.

Together with the leadership and expertise of the Capital Projects Field Manager and the dedication and technical skills of the special projects/trails crews, the District has fulfilled notable Vision Plan and Measure AA commitments such as the Mount Umunhum Trail (Sierra Azul), Oljon Trail (El Corte de Madera), Alpine Bypass Trail (Coal Creek), and Grasshopper Loop Trail (La Honda Creek). These trails have been flagged and constructed internally by District crews with special care and attention placed on protecting sensitive natural resources while providing an enjoyable nature experience for visitors.

Planning for new trails often starts as early as a property's acquisition phase when the District evaluates new properties for future public access opportunities, including regional trail connectivity to nearby public open spaces. The Preliminary Use and Management Plan (PUMP) that accompanies a proposed property acquisition may identify potential trail opportunities to be explored and evaluated in subsequent planning. Once the Board approves the property

acquisition and PUMP, the development of future public access facilities can be programmed as part of a future fiscal year Capital Improvement and Action Plan.

During the planning/feasibility phase, staff from Planning and Land & Facilities Departments work together to evaluate site conditions, opportunities and constraints, solicit public/stakeholder input and develop draft conceptual trail alternatives, which are presented to the Board and the community for feedback. Continual stakeholder and public engagement occur throughout the planning process. Staff relies on the Mission, Board policies (such as the Basic Policy, Resource Management policies, San Mateo Coastside Protection Area Service Plan, Trail Use Policies and other policies), District regulations and ordinances and the American for Disabilities Act (ADA) to evaluate proposed trail design alternatives.

Consistent with Board Policy 4.01, *Open Space Use and Management Planning Process*, staff present draft conceptual alternatives and a preferred alternative to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee and the Board for review and consideration. Once the Board selects a preferred alternative to serve as the basis of environmental review, staff initiate the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. The final recommendations and CEQA findings are subsequently considered by the Board and folded into a Use and Management Plan amendment for a preserve.

During the feasibility phase, District staff rely on road and trail assessments that inform opportunities to reuse and improve existing legacy roads and pathways. In addition, District staff rely on best practices to avoid and minimize environmental impacts, follow Board-approved environmental protection guidelines and mitigation measures that pertain to the project, and refer to the California State Parks Trail Design Standards and U.S. Forest Service Trail Construction Notebook to guide the creation of conceptual trail alignments.

During the early layout and flagging of a trail alignment, District staff strive to first avoid impacts to sensitive natural resources. Where proposed trails may result in potential temporary or permanent impacts, natural resource considerations are further evaluated in various technical studies initiated during feasibility to inform the final trail alignment and in support of the CEQA phase of the project. Technical studies are completed by internal subject matter experts and/or qualified consultants. These technical studies include the following:

- Protocol-level botanical surveys to evaluate rare plant species and sensitive natural plant communities/habitats
- Wetland and riparian delineations
- Cultural and historic resource evaluations
- Biological assessments of sensitive wildlife species and associated habitats
- Development of mitigation, monitoring and reporting plans (if impacts cannot be avoided)
- Consideration of on or off-site restoration opportunities to fulfill species or habitat goals

The completed technical studies are evaluated by natural resources staff, and recommendations to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts are considered through the lens of the Board approved Mitigation Policy ([R-22-41](#)). Adjustments are made to the final trail design to avoid or minimize impacts where possible. If these adjustments are not feasible, mitigation measures are developed. The requisite regulatory agency permits applications, when required, are submitted to the relevant agencies. The regulatory agencies, include but are not limited to: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers (with review by U.S. Fish and Wildlife review as necessary). These agencies may require additional conditions of approval for the project to protect natural resources. These conditions typically align with the District's Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures and Best Management Practices that include preconstruction natural resource surveys, biomonitoring in sensitive areas during construction, and sediment and erosion control protections near aquatic habitats.

Typically, narrow width trails (four to six feet wide) and trail-rated bridges are constructed by the Land & Facilities special projects trails crews. District crews also perform upgrades to existing ranch and logging roads to make them serviceable as trails. If the project involves large repairs to roads, with engineered retaining walls or vehicle-rated bridges, the Engineering & Construction Department will hire a contractor to complete the project. Once all local and regulatory permits are secured, crew will construct new trail using small equipment, such as mini-excavators, trail dozers, motorized wheelbarrows, and various hand tools to keep within the narrow footprint of the trail corridor. Throughout construction, Land & Facilities staff collaborate with the Planning Department to ensure CEQA compliance, as well as the Natural Resources Department, to ensure biological and cultural resources are protected and regulatory permitting requirements are implemented. Upon completion of the project, all local and regulatory permits are closed out, and any necessary mitigation and monitoring programs are established. Similar coordination and project closeout activities are completed by the Engineering and Construction Department for contracted repair/construction projects.

### **Districtwide Trail System and Use Designations**

Currently, the District offers 254.9 miles of publicly accessible trails on over 70,000-acres of protected open space lands, where the designated trail uses are shown in Table 1. Consistent with the Trail Use Policies, 64% (162.4 miles) of District trails are open to bicycles and 36% (92.5 miles) are open to hiking or hiking and equestrian uses. The Trail Use Policies identify a long-range trail use designation guideline ratio of 60 to 65% multi-use (including bicycles) and 35 to 40% hiking or hiking and equestrian use only.

District staff conducted preliminary research on trail use designations among several regional open space and regional parks agencies in the Bay Area to see how the districtwide trails system compares to others. While the summary of agency comparisons would benefit from including National Parks Service and California State Parks' trails data, staff did not have access to their data at this time. The table below groups Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority with the District given the strong similarity in policies and methodology for providing public recreation, focused on low-intensity, ecologically sensitive public access. East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) and the three County Parks listed instead offer a wider breadth of recreation, with both passive (low-intensity) and active (high-intensity) recreational opportunities. As such, the trail systems vary between Regional Open Space Agencies and Regional Parks Agencies, with park agencies having many more paved trails. Also, in contrast with the District and Santa Clara County Parks, bicycles are not allowed on most narrow natural surface trails in both EBRPD and San Mateo County Parks, while Santa Cruz County Parks has limited natural surface trails.

**Table 1. Trail Use Designations - Summary of Comparisons (2023)**

	Regional Open Space Agencies <i>(low-intensity/ passive recreation)</i>		Regional Parks Agencies <i>(active and passive recreation)</i>			
	Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District	Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority	East Bay Regional Parks District	San Mateo County Parks*	Santa Clara County Parks	Santa Cruz County Parks*
Total # of acres	72,194 <sup>1</sup>	>28,000 <sup>2</sup>	125,496 <sup>3</sup>	16,000	52,254 <sup>4</sup>	1,593
Total public trail miles	254.9 <sup>5</sup>	21.4	1,021	N/A	344.9	N/A
Hiking only	29.7	0	54	N/A	62.5 <sup>6</sup>	N/A
Hiking/Biking	6.3	1.2	5	N/A	8.7	N/A
Hiking/Equestrian	61.3	0	64	N/A	73.2	N/A
Biking only	0	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
Biking/Equestrian	0	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
Equestrian only	1.5	0	0	N/A	0	N/A
Multi-use (hiking/ biking/ equestrian)	156.1	20.2	898	N/A	183.9	N/A

\*Data shown as N/A since insufficient data was received as of the date of this report.

1. All protected lands (including fee title, most easements, contribution-only properties, long-term management agreements, long-term licenses, and CC&Rs. Assessed acreage, not GIS-measured.)
2. Open Space Authority's acreage on their website.
3. East Bay Regional Parks District's acreage on their website.
4. Includes 11,573 acres closed to the public.
5. Excludes connecting trails residing within County and City parks (e.g., Rancho San Antonio County Park, Novitiate Park)
6. Includes 1.1 miles of archery routes.

### Minor Technical Clarifications

For the most part, the Trail Use Policies are up to date and reflects current policy and practice for District trail use designations. The General Manager does not recommend any significant changes. However, there are some minor technical clarifications and other clean-up work that can be done at the administrative level to update the language to better reflect current regulations, such as the Americans for Disabilities Act, and other related Board policies, including the Coastal Service Plan. This cleanup work would also ensure that current trail construction practices and techniques are well described in the Trail Use Policies. More specifically:

- 1) In compliance with the ADA and the Board-adopted Other Power-Driven Mobility Device (OPDMD) Policy, the Trail Use Policies was amended in June 2015 to include language facilitating OPDMD usage on District trails. However, the Trail Use Policies still contain remnant language such as “[m]otorized vehicles, except electric wheelchairs, are prohibited.” As defined in the ADA and OPDMD policy, other power-driven mobility devices are not limited to electric wheelchairs and can include other mobility devices powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines, such as electric bicycles. *Minor administrative updates can be made to clarify the terminology and ensure OPDMD Policy language is consistently described throughout the policy.*
- 2) The Board recently designated certain trails as open to class 1 and class 2 electric bicycles. *Minor administrative updates can be made to include this new provision.*

- 3) The siting, design and construction of trails on the San Mateo County coast is carefully stipulated in the Board-approved Coastal Service Plan and the associated Environmental Impact Report (2004). *Minor administrative updates would reference the Service Plan for details on trail placement and construction in the Coastside Protection Area.*
- 4) The Trail Class Designations in the 1993 Trail Use Guidelines and Mitigation Measures do not reflect the ability to build narrower width trails using new, modern and specialized equipment and tools. *Minor administrative updates would clarify terminology in trail class designations and reference modernized construction practices.*
- 5) Other cleanup work would reorganize some of the information for ease of understanding and to better reflect current practices. For example, volunteer trail patrol is a recommended mitigation measure in Section II – this element is now a formal District program that is run by the Visitor Services Department. Other measures identified as recommended actions, such as instituting a bicycle speed limit, bicycle helmet requirements, and the requirement for horses and bicycles to stay on established trails, are now all formalized within District regulations/ordinances.

