



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-17-56
May 9, 2017

AGENDA ITEM 2

AGENDA ITEM

Public Access Conceptual Design Alternatives for the Red Barn Area of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Review and provide input on the Red Barn Area Public Access Conceptual Design Alternatives.

SUMMARY

The Red Barn Public Access Area (Project) will provide parking, trailhead, and picnic facilities adjacent to the iconic Red Barn just off Highway 84 in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Preserve) (Attachment 1). The improvements will facilitate the public opening of the central portion of the Preserve. Development of a site-specific plan is a high priority Phase I Action identified in the 2012 Board-approved Preserve Master Plan (Master Plan). The project landscape architect, Moore, Iacofano, Goltsman (MIG), Inc., will present two conceptual design alternatives for the public access area to solicit input from the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (Committee). Following Committee review, the conceptual design alternatives will be presented at a community meeting on May 16 in the Town of La Honda. Committee input received at this meeting will be shared at the May 16 meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Board has long identified the opening of the Red Barn area to the public as high priority. In August of 2012, the Board adopted the Preserve Master Plan and Mitigated Negative Declaration (R-12-83), which provides stewardship and public access prescriptions for the entire Preserve over a thirty-year period ending in 2042. On August 24, 2016, the Board awarded a contract (R-16-103) to MIG, Inc., for site planning, CEQA review, design, engineering, construction documents, and permitting assistance to implement the Project.

Master Plan Priority

The Project will establish new public access in the central portion of the Preserve. Visitor access facilities will include a new driveway from the rural two-lane Highway 84, parking for passenger vehicles and equestrian trailers, picnic area(s), accessible pathways, a double vault restroom, interpretive signage, fencing, gates, and trailhead amenities such as signboards. All elements will be designed to reflect the rural character of the adjacent Red Barn and Highway 84, a San Mateo County-designated Scenic Corridor. The scenic designation of this area will require additional Project review and approval by the County's Planning Commission. The proposed

site layout and circulation under the two proposed conceptual design alternatives accommodate various operations, including the onsite conservation grazing program.

Site Planning Analysis

The conceptual design alternatives have been informed by an analysis of opportunities and constraints, which included topography, existing tree species and health, biological resources, jurisdictional waters and wetlands, historic significance of the Red Barn, traffic study findings, and Phase I & II environmental site assessments to account for the past uses of the site. Two meetings were held with the grazing tenants to inform the proposed location, size, and configuration of the livestock corrals. The conceptual design alternatives also take into consideration ongoing maintenance activities, patrol, and emergency access. Given the focus and concentration of visitor-serving amenities at this location, the Project will necessitate the relocation of an existing informal emergency landing zone that is currently located near the livestock corral to avoid potential conflicts between future public use and emergency response. A list of key site analysis findings are provided below:

Site Opportunities

- Convenient access to the site from Highway 84 - a popular bicycle, motorcycle, and vehicle route to the coast.
- Central parking area location will enable access for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians to the Preserve.
- Expansive Preserve views and the historic Red Barn will enhance the visitor experience.
- Variety of educational opportunities include ecological resources, agricultural history, and the conservation grazing program.
- Opportunity to “daylight” or open an existing culver that drains to Weeks Creek to restore the creek to a more natural state.

Site Constraints

- Relocation of the entrance driveway 150 feet to the south due to inadequate line of sight.
- Added driveway construction complexity due to steep hillside along Highway 84.
- Need for facilities to continue supporting the cattle grazing operation.
- Contaminated soils within the historic livestock corral.
- Consultation may be required with Army Corps of Engineers for a potentially jurisdictional drainage.
- Proximity of Weeks Creek, located southeast of the Red Barn.
- Potential impacts to existing ranger residence.
- Relocation of the existing emergency landing zone.
- County Scenic Corridor designation increases design restrictions.
- Potential hazard due to many large, non-native trees that are in poor health.

Conceptual Design Alternatives (Attachment 2)

The two conceptual design alternatives (“Alt 1” and “Alt 2”) present various design options that allow for a combination of elements from each alternative to arrive at a preferred conceptual design.

Public Access, Grazing and Circulation Elements

- **Driveway:** To achieve safe sight distance and grade, a new driveway and retaining wall would be required from Highway 84.

