



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-22-53
Meeting 22-12
April 27, 2022

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA ITEM 1

AGENDA ITEM

Coastal Management Plan

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *den*

Review the Coastal Management Plan for Coastal Preserves.

SUMMARY

The purpose of the Coastal Management Plan (CMP) (attachment 1) is to identify recommended actions to be undertaken by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) General Manager's Office, phased in over the next five years, to build on-going and sustainable organizational capacity to support expanding programs and responsibilities required to care for coastal preserves. Recommendations found in the CMP are based upon the result of an evaluation of duties, work plans, staff capacity, and organization within five of the District's key programs (Land Protection, Visitor Services, Land and Facilities Management, Resource Management, and Project Planning and Delivery for Public Access) for the next five years that will be impacted by the anticipated increase in coastal preserve acreages and public access. Facility, staffing, and management alternatives will be reviewed and approved by the Board during the regular Capital Improvement Action Plan and Budget approval process. Recommendations for future fiscal years will be analyzed and prioritized along with other land management needs during the review of the 2015 Financial and Operational Sustainability Model scheduled for FY23 and FY24.

DISCUSSION

The District's Service Plan for the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area ([Service Plan](#))¹ certified in 2004, established a Coastal Mission for the District and identified goals for preserving open space, protecting natural resources, providing ongoing land stewardship, and developing public access in the coastal areas of San Mateo County. Since 2004, the District made significant progress implementing the Service Plan, protecting over 12,000 acres within the Service Plan's boundaries by the end of 2021. During that time, the District has also undergone tremendous growth and maturation as an organization, guided and assisted by a district-wide [Vision Plan](#) and voter-approved [Measure AA](#) funding in 2014. In 2015, the District also completed a [Financial and Operational Sustainability Model \(FOSM\) Study](#) to guide the expansion of the District's functions and organizational capacity to effectively deliver Vision Plan and Measure AA projects. Since 2015, the District has made steady progress in implementing Measure AA-funded projects across

¹ *Service Plan for the San Mateo Coastal Annexation Area*, adopted June 6, 2003 by the District's Board of Directors, and certified by the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission September 7, 2004.

preserves in both San Mateo and Santa Clara County, reorganized, and expanded various departments, and completed the majority of the FOSM Study's recommendations as summarized in a report to the Board on December 9, 2019 ([R19-162](#)).

The District is now poised to make two significant Measure AA-funded coastal land acquisitions, Cloverdale Ranch and Johnston Ranch,² coinciding with the launch of several Measure AA coastal public access and resource management projects, and the expansion of land stewardship responsibilities. Concurrently, all public open spaces, including District preserves, are experiencing tremendous growth in visitation. While organizational capacity has continued to grow steadily since 2015, the FOSM Study did not specifically address the District potential growth of coastal preserves³ and the responsibilities specifically associated with their growth.

Challenges identified in the CMP

Staff has evaluated the duties, work plans, staff capacity, and internal organization of five of the District's key programs (Land Protection, Visitor Services, Land and Facilities Management, Resource Management, and Project Planning and Delivery for Public Access) in coastal preserves. In summary, five factors were identified as major contributors to the expanding program duties and work plans going forward:

- new properties increasing the total acres in the Service Plan area to nearly 19,000 acres
- new programs and expanded workplans to meet new program goals
- increasing public access demand (both for new facilities and use of existing ones)
- increased resource monitoring and reporting responsibilities
- expanding stewardship role to balance agricultural uses and public access with management of sensitive coastal habitats for endangered species

These factors are described and analyzed in more detail in the CMP, and together represent greatly expanding responsibilities for both field and support staff.

Summary of CMP Recommendations

Increased workload associated with the challenges identified is anticipated in both the Natural Resources and Land & Facilities Departments. Impacts will be felt in the Visitors Services Department in their ability to effectively provide patrol and manage new and increasing public access. Within Project Planning and Delivery, the Planning Department would be impacted in their ability to plan for public access and help deliver capital projects important to the ongoing development of public access and facilities in coastal preserves. To address these needs, the following actions are recommended in the CMP:

- Create a separate Visitor Services Coastal Field Unit
- Develop a new Coastal Office
- Provide staff housing on Cloverdale Ranch
- FOSM Update
- Propose increased staffing in four departments

Further detail and options to phase recommendations over the next five years is provided in the CMP.

² Includes the 644-acre Johnston Ranch Uplands near Half Moon Bay, approved for purchase [R21-31](#), and the proposed acquisition of approximately 6,250 acres of the Cloverdale Ranch in Pescadero.

³ For the purposes of the Coastal Management Plan, coastal preserves include all preserves located west of Skyline Boulevard and their field management is provided by staff working out of the Skyline Field Office.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the review of the CMP. The CMP includes a fiscal impact section of various staffing recommendations. Funds to implement CMP recommendations will be recommended in future fiscal year budgets as a part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

Board Committee review was not conducted.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

Following the Board's review of the CMP, the General Manager's Office will implement the proposed recommendations in the recommended FY23 Capital Improvement, Action Plan and Budget for Board review and approval. The recommendations over the next four years will be further reviewed along with other District land management needs in the FOSM review proposed for FY23. focusing upon proposing new positions in future fiscal year budget cycles, position recruitments, internal alignment of duties as staff capacity is added, and seeking a location for a new Coastal Field Office.

Attachments

1. Coastal Management Plan

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MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table of Contents

Purpose of the Coastal management Plan

- I. Examination of Programs impacted by expansion of coastal preserves
 - a. Land Conservation
 - b. Visitor Services
 - c. Land and Facilities Management
 - d. Resource Management
 - e. Public Access Planning and Project Delivery

- II. Summary of Findings

- III. Recommendations
 1. Establishment of a dedicated Coastal Field Unit
 2. Creation of a Full-Service Coastal Field Office
 3. Establish a 2nd Employee Housing Unit at Cloverdale Ranch Upon Purchase
 4. FOSM Update
 5. Recommended Staffing

- IV. Fiscal Impact
- V. Next Steps

PURPOSE OF THE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District’s (District) Service Plan for the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area ([Service Plan](#))¹ certified in 2004, established a Coastal Mission for the District and identified goals for preserving open space, protecting natural resources, supporting viable agricultural uses, and developing public access in the coastal areas of San Mateo County. Between 2004 and 2021, the District made significant progress implementing the Service Plan, protecting over 12,000 acres within the Service Plan’s boundaries. During that time, the District also underwent tremendous growth as an organization, guided and assisted by a district-wide [Vision Plan](#) and [Measure AA](#) funding in 2014. In 2015, the District completed a [Financial and Operational Sustainability Model \(FOSM\) Study](#) to guide the expansion of the District’s programs and organizational capacity to effectively deliver Measure AA projects district wide. Since 2015, the District has made steady progress in implementing Measure AA funded Vision Plan projects and has completed the majority of the FOSM Study’s organizational recommendations, as reported in the December 2019 [Implementation Status Memo to the Board](#).

The District is now poised to make two significant Measure AA-funded coastal land acquisitions, coinciding with the launch of several Measure AA coastal public access and resource management projects. Concurrently, all public open spaces, including District preserves, are experiencing tremendous growth in visitation. The confluence of these factors will be felt across the organization, but most acutely within programs in the Visitor Services (VS), Land & Facilities (L&F), Natural Resources (NR), and Planning (PL) Departments.

This Coastal Management Plan (CMP) for Coastal Preserves has examined these impacts by program and identifies recommendations to implement in the next three to five years to build on-going and sustainable organizational capacity to support expanding programs and responsibilities required to care for the District’s coastal preserves.

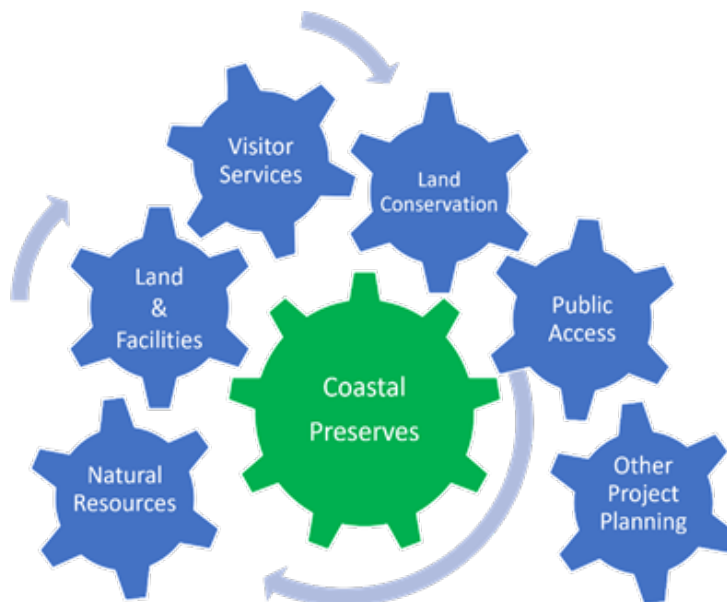


Figure 1: District programs impacted by expanding coastal preserves

I. EXAMINATION OF PROGRAMS IMPACTED BY EXPANDING COASTAL PRESERVES

The following section examines six District programs (Land Conservation, Visitor Services, Land and Facilities Management, Resource Management, Public Access, and Project Planning and Delivery) impacted by expanding acreage and responsibilities in coastal preserves.

¹ *Service Plan for the San Mateo Coastal Annexation Area*, adopted June 6, 2003 by the District’s Board of Directors and certified by the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission September 7, 2004.

A. Land Conservation

Protection of open space lands is essential to the District’s coastal mission. As of 2021, the District achieved protection of 12,662 acres in the Service Plan area. **Table 1** identifies how these lands are distributed across seven preserves.

Table 1: Lands Acquired in the Service Plan Area

| Open Space Preserve (OSP) | Total Acres in Preserve | Total Coastal Acres | Service Plan Area Acres as % of Total Preserve |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Miramontes Ridge* | 1,716 | 1,432 | 83% |
| Purisima Creek Redwoods | 5,409 | 2,277 | 42% |
| El Corte de Madera Creek | 2,908 | 91 | 3% |
| Tunitas Creek | 2,200 | 2,200 | 100% |
| La Honda Creek | 6,334 | 4,211 | 66% |
| Russian Ridge | 3,491 | 1,566 | 45% |
| Long Ridge | 2,226 | 241 | 11% |
| Total | 24,284 | 12,018 | 49% |

*Acreage for Miramontes Ridge does not include Johnston Ranch.

Two significant purchases are anticipated by the end of 2022/23. Pending Board approval, the District is also projected to acquire Cloverdale Ranch, owned by Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) in 2023. **Table 2** summarizes coastal acquisitions projected through 2023.

Table 2: Projected Service Plan Area Acquisitions in 2022-2023

| Year | Property | Preserve | Funding Source | Acres |
|--|------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 2022 | Johnston Ranch Uplands | Miramontes Ridge | Measure AA, grants | 644 |
| 2022 | Trail Easement | Miramontes Ridge | Measure AA, potential gift | 2 |
| Total acquisitions projected in 2022 | | | | 2 |
| Previous acquisitions (2004-2021) | | | | 12,018 |
| Total projected acres protected within the Service Plan area by end of 2022 | | | | 12,664 |
| 2023 | Cloverdale Ranch | New preserve | Measure AA, state, grants | 6,300 |
| Total Projected Acres Protected in the Service Plan area by end of 2023 | | | | 18,964 |

LAND CONSERVATION PROJECTS THAT IMPACT MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL PRESERVES:

The anticipated purchase of Cloverdale Ranch and other properties described below will increase coastal acreage by 33% in the next two years, resulting in an immediate increase in open space and agricultural land responsibilities, resource management, patrol, and new opportunities to develop public access. Included below is an overview of pending coastal acquisitions:

1. **Johnston Ranch:** The purchase of Johnston Ranch Uplands in 2022 will add 644 acres to Miramontes Ridge OSP and create an opportunity for public access for this closed preserve. In December 2021, the District entered into a lease and management agreement with POST for the Uplands until such time as the lot line adjustment to divide the Uplands from the rest of the property has been completed and the District can accept the Uplands in fee title. Under the lease and management agreement, the District was assigned the grazing lease covering 311 acres of

the Uplands, assumed patrol and land management of the 644 acres Uplands area, and will begin planning future public access on the property and work with the City of Half Moon Bay to develop shared parking facilities and a trailhead on the adjacent City-owned site after the property is acquired in fee title.

