



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-21-66
Meeting 21-15
May 26, 2021

AGENDA ITEM 4

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract to Hammer Fences for Construction of Livestock Fencing within the Lone Madrone Conservation Grazing Lease in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Hammer Fences to construct wildlife-friendly livestock fencing for a not-to-exceed contract amount of \$63,200.

SUMMARY

In support of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) conservation grazing program, the General Manager recommends approval of a contract to construct approximately 4,000 feet of wildlife-friendly livestock fencing along a road easement through adjacent private property to support the Lone Madrone grazing lease in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. The General Manager recommends awarding a contract to Hammer Fences for a for a not-to-exceed contract amount of \$63,200. The contract work is scheduled to be complete by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21. Sufficient funds are included in the FY21 Budget.

BACKGROUND

In the late 1990s, coastal residents expressed their support for extending District boundaries to include the San Mateo County Coast, where development was beginning to threaten the area's rural character. When the District's Coastal Service Plan was adopted in 2004, a commitment was made to the coastal community to preserve the rural character of the area and its agricultural land. This is reflected in the District's Mission Statement for the San Mateo County Coastal Protection Area:

To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect, and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

Coastal grasslands are one of the most biodiverse and threatened ecosystems in North America, and in many cases depend on regular disturbances like grazing or fire to prevent encroachment by native and introduced species of grasses, shrubs, and forests. These disturbances were historically provided by grazing native wildlife herds and Native American burning practices. Today the use of conservation grazing is a method utilized to replace indigenous wildlife herds and has proven beneficial in preventing or minimizing encroachment of invasive vegetation.

Conservation grazing focuses on the use of livestock to pursue conservation goals such as native species habitat enhancement. This focus distinguishes conservation grazing from basic livestock production. The grazing plan developed for each grazing location sets the management parameters (such as stocking rates, class of livestock, seasonality, and duration of grazing activity) to meet conservation goals. The District uses conservation grazing as a critical tool for managing approximately 8,000 acres of coastal range and grasslands for ecological health, biodiversity, and wildland fire resiliency. The District's Conservation Grazing Program is a mutually beneficial partnership with small-scale local ranchers on the San Mateo County Coast to accomplish multiple goals aligned with the District's mission.

The District purchased the former 1,098-acre McDonald Ranch (Attachment 1) as an addition to the La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve in 1990 (R-90-37). The property surrounds neighboring private property on two sides. The District introduced conservation grazing on the property in 2014. After a competitive Request for Proposal process in 2014, Eric and Doniga Markegard were selected as tenants and operators of the conservation grazing program on this property. The grazing property consists of four pasture areas with three of them accessible via a road that intersects private property. On March 24, 2021, the Board approved an agreement with the property owner (R-21-10) to facilitate the District's ability to allow the grazing tenant to drive cattle to and from pasture 1 and the corral area to the remaining pastures 2, 3 and 4. A crucial component for conservation grazing to be successful is the ability to rotate livestock from one area to another.

DISCUSSION

The wildlife-friendly livestock fence will contain cattle to the road easement area and prevent cattle from straying on to neighboring private lands and entering La Honda Creek. The total length of the fence will be approximately 4,000 linear feet. Since this fence will define a herding corridor rather than a pasture perimeter, District fencing specifications will be modified to reduce the number of wire strands from five to four. In some locations along the corridor, fencing is only required on one side of the road as trees and topography provide a natural barrier. (Attachment 2)

Installing the fence to prevent cattle access into La Honda Creek and the surrounding riparian areas is in line with the District Conservation Grazing Policy-1; *Manage agricultural leases and easements to protect and enhance riparian areas and to maximize the protection or enhancement of water quality*. While cattle grazing maintains grasslands, and improves habitat for some threatened species, it is important to exclude cattle from sensitive riparian areas where their presence can harm sensitive plant species or impact water quality. In particular, La Honda Creek supports steelhead and excess sediment into the stream can smother insect larvae and fish eggs and impact spawning areas for fish.

