



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-26-122
August 18, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 2

AGENDA ITEM

Update the Long Ridge Open Space Preserve Use and Management Plan to extend dog on-leash access to a 0.2-mile section of Chestnut Trail connecting Castanea Ridge Road and Portola Heights Road.

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Forward a recommendation to the full Board of Directors to approve an update to the Use and Management Plan for Long Ridge Open Space Preserve to allow dogs on leash on a 0.2-mile segment of the Chestnut Trail between Castanea Ridge Road and Portola Heights Road to improve neighborhood dog access. In addition, amend the Use and Management Plan to define and clarify that dogs are allowed only on the existing trails and disc line.

SUMMARY

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) is proposing to update the Long Ridge Open Space Preserve (Preserve) Use and Management Plan to allow dogs on leash on a 0.2-mile segment of the Chestnut Trail between Castanea Ridge Road and Portola Heights Road. The change of use would allow residents living on Castanea Ridge Road to safely walk their dogs into the Preserve to access the portions of the Chestnut Trail and Peter's Creek Trail that currently allow dogs on leash. The project is limited to a use designation change and existing trail signage updates, no alterations to the trail are proposed.

DISCUSSION

Dog access is currently allowed in the Preserve on portions of the Chestnut and Peter's Creek Trails between Portola Heights Road and the Peters Creek parking area, as well as a segment of disc line connecting the two trails to form a loop (refer to Attachment 1). After a period of allowing permit-only dog access for 10 years, from 1999 until 2010, the District Board of Directors (Board) approved allowing dogs where dogs are now currently allowed in the Preserve on January 27, 2010 ([R-10-03](#)). The proposed addition of the 0.2-mile segment of Chestnut Trail for dog use between Portola Heights Road and Castanea Ridge Road was not addressed during this process. When dog use was permitted in 1999, the trails were not named but rather access was permitted in the "13-acre grassy meadow situated between Skyline Boulevard and Peter's Creek" ([R-99-12](#)). In order for the existing and proposed authorized dog use to conform to current standards and practice, the Preserve Use and Management Plan should be updated to specify the trails and disc line that currently allow dogs on leash. Off trail use with dogs, while

technically allowed in this area, is neither enjoyable from a visitor perspective nor desired from an environmental protection perspective. While the disc line that serves as a fuel break in the Preserve along Highway 35 is not a designated trail, it does allow for a short loop opportunity for dog owners. Per District regulations, hikers and equestrians are allowed to use disc lines unless otherwise posted closed. Therefore, it is recommended that dog use be officially authorized on the disc line and that the current authorization of a dog use “area” be removed.

Neighbors residing on Castanea Ridge Road who wish to walk their dogs in the Preserve currently need to walk along Highway 35 or drive to the Peter’s Creek parking area to access trail segments that allow dogs on leash. Rangers have had to issue multiple warnings and citations to residents walking their dogs on the 0.2-mile segment of Chestnut Trail between Portola Heights Road and Castanea Ridge Road. Ranger staff have requested this change to allow dog owners living on Castanea Ridge Road to safely access the other portions of Chestnut and Peter’s Creek trails that allow dogs on leash. Natural Resources Department staff were consulted on the proposed addition of dog use on the trail segment and did not have any concerns as there are no sensitive resources in that segment that would be affected by the addition of dog on leash access.

FISCAL IMPACT

Minimal impact anticipated, with sufficient funding in the current budget to cover the cost of trail signage updates.

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

- May 12, 1999, Initial approval of trial dog on leash permit area Long Ridge Open Space Preserve (OSP) ([R-99-12](#), [minutes](#))
- June 9, 1999, Final adoption of trial dog on leash permit area Long Ridge OSP ([R-99-66](#), [minutes](#))
- January 27, 2010, Board approval of dog on leash access on specified trails at Long Ridge OSP ([R-10-03](#), [minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The proposed update to the Long Ridge Open Space Preserve Use & Management Plan and associated updates to existing signage is exempt in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

NEXT STEPS

Following Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) consideration, and full Board consideration and approval, District regulation signs at either end of the trail would be updated to show dogs on leash are permitted on the 0.2-mile segment of Chestnut Trail. Also, the District’s internal GIS data system would be updated to show the dogs on leash designation. Additionally, the Guide Maps for the Preserve would be updated online, and new printed maps made.