2. Miramontes Ridge OSP Trail Easement: Acquiring a trail easement over a property adjoining Johnston Ranch Uplands to the north of Higgins Canyon Road in 2022 will create an opportunity to develop a future trail from Higgins Canyon Road into Miramontes Ridge OSP and the adjoining Burleigh H. Murray State Park. The District will monitor and patrol the easement until such time as a trail connection can be developed in partnership with State Parks.
3. Cloverdale Ranch: Purchase of Cloverdale Ranch in 2023 would create a new stand-alone preserve rich in natural resource value, of which 2,750 acres are grazed by two established tenants. With the purchase, POST would assign the existing grazing leases to the District and the District would immediately be responsible for patrol and land management, including the existing 1-mile trail known as Wilbur's Watch. The District may potentially also become a shareholder in the Lake Lucerne Mutual Water Company (LLMWC), an entity devised to deliver water flowing through Cloverdale Ranch to surrounding properties for agricultural use. This would be a new role for the District that is still being explored.

The property's rich habitat value presents resource management opportunities and complexities that will require a careful and adaptive approach, especially regarding the protection of habitat for San Francisco garter snake and California red-legged frog when public access is considered. A summary of the property's key natural resources was provided in a [Cloverdale FYI Memo](#) to the Board in November 2021. This information will be further considered when recommending a Preliminary Use and Management Plan for the property and will help direct how Cloverdale Ranch would be managed during the early phases of District ownership.

4. Future Coastal Acquisitions: Beyond 2023, coastal land protection will likely concentrate more on acquiring fee title and/or conservation easements over forested upper watersheds that abut existing preserves and lands that achieve regional linkages to surrounding open space and park lands, improve trail connectivity, and further land conservation goals.
5. New Public Access Facilities: In the next three to five years, District is anticipating the following growth in coastside public access facilities that will further draw upon patrol and maintenance staffing resources:
 - Between 10 to 15 new miles of trails (Purisima-to-the-Sea, Johnston Ranch, Cloverdale, La Honda Creek)
 - Three parking areas (Johnston Ranch, South Cowell property, Cloverdale)

B. Visitor Services

Visitor Services staff reporting to the Skyline Field Office is responsible for patrol and management of coastal preserves. Patrol needs are driven by a service model that provides daily site presence, patrol, regulation enforcement, fire surveillance, emergency medical response, and frontline public contact on District lands. In addition, Visitor Services staff foster neighbor, partner, and public safety agency relationships both in the field, at public meetings, across preserve-adjacent communities, and other settings where they interact with the public and partners and are a visible community presence and available resource for nearby residents. These responsibilities continue to expand in scale and geographic area as the acreage of coastal lands and new public access facilities/visitation increases (refer to [2021 Memo to the Board regarding increasing visitation](#)). Ongoing and expanded efforts to educate visitors about natural resource protection, the role of

conservation grazing and agriculture in furthering the District’s mission, and their role to support and participate in these efforts will also be required to effectively integrate ecologically sensitive public access with conservation grazing and resource management.

EXPANDED DUTIES FOR VISITOR SERVICES FUNCTIONS:

The growth in total acres of coastal District lands, travel time between preserves and from the Skyline Field Office, Coastal Outpost, and expanding public access and levels of visitation factor into the District’s proactive and responsive staffing model. Rangers assigned to the Skyline Field Unit (includes the Coastal Outpost) patrol skyline and coastal properties as part of their area assignments. The recent opening of the Coastal Outpost at the La Honda Creek OSP’s Event Center on Highway 84 as a reporting location and addition of 3 Ranger housing units within the Service Plan area has increased the District’s coastside patrol presence. However, with the continued growth on the coastside, these Rangers are becoming increasingly stretched to meet coverage needs since they are also assigned to cover Skyline preserves.

Growing Needs and Operational Responsibilities Include:

- a. Provide routine patrol and oversight of new coastal lands upon acquisition. At this time, coastal properties that are currently closed to the public only receive one to two patrols per month due to capacity constraints, hampering the District’s ability to regularly monitor these lands to flag issues early that may need prompt attention. In comparison, popular public access areas are generally patrolled daily up to multiple times a day for very high visitation areas on the weekends.
- b. Enforce land use regulations and provide timely emergency response calls for expanded public access areas and new facilities that will be open to the public (e.g., Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area, La Honda Creek Loop Trail).
- c. Manage traffic and parking challenges associated with increasing preserve visitation.
- d. Expand public education and interpretation opportunities, particularly on the coastside.
- e. Expand coordination of volunteer projects on coastside properties.
- f. Build relationships with coastside neighbors, agricultural and residential tenants, and local public safety agencies to better integrate District activities and services with the larger coastside community.
- g. Improve coastside radio system coverage for patrol and maintenance activities, particular in the greater Pescadero area – south coast (project underway).

To ensure that Ranger staffing levels increase in tandem with the growth in both coastal acreage and the number/miles of public access facilities, and that patrol functions and onsite presence within the coastside ramps up to provide adequate patrol oversight of the District’s lands and establish greater community building and cohesion with coastsiders, Visitors Services anticipates the need to dedicate a Ranger unit solely to the coastside area that is generally independent of the core Skyline Area. To do so, the existing 11 Ranger/Lead Ranger positions that are staffed at the Skyline Field Office and Coastal Outpost should be increased to 12 total Ranger/Lead ranger positions. Staffing needs are projected to reach this level in FY23.

C. Land and Facilities Management

1. Open Space Land Management

The Land & Facilities Department (L&F) is responsible for ongoing routine land management, including maintenance of roads, culverts, trails, parking lots, restrooms, signage and boundary

delineation, and minor public health and safety improvements. L&F also provides in-field services to protect and restore natural resources, integrated pest management, seasonal vegetation/fuels management, and construction of new trails.

EXPANDED DUTIES FOR LAND MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS:

As acreage and new public facilities continue expanding on the coastside, so do the District’s land management responsibilities. Climate change is also requiring more proactive and expansive fuel management on coastal landscapes that generally have been considered at lower risk for fire danger. Complying with regulatory permit requirements to protect sensitive species and habitats require special efforts and resources when conducting routine maintenance activities such as road and culvert maintenance and trail brushing. Areas known to contain San Francisco garter snake (federally listed as endangered) require an extra level of caution and onsite monitoring, including having biological monitors travel on foot in front of vehicles and equipment in areas that traverse known occupied to ensure that pathways are clear. **Table 3** identifies the increasing land management functions on the coast.

Table 3: Increasing Coastal Land Management Activities

| Increasing Coastal Land Management Activities | Lead Dept. | Support Dept(s). |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Implement Tier 1 and Tier 2 fuel reduction projects to further the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program; improve water sources for fire suppression; partner with CalFire and the Resource Conservation District (RCD) on fuel reduction projects and establish similar relationship with the Coastside Fire Protection District. | L&F | NR VS |
| Conduct routine fuel load maintenance, integrated pest management, and seasonal vegetation management | L&F | NR |
| Perform preventative maintenance services to protect and steward the natural resources consistent within new coastal lands, including pond maintenance/repairs at Cloverdale Ranch | L&F | NR |
| Assess, scout, and construct new trail alignments on the coastside. | L&F | NR, PL, E&C |
| Expand routine maintenance program to include new trails, parking lots, restrooms, water systems, signage, fencing, culverts, and other recurring maintenance needs for new lands and facilities. | L&F | NR PL E&C |
| Comply with new and/or expanded regulatory permit conditions to safeguard sensitive species when conducting routine maintenance activities | L&F | NR |

2. Agricultural Land Management

Agricultural land management and support of the conservation grazing program plays an increasingly large role in furthering the District’s coastal mission. Agricultural land management includes the management of conservation grazing leases and completion of ranchland infrastructure upgrades that both protect natural resources and support agricultural operations while providing the co-benefit of watershed protection to downstream habitats and uses.

The conservation grazing program is managed jointly by the L&F and Natural Resources (NR) departments. The Property Management Program in L&F is responsible for lease management under the provisions of Board-adopted Rangeland Management Plans, as well as tenant relations,

and the installation and maintenance of agricultural infrastructure. L&F staff also assist grazing tenants with preparing Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) applications to offset the cost of infrastructure improvements such as livestock watering systems and exclusion fencing to protect sensitive habitat. The Vegetation Program under NR is responsible for vegetation monitoring, setting stocking rates based on rainfall and grass biomass predictions, establishing grazing regimes that meet resource management goals, identifying natural resource protections/buffers when siting new agricultural infrastructure, and protecting water rights and aquatic resources.

The District also leases out a limited acreage (33 acres) of row crop land to local farmers under three separate agricultural leases. Like grazing leases, these leases are also managed by L&F staff.

EXPANDED DUTIES FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND MANAGEMENT:

Agricultural land management projects and responsibilities will increase substantially with the pending purchase of the Johnston Ranch Uplands property and the potential future purchase of Cloverdale Ranch. Together, these two properties will add three separate grazing units totaling approximately 3,100 acres, expanding the conservation grazing program by approximately 25%. For Cloverdale Ranch, the size of the grazing operations and the extensive presence of known populations of endangered San Francisco garter snake will require a high level of lease oversight to protect the federally listed species and assist tenants with potentially incorporating new resource protections measures as part of their grazing practices. **Table 4** identifies the anticipated growth in responsibilities and projects.