To complete the administrative clean-up work, the General Manager plans to program the work and include it in the upcoming Three-Year Capital Improvement and Action Plan.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Review of Trail Use Policies and trail construction practices has no immediate fiscal impact.

## PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

The following lists prior Board and Committee meetings where trail policies were discussed:

**October 24, 1990:** Board review of the draft Trail Use Policies and Trail Use Designation Guidelines.

- [Board report](#) (R-90-121)
- [Minutes](#)

**November 14, 1990:** Final Board adoption of the Trail Use Policies.

- [Board report](#) (R-90-136)
- [Minutes](#)

**November 28, 1990:** The Board discussed seasonal and interim trail closures to bicycles and equestrian use at Skyline Ridge, Rancho San Antonio, Long Ridge, Fremont Older, Purisima Creek and Pulgas Ridge.

- [Board report](#) (R-90-138)
- [Minutes](#)

**October 23, 1996:** The Board directed the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to review the provision of a wilderness trail experience within the adopted Trail Use Policies.

- [Board report](#) (R-96-110)
- [Minutes](#)

**May 22, 2000:** The Board tentatively amended the Trail Use Policies to designate regional trails (such as Bay Area Ridge Trail) as multi-use (including bicycles).

- [Board report](#) (R-00-69)
- [Minutes](#)

**July 12, 2000:** Board final adoption of an amendment to the Use and Management Plans for seven preserves: Foothills, La Honda Creek, Los Trancos, Picchetti Ranch, Pulgas Ridge, Teague Hill, and Thornewood Open Space Preserves, designating the preserves as closed to bicycle use and amending the Trail Use Policies to add a long range trail use designation guideline ratio of 60 to 65% multi-use (including bicycles) and 35 to 40% hiking or hiking and equestrian use only.

- [Board report](#) (R-00-95)
- [Minutes](#)

**November 13, 2013:** Board approval of the *Board Policy Manual* that houses all Board policies and the Rules of Procedure, including the Trail Use Policies as Policy 4.07.

- [Board report](#) (R-13-102)
- [Minutes](#)

**June 24, 2015:** Board adoption of the *Other Power-Driven Mobility Device Policy* and related amendments to the Trail Use Policies (Board Policy 4.07) to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- [Board report](#) (R-15-93)
- [Minutes](#)

**August 14, 2019:** A Regional Trails Overview with partner presentations highlighting regional trail partnerships and projects from the San Francisco Bay Trail Program, Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Peninsula Open Space Trust, San Mateo County Parks, and City of Palo Alto.

- [Board report](#) (R-19-114)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Additional public notice was sent to Regional Trails, Hiking, Equestrian and Mountain Bicycling interested parties list.

## CEQA COMPLIANCE

Review and discussion of trail use policies and trail construction practices is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

## NEXT STEPS

Pending Board discussion and direction, staff would prioritize minor administrative updates to the Trail Use Policy during the development of the upcoming Three-year Capital Improvement and Action Plan.



Attachment(s)

1. Board Policy 4.07: Trail Use Policies and Trail Use Guidelines and Mitigation Measures
2. Board Policy 4.01: Open Space Use and Management Planning Process

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Board Policy Manual

<b>Trail Use</b>	<b>Policy 4.07 Chapter 4 – Acquisition &amp; Maintenance of District Lands</b>
Effective Date: 11/14/90	Attachment: Trail Use Guidelines and Mitigation Measures
Prior Versions: 11/14/90, 7/12/00, 11/13/13	Revised Date: 6/24/15

PREAMBLE

One of the District’s basic policy statements is that it will “follow a land management policy that provides proper care of open space land, allowing access appropriate to the nature of the land and consistent with ecological values.” As a result of the rapidly increasing level of trail use and the increased types of trail use, it is necessary to adopt more specific policies on trail use in order to effectively implement this basic policy statement.

The District is concerned both with the safety of all trail users and the enjoyment of their open space experience. The purpose for which people use open space trails varies depending on individual or group needs. Visitors may come to observe nature in a protected environment, experience tranquility, exercise in a non-urban setting, or any combination of these. The means by which visitors use trails also varies—be it hiking, running, on bicycle, on horseback, or in a wheelchair. Motorized vehicles are prohibited, except electric wheelchairs and other power-driven mobility devices as further set out in the Board Policy on Other Power Driven Mobility Devices.

The combination of trail conditions, level of use, and the mix of uses may lead to conflicts. Conflicts result in negative environment impacts, unpleasant user experiences, or unsafe situations. Conflicts are related to several factors, including:

- The relative speeds of different users
- Existing trail conditions, such as poor line-of-sight, narrowness, steep slopes and wide-open stretches of trail that might encourage excessive speed.
- A lack of knowledge of, or disregard for, trail use etiquette and regulations by all types of users
- A high concentration of use in certain areas

This set of policies is intended as a guide in establishing trail use designations throughout the District which will promote safe and enjoyable experiences for all who use the District lands. These policies are not intended to restrict who may use the District trails, but they may restrict how, or under what conditions, the trails are to be used.

POLICIES

1.0 The District will endeavor to provide a variety of satisfying trail use opportunities on open space preserves throughout the District. More specifically, the District will endeavor to:

1.1 Provide multiple use on individual trails where such use is consistent with the balance of these policies.

1.2 Protect the opportunity for tranquil nature study and observation, especially in those areas identified as providing a unique wilderness experience.

2.0 The District will designate appropriate use(s) for each trail. Uses will be allowed that are consistent with District's objectives for sound resource management and safe and compatible use. More specifically, the District will:

2.1 Allow trail use appropriate to the nature of the land and consistent with the protection of the natural, scenic and aesthetic values of open space.

2.2 Within budgetary and staffing constraints, make reasonable efforts to provide safe conditions for trail users.

2.3 Evaluate trail user needs, concerns, quality of experience, impacts, and the compatibility of various uses. Those uses creating the least conflict among trail users and the least environmental impact will be given greatest preference in trail use planning.

2.4 Ensure that all District trails will be accessible to hiking. When consistent with this policy, if a non-hiking use adversely impacts user safety, the use may be restricted or redirected. The intention is not to restrict access by any individual, but rather to limit incompatible uses and means of travel.

2.5 The District will strive to provide multi-use trail access (including bicycles) to dedicated sections of the Bay Area Ridge Trail and other regional trails by allowing exceptions to preserve bicycle closures for the Ridge Trail. The District will also strive to provide multi use trail access to regional trails connecting urban areas to the Ridge Trail. Access to such regional connecting trails will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, including consideration of availability of suitable regional trailhead staging, the availability of other alternative multi-use trail connections in the same region, and the completion of the CEQA process.

The district will encourage other agencies to provide Ridge Trail and regional trail connections on the same basis.

3.0 The Board of Directors will adopt qualitative and quantitative trail use guidelines to aid the Board and staff in determining trail use designations in the implementation of these policies.

3.1 As a planning tool to aid the Board and staff in determining future trail use designations, the District will consider, along with the Trail Use Guidelines and these

Policies, a guideline target trail use designation ratio of 60% to 65% multi- use trails (including bicycles) to 35% to 40% hiking or hiking-and-equestrian trails (excluding bicycles). This will not be a quantitative restriction, but a flexible planning tool to consider. Actual use designation of trails and preserves will only be established after the Use and Management Planning Process and CEQA process have been completed.

4.0 Specific trail use designations will be established and reviewed periodically through the Use and Management Planning Process, and will be subject to adopted Public Notification Procedures. Trail use designations may change if use patterns develop that are in conflict with these policies.

4.1 In extreme cases where there is not sufficient time to comply with the Use and Management Planning Process, the Board of Directors or General Manager may make an interim decision to limit use while providing an evaluation process and timeline for final determination of the designated use.