Attachment(s)

1. Map showing the existing trails, allowed dog use and proposed allowed dog use.

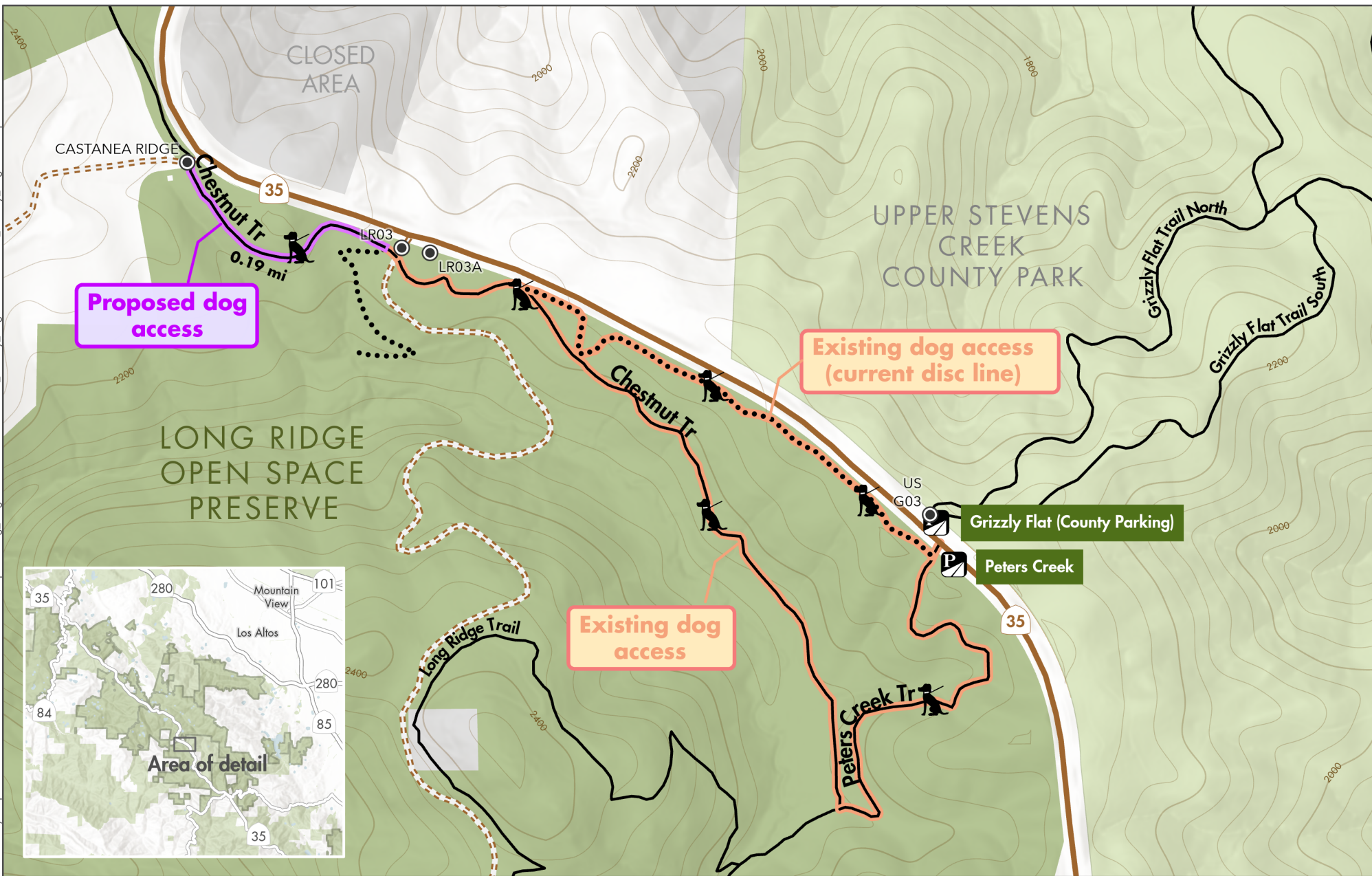
Responsible Department Head:

Matt Anderson, Visitor Services Department

Prepared by / Contact person:

Chris Barresi, Area Superintendent, Visitor Services Department

Path: G:\Projects\Long_Ridge\PublicAccess\Chestnut_Grizzly_DogAccess.aprx
Created By: flopez



Chestnut Trail Dog Access Extension

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Midpen preserves | Hiking, biking, equestrian trail | Dog access trail |
| Other protected lands | Hiking-only trail | Proposed dog access |
| Closed land | Driveway | Existing trail |
| Gate | | |

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
8/7/2026



While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.