Table 4: Increasing Agricultural Land Management Responsibilities

| Responsibilities and Projects | Lead Dept. | Support Dept(s). |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Support existing and future agricultural and grazing tenants on the District’s coastal lands in successfully adapting to new resource protection measures and the introduction of public access. | L&F | NR, PA, PL |
| Implement and manage grazing leases for Johnston Ranch Uplands and Cloverdale Ranch (approx. 3,100 acres). | L&F | NR |
| Upgrade grazing infrastructure on Johnston and Cloverdale Ranch, focusing on measures that protect both the natural resources and support agricultural operations (i.e., fences, water lines, roads improvements, gates, etc.). | L&F | NR |
| Develop and manage an agricultural lease for Toto Ranch | L&F | NR |

3. Staff Facilities

The Coastal Service Plan recognizes that staff facilities are necessary to manage coastal preserves. The Coastal Service Plan recommends using existing facilities and developing a new office once the District reaches 15,000 acres within the Coastal Service Plan area.² The 2015 FOSM Study also identifies the need to increase field office capacity in response to the ongoing growth of the greenbelt. The Skyline Field Office has been at capacity for over a decade. An interim office known as the Coastal Area Outpost located at the Event Center in La Honda Creek OSP, was first planned in 2018 and is now in operation, with county approval as final permits are secured. **Table 5**

² Coastal Service Plan pg. 42

provides a summary of the Coastal Service Plan staff facility recommendations and the status of implementation:

Table 5: Coastal Staff Facilities Recommendations

| Coastal Service Plan Facilities Recommendations ² | Implementation to date |
|--|--|
| In the near term, temporary field staff offices will be provided in existing buildings owned or acquired by the District | 2004 to present – Skyline Field Office (SFO) serves as the primary field office for the Coastal Service Plan area. Since 2018, conversion of the Event Center ranch office into the Coastal Area Outpost (permit pending) has provided a small interim coastal office to assist with the deployment of staff resources in managing and maintaining coastal properties. |
| A new, fully serviced coastal field office and maintenance facility would only be economically justifiable and should be established once the District manages approximately 15,000 coastal acres. | Presently, the District has acquired over 12,000 acres of land. That number will increase to just under 19,000 acres by the end of 2023. In preparation for reaching the 15,000-acre threshold, the District has developed site criteria to guide the exploration of new sites and began searching for suitable properties for a field office in 2021 |

STAFF FACILITIES IMPACTED BY EXPANDING COASTAL LANDS:

As noted in the table above, the District is fast approaching the acreage threshold to warrant a full-service coastal field office and maintenance shop (i.e., expanding from 12,000 coastal acres to 19,000 acres by the end of 2023). The interim Coastal Area Outpost at the Event Center in the La Honda Preserve serves the current basic needs of Rangers assigned to coastal lands, which currently reflect minimal levels of patrol for most coastal lands. As protected land acreage continues to grow, new public access facilities are constructed, and new areas are made open to public use, patrol levels on the coast will need to increase to be on par with Skyline area patrol levels. In addition, the L&F Department will also need office and shop space on the coast to effectively address the District’s growing maintenance, construction, and vegetation management responsibilities for coastsides properties. Furthermore, the District would also benefit from other related office facilities, including a dedicated meeting space to hold meetings with community members and agricultural/grazing tenants and to office “office hours” and improved accessibility for coastsides residents.

Efforts are underway to locate an office within the city limits of Half Moon Bay or with a partner who already has a similar facility. At this time, staff have identified a limited number of sites that meet the necessary site criteria³. The Controller’s 30-year fiscal model includes a financial placeholder for such a facility in Fiscal Year 2024-25. In addition, the General Manager and Chief Financial Officer will request additional reserve funds to set aside the funding necessary for a new facility. When a site is located, the District anticipates the need to retrofit the property to reconfigure the facilities to meet operational needs. In the interim, possible reuse of existing District structures and alternate office solutions will be considered.

4. District Housing

³ Criteria are used to evaluate potential sites before bringing options forward for further consideration include minimum lot size and usable area, a availability of utilities, proximity to coastal preserves, ease of access, etc.

The Coastal Service Plan identifies preserve housing as an integral part of managing coastal lands⁴ to provide onsite District presence (eyes and ears on the land) and as agricultural workforce housing that supports onsite agricultural operations. Per the District’s Board Housing Policy, residences are first offered to employees who provide District services if there is a need for afterhours callouts for patrol, maintenance, or other needs. District housing units also offer other potential benefits, including repurposing an existing structure into a small office/workspace site that brings employees in close proximity to preserve project locations. There are currently nine (9) District owned residential rental properties within the Coastside Protection Area, three (3) are currently used as employee ranger residences, three (3) are assigned to supporting onsite agricultural uses, two (2) are general public rentals, and one (1) is rented to an allied agency employee.

EXPANDED HOUSING NEEDS:

As District lands and operations grow on the coast, there is a corresponding growing business need to ensure sufficient onsite presence (eyes and ears) on the land for site security and emergency response and to strengthen connections and relationships with surrounding neighbors and the local community. Expanded District housing on the coast can support these needs by having District employees/representatives form part of the local community. Expanded District housing on the coast can also support the expansion of agricultural operations on District lands.

With the planned acquisition of Cloverdale Ranch from Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), it would be beneficial to establish site presence on or near the property as soon as possible to ensure management continuity. Two houses would be transferred to the District as part of planned transaction. They provide an opportunity to establish a reasonable level of staff presence for new remote preserve. One of those residences, along Cloverdale Road, was recently leased by the District under a license agreement with POST when the prior tenant vacated the premises and is now housing a District Ranger. Under this agreement, the District has been able to establish an employee residence before completing the property purchase to further facilitate the transfer of property management responsibilities.

As the number of housing units increase and to comply with the District’s goals of reducing operational greenhouse gas emissions under its [2018 Climate Action Plan](#), there will be ongoing efforts and activities implemented to reduce the carbon footprint of the District’s Housing Program. This will include opportunities to reduce propane and wood fuel as heating sources with electrical units and by upgrading existing windows from single paned to double paned windows, improving the amount and extent of insulation, and taking other energy efficiency actions. As retrofits are done, the District will also need to consider the use of materials that are more fire resistant for such things as building siding, decking materials, eave construction, fencing, etc., and possibly backup generators and other equipment for structures that may experience regular annual Public Safety Power Shutoffs. The addition of housing stock to the Housing Program will also expand the scale of the District’s annual defensible space activities to maintain sufficient fire buffers and clearances as required regulations and recommended by local authorities.

D. Resource Management

Management of natural and agricultural resources is overseen by the Natural Resources Department. Natural resource management consists of protecting, restoring, enhancing, and monitoring native vegetation and wildlife, and monitoring and protecting the quality of geological and hydrological conditions. Agricultural resource management focuses on working with partners and grazing and

⁴ Coastal Service Plan pg. 42

agricultural tenants to support agricultural activities that complement and protect natural resources and conservation values. The expansion of coastal preserves presents several challenges for resource management. The first is the simple addition of additional acreage that expands the geographic scope of District wide resource programs as well as the extensive support required from NR on other District projects and ongoing maintenance. The second is the unique habitats and special status species found on the coast including several endangered species. In particular, Cloverdale combines these two aspects with extensive grasslands managed through conservation grazing and the endangered San Francisco garter snake, both of which require more intensive NR management and oversight. There are also many streams on the coast that support anadromous fish including steelhead and Coho salmon, some of which have significant barriers or degraded habitat. The coastal area also has several preserves impacted by plantations of nonnative or native plantation tree plantings that require management or restoration.

1. Resource Planning Efforts

The scale of resource planning efforts ranges from the site level to the landscape level and often include development of policies and programs to codify District best practices. In the coastal area, resource management plans have been adopted for La Honda Creek OSP and the Mindogo Hill area of Russian Ridge OSP to prioritize protection of the endangered San Francisco garter snake and threatened California red-legged frog. Since 2014, the [Integrated Pest Management Program \(IPM\)](#) and the [Wildland Fire Resiliency Program](#) have been developed to support district-wide resource management and enhance ecosystem resiliency on the landscape level. Resource planning efforts identified in the [FY22 and FY23 Capital Improvement and Action Plan \(CIAP\)](#) that contribute toward the management of coastal preserves are summarized in **Tables 7 and 8**. Many of these efforts will extend into future fiscal years.

Table 7: Resource Planning Efforts in progress

| Project | Project Purpose | Lead Dept. |
|--|---|-------------------|
| Badger/Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment | Prepare a management plan of grasslands and upland habitat to protect and sustain badger and burrowing owl populations. | NR |
| District-wide Aquatic Habitat Assessment and eDNA Collection | Understand District-wide aquatic habitat distribution and species composition to inform management and protection of these habitats. | NR |
| District-wide Vegetation Mapping | Collaborate with the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy to quantify vegetation changes and fuels at a landscape scale. | NR |
| Carbon Storage Study - Pilot Project | Analyze carbon storage enhancement potential in the San Gregorio watershed through a literature review and identify suitable and effective carbon sequestration projects. | NR |
| Ecological Health and Biodiversity Monitoring | Establish grazing exclusion areas to evaluate beneficial ecological effects & compare with actively grazed lands to inform future land management actions. | NR |
| District-wide Wildlife Camera Program | Assess presence of wildlife species and/or populations in different habitats and locations, including areas where public access or infrastructure is planned, to inform future land management actions. | NR |
| Drought Response and Resiliency Plan | Prepare for drought and identify drought resiliency measures. | NR |
| Marbled Murrelet Recovery | Comply with survey requirements on District lands for affected projects and assist in the development of region-wide recovery plans. | NR |
| Water Quality Monitoring Program | Monitor water quality in support of District land management priorities and ecosystem health. | NR |

| Project | Project Purpose | Lead Dept. |
|---|--|------------|
| Habitat Enhancement and Water Supply Improvement Plan | Develop Pond Management Plan for Purisima-to-the-Sea properties to enhance pond habitat for native wildlife and improve water supply source that supports the conservation grazing program. | NR |
| Restoration Forestry Demonstration Project | Develop pilot project to restore degraded forest habitat and enhance fire resiliency on District open space preserves. | NR |
| Wildland Fire Resiliency Program | Develop Phase II of the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program (Prescribed Burn), including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis document and public review to bring back prescribed fire into the landscape as an important wildland fire resiliency tool. | NR |
| Cloverdale Ranch Pre-acquisition planning and investigation | Prepare studies, including a botanical survey, the Lake Lucerne Mutual Water Company infrastructure and water supply analysis, and habitat mapping to inform the designation of future Conservation Management Units (CMUs) for protection of highly sensitive species/habitats. | NR |

Table 8: Resource Policies and Permits in progress/recently completed

| Resource Policies and Permits | | | |
|---|--|------------|------------------|
| Policy | Policy Purpose | Lead Dept. | Support Dept(s). |
| Agricultural Policy | Establish a comprehensive agricultural policy to guide future District agricultural activities. | NR | PL, L&F |
| Mitigation Policy | Develop a policy to guide the consideration for (1) accepting mitigation from outside agencies and (2) the process for avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for District projects that may affect the environment. | NR | PL |
| Programmatic State and Federal Environmental Permitting | Develop State and Federal programmatic permits for compliance with Endangered Species and Clean Water Acts to streamline project implementation, resource protection, and partnering efforts under the Open Space Maintenance and Restoration Program (Routine Maintenance Program). | NR | PL |

2. Resource Protection Projects and Activities

In early 2021, the NR Department provided the Board with an overview of priorities for natural resource restoration and recovery work, how this work aligns with regional plans, and how it provides benefits across the broader region ([R-21-26](#)). Much of this effort is focused on habitat and species located in coastal lands given the high prevalence of sensitive habitats and species. Given annual District staffing and funding constraints, restoration projects are prioritized to provide the best benefit. Coastal resource management projects and activities identified in the [FY22 and FY23 CIAP](#) are identified in **Table 9**.