5.0 The District will endeavor to provide trail access for a variety of physical capabilities and user needs (including persons with physical limitations) in a manner consistent with resource protection goals, budgetary constraints, and state and federal regulations.

6.0 The District will carry out management programs necessary for the implementation of these trail use policies. The designation of appropriate trail use as a method of minimizing trail use conflicts and environmental impacts will require a significant increase in trail use measures such as education, physical improvements to trails, and enforcement of trail use regulations. More specifically, the District will:

6.1 Support trail use actions with a strong educational program. The District recognizes that education in proper trail etiquette and low-impact use is a key measure towards the reduction of negative trail use impacts.

6.2 Monitor trail use conditions on a regular basis. The purpose of a monitoring program will be to evaluate current conditions and to determine whether or not trail management programs, including maintenance, reconstruction, education, and use regulations, are effective in addressing user conflicts and environmental impacts, and to recommend changes if necessary.

6.3 Include implementation costs in determining the feasibility of trail use designations and regulations.

7.0 The District will work with other agencies, interest groups, and private landowners in an effort to promote an interconnecting trail system throughout the region. The District recognizes that connections should be compatible with other jurisdiction designations and land owner objectives as well as these policies and trail use guidelines.

8.0 The District recognizes that existing trail use characteristics such as the types of use, conflicts, and impacts may change over time so that certain policies may no longer be

appropriate or a new policy may be required. Hence, these policies will be subject to review and revision as deemed necessary by the Board of Directors, following adopted Public Notification procedures.

## TRAIL USE GUIDELINES AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Adopted by  
Board of Directors  
January 27, 1993

This document represents a comprehensive strategy for implementing the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Trail Use Policies. It is comprised of two major components, trail use guidelines and mitigation measures. Section I addresses trail use guidelines which establish a procedure for designating appropriate trail use on the District's vast and diverse trail system. Section II, mitigation measures, analyzes methods designed to augment trail use guidelines in reducing trail use conflicts. Both components are equally important in providing a safe and enjoyable trail experience and protecting the natural resources. (See Appendix A for supplemental information.)

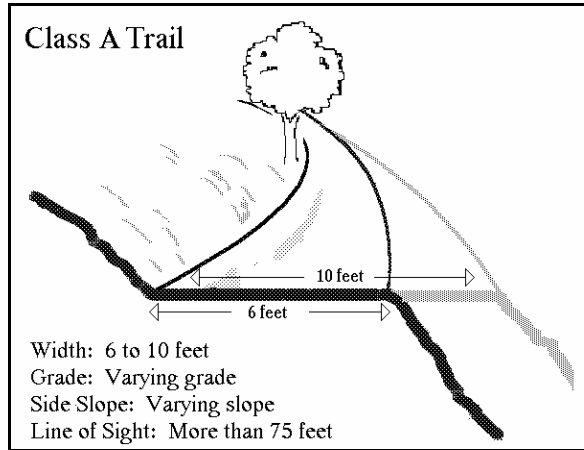
### Section I Trail Use Guidelines

Trail Use Guideline	Comments
<p><b>1.0 Trail Inventories</b></p> <p>1.1 Physical conditions of all trail segments will be documented.</p>	<p>Data will be gathered relating to trail width and grade, side slopes, line of sight, surface condition and natural obstacles.</p> <p>The surveys will be conducted in a consistent manner to insure continuity in the decision making process. The survey comprises documentation of trail conditions at 500 foot intervals, noting exceptional and unusual features along the way.</p>
<p><b>2.0 Trail Class Designation</b></p> <p>2.1 Three trail classifications will be used to characterize physical conditions of the trail system.</p> <p>2.2 Trail class designations only suggest suitable trail uses. Other factors must be considered to determine a trail use designation.</p>	<p>A trail class designation portrays the physical conditions, generally existing over 75% of a trail's length. The length of trail segment is determined from one trail junction to the next.</p> <p>Three class designations characterize the major portion of the District's trail system (Refer to Trail Class study following this table). Not all trails will fit into the three class designations. Exceptions must be evaluated on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Suitable trail uses for a trail class designation are not based solely on physical characteristics. Other factors such as trail use on adjacent parklands and anticipated trail use may be equally important in determining trail use designation.</p>
<p><b>3.0 Past, Present and Future Trail Use</b></p> <p>3.1 Trail use information relating to levels and types of trail use will be evaluated.</p> <p>3.2 Existing trail use will not be considered an over-riding factor in determining trail use designations.</p>	<p>Historical and existing trail use information will be gathered from field staff and informal surveys. Trends in trail use will be valuable information in attempting to project future use.</p> <p>Trends may also indicate that trail users have been displaced because of undesirable conditions, incompatible user groups or increased levels of use. It is conceivable that an existing trail use prevents others from a safe and enjoyable trail use experience or has deleterious environmental impacts, whereby consideration may be given to redirecting one user group to an alternate route.</p> <p>Existing and anticipated low trail use levels may allow for variations of multi-use (ie; equestrians and/or bicyclists) where, 1) a trail's class designation would indicate multi-use is not suitable or, 2) a trail has been found to be an exception to the three class designations.</p>
<p><b>4.0 Trail Use Conflicts</b></p>	<p>Field reports will be reviewed to examine accidents and violations. Records will</p>

Trail Use Guideline	Comments
<p>4.1 Available records will be evaluated to gain understanding of current trail use conflicts.</p> <p>4.2 Future trail use conflicts will be anticipated and will be an important consideration.</p>	<p>include public communications. Consideration will be given to the possible subjective nature of these communications.</p> <p>Trail use conflicts may be anticipated, based on changes in use and management or new recreational equipment that may be adapted to trail use.</p> <p>Analyzing trail use conflicts may reveal information about users having been displaced to other parks and preserves where conflicts are not so prevalent.</p>
<p><b>5.0 Adjacent Land Use</b></p> <p>5.1 Trail use designations will be compatible with adjacent parklands in respect to trail use and regulations.</p> <p>5.2 Undesirable trail use on private lands will be discouraged.</p>	<p>Where trails are connecting with adjacent public lands, a survey of trail use and regulations will be undertaken. Consultation with public agencies will identify existing and planned land use and trail use that may influence the District's decision making process. Every attempt will be made to develop, in cooperation with other agencies, a connecting trail system that is consistent in terms of trail use and regulations.</p> <p>The District needs to be sensitive to private landowners who do not want public trail use or specific user groups. In cases where a landowner may be receptive to allowing public trail use, attempts will be made to designate compatible trail use on connecting trails.</p>
<p><b>6.0 Trail Use Opportunities</b></p> <p>6.1 Attempts will be made to provide loop trails and regional trails for all user groups.</p> <p>6.2 Attempts will be made to provide all user groups equal access to facilities and attractive areas of a preserve.</p> <p>6.3 Equal access opportunities for equestrian and bicyclists will be considered when trail conditions will not permit both user groups.</p>	<p>Loop trails of moderate length will be explored to accommodate pedestrians while longer loop trails will be sought for equestrians and bicyclists.</p> <p>When conditions exist, whereby a direct regional connection for a particular user group is not feasible, alternate trail routes will be pursued if they do not unnecessarily duplicate the trail system.</p> <p>Providing all user groups access to attractive portions of the preserve may also be achieved by providing alternate routes if they are not unnecessarily duplicating a trail system.</p> <p>When trail conditions do not accommodate both equestrians and bicyclists, decisions will not be based solely on historical and existing trail use. Other factors contained in these guidelines will be taken into consideration.</p>
<p><b>7.0 Trail Use Constraints</b></p> <p>7.1 Environmental impacts and persistent conflicts are critical in determining trail use designations.</p> <p>7.2 Trail use by a user group may be prohibited on trails that lead directly to trails found not appropriate for that use.</p> <p>7.3 Trail use by a user group may be prohibited when 25% of a trail's length does not comply with a trail class designation and mitigation measures can not reasonably reduce trail conflicts.</p>	<p>When a trail exhibits satisfactory conditions for specific uses but high levels of trail use result in degradation of the trail or persistent trail use conflicts, consideration will be given to prohibiting the use causing the greatest impact. Prior to closing a trail to specific uses, mitigation measures that adequately address the trail use problems will be explored.</p> <p>Trail use designations will be compatible with interconnecting trails. A trail may exhibit satisfactory conditions for a particular user group, but if that trail leads directly to a trail which does not exhibit satisfactory conditions, the use will not be permitted on either trail.</p> <p>When a trail exhibits satisfactory conditions over 75% of it's length, mitigation measures may be employed to make the remaining 25% acceptable. Minor rerouting of a trail segment may bypass natural obstacles like a tree limb or rock outcropping. Advisory signs and passing areas may mitigate narrow trail segments.</p>
<p><b>8.0 Use and Management Plans</b></p>	<p>Many elements in a preserve's use and management plan can potentially impact the trail system. It is imperative that consideration be given to planning elements</p>

Trail Use Guideline	Comments
8.1 Trail use designations will be compatible and facilitate other elements of the use and management plan.	such as new parking areas, environmental education programs, and equestrian facilities. These uses can seriously contribute to trail use conflicts if they are not recognized in advance.

