



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

# Memorandum

DATE: June 10, 2026

MEMO TO: Board of Directors

THROUGH: Ana M. Ruiz, General Manager *se Ruiz*

FROM: Mattea Ottoboni – Planner II, Planning Department  
Karine Tokatlian – Senior Resource Management Specialist, Natural Resources Department

SUBJECT: Request for Proposals and Qualifications for CEQA Services and Drafting a Sensitive Species Protection Program

---

## Summary

Staff are developing a Sensitive Species Protection Program (SSPP) to protect federally threatened and endangered species in Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) bayfront preserves – Ravenswood Open Space Preserve and Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area. These species include western snowy plover, salt marsh harvest mouse, California least tern, and Ridgway's rail.

Staff provided a presentation and report on this topic to the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee on April 27, 2026 (Attachment 1 – PNR Report). Committee members unanimously supported the General Manager's recommendations as follows:

1. Receive a presentation and provide feedback on the development of a Sensitive Species Protection Program for Bayfront Preserves.
2. Provide concurrence that the Sensitive Species Protection Program as described is sufficient for staff to release a Request for Proposals to select a consultant for this work. An award of contract would subsequently be brought to the full Board of Directors for review and consideration.

PNR acknowledged the importance of a SSPP and were particularly interested in the anticipated schedule. They inquired about conservation actions that could be taken during the interim period while a SSPP is finalized by 2028, as well as potential opportunities to engage volunteers. PNR also asked about the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process and how to keep the environmental review document flexible for unforeseen circumstances, which will be explored during document preparation. PNR expressed interest in regional coordination for species protection. The video of the meeting is available at the following link: [April 27, Planning and Natural Resources Committee - Video Recording](#).

Staff will now proceed to develop and release a request for proposals (RFP) to solicit a consultant to prepare a SSPP and an associated CEQA document. As presented to the PNR, the conceptual scope of the proposed plan is described in Attachment 1 and described in the recording of the PNR presentation. Staff will bring an award of contract to the Board of Directors for approval when a consultant is selected,

which is anticipated in Fall 2026. This Board report to consider the award of contract will provide further details about the scope of work and next steps. Once a contract is approved, staff will work with the selected consultant to prepare a draft SSPP and the associated CEQA document, which at this time is anticipated to be an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The draft SSPP and CEQA document would subsequently be brought to the Board for review, approval, and certification at a future date, currently anticipated for late 2027 or early 2028.

For more information about the purpose of the project, planned scope of work, and key stakeholders contacted to date, please refer to Attachment 1- PNR Report, Attachment 2 – Draft PNR Meeting Minutes, and to the PNR video.

#### **Attachments**

- Attachment A – April 27, 2026, PNR Report
- Attachment B – Draft April 27, 2026 PNR Meeting Minutes
- [Link to video](#) - Note: PNR requested that the slides be provided to the Board with the FYI memo; the video recording is provided in response as it displays the presentation slides while also conveying important contextual information



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-26-57  
April 27, 2026

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### AGENDA ITEM

Sensitive Species Protection Planning for Bayfront Preserves

#### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Receive a presentation and provide feedback on the development of a Sensitive Species Protection Program for Bayfront Preserves.
2. Provide concurrence that the Sensitive Species Protection Program as described is sufficient for staff to release a Request for Proposals to select a consultant for this work. An award of contract would subsequently be brought to the full Board of Directors for review and consideration.

#### SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) owns and manages two preserves on the San Francisco Bay (Bay): Ravenswood Open Space Preserve (Ravenswood) and Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area (SCSNSA). These bayfront preserves are home to several State and Federally protected species, including western snowy plover, salt marsh harvest mouse, California least tern, and Ridgway's rail. The District is working on several fronts to protect and support these sensitive and rare species. At SCSNSA, the District is pursuing the SCSNSA Restoration Project, commencing with feasibility studies of various habitat enhancement alternatives to identify the best restoration option that maximizes the ecological value for native species.