Table 9: Coastal Area Natural Resource Protection Projects

| Project | Project Purpose | Lead Dept. | Support Dept(s). |
|---|--|------------|------------------|
| Irish Ridge Restoration | Restore habitat on the Irish Ridge property to remove non-native/non-local vegetation and return native forest health to the property. | NR | PL |
| Pescadero Sediment Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation | Fulfill watershed-wide regulatory mandate to reduce sediment in the Pescadero Watershed. | NR | |

| | | | |
|--|--|----|---------|
| Madonna Creek Fish, Water Supply, and Bridge Replacement | Restore fish passage on Madonna Creek, provide alternative water supply to agricultural operations, and replace access bridges across Madonna Creek to enhance fisheries and habitat conditions. | NR | E&C |
| Purisima Upland Site Clean-up and Soil Remediation | Complete site clean-up and soil remediation around existing empty oil tank on recently acquired property to protect natural resource values. | NR | PL, E&C |
| La Honda Creek Lower Turtle Pond Repair | Repair important habitat and stock watering pond in Lower La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. | NR | |
| Conservation Carbon Farming Plan Implementation | Implement measures to increase carbon sequestration on Bluebrush Ranch while providing co-benefits to ranching operation. | NR | L&F |
| Ecosystem Carbon Study, San Gregorio Watershed | Identify habitat types and/or sites where existing carbon storage and/or ecosystem conditions provide opportunities for carbon resiliency enhancements | NR | |

EXPANDED DUTIES FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

The District faces many challenges when managing conservation lands and sensitive resources. One of the biggest is allocating adequate staff time to resource management-related activities. The NR Department faces increasing responsibility for oversight associated with ongoing District resource management programs (Conservation Grazing, IPM, Wildland Fire Resiliency Program) to comply with required mitigation measures and regulatory permit conditions, grant funding conditions, and Measure AA obligations. Additionally, the coastal management area’s high concentration of sensitive habitats and species presents opportunities for valuable restoration projects, however, such projects require substantial effort to implement and monitor. The presence of Native American cultural resources throughout the coast requires a proportional increase in cultural resource management.

The NR Department is also relied upon to support new land acquisitions and Measure AA projects led by other departments. This limits capacity for focused restoration and resource management projects. **Table 10** provides average yearly projected hours for recommended discretionary natural resource land management activities on new properties to be acquired.

Table 10: Recommended Annual Resource Management Hours for Johnston and Cloverdale Ranches

| Natural Area (Condition) | Monitoring hours | Habitat Restoration / Maintenance hours | Reporting hours | Program Management hours | Total Hours |
|--------------------------|------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Cloverdale Ranch* | 1,000 | 2,350 | 625 | 1,250 | 4,825 |
| Johnston Ranch | 75 | 575 | 50 | 125 | 425 |

*Natural areas contain highly sensitive species and/or communities that are susceptible to rapid decline, designated as “special status”, and/or are protected by laws or regulations.

Although each site requires individual analysis to determine appropriate land management activities, the hours listed for Cloverdale and Johnston Ranch are based on generally accepted time requirements for resource management, based upon hours per 100 acres per year is provided in **Table 11**. These recommended annual time requirements are based on a report from the Center for Natural Lands Management, a California non-profit organization and is discuss further below.

In 2004, the Environmental Protection Agency funded a survey of long-term conservation management practices at 28 parklands, preserves and open spaces to present a comprehensive picture of the management costs, hours, and functions used by agencies with the responsibility to manage these lands. The resulting report, titled *The Natural Lands Management Cost Analysis Report* written by the Center for Natural Lands Management, presents the results of this analysis of lands located in Arizona, California, and Oregon, including the District’s Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve. The preserves were chosen to illustrate a variety of situations and ranged in size from 13 acres to more than 100,000 acres with a total of 325,000 acres surveyed. District staff used the results of this report to estimate the time that will be required to manage newly acquired and projected future coastal lands, including updated costs to reflect cost escalation, and applied best professional judgement based on the variety of situations for the Santa Cruz Mountain region.

Table 11: Recommended Annual Time Requirements for Resource Management (hours per 100 acres per year), adapted from *Natural Lands Management Cost Analysis Report, Center for Natural Lands Management (2004)*

| Natural Area Condition | Monitoring hours | Habitat Restoration / Maintenance hours | Reporting hours | Program Management hours⁵ | Total hours |
|--|-------------------------|--|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Initial Acquisition (first 5 years +/-) | 22 | 46 | 13 | 40 - 64 | 121-145 |
| Areas of High Sensitivity* | 16 | 31 | 10 | 20 - 40 | 77-97 |
| Natural Area | 13 | 29 | 8 | 10 - 30 | 60-80 |

* Areas of High Sensitivity = Natural areas that contain species and/or communities that are susceptible to rapid decline, designated as “special status”, and/or are protected by laws or regulations.

Other Expanded Resource Management Activities

Rangeland management plans are essential to establishing specific conservation grazing goals on individual properties or grazing units. The District has adopted rangeland management plans for eight grazing units to date. There are several others that are forthcoming, including one for the Gordon Ridge⁶ property (Tunitas Creek OSP), an amendment of the Elkus-Lobitos Rangeland Management Plan to include the South Cowell property⁷ acquired in 2020 (Purissima Creek Redwoods OSP), and one for the new Johnston Ranch Uplands property (Miramontes Ridge OSP). In the future, pending Board approval of a property purchase, a rangeland management plan or plans would also be prepared for the grazed areas of Cloverdale Ranch.

Resource planning and management for Cloverdale Ranch is planned to continue for a number of years after the property is acquired given the high resource values of the property. The extensive presence of known populations of endangered species will require focused effort to carefully integrate water supply management, grazing, and public access with resource management priorities and regulatory resource protections.

⁶ Adoption of plan will formalize the grazing practices already in place under these leases while providing resource benefit by maintaining habitat or improving habitat diversity and include an adaptive management tool for reducing fire fuels and shrub encroachment.

⁷ Ibid

E. Public Access Planning and Project Delivery

Public access planning is the responsibility of the Planning (PL) Department from initial scoping and project feasibility analysis through environmental review, early design and land use permitting. Many public access projects originate from the Vision Plan, preserve plans, and long-range use and management plans, and are often the result of long-term, multi-year regional planning and coordination efforts. Public access planning includes compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local codes and regulations, and permitting requirements for project planning and early design. The Coastal Service Plan establishes goals, policies, guidelines, and objectives for public access within the coastal area. To date, the District has completed over 8 miles of trails and added three new parking areas within coastal lands. Coastal trail planning projects identified in the [FY22 and FY23 CIAP](#) and anticipated within the next three to five years are identified in **Table 12**.

Table 12: Coastal, Trail and Parking Area Planning Projects

| Projects Underway/Recently Completed | | | |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Open Space Preserve | Proposed trails* | Parking areas | Additional Information |
| Hwy 35 Multiuse Trail Crossing and Parking Feasibility Study | >1 mi | - | Possible reconfiguration of existing parking area. While outside the Coastal area, this project contributes to the Purisima-to-the-Sea project and parking capacity for the preserve. |
| Purisima Creek Redwoods: Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area | 5-7 mi | 1 | Feasibility study underway for a new parking area at Verde Road |
| La Honda Creek: Easy Access Loop Trail | 1 mi | - | Master Plan Phase II Loop Trail to enhance public access in lower La Honda Creek |
| La Honda Creek: Phase II Trails | 3-4 mi | - | Master Plan Phase II Trail from Harrington Creek Trail to the central and northern area of the preserve |
| La Honda Creek: Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study | - | TBD | Study to identify feasible public access improvements to open the central area of the preserve to public use. |
| Future Projects | | | |
| Miramontes Ridge: Johnston Ranch Upland Trail Loop and Parking Area | 1-3 mi | 1 | Shared expanded/improved parking area with City of Half Moon Bay |
| Estimated Totals: | 10-15 mi | 2 | |

*Estimated trail mileages are for planning purposes only. Final totals may vary.

Planning staff also lead or participate in feasibility studies for staff facilities, visitor surveys, structure demolitions and rehabilitations, programmatic permitting, historic assessments, and CEQA compliance for a wide spectrum of projects. Planning staff currently are supporting efforts to secure a Master Permit with San Mateo County to streamline the permitting process.⁸ As the District continues to broaden efforts for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the engagement of a wide range of

⁸ If the Master Permit with San Mateo County is successful, routine maintenance and small-scale restoration and facility improvement projects could be covered under the programmatic permit. Larger scale projects would continue to require individual permits.

stakeholders and users, Planning staff are often the lead or primary support for public and stakeholder outreach and engagement. Development and implementation of thoughtful engagement and communications plans are essential to successful project planning and delivery and to implementing the goals of the Coastal Service Plan, Strategic Plan, Basic Policy and Good Neighbor Policy.

Planning, permitting, and approval processes in coastal lands are complicated by San Mateo County’s strict zoning ordinances and the need for Coastal Development permits when projects fall within the state’s coastal development zone. All new capital improvement projects require CEQA analysis and individual permit applications and approvals, which are often undertaken by the Planning Department. **Table 14** lists additional Planning Department activities anticipated for FY23 through FY25 that support District goals and priorities for the coastside:

Table 14: Coastal Area Activities (FY23-FY25)

| Project | Project Purpose | Lead Dept. | Support Dept(s). |
|---|---|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Basic Policy Review | Complete set of Basic Policies for the Coastal Service Plan area (Service Plan Guideline G.6.1.) | PL | RP, NR, L&F, GMO, PA |
| Purisima Multimodal Access Study | Evaluate and develop multimodal access opportunities for Purisima Creek Redwoods OSP to inform planning of new Verde Road parking area and improvements to existing trailhead parking (North Ridge, Redwood Trail, Higgins Canyon Road) | PL | VS, L&F, NR |
| Regional trails planning and coordination with partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peninsula Trails Team • Bay to Sea Trail Planning Coalition • Coastal Trail / Ohlone-Portola Heritage Trail • San Mateo Countywide Active Transportation Plan, San Mateo C/CAG Bicycle Plan • Caltrans District 4 Pedestrian Plan • Reimagine SamTrans • San Mateo Coastal Trail Gap Prioritization and Feasibility Study | PL | NR RP VS L&F |
| ADA Transition Plan Implementation | Support GMO, Engineering & Construction and Land & Facilities in prioritizing and completing CEQA review and compliance for ADA barrier removal projects, upgrades and improvements identified in Board-approved ADA Transition Plan Update. | GMO | PL, E&C, L&F, NR |
| San Mateo County Master Permit | Support GMO in submittal of Master Permit with San Mateo County to streamline project implementation under the Open Space Maintenance and Restoration Program (Routine Maintenance Program) and CEQA review compliance. | GMO | PL, NR, L&F E&C |
| Structures Disposition | Support Engineering & Construction and Land & Facilities in obtaining historical assessments and conducting CEQA review and planning permitting | E&C, L&F | PL, NR |
| Coastal Field Office | Support Real Property and Engineering and Construction in programming, site identification and planning for a new coastal field office | E&C | PL, VS, L&F, RP |

EXPANDED DUTIES FOR PUBLIC ACCESS PLANNING:

Increased demand for new public access in preserves and greater visitation has been occurring even before the surge in visitation in 2020. One of the biggest challenges is to meet visitor needs while protecting native habitat, natural resource and agricultural values in the Coastal Service Plan area. To meet this challenge, feasibility studies for unopened areas and new acquisitions will need to assess any potential concerns from surrounding neighbors/communities and onsite agricultural tenants, and effective solutions that avoid potential impacts. Similarly, feasibility studies will also need to assess onsite existing conditions, including the presence of sensitive habitats and species that need special protections to inform use and management recommendations, including the location and design of new public access facilities. The District continues broadening its efforts to engage a wide range of stakeholders and users in decision-making to strive for a more equitable and inclusive planning process. Although these efforts lengthen project delivery timelines, they ensure that the most feasible routes, sustainable uses, and appropriate parking locations are developed. **Table 13** includes public access projects anticipated as a result of expanding coastal lands:

Table 13: Future Coastal Area Public Access Projects

| Project | Project Purpose | Lead Dept. | Support Dept(s). |
|--|--|-------------------|-------------------------|
| La Honda Event Center Parking Area and Trail Connections | Update/amend the La Honda Creek Master Plan to include the former Apple Orchard and Event Center properties, develop a Site Plan for Event Center that includes expanded parking and trail connection. | PL | E&C, NR, L&F, VS |
| Miramontes Ridge: Johnston Ranch Uplands | Future feasibility study to provide public access to closed areas of Miramontes Ridge OSP and a trail connection to Burleigh H Murray State Park. | PL | E&C, NR, L&F, VS, RP |
| Cloverdale Ranch Interim Public Access Plan | Develop an interim public access program and plan for docent led hikes and other opportunities for environmentally sensitive public access in the early period of District management of Cloverdale Ranch. | VS | PL, NR, PA, RP, L&F |
| Cloverdale Ranch Preserve Planning | Pending Board approval of the property purchase, schedule the preparation of a Comprehensive Use and Management Plan. | PL | NR, L&F, VS |

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

I. Challenges Facing the Management of Coastal Lands

The first section of the CMP examines responsibilities and workplans for five District programs (Land Conservation, Visitor Services, Land and Facilities Management, Resource Management, and Public Access Planning and Project Delivery). The CMP identifies challenges in meeting these program responsibilities at the expected levels while absorbing new properties, maintaining or expanding the level of effort for newly added resource protection programs (e.g., wildlife corridors, wildland fire resiliency, species recovery, forest management), expanding coastal stewardship of sensitive habitat to balance agricultural uses and recreation, managing the increasing demand for public access, and adding new staff support facilities on the coast. Workplans and workloads are therefore correspondingly expected to increase in the NR, VS, and L&F Departments. To meet these challenges, staff have identified the following set of recommendations that focus on optimal staff deployment, the addition of a full service coastal field office, enhanced relationships and integration with coastside communities, additional staffing capacity, and a few other notable considerations.