The Markegards typically graze year-round at this location with about 60 to 65 head of Belted Galloway cattle. The cattle are unloaded and loaded at the corral near the Red Barn and access pasture 1 directly from the corral. The only access to pastures 2, 3 and 4 is the access road through private property to the bridge over La Honda Creek. This fencing will provide for more orderly and efficient movement of cattle and prevent them from straying onto neighboring private property or the riparian area around La Honda Creek.

Contractor Selection

Staff posted a Request for Bid for this project on March 24, 2021. Ads were placed in local papers per Board Policy 3.03 *Public Contract Bidding*. A pre-bid site meeting and tour was held April 5, 2021 with representatives from four fencing companies in attendance. Staff received bids from two companies on April 14, 2021. The following table illustrates the bid results. Hammer Fences is the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Company	Bid Amount	Project Estimate	% Difference
Hammer Fences	\$63,200	\$65,000	-2.7
HBC Construction	\$108,275	\$65,000	66.5

FISCAL IMPACT

The FY21 amended budget includes \$77,075 for the MAA05-011 - Lone Madrone Ranch Fence Installation project. There are sufficient funds in the project budget to cover the recommended action and expenditures. Additional fencing construction is anticipated in future years in other areas of the preserve. Funds will be recommended in future fiscal year budgets as a part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

MAA05-011 - Lone Madrone Ranch Fence Installation	FY21 Amended	FY22 Projected	FY23 Projected	TOTAL
District Funded (Fund 30):	\$77,075	\$28,027	\$173,796	\$278,898
Total Budget:	\$77,075	\$28,027	\$173,796	\$278,898
Spent-to-Date (as of 05/06/21):	(\$164)	\$0	\$0	(\$164)
Encumbrances:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Hammer Fences Contract:	(\$63,200)	\$0	\$0	(\$63,200)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$13,711	\$28,027	\$173,796	\$215,534

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 05 La Honda Creek - Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects allocation, costs-to-date, projected future project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA05 La Honda Creek - Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Grant Income (through FY23):	\$0
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 05/06/21):	(\$2,640,788)
Encumbrances:	(\$54,279)
Remaining FY21 Project Budgets:	(\$149,223)
Future MAA05 project costs (projected through FY25):	(\$3,525,471)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$6,369,761)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$5,363,239

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 05 allocation, projected life of project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA05 La Honda Creek - Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Grant Income (through FY23):	\$0
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	
MAA05-001 - LHC - Land Conservation Opps - Toepfer/Ashworth	(\$1,756,093)
MAA05-002 - Upper La Honda Creek Grazing Infrastructure	(\$297,432)
MAA05-005 - La Honda Creek Red Barn Parking Area and Easy Access Trail	(\$327,514)
MAA05-007 - La Honda Creek Phase II Trail Connections	(\$471,622)
MAA05-008 - La Honda Creek White Barn Structural Rehabilitation	(\$588,639)
MAA05-009 - LHC Redwood Cabin Assessment, Removal and Site Restoration	(\$664,134)
MAA05-010 - Restoration Forestry Demonstration Project	(\$1,360,832)
MAA05-011 - Lone Madrone Ranch Fence Installation	(\$278,898)
MAA05-012 - Phase 2 - Paulin Bridge Replacements (2)	(\$624,597)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$6,369,761)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$5,363,239

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

At the March 24, 2021 meeting, when the Board approved the Exchange of Easements with the private property owner, staff indicated during the presentation that fencing would be required as a subsequent action ([R-21-10](#)).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

Potential environmental impacts from the construction of grazing fencing were analyzed in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the La Honda Creek Master Plan, adopted by the Board in August 2012. Fence construction activities will adhere to the relevant mitigation measures within the adopted IS/MND.

NEXT STEPS

The General Manager will execute a contract with Hammer Fences for a not-to-exceed contract amount of \$63,200 to construct a wildlife-friendly livestock fence along the access road easement. Construction is expected to be completed by June 30, 2021.