Trail Class Designations



Trail Use Suitability

Hiking Equestrian  
 Running Bicycling

Examples

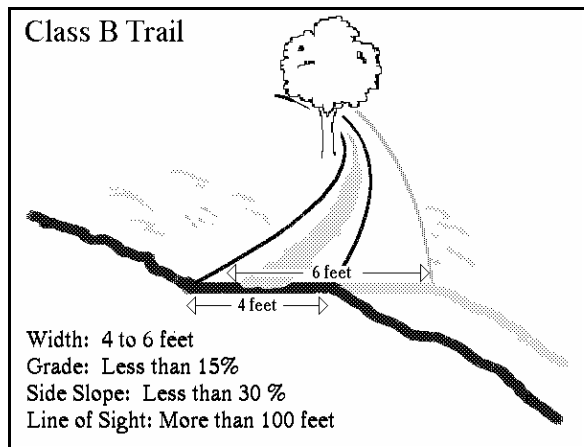
Monte Bello - Upper & Lower Canyon Trail  
 Russian Ridge - Ridge Trail

Statistics

Represents approximately 60% of District trails

Significant Problems

Speed increases on wide trails and roads



Trail Use Suitability

Hiking Equestrian  
 Running Bicycling

Examples

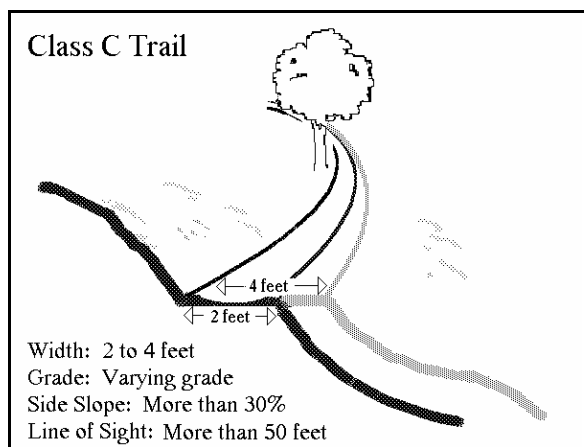
Long Ridge - Parking to Peters Creek  
 Monte Bello - Parking lot to Skyline

Statistics

Represents approximately 10% of District trails

Significant Problems

Passing often requires moving off trail



Trail Use Suitability

Hiking  
 Running

Examples

Purisima Creek Redwoods - Soda Gulch Trail  
 St. Joseph's Hill - Jones Trail

Statistics

Represents approximately 5% of District trails

Significant Problems

Speed is alarming on blind turns



Section II Mitigation Measures for Trail Use Conflicts

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
<b>1.0 EDUCATION</b>									
1.1 Etiquette Brochure (Project complete)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Assists those unfamiliar with regulations</li> <li>· Most helpful if available on all preserves</li> <li>· Most useful if brief and to the point</li> <li>· Should be available with preserve brochure</li> <li>· Irresponsible users will probably not read</li> <li>· Not everyone will stop to read</li> <li>· Too general to address specific problems</li> <li>· Needs to be made widely available</li> <li>· Needs to be included in mailings &amp; handouts</li> <li>· Provide etiquette brochures to conservation &amp; recreation organizations and retail stores</li> <li>· Attention enhanced by ranger distribution</li> <li>· Need a better interpretation for "yield"</li> </ul>	M	M	M	L	M	L		M
1.2 Volunteer Patrols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Positive peer group contact is helpful</li> <li>· Serves as eyes and ears; volunteers can not enforce District rules and regulations</li> <li>· Offers a needed presence &amp; surveillance</li> <li>· Organizing, training and scheduling is difficult and costly; can be facilitated with core group of volunteers</li> <li>· Training by staff necessary to insure high quality program</li> <li>· Some volunteers may take possessory interest &amp; not be receptive to trail closures if needed</li> <li>· Can convey valuable info on maintenance problems as well as user related issues</li> <li>· Ineffective without reasonable level of ranger enforcement to reinforce volunteer efforts</li> <li>· Multi-agency volunteer program is possible</li> <li>· Limited success at other public agencies</li> <li>· Need uniforms, identification and radios</li> <li>· Participation &amp; enthusiasm can wane due to time commitment</li> <li>· Irresponsible users may react in an abusive manner to volunteers contacting them</li> <li>· Bicycle and equestrian patrols should not be used where bicycles &amp; horses are not allowed</li> <li>· Organizations like ROMP could participate</li> <li>· Program needs to be re-energized by staff</li> </ul>	L	H	M	H	H	H	H	M

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

1.0 EDUCATION (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
1.3 Education Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Potentially can reach broad audience</li> <li>· Could be used in schools, retail shops and private organizations</li> <li>· May reach irresponsible users</li> <li>· Could be undertaken by university or private organization such as Trail Center</li> <li>· Could be eligible for grant program</li> <li>· Include in bicycling classes such as one offered at West Valley College</li> <li>· Could locate videos at some trailhead</li> </ul>	H	H	H	L	H	H	H	M
1.4 District Special Events and Hikes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Trail use information could easily be combined with other scheduled events</li> <li>· Problematic users do not attend these events</li> <li>· Limited audience</li> <li>· Participants will spread the word</li> </ul>	L	H	L	H	L	H	H	M
1.5 Trail Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Value for safety related issues</li> <li>· Required to convey regulations</li> <li>· Conveys site specific information</li> <li>· Renegade users tend to ignore signs</li> <li>· Too many signs detract from quality of experience and are confusing if they conflict</li> <li>· Adds support to enforcement effort</li> <li>· Trail conditions &amp; closures should be more apparent at the trailheads</li> <li>· Provide trail courtesy signs at trailheads</li> </ul>	M	H	L	L	H	M		H
1.6 Information Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Ability to contact specific users of preserve</li> <li>· Ineffective without reasonable level of ranger enforcement to reinforce education</li> <li>· Positive peer group contact is helpful</li> <li>· Trail system having multiple entry points will require multiple stations to be effective</li> <li>· Need to be dedicated over long time period</li> <li>· Participation &amp; enthusiasm can wane due to time commitment</li> <li>· Irresponsible users may react in an abusive manner to volunteers contacting them</li> <li>· Scheduling and participation are critical</li> <li>· Staff operated stations may be more effective with some user groups than volunteer stations</li> </ul>	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	M

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

1.0 EDUCATION (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
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1.7 Outreach to Schools, Retail Stores and Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Difficult to direct to irresponsible users</li> <li>· Staff could include message when speaking to organizations, school career days, etc.</li> <li>· May not fit into existing school curriculum</li> <li>· May discourage some from visiting trails</li> <li>· Message could reach new users that are unfamiliar with rules</li> <li>· Could result in more use and conflicts</li> <li>· Could combine with existing outreach from organized groups such as ROMP</li> </ul>	L	M	H	M	L	M	L	M
1.8 Safety Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Probably not well attended unless combined with fun event</li> <li>· Difficult to organize and manage event</li> <li>· Enthusiasm tends to wane</li> <li>· Safety events could be combined with school, retail and organizational events</li> </ul>	M	H	H	M	L	H	H	L
1.9 Press Releases and Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Reaches large audience</li> <li>· Not much control over content and editing</li> <li>· Good contacts with press necessary</li> <li>· Good method of public outreach</li> <li>· May discourage some from visiting trails</li> </ul>	L	L	M	L	L			M

<b>2.0 REGULATIONS</b>								
2.1 Bicycle Helmets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Promotes general safety and awareness</li> <li>· May reduce severity of head injuries</li> <li>· Contact with violators could include increased education</li> <li>· Violators could be irresponsible users otherwise difficult to contact</li> <li>· Leads to confusion when user reaches preserve not knowing of requirements</li> <li>· Requirement should be compatible with adjacent lands (Santa Clara Co. requires)</li> <li>· Continuity throughout District lands needed</li> <li>· Ordinance revisions necessary</li> <li>· Need public relations program to spread word; work with retailers to educate users</li> <li>· Consider stipulating helmet standard (ANSI)</li> </ul>	M	H	M	L	M	M	H