- **Livestock Corrals:** The livestock corrals would be moved closer to the Red Barn, within the former pond area. White corral fencing would be used to maintain the familiar rustic character of the site. The internal corral configuration would be designed to meet District needs for current and future conservation grazing operations.
- **Parking and Circulation:** Agricultural and equestrian traffic would be separated from the passenger vehicle traffic via one- and two-way loop roads. The two design options for a 3-stall equestrian parking layout include a traditional side-by-side pull-through configuration (Alt 1) and a variation on a pull-through parking layout (Alt 2). Each of these allows equestrian drivers to pull forward into and out of the parking space. Passenger vehicle parking would include ADA parking spaces, bus parking, loading zone, and motorcycle parking. The capacity varies slightly between the alternatives due to the hillside topography and the variation in the equestrian parking arrangement. The proposed range is between 25 and 30 vehicle spaces. Parking capacity would be maximized during design development.
- **Pathways and Trails:** Internal pathways would lead visitors between the parking area, restroom, Red Barn, picnic areas, and trailhead. The trailhead would lead visitors to the interior trail system that would ultimately connect to the lower and upper Preserve areas.
- **Environmental Elements:** Bioswales are proposed to manage stormwater runoff and water quality requirements for the new parking area and livestock corral. Required vegetative screening would be provided by new plantings and through the preservation of some existing trees. Vegetative plantings are proposed for the retaining walls alongside the driveway to minimize the visual impact of the wall near the entrance to the Preserve.

Table 1. Conceptual Design Alternatives Comparison

Design Element	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Vehicle Parking	22 regular spaces + 3 ADA spaces	26 regular spaces + 4 ADA spaces
Equestrian Parking	Side-by-side pull-through	Pull to the side (forward driving only)
Restroom location	Adjacent to parking area loop road	Adjacent to trailhead and ADA spaces
Picnic Area	Dispersed picnic areas	Centralized picnic area

FISCAL IMPACT

The Planning Department's FY2016-17 Budget for the Red Barn Public Access Area (MAA05-005) includes \$225,000 for site investigations, technical reports, and conceptual design development. Funds for subsequent project phases, including design development, environmental review, permitting, and construction documentation will be included as part of the three-year Capital Improvement Program, which the Board will consider in May 2017.

The recommended action has no direct fiscal impact, but future implementation activities will have fiscal impacts. Project implementation costs would be eligible for Measure AA

reimbursement. The preliminary cost estimate for project construction ranges between \$3 and \$4 Million.

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 05 allocation, expenses to date, and remaining portfolio fund balance.

MAA 05 Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 3/14/17):	\$2,041,395
Total Encumbrances:	\$80,367
Balance Remaining:	\$9,611,238

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

The La Honda Creek Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee met on ten (10) occasions between 2004 and 2009 to guide the planning process and development of final trail use recommendations. The Board approved the Master Plan and adopted the IS/MND, which includes the proposed Red Barn public access area as part of Phase I & II implementation, at the August 22, 2012 meeting (R-12-83). On April 20, 2016, the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee received a brief update on the project status and design schedule (R-16-48).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Additional notice was provided to the grazing tenant, neighbors living adjacent to the Preserve, and parties interested in Coastal projects, the La Honda Creek Preserve, and Master Plan.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As stated in the 2012 Master Plan and IS/MND, additional environmental review will be conducted for this project as needed. Additional environmental review would begin once the Board approves the complete CEQA project description in Fall 2017.

NEXT STEPS

Milestones	Tentative Schedule
Community meeting in the Town of La Honda to review Design Alternatives and receive additional public input	May 16, 2017
Present preferred conceptual design to PNR Committee	Summer 2017
Present preferred conceptual design to the Board as the CEQA Project Description to initiate CEQA review	Fall 2017
Board adoption of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and project approval	Winter 2018
Construction documentation and Permitting	Winter 2018 to Spring 2019
Construction Bidding Process	Fall 2019

Construction	Summer 2020
In Service	Fall 2020

Attachment(s)