Attachments

1. Location Map
2. Fencing Map

Responsible Department Head:

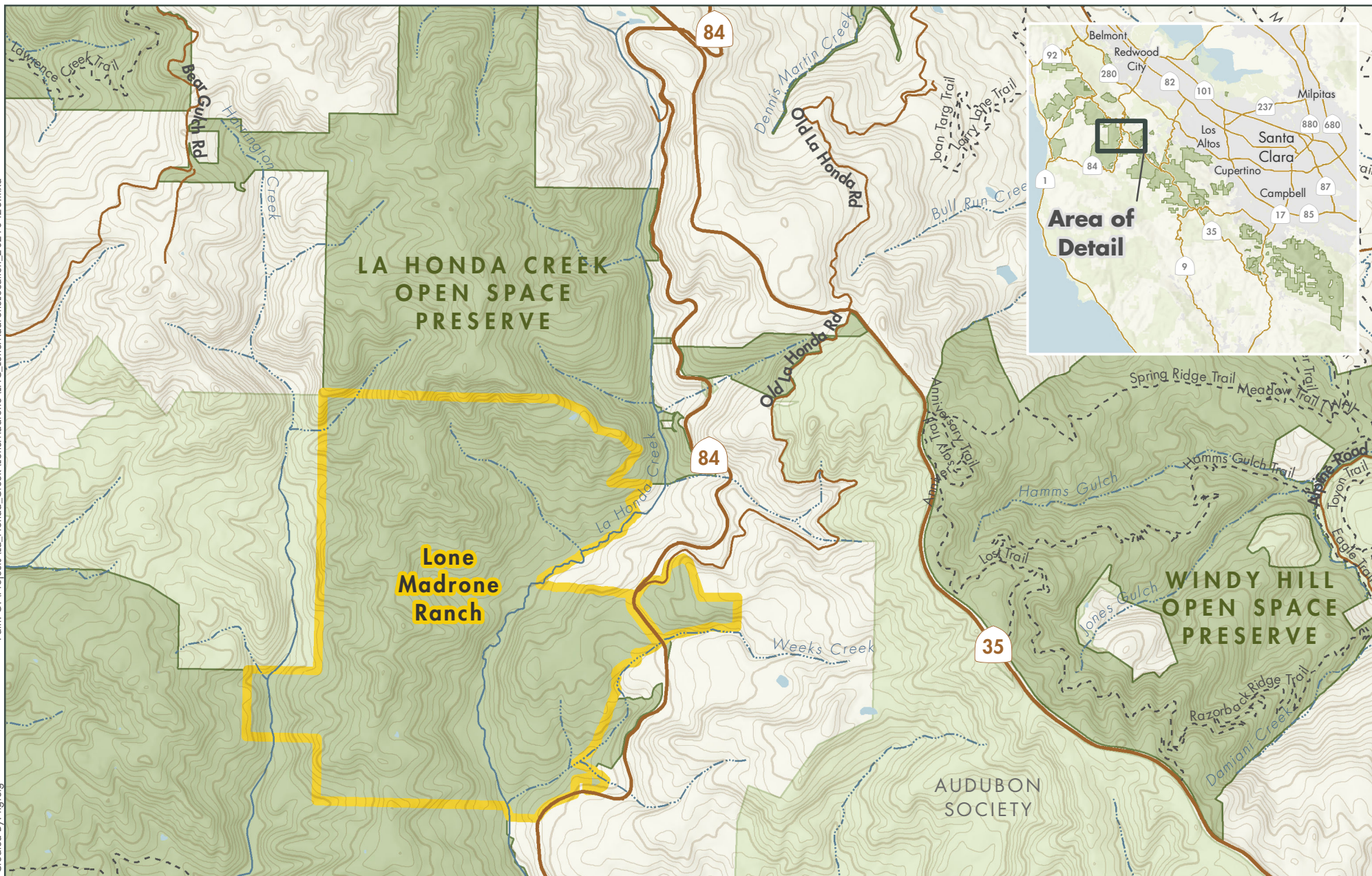
Brandon Stewart, Manager, Land & Facilities Services

Prepared by/Contact person:

Susan Weidemann, Property Management Specialist II, Land & Facilities Department

Graphics prepared by:

Nathan Greig, Data Analyst II, Information Systems & Technology



Lone Madrone Ranch

-  Midpen preserve
-  Other protected land
-  Private property
-  Lone Madrone Ranch