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

2.0 REGULATIONS (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
2.2 Restrict Use to Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Required to reduce resource degradation</li> <li>· Could inhibit informal access for picnics, photography, etc.</li> <li>· Could be directed to specific users such as equestrians and bicyclists</li> <li>· Trailhead sign could state "Bicycles must stay on trail"</li> <li>· Specific problem areas could be signed to state "Closed - Not a Trail"</li> <li>· Using "Closed Area" sign is too restrictive and unclear as to where boundaries are</li> </ul>	M	M	L	L	M	M		M
2.3 User Permit or Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Etiquette brochure could accompany permit</li> <li>· Retailers could assist in issuing permits</li> <li>· Extremely difficult to administer and may require permit officer</li> <li>· Leads to confusion; user reaches preserve not knowing of permit requirements</li> <li>· Too many entry trails to regulate</li> <li>· More rangers &amp; volunteers to check permits</li> <li>· Permit fee probably could not offset costs</li> <li>· Taking permit for reckless behavior could be very subjective</li> <li>· Violations must be observed by ranger in order to confiscate permit</li> <li>· Coordination needed with adjacent park agencies</li> </ul>	H	H	H	H	M	H	M	L
2.4 Periods of Use (Days or Hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Leads to confusion when user reaches preserve not knowing of restrictions</li> <li>· Considered very restrictive</li> <li>· Bicyclists could still injure themselves</li> <li>· Concentrated bicycle use may be a problem</li> <li>· Too many entry trails to regulate</li> <li>· May not be compatible with adjacent lands</li> <li>· Need to apply to all preserves for continuity</li> </ul>	M	H	H	L	M	M		L
2.5 Limit Number of Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Leads to confusion when user reaches preserve not knowing of restrictions</li> <li>· May not be compatible with adjacent lands</li> </ul>	M	H	H	H	M	M		L

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

2.0 REGULATIONS (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Too many trails and impossible to regulate</li> <li>· Acceptable level of use is very subjective</li> <li>· Bicyclists will still injure themselves</li> </ul>								
2.6 Bicycle Speed Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Very important since speed relates so closely to fears and safety problems</li> <li>· Can be in designated area or District-wide</li> <li>· Can be specific to passing and blind turns</li> <li>· Requires radar guns and training to enforce</li> <li>· Need increase level of signs and enforcement</li> <li>· Courts likely to uphold enforcement with radar gun if they understand the problems</li> <li>· Radar guns may have undesirable image</li> <li>· Speed estimating and enforcement without radar gun unlikely to be upheld in court</li> <li>· Bicyclists warn others of speed traps</li> <li>· Bicyclists have difficulty monitoring speed without speedometer</li> <li>· Marin Water &amp; San Mateo County and E.B.R.P.D have speed limits and use radar</li> <li>· Ordinance revisions necessary</li> </ul>	M	H	M	M	H	H		H
2.7 Bicycle Walking Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Use only in exceptionally dangerous conditions</li> <li>· Compliance is usually very poor</li> <li>· Needs to be a short distance</li> <li>· Signs and brochures need to be clear</li> <li>· Beginning and end need to be clear</li> <li>· Difficult to enforce when applied to runners</li> <li>· Indirectly warns all users to use precaution</li> <li>· May reduce accidents even though compliance is terrible</li> </ul>	H	H	L		M		M	L
2.8 Temporary Trail Closures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· May be closed to all use or closed to specific user group</li> <li>· Annual closures required for restoration</li> <li>· Protects sensitive areas</li> <li>· Seasonal closures required for winterization</li> <li>· Closures may occur for hazardous conditions</li> <li>· Equestrian and bicycle closures are very effective when trail is uncompacted &amp; wet</li> </ul>	L	H	L	L	L	L		M

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

2.0 REGULATIONS (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Generally accepted by public when closure is short term</li> <li>· Advanced warning needed at parking areas &amp; roadside trailheads and interconnecting trails where part of longer loop trail system</li> </ul>								
2.9 One-way Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Leads to confusion when user reaches preserve not knowing regulation</li> <li>· Signs and brochures need to be clear</li> <li>· Legal direction may prove difficult or too long; user can not turn around</li> <li>· Steepness may require high level expertise</li> <li>· User group needs input into feasibility</li> <li>· Conflicting reports on degree of compliance</li> <li>· Irresponsible users learn patrol patterns and continue to violate</li> <li>· May be useful on short trail sections to bypass steep and unsafe trail conditions</li> <li>· Uphill trail use could open up steep trails</li> </ul>	M	H	M	L	M	M	M	M
<b>3.0 ENFORCEMENT</b>									
3.1 Ranger Bicycle and Equestrian Patrol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Some users may find this offensive</li> <li>· Some users may feel this promotes objectionable use</li> <li>· Bicycles and horses should not be used where they are not allowed</li> <li>· Patrol procedure would never permit fast pursuits</li> <li>· More trail patrolled in less time</li> <li>· Would require union meet and confer</li> <li>· Variety and sizes of equipment needed to fit all rangers - donations possible</li> <li>· Potential increase of staff injuries</li> <li>· Increased training</li> <li>· Users give advance warning to others</li> <li>· Could build goodwill with all user groups</li> <li>· Could reduce vehicle traffic, pollution and vehicle maintenance</li> </ul>		H	L	M	M	M		M

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

3.0 ENFORCEMENT (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Increase ranger presence in more areas</li> <li>· Set a proper example for bicyclists by demonstrating trail etiquette</li> <li>· Some agencies report successful and effective ranger bicycle and equestrian patrols</li> </ul>								
3.2 Update Ordinance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Last revisions were in 1983</li> <li>· Any new regulations require revising ordinance</li> <li>· Staff needs to prepare draft</li> <li>· Legal counsel needs to review</li> <li>· Board needs to adopt revised ordinance</li> <li>· Regulations need to be clear at preserves and in brochure</li> <li>· Courts need to be advised of trail use problems to gain support</li> <li>· Need liaison with local district attorneys</li> </ul>	L	H	L	L	L	M		M
3.3 Ranger Patrol and Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Most violations observed result in citations</li> <li>· Education is included when citations and warnings are issued</li> <li>· Increase patrols where problems exist</li> <li>· Word spreads when patrols stepped up</li> <li>· Take transportation away from offenders, including bicycles &amp; horses</li> <li>· Confiscating bicycles and horses may create liability for District and riders may not be able to walk out</li> <li>· Saturate patrol where problems persistent</li> <li>· Adds support to volunteer efforts</li> <li>· Increased foot patrols limits emergency response capabilities</li> <li>· Patrol vehicles provide warning</li> </ul>	L	H	M	M	H	L		M
3.4 Community Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Court unlikely to grant community service as option to violator</li> <li>· Infractions do not require court appearance</li> </ul>								

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

3.0 ENFORCEMENT (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
<p>3.5 Bail Schedule for Violations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· District recommends bail schedule to court</li> <li>· Fee structure consistent with other agencies</li> <li>· Court sets bail schedule; not District</li> <li>· Excessively high bails increase ranger court appearances</li> <li>· Court costs increase bail</li> <li>· Need a graduated schedule to penalize repeated offenders</li> <li>· Graduated schedules difficult to manage</li> <li>· Publicize amount of fines over \$100 to encourage compliance</li> <li>· Education is included when writing warnings</li> <li>· Juveniles do not pay same fine as adults</li> <li>· Revise ordinance so equestrian and bicycle infractions have same fine</li> <li>· Ordinance revisions necessary</li> <li>· Publicize fine schedule at trailhead</li> </ul>			M	L	L	L	H		M
<b>4.0 IMPROVEMENTS</b>									
<p>4.1 Improved Trail Surface</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Requires imported non-native materials</li> <li>· Soil type and moisture are major factors in providing smooth, stable compacted trails</li> <li>· Initially requires specialized heavy equipment</li> <li>· Increases accessibility to many users</li> <li>· Can detract from natural environment</li> <li>· Confine to persistent problem areas</li> <li>· Very expensive and labor intensive</li> </ul>		M	H			H	H		M
<p>4.2 Passing Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Allows passing within reasonable distance</li> <li>· Should be placed within users view</li> <li>· Viable alternative to wider trails</li> <li>· Allows users to negotiate on where they want to be passed</li> <li>· Requires increased cut and fill</li> </ul>		L	M			L	L	L	M

L = Low M = Moderate H = High



4.0 IMPROVEMENTS (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Requires removal of more vegetation</li> <li>· Can detract from natural environment</li> </ul>								
4.3 Wider Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Increases passing space for multi-use</li> <li>· Desirable width for multi-use is &gt; 6'</li> <li>· Requires increase in cut and fill resulting in visual impacts</li> <li>· Requires removal of more vegetation</li> <li>· Can detract from open space experience</li> <li>· Increased expense and labor intensive</li> <li>· Bicyclists may increase their speed</li> <li>· Volunteers could assist in finishing work</li> <li>· Wide switchbacks difficult to construct</li> <li>· May increase problems with erosion</li> </ul>	H	H			H	M	L	H
4.4 Alternate Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Use to increase opportunities for passive experience</li> <li>· Redirect less passive use to alternative routes</li> <li>· Too many alternates can duplicate trail system and negatively impact environment</li> <li>· Most users will choose most attractive route</li> <li>· Alternate routes used to redirect specific user group away from where conflicts exist</li> <li>· Does not reduce conflicts within specific user group</li> <li>· Seek desirable and scenic alternate routes</li> </ul>	H	H			H	H	L	M
4.5 Loop Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· All users prefer loop trail experience</li> <li>· Will lead to better compliance</li> <li>· Different user groups have different needs in regards to length</li> <li>· Loop trails can disperse trail use</li> <li>· May need interagency cooperation</li> </ul>	H	H			H	H	H	M
4.6 Barriers & Stiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Use to prohibit specific uses</li> <li>· In using, they may make areas less accessible to physically limited</li> <li>· Horse stile inhibits physically limited</li> <li>· No barrier prevents bicycle access</li> <li>· Stiles needed to prevent motorcycle access in remote areas</li> </ul>	M	H			M	L		L