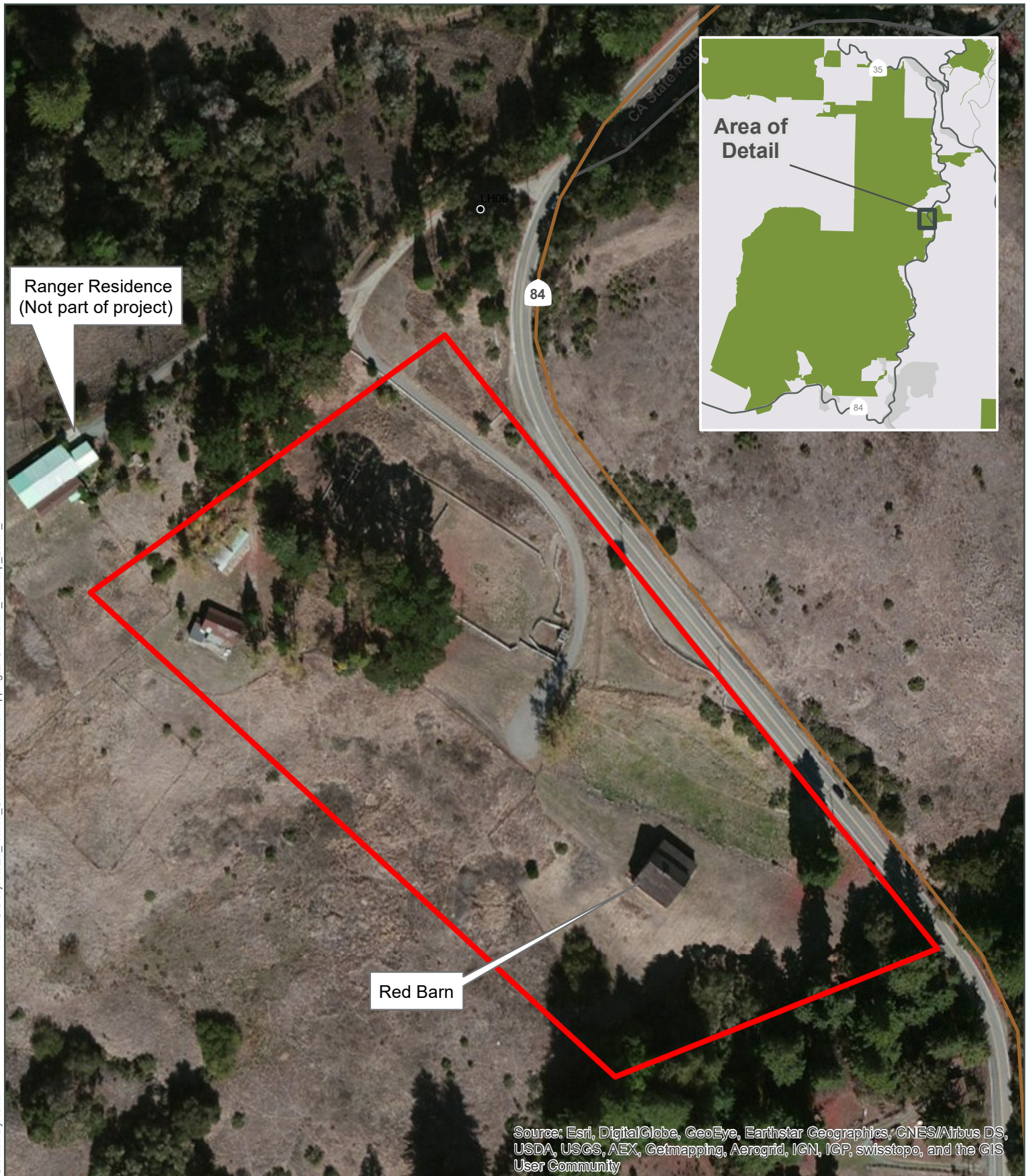
1. Site location map
2. Conceptual Design Alternatives 1 and 2.