The District is also developing a Sensitive Species Protection Program (Program, the subject of this Agenda Item) that would apply to both bayfront preserves and establish a range of management measures for enhancing essential habitat features and reducing the ongoing significant predation risk to support the long-term sustainability of rare and sensitive species populations. This type of species protection work is widely conducted in other bayfront and coastal habitats with a high degree of success to conserve populations of sensitive species. District staff have consulted with partner and stakeholder agencies and organizations to discuss similar efforts and received early feedback on the proposed Program as described in this report. The Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) will have an opportunity to review the proposed concepts of the Program to provide early feedback that will be incorporated into an upcoming Request for Proposals solicitation to select an outside firm that can support the

development of the Program and the preparation of an accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

## BACKGROUND

The Baylands of the South San Francisco Bay (Bay), including District lands, consist of a mosaic of marshes and salt ponds and contain breeding habitat for multiple sensitive species that are listed as either threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and/or the California Endangered Species Act (Table 1). Many agencies and entities are working to protect these species and bolster populations through habitat improvements, restoration projects, and direct management of predation pressure, including agencies that are managing wildland habitat zones located to the north and south of the District's Ravenswood Preserve and SCSNSA.

**Table 1 – Sensitive Species Present in District Baylands**

Species	Scientific Name	Protection Status
Western snowy plover (plover)	<i>Anarhynchus nivosus nivosus</i>	Federal Threatened, California Species of Special Concern
California least tern (tern)	<i>Sterna antillarum browni</i>	Federal and State Endangered, California Fully Protected
Salt marsh harvest mouse (mouse)	<i>Reithrodontomys raviventris</i>	Federal and State Endangered, California Fully Protected
Ridgway's rail (rail)	<i>Rallus obsoletus obsoletus</i>	Federal and State Endangered, California Fully Protected

These sensitive species face high predation pressure due to unnaturally inflated predator populations that have been subsidized by human activity and development. The District's two bayfront preserves are affected by this dynamic, given that they both are within wildland-urban interface zones, immediately adjacent to and just outboard of highly urbanized areas consisting of housing, business, and industrial uses. Populations of local predators such as Common raven (*Corvus corax*;) and California gull (*Larus californicus*) have dramatically increased in the Bay in recent decades. Data collected from the North American Breeding Bird Survey indicate that within the Mediterranean California ecoregion, raven abundance was 14.3 times higher in 2018 than in 1966. Breeding California Gull populations in the San Francisco Bay have boomed since the 1980s, growing by 21,342% from under 200 individuals in 1982 to an estimated 42,884 individuals in 2023. Both species are bolstered by food subsidies related to human activity, including landfills and other unsecured food debris. At their current anthropogenically (human activity) inflated population levels, predation pressure is now capable of eradicating an entire breeding colony of shorebirds in as little as a single day and has resulted in detrimental effects on vulnerable marsh species.

### *Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area*

SCSNSA is a 55-acre preserve located on the bayfront in Mountain View (Attachment 1). It is adjacent to Stevens Creek but is not hydrologically connected to the creek or the Bay. It functions as a stormwater retention basin for the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA) Ames facility. SCSNSA provides habitat for water birds and migratory species during wet months and habitat for ground nesting birds like plovers when dry enough during the summer. Pickleweed present on site could potentially provide habitat for the mouse and rail. Numerous predator species are present at SCSNSA, documented through in person surveys and

wildlife cameras. Most recently, in 2025, three plover nests were identified and monitored at SCSNSA, two of which were depredated before the eggs hatched, and one was partially depredated after at least one chick hatched. This event is representative of the ongoing predation pressures in Bay habitats.

Through a separate project (SCSNSA Restoration Project) that aims to enhance the health and sustainability of rare and sensitive Bayland species, the District is evaluating various habitat restoration alternatives for the site (R-25-97). The types of sensitive species supported by this effort will depend on the selected alternative. The level of success of this habitat restoration project in increasing the populations and stability of sensitive species will greatly depend on supplemental actions to control the unnaturally high levels of predation. The proposed Sensitive Species Protection Program will be essential in managing predation pressure to successfully increase sensitive species populations and prevent a mortality sink in which predation (mortality) increases with sensitive species abundance.

### *Ravenswood Open Space Preserve*

Ravenswood is a 376-acre preserve located in the Bayfront area of East Palo Alto (Attachment 1). The preserve is hydrologically part of the Bay and provides active and muted tidal marsh habitat. It is a former salt pond site that was restored to a tidal marsh in 2000. Ravenswood provides valuable habitat for mouse, rail, and migratory birds. The protected species in this preserve are likely predated by similar predator species as those found in SCSNSA based on historical case studies documented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in similar Bay habitats, ongoing species monitoring by external entities, and the proximity of location and similar urbanized surroundings. In 2000, a tidal marsh restoration project was completed at Ravenswood, breaching the former outboard levee to successfully reintroduce tidal flow to the site. In 2019, refuge islands were constructed as part of the Ravenswood Bay Trail project to provide suitable protected habitats above high tides for sensitive species. At present, the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority is leading the design of a shoreline levee with associated habitat modifications, including mitigation for snowy plover.