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

4.0 IMPROVEMENTS (Continued)

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Use pedestrian/wheelchair stile in combination with equestrian stile</li> <li>· May cause visitor to stop and read signs</li> </ul>								
4.7 Volunteer Construction and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Indirectly benefits when volunteers gain understanding of trail use impacts</li> <li>· Volunteers can assist in repairing surfaces, widening and other physical improvements</li> <li>· District's volunteer program can be expanded to repair trail damage</li> <li>· Maintenance provides more awareness of user related problems</li> <li>· Mixing user groups can foster better understanding of trail use needs</li> <li>· Volunteers may take possessory interest and not be receptive to trail closures if needed</li> <li>· Projects need to be directed by staff to insure quality and low maintenance</li> <li>· Partnership between staff and volunteers strengthens when working together</li> <li>· Increases interest in caring for land</li> <li>· Is not free but requires good deal of staff attention and direction</li> </ul>	H	H	H		M	H	H	M
4.8 Speed Bumps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Present a hazard and liability problem</li> <li>· Difficult to make visible and not intrusive</li> <li>· Could injure inexperienced bicyclists</li> <li>· Needed more on roads than trails</li> <li>· Tend to breakdown when driven over</li> <li>· Degrades passive users experience</li> <li>· Hard on patrol vehicles</li> <li>· Need warning signs alongside</li> <li>· Irresponsible users may still speed</li> </ul>	L	M			L	H		L
4.9 Trail Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Trail maintenance is required to keep trail width and surface in good condition</li> <li>· Keep trail shoulders brushed for passing</li> <li>· Maintain trails to required width to accommodate designated trail use</li> <li>· Volunteers are helpful maintaining trails</li> </ul>		H	M	L	M	M	H	M

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

Mitigation Measure	Public and Staff Comments	Planning	Operations	Public Affairs	Administration	Material Costs	Implementation	Volunteers	Effectiveness
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<b>5.0 MONITORING</b>									
5.1 Visitor Conflict Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Visitor conflict form needs to be readily available to trail users</li> <li>· Visitor may lack objectivity and report may be unreliable</li> <li>· Reporting procedure needs to be explained in signs and brochures</li> <li>· Visitors must be encouraged to report conflicts to rangers</li> <li>· Return address cards need to be provided</li> </ul>	L	M	L		L	M		L
5.2 Violation and Incident Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Rangers provide valuable information for understanding and resolving trail conflicts</li> <li>· Number of reports not as useful as content (how, when, where, and why)</li> <li>· Reports need to be comprehensive, objective, &amp; consistent</li> </ul>		M			L			M
5.3 Trail Condition Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Monitoring effectiveness of mitigation measures is necessary</li> <li>· Need guidelines to ensure consistency</li> <li>· Volunteers may be too subjective (eye of the beholder)</li> <li>· Need base line information and regular reports to determine increase in damage</li> <li>· Need in conjunction with visitor survey to determine relationship of use</li> </ul>	M	M			L	M		M
5.4 Visitor Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Need user type, numbers and attitudes</li> <li>· Extend over time to compensate for unusual weather, special activities, etc.</li> <li>· Survey method and delivery must be consistent for accountable data</li> <li>· Numerous entry points and long days require numerous participants</li> <li>· Extremely difficult to coordinate with volunteers</li> <li>· Commitment &amp; boredom are a problem</li> <li>· Could contract for survey</li> <li>· Only way to substantiate levels of use</li> <li>· Will not indicate if hikers have diminished due to other incompatible trail uses</li> <li>· Need data for benefit &amp; dissatisfaction levels</li> </ul>	H	M	H	M	H	H	L	M

L = Low M = Moderate H = High

## APPENDIX A - SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

### Section I Trail Use Guidelines

#### ***What are trail use guidelines?***

Trail use guidelines are quantitative and qualitative factors considered in determining trail use designations. Quantitative factors include physical characteristics of a trail such as trail width and grade, line-of-sight and side slopes. Qualitative factors are more subjective in nature and address existing trail use conflicts, other preserve activities, trail use on adjacent lands, and past, present and future trail use.

Trail use guidelines are designed to assist the District staff and Board of Directors in implementing adopted trail use policies. The guidelines are meant to be principles that direct the judgement and decision making process. They are intended to provide flexibility in the planning and management of the District's trail system.

The District is currently developing accessibility plans that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As part of the process, trail access for visitor's having disabilities is being addressed. When completed, trail use considerations contained in the ADA Plan will be incorporated into the trail use guidelines.

#### ***Why are trail use guidelines being developed?***

Trail use guidelines are being developed to comply with the existing Trail Use Policies, adopted by the Board of Directors in November 1990. The purpose of the policies is to promote safe and enjoyable experiences for all who use the District lands. Trail Use Policy 3.0 states "The Board of Directors will adopt qualitative and quantitative trail use guidelines to aid the Board and staff in determining trail use designations in the implementation of these policies." As pointed out in the preamble to the policies, this policy is not intended to restrict those who may use the District trails, but they may restrict how or under what conditions the trails are to be used (Refer to Trail Use Policies dated November 14, 1990)

#### ***How are trail use guidelines going to be used?***

Trail use guidelines will be applied to each preserve on an individual basis. A particular trail system will be examined in a comprehensive manner along with all other elements of the preserve's use and management plan. This is to insure that land use decisions relating to such things as environmental education, parking areas and observation platforms become factors in determining appropriate trail use. Use and management plans are reviewed by the Board of Directors in accordance with District's planning process and subject to the Public Notification Procedures.

***Trail use guidelines and the planning process.***

The trail use guidelines are presented in the following table. They are, generally, in the order they will be considered in the use and management planning process. Many of these guidelines can be applied simultaneously during the process.

***What are trail class designations?***

The District's trail system is characterized by a wide variety of physical trail conditions. These trails range from level to steep, narrow to wide, and with natural features making each trail somewhat unique. Many of the trails, though, can be grouped together when examining similarities in trail width and grade, side slope, and line of sight. In fact, the majority of trails fall into three classes which are described, herein, as Class A, B and C. Together, these three classes are believed to represent approximately 75% of the District's trail system.

The four physical characteristics that determine a trail class designation are;

- Trail Width - represents the width of the trail pad or graded area including the path in which trail users travel and the shoulders of the path which in many cases may be overgrown.
- Trail Grade - describes the steepness of a trail. It is based on the change in elevation between two points along the length of the trail.
- Side Slope - represents the steepness of the area adjacent to a trail. It is based on the change in elevation between two points along a line perpendicular to a trail.
- Line of Sight - describes the distance a trail user can see along the length of a trail. Large trees, rocks or embankments can limit the line of sight and ability to see oncoming trail users. Line of sight is based on the average height of a trail user travelling in the middle of the trail.

**Section II Mitigation Measures for Trail Use Conflicts*****What are trail use conflict mitigation measures?***

In the future, increasing trail use and changing modes of travel will escalate trail use conflicts. Trail use guidelines and designations may reduce trail conflicts but will not completely resolve them. Unfortunately, trail users will always have different expectations, irresponsible and illegal trail use will continue, and accidents will happen even under the best conditions. It is, therefore, necessary to employ trail use conflict mitigation measures.

Mitigation measures are an array of actions that may be undertaken to augment trail use guidelines and designations. They are essentially the tools used to reduce significant trail use conflicts to an acceptable level. They vary greatly in their scope and application and therefore need to be evaluated on individual merit. These

tools include such things as educational videos, bicycle helmets and one-way trails. Generally speaking, mitigation measures can be grouped into the following five categories.