Figure 2: Expanding responsibilities with Increased coastal lands.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Establishment of a dedicated Coastal Field Unit** – A new Coastal Field Unit that is largely independent from the Skyline Field Unit is recommended to dedicate Ranger staff solely to coastal lands within the coastside area to effectively manage the expanded (and expanding) acreage and public use. Having a District Coastal Field Unit dedicated to the coast will also improve relationships with coastside neighbors, partners and communities by dedicating a core team of rangers to specifically serve the coastal geographic region and establishing a greater physical presence on the coast with frequent opportunities for relationship building through neighborly interactions, impromptu encounters at local service sites, frequent observations of District ranger vehicles, ranger assistance in local medical/emergency calls, etc. The Coastal Field Unit staffing model would be similar to the Skyline Field Unit, composed of one Supervising Ranger, one Lead Ranger, and five Rangers. **Table 16** provides the recommended staffing model and **Table 17** provides a sample patrol schedule for the separate units:

Table 16: Field Unit Staffing Model

| Field Unit Staffing Levels ¹ | Total Acres | Supervising Ranger | Lead Ranger | Ranger |
|--|-------------|--------------------|-------------|--------|
| Realigned Skyline Field Unit – Preserve Coverage | | | | |
| Saratoga Gap, Long Ridge, Los Trancos, Monte Bello, Coal Creek, Skyline Ridge, Russian Ridge, Windy Hill, Upper La Honda, El Corte de Madera Creek, Upper Purisima Creek, Teague Hill, Thornewood, Foothills, Upper Miramontes Ridge | 22,619 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| New Coastal Field Unit – Preserve Coverage | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|---|----------------|
| Lower La Honda, Lower Purisima Creek (including Irish Ridge), Lower Miramontes Ridge (including Johnston Ranch Uplands), Tunitas Creek, and Cloverdale Ranch. | 19,105 ² | 1 | 1 | 5 ³ |
|---|---------------------|---|---|----------------|

¹ Coverage of upper areas of Purisima Creek, El Corte de Madera Creek & La Honda would be flexible, with staffing based on seasonal need and visitor usage.

² Includes 6,300 acres for Cloverdale Ranch.

³ The fifth Coastal Ranger position is requested for FY23.

Ranger schedules are a mix of early (E) and late (L) shifts assigned to cover preserve hours, opening and closing tasks and provide enough people to respond to emergencies and provide staff that can response to assist each other. Days off are assigned to provide more coverage and presence on weekends than weekdays. Wednesdays are currently designed as a common day for all to facilitate meetings and trainings. Effort is made to have a balance of E and L shifts. Both early and late shifts are primarily during daylight hours when the preserves are open. The late shifts extend into the evening to allow rangers to close preserves and patrol for illicit afterhours activities. When there is an odd number of staff available weight is given to late shifts to provide coverage for rangers for each other during the evening when other District staff are off duty. Minimum staffing is maintained to ensure the ability of rangers to respond to emergencies.

Table 17: Sample Patrol Schedule:

| X- day off; E- Early; L -Late | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Skyline Area Field Office | | | | | | | |
| Supervising Ranger | E | E | E | X | X | E | E |
| Lead Ranger | X | X | L | L | L | L | L |
| Ranger | X | X | E | E | E | E | E |
| Ranger | X | X | L | L | L | L | L |
| Ranger | E | E | E | X | X | E | E |
| Ranger | L | L | L | X | X | L | L |
| Ranger (added FY 22) | E | E | E | X | X | E | E |
| Coastal Area Field Office | | | | | | | |
| Supervising Ranger | X | X | L | L | L | L | L |
| Lead Ranger | E | E | E | X | X | E | E |
| Ranger | L | L | L | X | X | L | L |
| Ranger | L | L | L | X | X | L | L |
| Ranger | X | X | E | E | E | E | E |
| Ranger | X | X | E | E | E | E | E |
| Ranger (add FY 23) | X | X | L | L | L | L | L |
| Early shifts | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| Late Shifts | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 6 |

2. Creation of a Full Service Coastal Field Office – Locating and establishing a new, full-service Coastal Field Office, preferably within the city limits of the City of Half Moon Bay and south of Highway 92, is recommended to support the long-term management of coastal lands and the optimal deployment of staffing resources. A full-service Coastal Field Office similar in size and operation as the Skyline Office, equipped with an adequate water supply, internet connection, space for meetings and trainings, changing and washing, workstations, private office space, space for materials and tool storage, and sufficient parking for large trucks and heavy equipment is becoming increasingly important to meet ongoing operational demands. At this location, the Property Management Specialist II who oversees the conservation grazing program and agricultural leases may also have a workstation site or “office hours” to be more accessible for meetings with local coastal tenants and to more frequently check-in with tenants and their operations. If finding an appropriate property to establish a permanent full-service field office is posing a major challenge, the District can consider renting a smaller interim site in or near Half Moon Bay to meet office space and storage needs for coastal operations.

3. Establish Employee Housing at Cloverdale Ranch Upon Purchase – Establishing staff presence at two residences on Cloverdale Ranch is considered a high priority given the remote location and scale of the property. One Cloverdale Ranch residence located along Cloverdale Road is already occupied by a Ranger under a license agreement with POST. If the proposed property purchase is approved by the Board, the District will have an opportunity to designate a second existing residence on Cloverdale Ranch as employee housing for additional onsite, after-hours site security of the property.

4. FOSM Update – The upcoming FY23 FOSM update offers an opportunity to evaluate and confirm future capacity demands for coastal operations (including the initial projected staffing recommendation listed in Item 5 below) and other district-wide operations to address long-term needs and priorities for vegetation management, resource management, deferred maintenance, public programming, and low-intensity public access. The FOSM update should consider the close interdependencies that exist between L&F and NR to effectively manage and deliver key program activities, including the conservation grazing program, resource management field work, Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, and Integrated Pest Management Program.

5. Recommended Staffing – Additional staffing is recommended primarily focused within the Visitor and Field Services business line to enable the District in scaling up and meeting the expanded responsibilities for coastal lands. This recommendation is fully consistent with the 2015 FOSM Study, which identified the need for long-term staff growth in field operations to meet expanding land management demands.⁹ More specifically, the Coastal Management Plan identifies the need for additional rangers, maintenance personnel, and natural resources staff to address growing patrol and site security needs, facility and vegetation management, agricultural program management, and natural resource management of coastal lands. Most of the recommended new positions would be largely dedicated to coastal areas, while others would have broader geographic responsibilities (District-wide), with 25% to 50% of their capacity dedicated to managing coastal lands.

⁹ A [Memo to Board](#) in December 2019 reiterated the FOSM Study’s finding that “the greatest area of growth over time will be in Visitor and Field Services” to manage the increase in total acreage, acreage open to the public, trail miles, and increased visitation due to the delivery of Measure AA projects.

In addition to expanded staffing capacity in the Visitor and Field Services business line, 1.5 additional positions are recommended under the Planning and Project Delivery business line if the Board plans to prioritize the comprehensive use and management planning process for new and planned coastal properties, including Johnston Ranch Uplands and Cloverdale Ranch. Given the high long-term workload to further District-wide Measure AA projects that are already on the Measure AA Project list, additional staffing would be needed to keep these other priorities moving forward without slowing down or being otherwise impacted to take on new site planning and capital improvement projects on newly acquired coastal properties. Without the additional staffing, planning and capital improvement projects on newly acquired coastal properties would likely not begin until three to five years after the property purchase. As a reminder, each planning and capital improvement project typically takes approximately three to four years to complete all project phases (with the last two phases handed off to the E&C Department): conceptual/site/preserve planning, feasibility studies, early design, environmental review, permitting, final design, and construction.

Staffing details by business line and department are provided below.

Visitor and Field Services Business Line

Additional Staffing Recommended for the Visitor Services (VS) Department

Two new positions are recommended in VS to meet the expanded coastal patrol and site security needs and to create separate Coastal and Skyline areas functioning as standalone units. Current FTEs assigned to the combined Skyline/Coastside unit include 2 Supervising Rangers, 2 Lead Rangers and 9 Rangers. The ideal patrol team composition to provide effective supervision, timely response to incidents, a proactive presence, and early and late shift coverage 7 days a week is: one Supervising Ranger, one Lead Ranger and 5 Rangers for both the Skyline and Coastside units (7 FTEs for each unit for a total of 12). To achieve this composition, one additional Ranger position is requested for FY23, with one additional Ranger position projected for FY27 after numerous new coastal public access projects are completed:

- 1 New Ranger in FY23 (100% coastal)
- 1 Additional New Ranger in FY27 (100% coastal)
(assumes on target completion of numerous coastal public access projects) (>75% coastal)

Additional Staffing Recommended for the Land & Facilities (L&F) Department

Five new positions are recommended in L&F over the next five years to meet the demands accompanying the expansion of duties and the purchase of Cloverdale Ranch. The staffing increases would allow the equivalent of approximately three (3) FTEs dedicated to coastal activities and two (2) FTEs with time split between the Coastal and Skyline areas as follows:

- 1 Property Management Specialist II (100% coastal)
- 2 Open Space Technicians (100%coastal)
- 1 Field Resource Specialist (50% coastal)
- 1 Lead Open Space Technician (50% coastal)

The addition of a Property Management Specialist II (PMS II) position would allow for an internal restructuring of the Property Management Program to have one position dedicated to the conservation grazing program and managing other agricultural uses, including serving as a clear point of contact for all agricultural tenants; coordinating with NR on vegetation management projects to control coyote brush and other invasive plants that encroach into grazing acreage;

contracting with ranchers to complete grazing infrastructure improvements, including fence installations and repairs, water system upgrades, and brush removal; and identifying new tools and best practices to expedite cost-effective capital improvements and repairs to maintain and improve agricultural infrastructure on District lands.