## **DISCUSSION**

Numerous rare and sensitive species inhabit bayfront Preserves (refer to list of species in Table 1) face unrelenting pressure from increased predator populations, which is a significant limiting factor for sensitive species recovery. These species are legally protected under the ESA and given the level of predation loss, merit active management actions to support their survival and population recovery. The District is proposing to prepare a Sensitive Species Protection Program (Program) that will provide programmatic guidance with graduated levels of active management actions to reduce predation pressures. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) environmental review process for this Program is expected to result in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that will analyze any potential environmental impacts associated with implementing the proposed Program.

Based on extensive research and discussions with regulatory agencies, sensitive species protection will require a comprehensive effort to manage both habitat quality and predation

pressure. Agencies in the San Francisco Bay and in other coastal habitats across California, Washington, and Oregon have implemented similar longstanding, comprehensive and successful sensitive species protection programs. This two-pronged approach to improve habitat quality and manage predation pressure is ecologically necessary due to the intense predation, and the diversity and complexity of predator-prey interactions. Moreover, the creation of a “toolbox” of graduated management actions as part of the Program is understood to best meet the sensitive species protection objectives by “custom fitting” each situation and each predator issue in real time.

The proposed Program would include both proactive and reactive measures for each preserve. Proactive measures would be implemented on an ongoing basis to reduce predation risk. Examples of these measures may include monitoring, fencing, trash removal, public education, removal of predator perches, dismantling of predator nests, etc. Additionally, proactive measures specific to domestic/feral cats that may be present on the preserves would include humane capture and relocation to local animal rescue organizations, as well as removal/relocation of nearby cat feeding stations and public education to keep pet cats indoors.

Reactive measures would be implemented on an as-needed basis, informed by monitoring, evidence of repeat predation, and/or other acute indicators. Reactive measures would be applied to the specific scenario and, when appropriate, target problematic individual predators and/or predator species. Reactive measures would first include non-lethal treatment through hazing and behavior modification to change behaviors. If necessary, lethal removal of select problematic common species or individuals that are present in unnaturally high numbers may be considered, such as ravens, gulls, skunks, rats, house mice, and raccoons. All proposed measures would be fully analyzed as part of the CEQA review.

### **Early Outreach and Engagement**

During the exploration and scoping phase of the proposed Program planning effort, staff conducted outreach to a variety of federal, state, and local partner and stakeholder groups with neighboring ownership of Bayfront property, and who hold subject matter expertise in managing sensitive species. This effort was conducted to provide early notification and engage in discussions regarding the proposed Program development and create an opportunity for information exchange. The entities engaged in this phase of outreach included:

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge, US Fish and Wildlife Service
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory
- East Bay Regional Park District
- South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project
- Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance (formerly Audubon Society)
- Sierra Club – Loma Prieta Chapter’s San Francisco Bay Alive Campaign
- City of East Palo Alto
- City of Mountain View
- City of Palo Alto
- Animal Care Organizations

During this outreach, staff presented the District's goal of the proposed Program to protect special status species located in its Bayfront preserves with an accompanying thorough CEQA review.

General feedback from this outreach is summarized as follows. Environmental partners expressed support and/or understanding for the proposed Program with the acknowledgement that high predation is a systemic problem. They also acknowledged that efforts of this nature can be a sensitive topic, but that management and implementation of these efforts can be very effective for protecting sensitive species. Environmental partners recommended a broad and holistic approach with multiple tools available to fit different scenarios, enabling staff to determine in real time which tools are most appropriate to use in a particular situation. Environmental partners urged caution on the management of domestic cats and recommended partnering with animal care organizations and working with concerned communities to reach mutual goals. No specific concerns or objections were raised about the District's implementation of the proposed Program.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation. Future efforts, including the preparation of a Sensitive Species Protection Program and associated CEQA review, will be included in future board reports.

### **PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW**

None

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. In addition, staff have conducted ongoing coordination and provided notification of the meeting to the stakeholders engaged in the effort listed in the previous section.