Responsible Department Head:

Jane Mark, AICP, Planning Manager








Prepared by/Contact person:

Leslie Chan, Planner II



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Attachment 1: Red Barn Public Access Area Site Map

	MROSD Preserves		Watershed Land		Project Site
	Other Protected Lands		Land Trust		
	Private Property		Other Public Agency		

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(MROSD)

April 2017



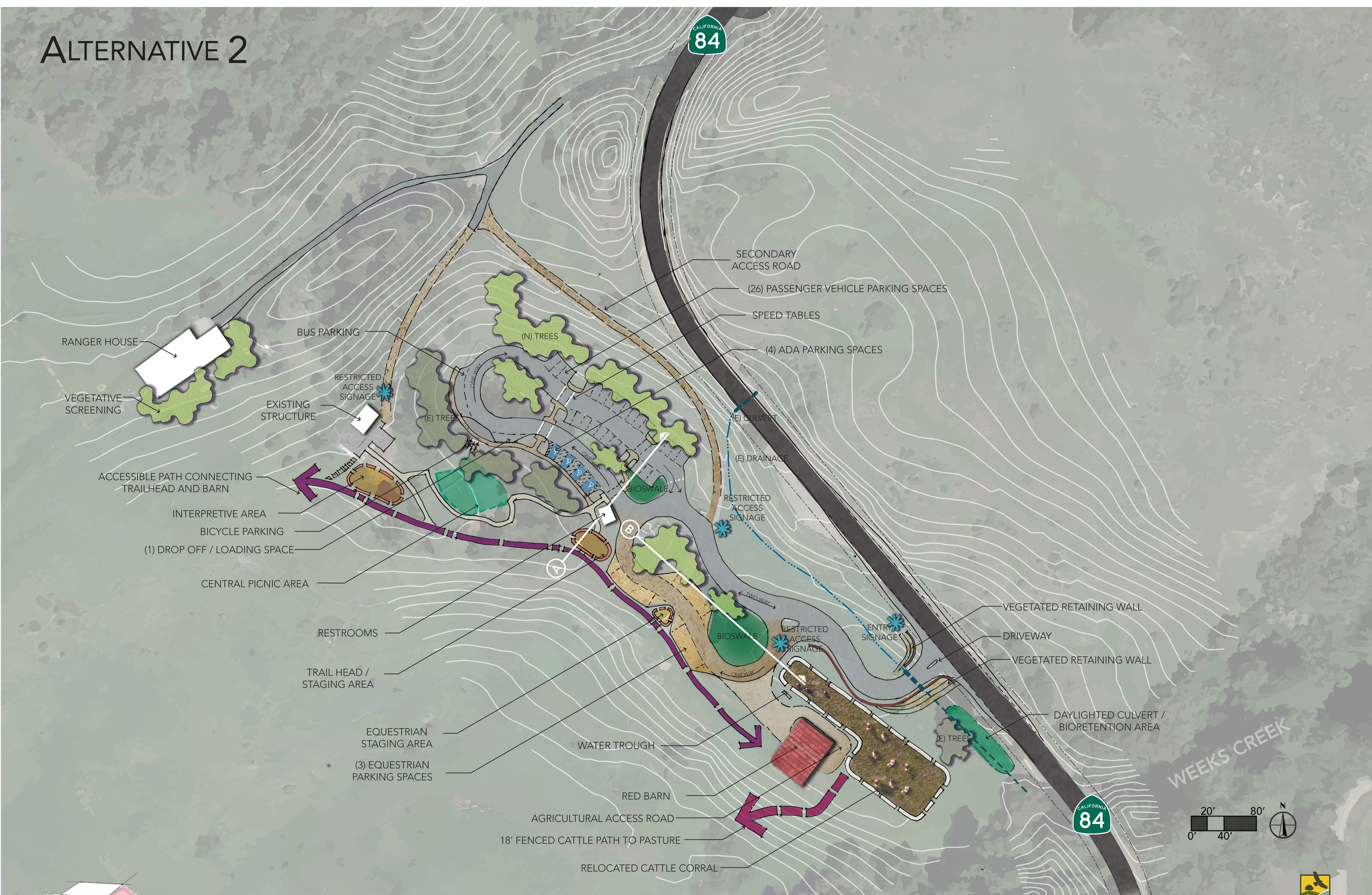
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ALTERNATIVE 1



ALTERNATIVE 2



REPRESENTATIVE SECTIONS