Additional Staffing Recommended for the Natural Resources (NR) Department

Three and a half (3.5) new positions are recommended for the NR Department over the next five years. With the proposed expansion of coastal lands and the associated need for natural resource planning and projects, the NR Department anticipates the need for three (3) additional Resource Management Specialist I/II's and the conversion of one ½-time Administrative Assistant position to one FTE Administrative Assistant position to support the administrative needs of the NR Department:

- Resource Management Specialist I/II – Vegetation Program (1 FTE-50% coastal) – The Vegetation Program position will support wildlands fuels and vegetation management needs and field projects within the expanded coastal land holdings. Because of the high number of sensitive habitats and species that are carefully regulated throughout coastal lands, most projects and land management actions require botanical surveys and biomonitoring during field work to comply with permitting requirements from local, state and federal agencies. This position will support that work directly and through consultant contract administration. Additionally, the position will bring added capacity to lead restoration and management projects for restoring and enhancing habitats and populations of rare, threatened, and endangered plants.
- Resource Management Specialist I/II's -Wildlife Program (1 FTE-50% coastal) The wildlife program position will focus primarily on the protection, enhancement and recovery of red legged frogs and San Francisco Garter snakes, in particular working on coastal habitats and ponds that support these species.
- Resource Management Specialist I/II's Sciences Earth Program (1 FTE) Water is a limited resource on the coast and is of the utmost importance both to wildlife and agriculture. This position will help manage water resources to support both wildlife and agriculture.
- Administrative Assistant (0.5 FT-50% coastal) The addition of ½ time FTE will allow one assistant to be dedicated entirely to the NR department instead of being split between two departments in order to take on the increased administrative role needed for expanded consultants and contractors and project administration associated with the coastal expansion.

Additional Staffing Recommended for the Planning (PL) Department

The following two new positions totaling 1.5 FTEs are recommended for the PL Department assuming that the expectation is to proceed with planning and capital improvement projects on newly acquired coastal lands soon after (one to three years from) the purchase of these properties. The new positions would also provide expanded capacity for PL to support L&F and NR as they pursue maintenance and resource management projects, including assisting with CEQA compliance, historic resource reviews, land use permitting, and public and stakeholder outreach and engagement.

- 1 Planner III
- 0.5 Administrative Assistant

The new Planner III would focus on developing new public access facilities in coastal areas without impacting other districtwide public access projects. Without this additional position by FY24, engagement and planning for Cloverdale Ranch, staff facility planning for a new coastal office, trail planning and a parking expansion at Johnston Ranch Uplands would need to be deferred by three to five years given the long-term workload and demands for delivering the remaining long list of MAA projects that precede the coastal acquisitions.

The additional 0.5 FTE Administrative Assistant would provide the administrative support to assist Planners, including the new Planner III, with supporting the expanded workload that will result in additional Request for Proposals solicitations, notifications, and support to facilitate public meetings/workshops/engagement efforts, data entry and filing needs, basic research support, etc.

Table 15 summarizes the recommended staffing increases by fiscal year for the next five years. Note that the FY23 positions listed below form most of the position requests that the Action Plan and Budget Committee, and full Board will consider for the upcoming fiscal year. Positions identified for the outer years (FY24 – FY27) would be further confirmed by the upcoming FOSM update that is scheduled to begin in FY23.

Table 15: Recommended Staffing Increases to Support Coastal Activities – FY23 through FY27

| Business Line | Department | FY2023 | FY2024 | FY2025 | FY2026 | FY2027 | Total by Business Line |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|----------------|--|--|------------------------|
| Visitor and Field Services | Visitor Services | Ranger* | | | Ranger* | | 10.5 ¹³ |
| | Land and Facilities | Property Management Specialist II* | | | | | |
| | | Lead Open Space Technician | | | | | |
| | | Field Resource Specialist | | | | | |
| | | | Open Space Technician* | | | Open Space Technician* | |
| | Natural Resources | Resource Management Specialist I/II (Vegetation) | | | Resource Management Specialist I/II (Wildlife) | Resource Management Specialist I/II (Earth Sciences) | |
| | | Administrative Assistant (0.5 FTE) | | | | | |
| Planning and Project Delivery | Planning | | Planner III* | | | | 1.5 |
| | | | Administrative Assistant (0.5 FTE) | | | | |
| Total by Fiscal Year | | 5.0 FTEs | 3.0 FTEs | 1.0 FTE | 2.0 FTEs | 1.0 FTE | 12 FTE |

*Indicates positions with significant coastal responsibilities (>75%). Other positions listed would have broader geographic responsibilities with ~50% of their time dedicated to coastal areas.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

The staffing recommendations are proposed to be phased in over the next five fiscal years (FY23 through FY27) with the FY23 recommendations to be included as part of the proposed FY23 budget. The table below outlines the staffing costs (salary and benefits), with associated vehicle and equipment costs, per fiscal year. Positions identified for the outer years (FY24 – FY27) would be further confirmed by the upcoming FOSM update that is scheduled to begin in FY23. If aligned with the FOSM update, these positions will be included as part of future fiscal year budgets for Board approval.

Table 21: Estimated Costs for Staff Increases by Fiscal Year

| Department | Position | FY2023 | FY2024 | FY2025 | FY2026 | FY2027 |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Visitor Services | Ranger | \$140,700 | | | \$162,800 | |
| Land and Facilities | Property Management Specialist II | \$175,300 | | | | |
| | Lead Open Space Technician ¹ | \$140,700 | | | | |
| | Field Resource Specialist ¹ | \$188,600 | | | | |
| | Open Space Technician | | \$127,600 | | | \$147,700 |
| Natural Resources | Resource Management Specialist I/II ¹ | \$171,000 (Vegetation) | | \$188,500 (Wildlife) | \$198,000 (Earth Sciences) | |
| | Administrative Assistant ¹ | | \$63,800 (0.5 FTE) | | | |
| Planning | Planner III | | \$202,900 | | | |
| | Administrative Assistant ¹ | | \$63,800 (0.5 FTE) | | | |
| Staff Total | | 5.0 FTEs \$816,300 | 3.0 FTEs \$458,100 | 1.0 FTE \$188,500 | 2.0 FTEs \$360,800 | 1.0 FTE \$147,700 |
| Vehicles & Equipment | | \$123,000 (2) | | | \$82,000 (1) | |
| Total by FY | | \$939,300 | \$458,100 | \$188,500 | \$442,800 | \$147,700 |
| Cumulative Total | | \$939,300 | \$1,397,400 | \$1,585,900 | \$2,028,700 | \$2,176,400 |

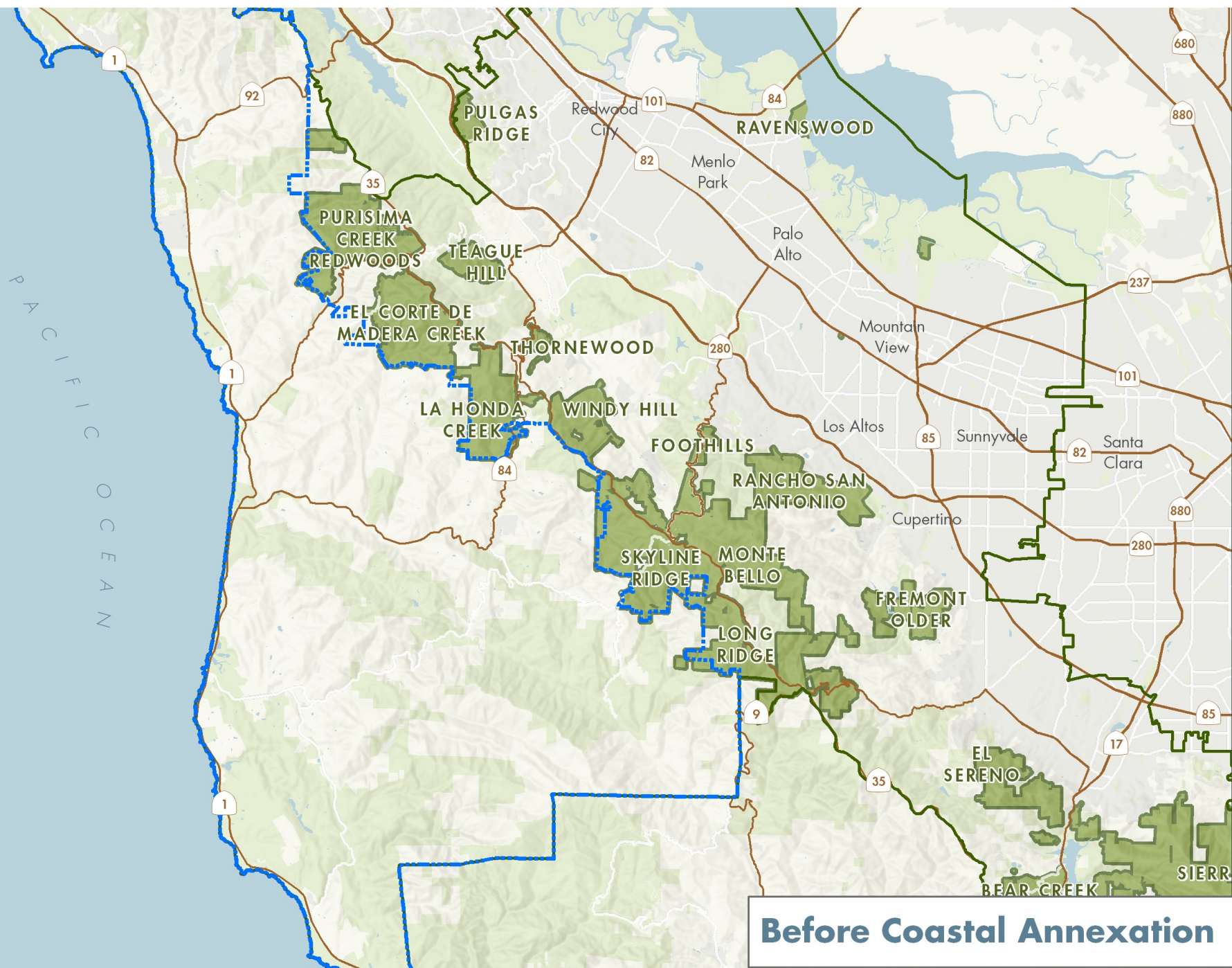
¹These positions have geographic responsibilities beyond the coastal area and would be dedicated ~50% coastal activities.