### **CEQA COMPLIANCE**

The Committee's action associated with providing input on a Proposed Program is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Potential environmental effects of the Proposed Program will be evaluated pursuant to CEQA when a Sensitive Species Protection Program and associated CEQA documentation are prepared.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Summer 2026 - After obtaining early feedback from the PNR, staff will submit a FYI Memorandum to the full Board of Directors describing the scope and intent of the Program and recapping the work completed to date.
- Summer 2026 - Staff will distribute a RFP to solicit consultant services.
- Fall 2026 - Board of Directors (Board) will consider approval of an award of contract for consultant services to begin developing the Program and perform CEQA review.

- Late 2027/early 2028 – Board will consider approving the proposed Program and certifying the CEQA environmental review document.

**Attachments**

1. District Bayfront Preserves

Responsible Department Head:

Jane Mark, Planning Manager

Kirk Lenington, Natural Resources Manager

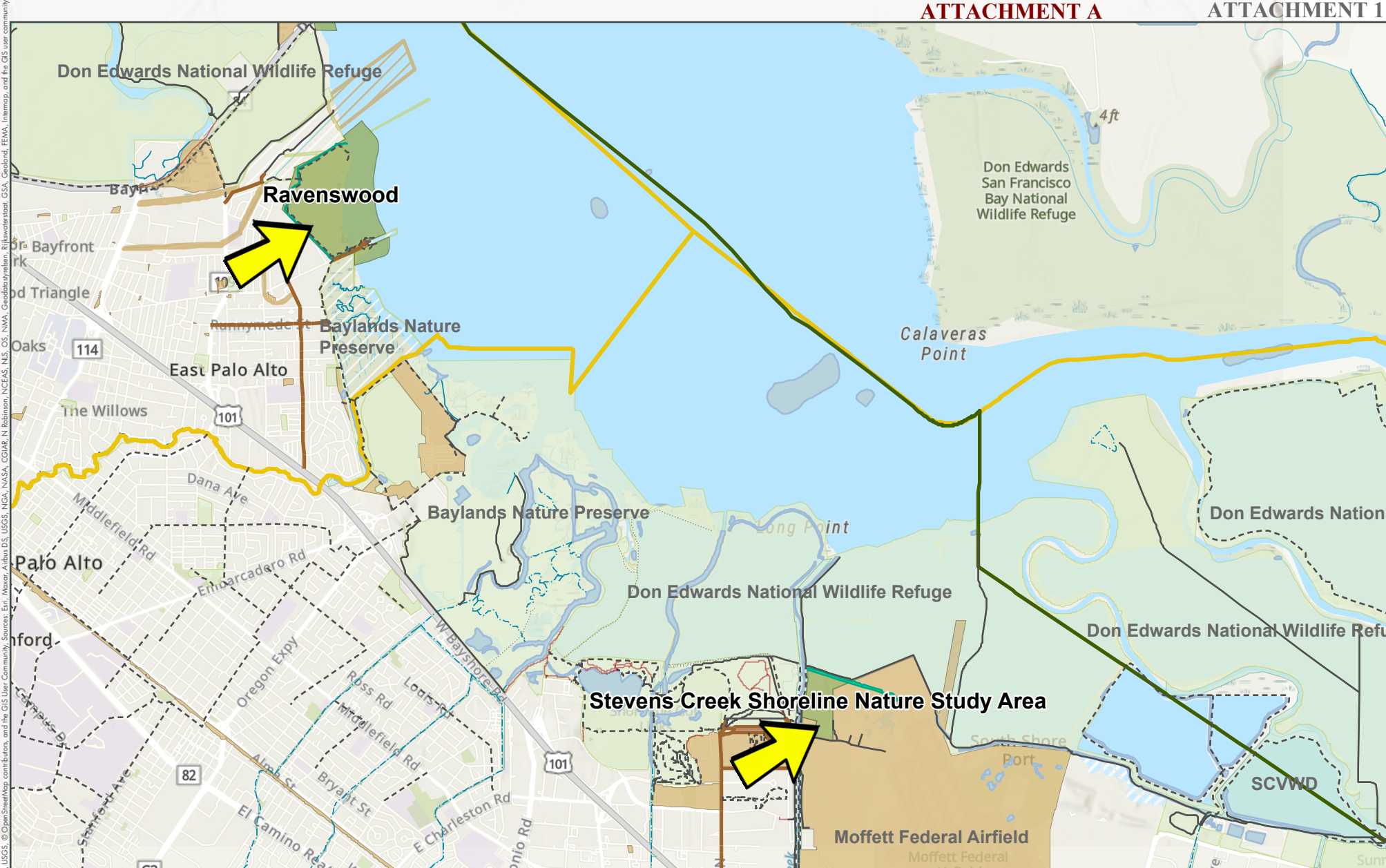
Prepared by:

Mattea Ottoboni, Planner II, Planning Department

Karine Tokatlian, Senior Resource Management Specialist, Natural Resources Department

Contact person:

Mattea Ottoboni, Planner II, Planning Department



### Midpen Bayfront Preserves

- |   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Stream</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: blue;">—</span> Perennial</li> <li><span style="color: blue; font-style: dashed;">—</span> Intermittent</li> </ul> <p><b>Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: gray; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Present</li> </ul> <p><b>Trail</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid brown; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Paved Road</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Unpaved Seasonal Road</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed black; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Trail</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dotted black; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Abandoned / Unmaintained Trail</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid red; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> District Boundary</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid green; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> District Boundary</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid yellow; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> County Boundary</li> </ul> | <p><b>Waterbody</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Active Pond</li> <li><span style="background-color: cyan; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Active Wetland</li> <li><span style="background-color: green; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Preserve Boundary</li> </ul> <p><b>Open Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Non-MROSD Easement Over Other Open Space</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Non-MROSD Easement Over Private; Non-MROSD Easement Over Public</li> <li><span style="background-color: lightorange; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Non-MROSD Easement Over Private; Non-MROSD Easement Over Public</li> <li><span style="background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Non-MROSD Easement Over Water</li> <li><span style="background-color: lightyellow; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Other Protected Open Space</li> <li><span style="background-color: tan; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Other Public Agency</li> <li><span style="background-color: lightcyan; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Public Watershed Land</li> </ul> |
|---|--|--|---|

Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District  
10/10/2025



Data Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community. Sources: Esri, Maxar, Airbus DS, USGS, NOAA, NASA, CGIAR, N. Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatasystem, Rikswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, and the GIS user community



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

**MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

**PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office  
5050 El Camino Real  
Los Altos, CA 94022

**Monday, April 27, 2026**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Riffle called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 2:01 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present: Zoe Kersteen-Tucker (voting alternate), Curt Riffle

Members absent: Jed Cyr and Yoriko Kishimoto

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Senior Resource Management Specialist Karine Tokatljan, Planner II Mattea Ottoboni, Senior Capital Project Manager Mark Brandi, Capital Project Manager I Ayden Sabharwal, Area Superintendent Brad Pennington, Senior Resource Management Specialist David Liefert

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**1. Approve the March 31, 2026 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Public comment opened.

**Planning and Natural Resources Committee  
April 27, 2026**

Ms. Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed.

Chair Riffle requested a correction of the draft minutes on the second page, fourth paragraph of agenda item two, which states, “Chair Riffle inquired whether the District could consider ways to inform the public that there is additional parking a few miles down the road at the Windy Hill Portola Road lot.” He explained the additional parking is not on Portola Road but rather on Sears Ranch Road.

**Motion:** Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Chair Riffle seconded the motion to approve the March 31, 2026 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Cyr absent)**

**2. Sensitive Species Protection Planning for Bayfront Preserves (R-26-57)**

Senior Resource Management Specialist Karine Tokatlian and Planner II Mattea Ottoboni presented. Assistant General Manager Brian Malone and General Manager Ana Ruiz assisted with answering questions.

Director Cyr joined the meeting at 2:16 p.m.

Director Kersteen-Tucker expressed regret that on-the-ground work would not begin until 2028, and suggested staff perform interim work while waiting to be CEQA certified.

Ms. Tokatlian stated staff can explore options for habitat or preserve management that benefits species protection and reduces predator activity, but that staff would need to be confident about the necessary level of CEQA or environmental coverage.

Chair Riffle suggested incorporating volunteers to assist in the interim and possibly long-term implementation actions.

Ms. Ottoboni confirmed that staff can explore promoting volunteer habitat enhancement support to get people involved.

Ms. Tokatlian explained there may be an opportunity to have a volunteer presence with educational materials to inform visitors using the trails, increase outreach efforts, and convey to the community how best to protect these species.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested there may be an opportunity to collaborate with District partners on a regional basis.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

**Planning and Natural Resources Committee  
April 27, 2026**

Chair Riffle requested that staff include the presentation slides in the FYI that will be presented to the Board of Directors (Board).