■ Education

Methods for increasing public awareness and understanding of diverse trail use needs and conflicts

■ Regulations

Rules that may be applied and enforced widespread on District preserves or specific areas and trails

■ Enforcement

Number of rangers and the manner in which regulations are enforced by rangers and administered by the courts

■ Improvements

Construction and maintenance measures that can be undertaken to improve trail use conditions

■ Monitoring

Data gathering and analysis of trail use impacts, trail use guidelines and mitigation measures

***What mitigation measures have been undertaken to date?***

- An etiquette brochure title Sharing the Trails, has been developed and made available at preserves and included in mailings and handouts; portions were published in the San Jose Mercury News.
- Signs prohibited particular trail uses are placed at trail entry points and trail junctions to clearly indicate regulations.
- Bicycle advisory signs stating "Bicyclists - Caution 15MPH", "Reduce Speed - Steep Grade", and "Reduce Speed - Call Out When Passing" are being tested at Fremont Older Open Space Preserve.
- New map signs and brochure maps have been placed at Skyline Ridge and Russian Ridge Open Space Preserves emphasizing trail use designations, distances and terrain.
- Increased ranger patrols are occurring in hotspots where problems are persistent, including a recent ranger information barricade program at Fremont Older Open Space Preserve.
- Seasonal trail closures occur on specific trails to prohibit bicycle and equestrian use during winter months when the trails can be easily damaged.

***How are mitigation measures going to be employed?***

Many trail use conflicts are related to physical conditions of a trail and levels of trail use. Each situation where conflicts occur may be unique and require individual attention. Other situations may be widespread and mitigation measures can be applied more broadly. In other words, bicycle helmets may be considered appropriate District-wide while one-way uphill trails may be developed in specific areas of a preserve.

The mitigation measures that have been addressed in the attached table can be considered a shopping list when

trying to resolve specific trail use conflicts. Some mitigation measures may not be the panacea they first appear to be. Without fully understanding the relative effectiveness of a measure and budgetary impacts, it may be premature to consider implementation. The purpose of compiling the comprehensive list is to understand the multitude of available tools and weigh their individual merits. Many of the measures will require further evaluation and Board consideration before they can be implemented. On the other hand some measures can be more easily implemented when they are relatively effective and do not require detailed fiscal analysis.

***What is included in the Mitigation Measures table?***

The following table includes an analysis of mitigation measures that have been identified during the course of this study. The left portion of the table represents comments expressed by the public, staff, and Board committee. Comments are not necessarily supported by each and everyone who participated in the planning process. They are presented to fairly represent those who have commented and believed to add valuable insight into the planning process.

The right portion of the table represents the Board committee's view (based on staff input) of the resources, complexity and relative effectiveness of each measure. The first four columns project the staffing levels that may be needed in respect to planning, operations, public affairs and administrative programs. The fifth column indicates the potential cost that may be associated with materials, publications and contract services. Cost projections do not include staff salaries which are indirectly included in staffing levels. The implementation column represents the complexity and time that may be involved in implementing a particular measure. The seventh column projects the amount of volunteer support and commitment necessary. The last column, and most subjective part of the analysis, is an opinion of relative effectiveness of a measure in respect to other mitigation measures in the table.

Board Policy Manual

<b>Open Space Use and Management Planning Process</b>	<b>Policy 4.01 Chapter 4 – Acquisition &amp; Maintenance of District Lands</b>
Effective Date: 7/27/77	Revised Date: 11/13/13
Prior Versions: 7/27/77, 8/13/80, 7/14/82, 3/23/83, 9/14/83, 2/25/87, 5/13/09	

**A. Purpose and Scope of Planning Process**

MROSD lands are managed to promote the continued preservation of their natural, historical and cultural resources, and at the same time provide compatible public recreation, environmental education, and agricultural use where possible.

The Open Space Use and Management Planning Process has been established to address these management goals. The process encompasses an ongoing comprehensive approach to management, designed to respond to the dynamic changes of the District’s environmental resources and public needs.

**B. Description of Planning Process**

The Planning Process is comprised of five planning categories, which allow for a systematic approach to the development of management plans. The categories relate to various stages of site planning a preserve may be subject to during its course of development and use.

**1. Preliminary Use and Management Plans**

Preliminary Use and Management Plans consist of use and management recommendations developed and approved at the time of acquisition or approval of a license or management agreement. These plans normally represent a status quo approach to use and management. Emphasis of the plan is typically on securing the site, specifying immediate site management needs, and establishing a timeline for providing general public access. Limited public use, such as docent hikes or neighbor use/permit use, may occur while the site undergoes post-acquisition planning, depending on site constraints.

The Preliminary Use and Management Plan remains effective until 1) it is incorporated into an existing Comprehensive Use and Management Plan or Master Plan if the site is an addition to an existing preserve; 2) it is incorporated into an Interim, Comprehensive or Master Use and Management Plan when the site is an addition to a preserve not yet having a comprehensive plan; or 3) it is reviewed and expanded into an Interim Use and Management Plan when the site is not part of another preserve and is relatively small and isolated.

**2. Interim Use and Management Plans**

The Interim Use and Management Plan is usually a refinement of a Preliminary Use and Management Plan, but in some instances is also an accumulation of preliminary plans for a



number of acquisitions comprising a preserve. The Interim Plan is most commonly prepared for preserves that consist of non-contiguous parcels, have use limitations, or are anticipated to require boundary adjustments. The Interim Plan responds more to immediate versus long-range planning concerns and generally represent a continuation of existing levels of use and management.

### 3. Comprehensive Use and Management Plan

The Comprehensive Use and Management Plan is a detailed plan addressing all aspects of use and management. It is prepared for preserves that have the potential for a substantial amount of public use, and/or have other critical land use issues which need attention. The comprehensive plan is based on a resource analysis and public input, and evaluates potential uses as well as cultural and existing uses. It represents both long term (5-15 years) goals and short term (1-5 years) goals with the focus of specific recommendations being the tasks to be completed within five years. The need and approximate timing for preparation of a Comprehensive Use and Management Plan may be determined when considering the Preliminary Use and Management Plan or when the Interim Use and Management Plan is adopted or reviewed.

### 4. Preserve Master Plan for Improvement, Use and Management

The Preserve Master Plan is very broad in scope and is developed with the intent of providing a guideline for development of a preserve over a term of 1 to 30 years. Compared to the Comprehensive Use and Management Plan, the Preserve Master Plan involves more extensive site analysis, a higher level of public involvement, and in most cases, explores a wider range of improvements, resources, and land uses. The Master Plan is usually designed to be implemented in phases over a long time period. Master Plans are typically prepared for District lands that lend themselves to higher levels of recreational uses, resource issues, agriculture, improvements, and land uses, or have particularly complex planning issues to be resolved.. Upon completion, the Preserve Master Plan serves as a basis for the formulation of change to a preserve's Comprehensive Use and Management Plan, which reflects the more immediate phases of the Master Plan. The Master Plan is intended to be the guiding document when considering amendments to previous Use and Management Plans.

### 5. Use and Management Plan Reviews

All Use and Management Plans are subject to the Board's review at its discretion or upon the General Manager's recommendation. The purpose of the review is to examine changes in site use, resolve use and management issues as they arise, and address the progress of implementing existing plans. The time period and schedule during which a plan is reviewed depends on level of use, and use and management issues requiring attention.

A Policy for Relative Emphasis of Use, Development and Publicity of District sites was adopted in 1982 to guide the District in prioritizing planning of preserves and in developing a five-year Capital Improvement Plan. Since adoption of this Policy, the process for prioritizing and planning the development of Use and Management Plans has become a component of the Board's annual review and adoption of the District's Action Plan. As part of the District's Strategic Plan, a goal will be to formulate a more current and effective process for prioritizing

and planning the use and management of District Preserves. This revision of the District's Open Space Use and Management Planning Process is an interim policy to be in place until the development of a revised process which reflects the District's current approach to preserve use and management issues.

### **C. Preliminary Use and Management Plan Elements**

The Preliminary Use and Management Plan contains a number of elements that focus on existing conditions and potential uses of the site. The elements typically include, but are not limited to:

#### 1. Description of Site

Discussion to describe size, location, boundaries, topography, geology and natural landscapes, and other significant site conditions.

#### 2. Planning Considerations

Discussion directed toward identifying jurisdictional and zoning factors influencing site planning.

#### 3. Current Use and Development

A description of current uses of the site including structures, roads, power lines, agriculture, water systems, and other significant uses.

#### 4. Potential Use and Development

A conceptual look at the potential uses, including potential uses of structures and improvements.

#### 5. Site Protection and Immediate Site Needs

These elements pertain to any immediate plans for the lands including limited public access, protection of the site's resources, and insuring public safety.

##### a. Limited Public Access

Discussion and plans concerning limited public access, if any, such as parking, trail, and road systems. Conceptual discussion of future access opportunities may be included.

##### b. Signing

Discussion and plans concerning signing for boundaries, regulations, safety and other immediate needs.

##### c. Structures and Improvements

Discussion of all structural-type improvements including residences, water systems, restrooms, barns, fences and gates. Policies regarding disposition of major structures (i.e., use, sale or demolition) is further addressed in Section E.