VI. NEXT STEPS

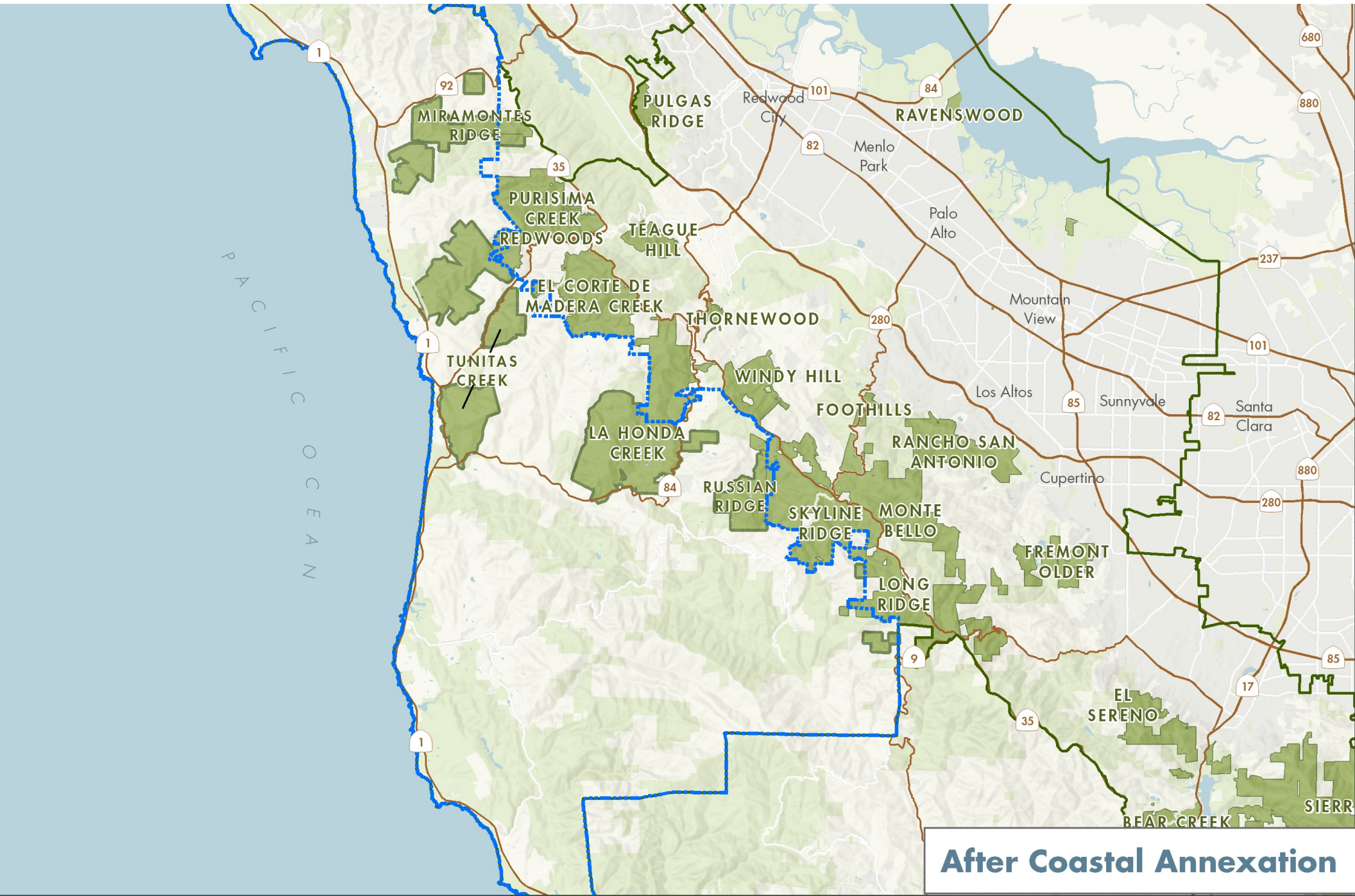
The Board will be asked to consider the FY23 staffing recommendations as part of the upcoming Capital Improvement, Action Plan and Budget development process. Other recommended positions for later fiscal years will be reassessed and confirmed as part of the FOSM update that is planned to begin in later summer/early fall of 2022.

Appendix 1 Maps

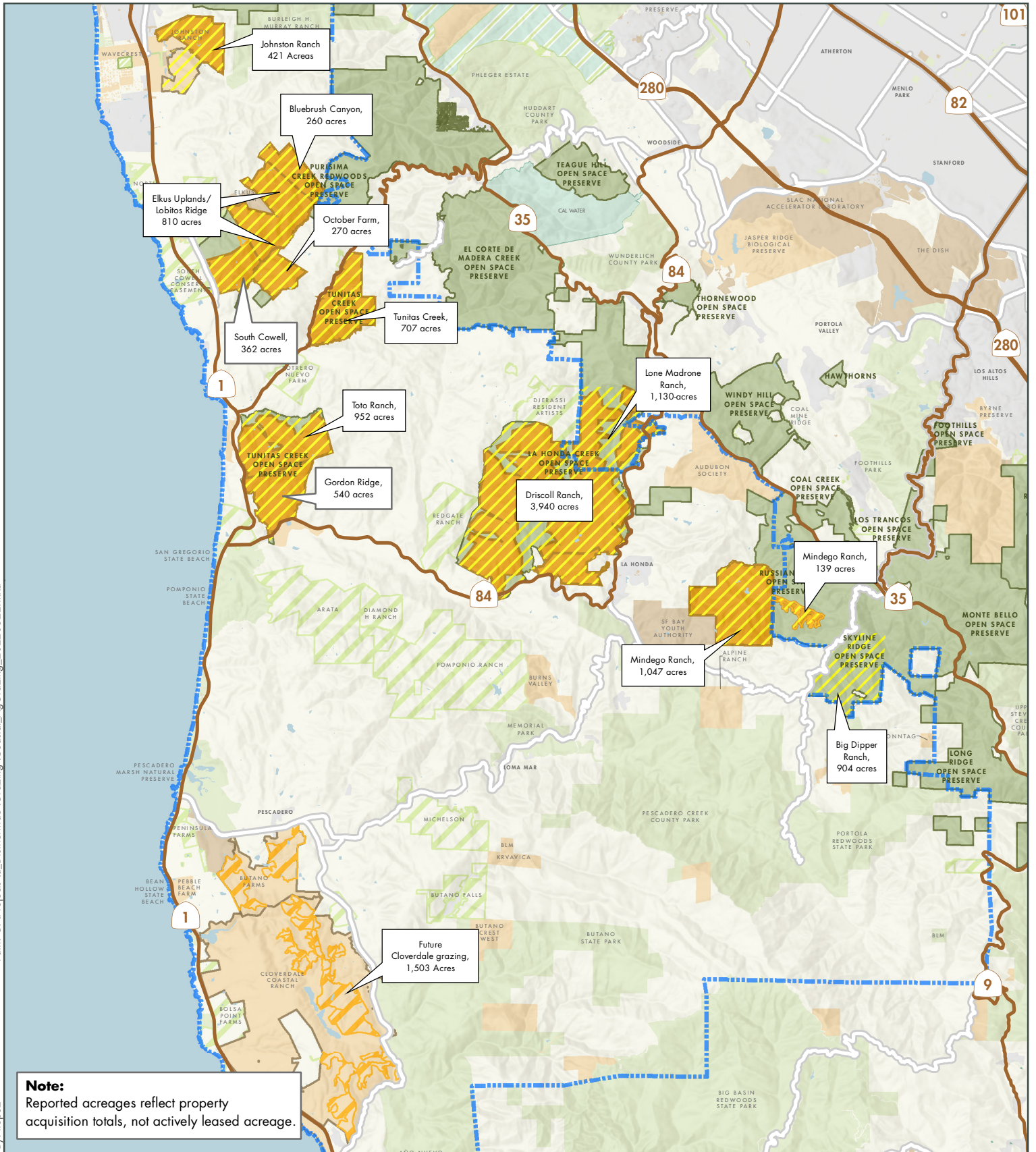
Appendix 2 Proposed Org Charts



Before Coastal Annexation



After Coastal Annexation



Note:
Reported acreages reflect property acquisition totals, not actively leased acreage.

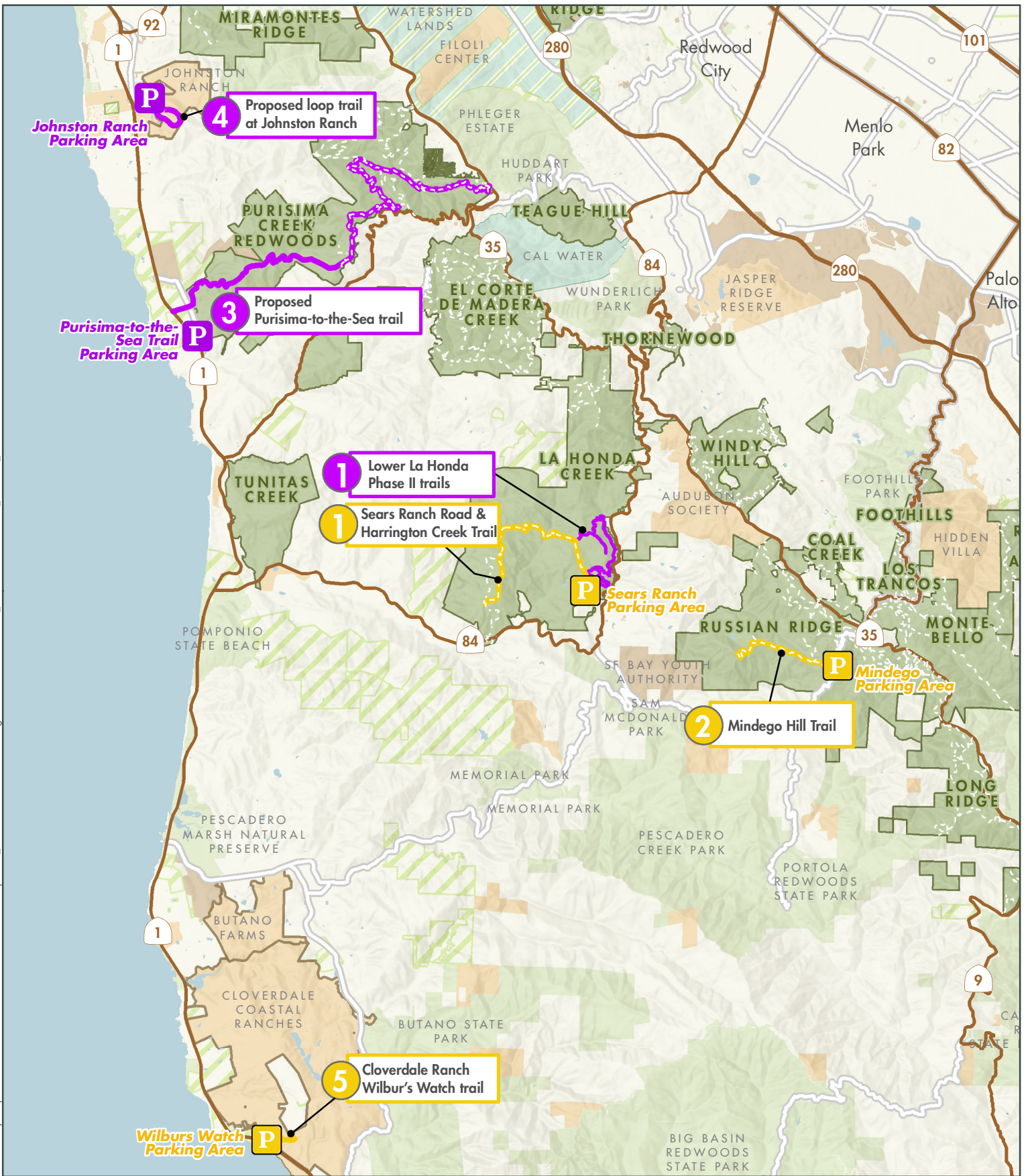
Grazing Properties

- | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--------------------|
|  | Midpen Preserves |  | Midpen Conservation or Agricultural Easement |  | Current Grazing |
|  | Other Protected Open Space or Park Lands |  | Non-Midpen Conservation or Agricultural Easement |  | Future Grazing |
|  | Land Trust |  | Coastal Service Plan Area |  | Grazing Lease Area |
|  | Watershed Land |  | Private Property | | |
|  | Other Public Agency | | | | |

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
3/30/2022



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.