ATTACHMENT 1

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
4/23/2021

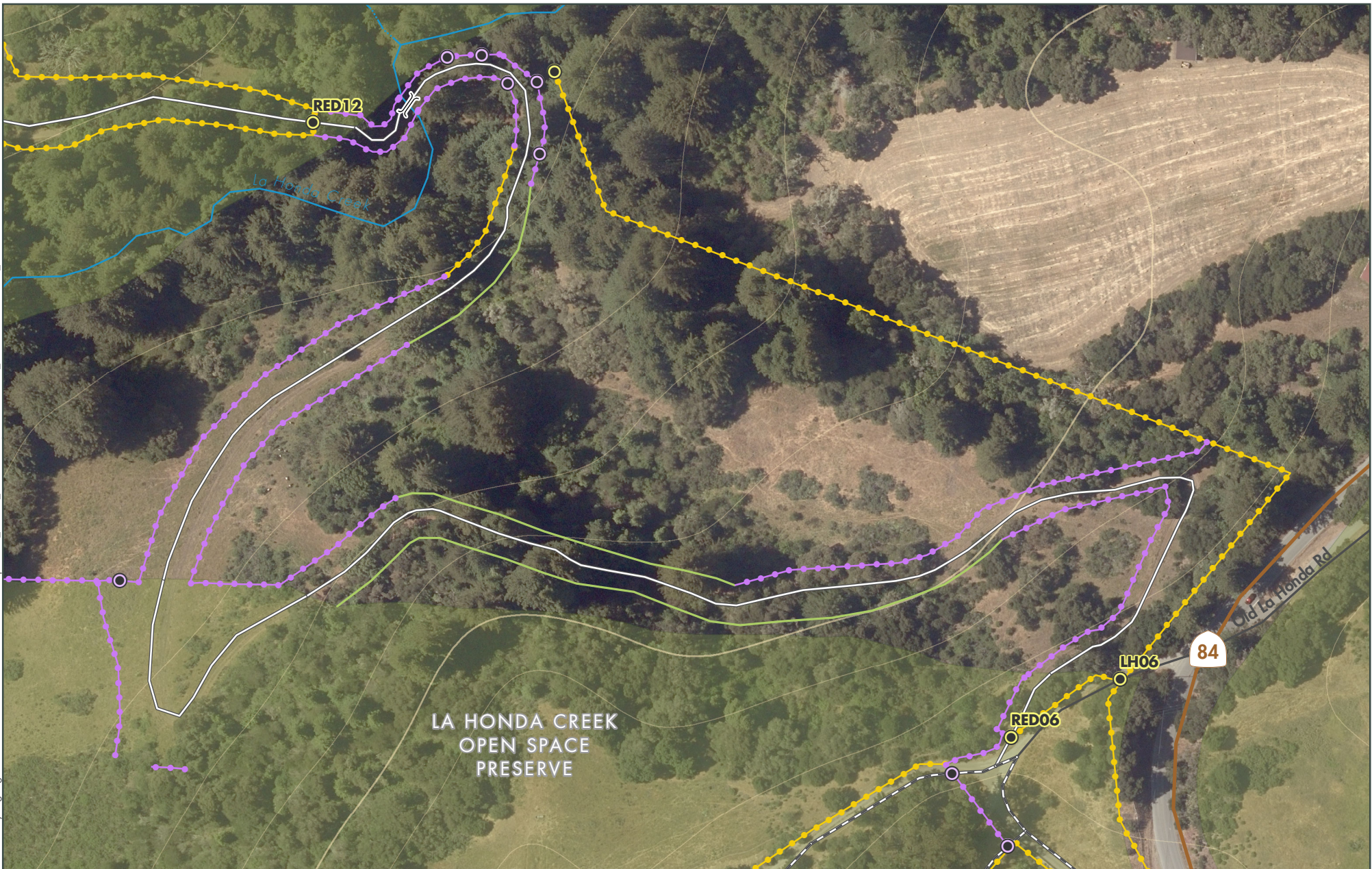


Miles

0

0.5

1



Attachment 2: Lone Madrone Fence Construction



La Honda Creek OSP

Private property



Existing gate



Proposed gate



Bridge



Existing fence



Proposed fence



Natural barrier



Feet

0

150

300

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
5/20/2021