##### d. Natural Resources Management

Discussion related to immediate resource management needs such as restoration, inventories, and erosion control.

e. Agricultural Resources

Discussion of the current agricultural uses and agricultural preservation needs in the near term, such as grazing and continuation of agricultural activities.

f. Patrol

Discussion of proposed patrol plans and patrol and maintenance access.

g. Wildfire Fuel Management

Discussion of any immediate fuel management needs or fuel planning needs.

h. Roads and Trails

Discussion and preliminary assessment of existing road and trail systems.

i. Service Plan for the Coastside Protection Program

For lands in the Coastside Protection Area, discussion of the maintaining the site in compliance with the Service Plan.

j. Site Safety Inspection

Discussion of any immediate site safety needs to insure public and employee safety such as existing potential hazards, needed site clean-up or remediation, or other protective measures.

6. Compliance with CEQA

Determination of project's potential impact in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

7. Site Naming

Discussion and plan for the naming of the site either as an addition to an existing preserve or formulation of a new preserve name.

8. Dedication

Discussion of intention to dedicate the site as public open space.

9. Fiscal Impact

Information on immediate costs of use and management of the site may be included.

The Interim, Comprehensive, and Preserve Master Use and Management Plans typically address the same elements as those contained in the Preliminary Use and Management Plan, but include more elements and a broader, more intensive analysis and plan for the preserve. Both the Interim and Comprehensive pPlans contain, in addition, a description of current public use including changing patterns of use and problematic uses. The degree of attention given to elements pertaining to public access and site protection is relative to the type of Use and Management Plan they are contained in, with the most detailed information available in the Preserve Master Use and Management Plan.

#### **D. Major Structures and Improvements**

The disposition of major structures and other improvements is a primary concern throughout the planning process because of their potential resource value or deleterious impact. The process by which structures are disposed of is in accordance with Policies Regarding Improvements on District Lands.

Preliminary use and management recommendations relating to existing structures and improvements will generally maintain the status quo, unless specific factors must be addressed because of negative site impacts or safety hazards requiring mitigation. For structures and improvements being retained during the further planning process, potential use categories will be identified, and a timeline for returning to the Board will be established. When feasible, the next decision point should coincide with the next consideration of the site's Use and Management Plan to ensure that the ultimate disposition is consistent with overall plans for the site.

The Use and Management Plan will establish the parameters for improvements and use of structures that are compatible with all other elements of the plan. The plan will outline the procedure and timeline for the preparation of a specific proposal, whether it is confined to a staff proposal or possibly the solicitation of public proposals. In the case of public solicitation, it is imperative that the parameters are well defined and consistent with open space goals and site plans.

#### **E. Conservation Management Units**

Conservation Management Units (CMUs) are areas within preserves, or possibly entire preserves, which because of certain criteria limiting their use, are planned and subsequently managed primarily for preservation of natural resources and viewshed. The criteria used to determine if a particular area or preserve falls within this category are:

1. Severe public access limitations

This occurs when the area is surrounded by private property and is not currently accessible by public roads or trails.

2. Remoteness causes management constraints

The area's remoteness makes it difficult to provide a responsible level of visitor and site protection, similar to that which is offered on more accessible sites, in the foreseeable future.

3. Undesirable for public use in the foreseeable future

This can be the result of site constraints which make the site currently not conducive to public use, such as site safety issues, size of the site, or other factors currently incompatible with general public use.

4. Significant environmental constraints

The lands may contain highly sensitive areas with current environmental constraints on public use, such as presence of critical habitat for endangered or threatened species, the presence of those species, or other significant risk of natural resource damage.

#### 5. Agriculture

The presence of active agricultural uses makes the site currently inappropriate for general public use.

Areas designated as Conservation Management Units (CMUs) will not be managed for general public recreation until use limitations can be sufficiently overcome. Public use will not be encouraged, patrol and maintenance will be the minimum necessary for resource protection and public safety, and site maps and signs (outside of the standard boundary signs) will not be available. Staff will monitor the resource as time permits and as conditions require. Maps contained in the acquisition report and available to the public only upon request will clearly outline access, limitations, and adjacent private properties.

The CMU determination is commonly made at the time of acquisition, but may occur or be modified during the review process. In most cases, a CMU status is only temporary until limiting conditions improve, but it is conceivable that this status could remain indefinitely. Areas or preserves designated CMUs will not be reviewed on a regular basis, but at Board or General Manager discretion.

Areas over which the District holds open space easements are usually CMUs unless the conditions of the easement permit public access. Although the level of planning for easements is similar to any other CMU, the management and method of monitoring may be different. In most cases, the District does not participate in the management of an open space easement area and is required to make special arrangements with the property owner for inspection of the easement conditions.

#### F. Site Naming

When a site is acquired, it may be recommended that it become an addition to an existing preserve, a specific area within an existing preserve, or a new preserve. If the property under consideration is to become an addition to a preserve, that action should occur at the time of acquisition. If the site is to become a specific area within a preserve or a new preserve, suggested names should be considered at the time of acquisition, with a final decision to follow at the next Use and Management Plan review or amendment. Guidelines for site naming are contained in the Board's Site Naming and Gift Recognition Policies. As preserves grow in size and possibly merge with other District land, it may become necessary to modify existing preserve perimeter boundaries and names. Suggested changes in boundaries and names may occur at the time of acquisition, with a final decision to follow at the next review or amendment of the Use and Management Plan.

#### G. Development Project Funded by a Grant

A preserve's Use and Management Plan may include projects that are ideal for development under various grant programs. These projects usually significantly increase public access, have elements beyond the more traditional types of development on district land, and have potential budget impacts that could divert funds away from ongoing management of the District's Preserves. In these cases, grant funds are sought as a means to implement the development phase without seriously impacting the overall program.

When applying for a development grant, it is advantageous to submit plans which have already been through the CEQA process, publicly reviewed, and adopted by the Board. This ensures the granting body that the project can be implemented expeditiously and with little modification. For this reason, every attempt is made to incorporate prospective grant projects into Use and Management Plans before the funding sources become available. When this is done, the elements are identified in the plan and in budget preparation as potential grant projects and, as such, are not anticipated to be developed solely with District funds.

In some instances, grant opportunities arise unexpectedly, and a grant project may be formulated without prior inclusion in a Use and Management Plan, in order to take advantage of the funding opportunity. It is then imperative to incorporate the project into the Use and Management Plan as soon as possible to provide the necessary public review, Board adoption and CEQA compliance.

#### **H. Open Space Planning Areas within District Preserves**

Some District preserves contain differing ecological and geographical open space planning areas. This arrangement facilitates comprehensive site use planning and management. Use and Management Plans and reviews for individual sites within a given planning area are prepared within a short span of time so that the plans are consistent with each other.

#### **I. Public Review**

Public participation is an integral part of the planning process. Anyone inquiring about planning issues related to a preserve is encouraged to become involved by attending public workshops and hearings when the issues are discussed. Interested parties may subscribe to the District's agendas to keep informed of upcoming meetings. In addition, a notice of an upcoming meeting will be posted on the website to increase public awareness. All public notification is in accordance with the Public Notification Policy, the District's Good Neighbor Policy, and the Coastside Service Plan.

Except for Preliminary Use and Management Plans and Plan Amendments, Use and Management Plans are considered by the Board at a minimum of two public hearings at which the public may comment. The initial hearing is for the purpose of tentatively adopting the Use and Management Plan recommendations. In most cases, these tentatively adopted recommendations will be returned to the Board for final approval at the next regularly scheduled meeting. This will typically allow at least a two-week period to receive public comment. There may be cases where additional time is required to resolve specific planning issues.

When the General Manager is authorized to accept a gift of or acquire low value real property, the General Manager is also authorized to approve the Preliminary Use and Management Plan for the property. The Board of Directors shall be notified in writing of any Preliminary Use and Management Plan so approved at the next regular Board meeting following the acquisition.

When specific land use issues under consideration may lead to significant changes in an existing use and management of a site and generate a substantial amount of public interest or raise complex issues, the proposed plan may be first considered by the District's Use and Management Committee or a Board-authorized ad hoc committee. Public workshops are typically held. Public workshops may be informal meetings held before staff presents a plan to the Board for final approval or, at the Board's discretion, may be District board meetings. This will encourage public involvement in the development or modification of the Use and Management Plan. When special use and management issues arise, public workshops or neighborhood meetings may be held to resolve the issues and possibly modify the existing Use and Management Plan. These workshops will be held on or near the preserve when possible, and announcements will be sent to subscribers of the District's agenda and local newspapers, as well as posted on the website.

District-wide planning issues (e.g., dog usage, trail use conflicts) will be subject to the same planning procedures as site-specific issues. A mailing list of interested parties will be maintained and used for public notification when public workshops or hearings related to the matter are scheduled.

**LEGAL NOTICE.** The purpose of this policy is to assist the District in planning the use and management of its preserves to further the District's mission and best accomplish its planning goals. It is not the purpose of this Process to adopt legal notice, legal procedures, public meeting, or land management policies beyond those required by state law. No action taken by the District shall be invalid for failure to comply with this policy.