Coastal Trail Priorities

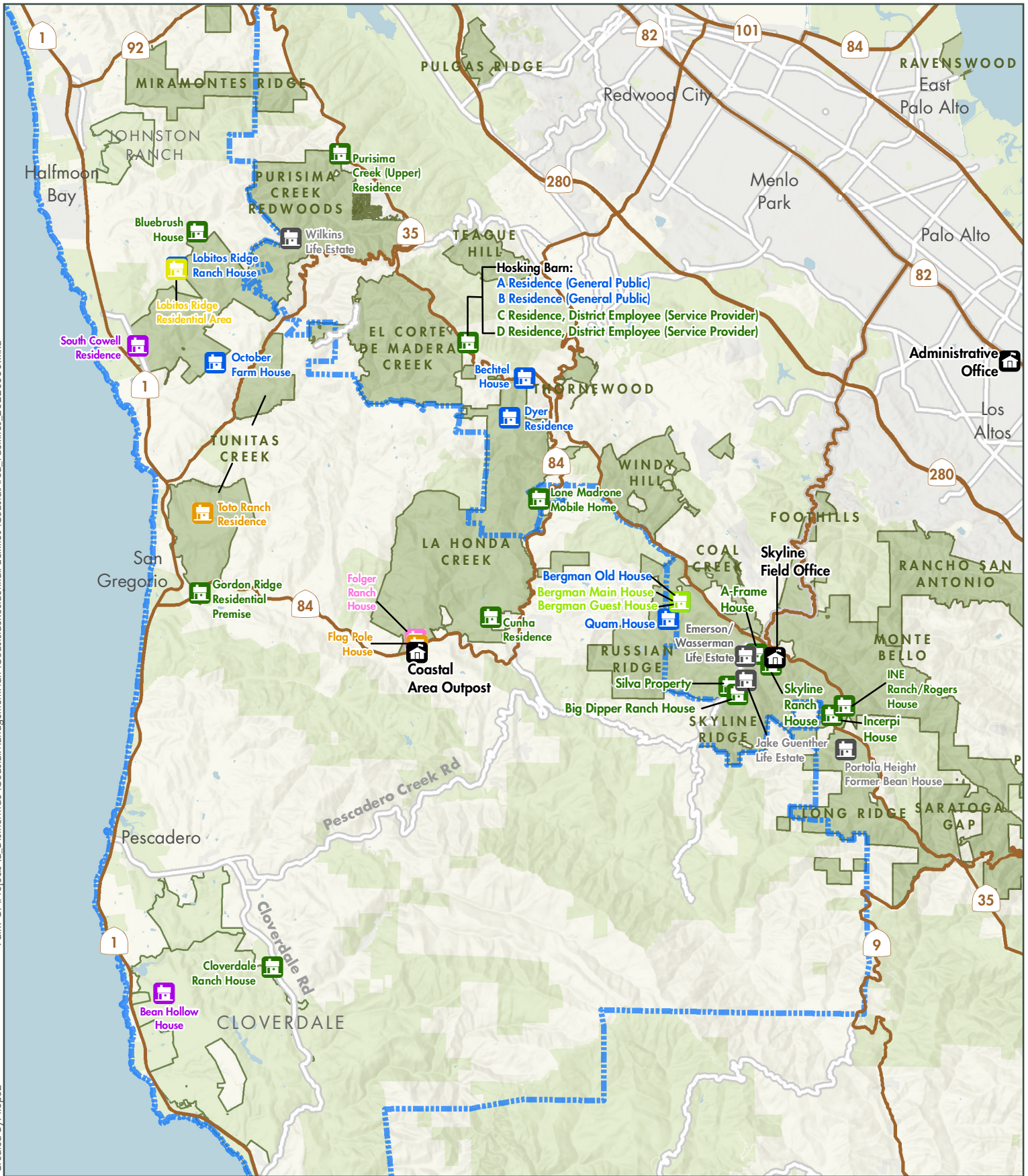
- | | | |
|---|---|--|
|  MROSD Preserves |  Land Trust |  Existing Trail/Parking |
|  Other Protected Lands |  Other Public Agency |  Proposed Trail/Parking |
|  Private Property |  Coastside Protection Area | |

Midpeninsula Regional
 Open Space District
 (Midpen)
 3/31/2022



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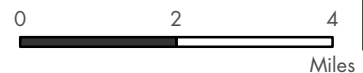
Path: G:\Projects\Va_Districtwide\CoastalManagementPlan\CoastalArea\Facilities_20220330.mxd
 Created By: flopez



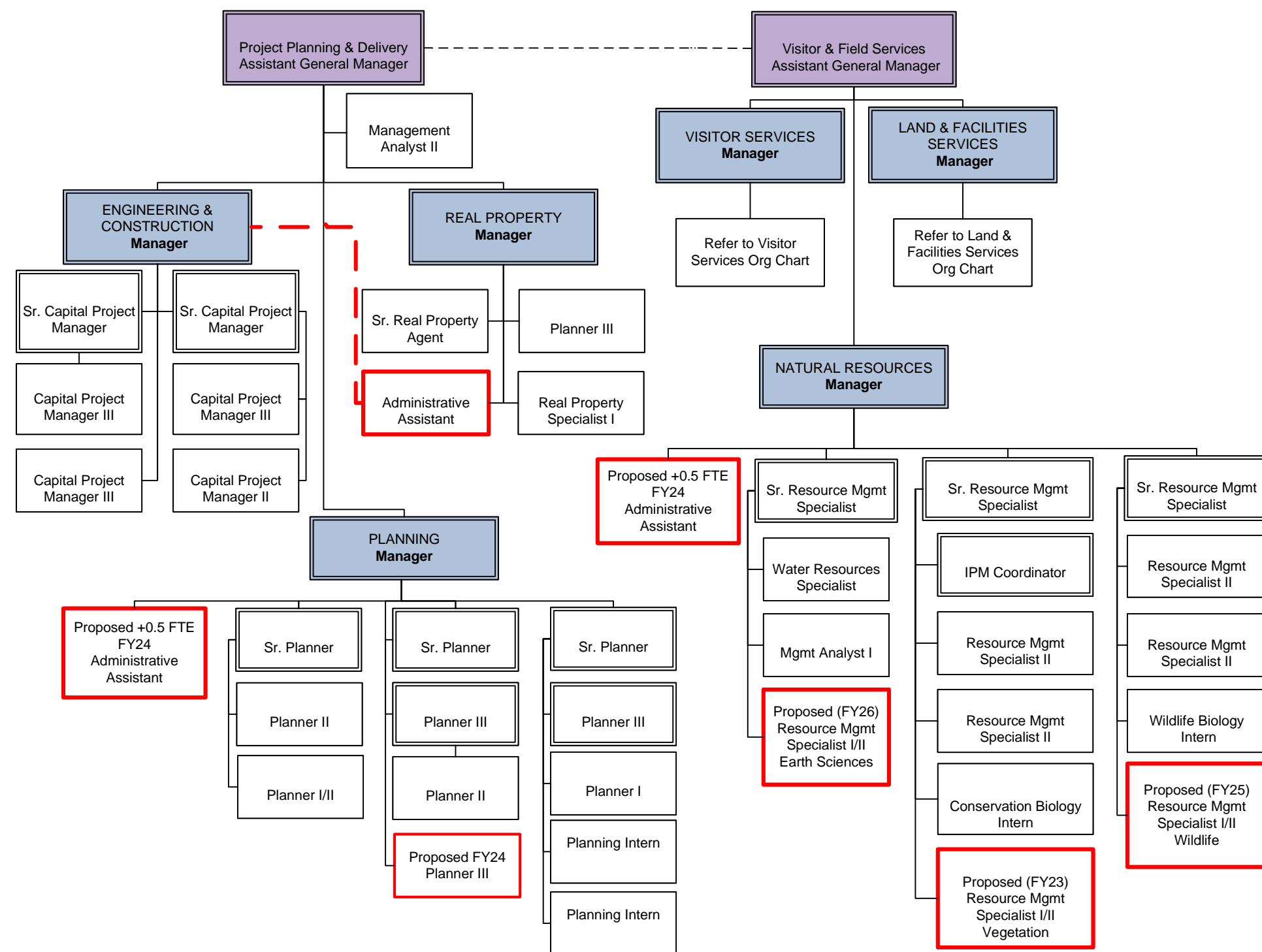
Coastal Residence & Facilities

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| MROSD Preserves | Residential, Agricultural | Historical |
| Other Protected Lands | Residential, District Employee (Service Provider) | Other Agency/ Non-Profit Employees |
| Private Property | Residential, District Employee (Non-Service Provider) | Determinable Fee/Life Estate |
| Coastside Protection Area | Residential, General Public | Potential Aquisition |
| | | Office |

Midpeninsula Regional
 Open Space District
 (Midpen)
 3/30/2022



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Land & Facilities Services Department Organization Chart



Brandon Stewart
Land and Facilities Services Manager

Adriana Headley
Management Analyst II

Caitlin Amarillas
Admin. Asst.

Michael Gorman
Foothills Area Manager

Jennifer Kavanagh
Admin. Asst.

Bryan Apple
Capital Projects Field Manager

Gloria Bell
Admin. Asst.

Craig Beckman
Skyline Area Manager

Omar Smith
Senior Property Management Specialist

Joe Mackessy
Facilities Maintenance Supervisor

Michael Bankosh
Maintenance Supervisor

Jim Mort
Maintenance Supervisor

PROPOSED FY23
Field Resource Specialist

Erik Viik
Special Projects Maintenance Supervisor FFO

Vacant
Special Projects Maintenance Supervisor SFO

Grant Kern
Maintenance Supervisor

Brendan Dolan
Maintenance Supervisor

Christian Bonner
Field Resource Specialist

Frank Healey
Facilities Maintenance Specialist

Stephanie Towne
Equipment Mechanic Operator

Tom Hanson
Equipment Mechanic Operator

John Holback
Lead Open Space Technician

Dan Chamberlin
Equipment Mechanic Operator

Holden Neal
Equipment Mechanic Operator

Warren Jenkins
Equipment Mechanic Operator

Steve Davison
Lead Open Space Technician

PROPOSED FY23
Lead Open Space Technician

Susan Weidemann
Property Management Specialist II

Alex Rodriguez
Lead Open Space Technician

Vince Hernandez
Lead Open Space Technician

Vacant
Equipment Mechanic Operator

Ken Bolle
Equipment Mechanic Operator

Eric Stanton
Equipment Mechanic Operator

Scott Cotterel
Lead Open Space Technician

Jean Chung
Property Management Specialist II

Kyle Putnam
Open Space Technician

Ignacio Zavala
Open Space Technician

Cody Fickes
Lead Open Space Technician

Chris Perry
Lead Open Space Technician

Brett Snider
Open Space Technician

Steve Reed
Open Space Technician

PROPOSED FY23
Property Management Specialist II

Ian Cook
Open Space Technician

Brian Fair
Open Space Technician

John Cifelli
Open Space Technician

Bernard Fahey
Open Space Technician

Rob Scilingo
Open Space Technician

Rich Hopp
Open Space Technician

Miguel Ojeda
Farm Maintenance Worker

Steve Neighbors
Open Space Technician

Trisha Marshall
Open Space Technician

Kandahar Husin
Open Space Technician

PROPOSED FY24
Open Space Technician

PROPOSED FY27
Open Space Technician

62.5 FTEs in Land and Facilities Services
54 Permanent Staff
17 Seasonal Staff

Seasonal Open Space Technicians

Seasonal Open Space Technicians

Proposed 1/31/2022

PROPOSED
 47 FTEs Budgeted in Visitor Services
 44 Full Time Positions

Ranger Staffing (35 Badged Staff)
 1 Chief Ranger, 2 Area Sups
 5 Supervising Rangers
 5 Lead Rangers
 22 Rangers

Budgeted - 4 Seasonal Ranger/Aides (2 FTE total)
 2 Seasonal Ranger Aides (RSA Multimodal- Temporary) - (1 FTE)

Visitor Services Department

Proposed New Ranger Positions to Support Coastside Acquisitions

Visitor Services Manager
 Chief Ranger