**Motion:** Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to provide feedback on the development of a Sensitive Species Protection Program for Bayfront Preserves, and provide concurrence that the Sensitive Species Protection Program as described is sufficient for staff to release a Request for Proposals to select a consultant for this work. An award of contract would subsequently be brought to the full Board of Directors for review and consideration.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**3. Design Alternatives for the Kennedy Trailhead Parking Area Improvement Project in Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (R-26-58)**

Senior Capital Project Manager Mark Brandi and Capital Project Manager I Ayden Sabharwal presented. Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, General Manager Ana Ruiz, Area Superintendent Brad Pennington, and Senior Resource Management Specialist David Leifert assisted with answering questions.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired about the feasibility of creating an exit separate from the entrance with option 1.

Mr. Brandi stated the possibility could be considered further but staff's preliminary finding was that it may be infeasible due to environmental impacts, particularly to oak trees susceptible to impact within their root zone, and because of the significant grading that would be required for a separate exit.

Ms. Ruiz further explained that there is a wetland setback that needs to be maintained.

Mr. Brandi added that the eastern side of the site is complex in terms of the number of constraints, including the wetland, which may have a 30-foot setback required by the resource agencies with jurisdiction over the wetland.

Chair Riffle requested that the committee provide their feedback on option 1 versus option 2 so that the full Board has the Committee's feedback, and to also consider whether to forward both options, one of the options, or neither option to the Board.

Director Kersteen-Tucker, supported by Chair Riffle, suggested identifying the location for a bike rack on the site plan as part of the transportation demand management strategies. She further suggested identifying the capacity of the bike rack.

Mr. Brandi stated staff will review the demand for bicycle parking and potentially revisit the traffic study associated with the project to gain a better sense of demand.

Director Kersteen-Tucker encouraged more bike parking.

**Planning and Natural Resources Committee**  
**April 27, 2026**

Chair Riffle commented that, unlike the Fremont Older parking lot, he is leaning towards maximizing the number of parking spaces and not having full circulation of traffic flow. He requested additional information on the trade-off.

Mr. Brandi explained staff is constantly evaluating full circulation in and out of sites, and every site is unique. He stated that although Kennedy and Fremont Older are both highly constrained in terms of the ability to have full circulation of vehicles, the community feedback for this project suggests there is a priority for alleviating roadside parking and overflow issues, and therefore to maximize the number of parking stalls provided. He noted that this project would not solve the overflow parking issue in the neighborhood, however, it would be a step towards alleviating the pressure on the neighborhood.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

Director Cyr recommended forwarding both options to the full Board for their consideration. He noted his preference is for Option 2 and identified increased circulation as a higher priority.

Director Kersteen-Tucker also recommended forwarding both options to the full Board and expressed a preference for Option 1. She noted that although she likes the improved circulation of Option 2, Option 1 has five extra parking spaces, in addition to the bike parking. She also expressed appreciation that fewer trees would need to be removed with Option 1.

Chair Riffle expressed a preference for Option 1 to maximize parking capacity. He recommended forwarding both options to the Board for consideration. He commented that he believes the District needs to maximize access to relieve the roadside parking pressure on the top of the hill and on Kennedy Road. He expressed a preference for extending the duration of the online survey to allow for additional public feedback and said he would defer to staff. He also noted that he had heard comments questioning why the District would provide ADA access if the trail is too difficult and stated it is the District's responsibility to provide ADA access. He highlighted that eventually the District will have an entrance in the Rancho de Guadalupe area and suggested letting people know that this other entrance is part of the District's long-term plan.

Mr. Brandi stated staff will be sure to highlight that in the presentation to the Board.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested that the staff report to the Board include future entry points into the preserve, a key to the two options so the Board understands exactly what everything is, and to add where staff believes bike parking could be located. She further requested staff to add their initial ideas for the bike parking capacity, more information regarding fire emergency access, and a description of the wetland and how it might dictate the type of surfacing chosen for the area.

**Motion:** Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to forward both design alternatives to the full Board of Directors for review and approval along with the Committee's recommendation for Option 1.

**Planning and Natural Resources Committee  
April 27, 2026**

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

Chair Riffle asked for staff to recommend to the Board to visit the site prior to the item being presented. He noted that staff would not need to be present.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 4:07 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC  
District Clerk