



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-23-18
Meeting 23-04
February 8, 2023

AGENDA ITEM 5

AGENDA ITEM

Contract Amendment for a Botanical Resource Survey - La Honda Phase II Trail Connections

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with AECOM Technical Services, Inc., of Oakland, California, to provide botanical resources support for the La Honda Phase II Trails, in the amount of \$34,774, bringing the contract base amount to a not-to-exceed total of \$126,761
2. Authorize a 15% contingency of \$5,216 to cover unforeseen conditions and complexities for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$131,977.

SUMMARY

The conservation of special-status native plants and their habitats, as well as sensitive natural communities, is integral to maintaining biological diversity. On February 9, 2022, the Board authorized a multi-year contract with AECOM Technical Services, Inc., (AECOM) to provide botanical services to support multiple projects, including the La Honda Phase II Trail Connections project (R-22-15, [Minutes](#)). The recommended contract amendment would provide additional botanical services necessary to complete the La Honda Creek Phase II Trail Connections project (Project). A segment of an existing ranch road that will be incorporated into the trail system needs to be replaced with new trail construction due to excessive grades. Botanical surveys will inform the location of the new alignment. The General Manager recommends amending a contract with AECOM in the amount of \$34,774 for a total base not-to-exceed amount of \$126,761. Additionally, a 15% contingency in the amount of \$5,216 is requested should additional hours beyond the scope be required to complete the survey work, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount to \$131,977. There are sufficient funds in the adopted Fiscal Year 2022-23 (FY23) budget to cover the cost of the recommended action. Funding for FY24 will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

DISCUSSION

The conservation of special-status native plants and their habitats, as well as sensitive natural communities, is integral to maintaining biological diversity. Protocol botanical surveys ensure a consistent and systematic approach for surveying, locating, assessing, and mapping special status plants and sensitive natural communities to protect and steward these natural resources. This work is also critical to ensure that proposed projects are designed to avoid and/or reduce impacts on these resources.

Botanical field surveys are conducted in the field at the times of the year when plants will be both evident and identifiable. Usually, this is during flowering or fruiting. The timing and number of visits to determine if special status plants are present is determined by geographic location, the natural communities present, and the weather patterns of the year(s) in which botanical field surveys are conducted.

The Project includes a public trail to connect the existing Sears Ranch Parking Area with upper La Honda Creek OSP. As approved by the Board on August 22, 2012, the La Honda Creek Master Plan envisioned repurposing and integrating portions of the existing ranch road system into the new trail network. The Preserve Plan states that “New trail alignments will incorporate existing ranch and forest roads, where appropriate” and also identifies that “In some locations, existing roads will be realigned to reduce grades and avoid sensitive resources.” Botanical surveys are complete for two sections of the trail alignment that will require new construction. After a further review of the Project, staff have determined that an additional segment of an existing ranch road that is being incorporated into the trail network requires construction of a realignment due to excessive grades. The realignment will have grades ranging from 5% to 12% and will replace an existing 600-foot segment with maximum grades of 26%. The realignment area is considered potential habitat for listed species; however, the area has not yet been fully surveyed. The recommended contract amendment with AECOM would provide the necessary botanical surveys and identify any required mitigation measures for the Project to inform the proper realignment of the trail.

A 15% contingency is requested due to the complex nature of the Project and the extent of the potential habitat for special status species. Past similar projects include contingencies for such issues as difficult access roads, surveying within difficult terrain and heavy vegetation, or finer scale mapping to accurately map areas to avoid or minimize impact. In addition, and as required by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), if a special status species is discovered, the botanist must fully evaluate the population in question, including areas that may reside outside the study area. The original contract authorized by the Board included an allowance (set aside for a specific occurrence if needed) and a 12% contingency, neither of which has been used to date. The original contingency is being reserved to complete the scope of work under the original base contract. As a result, the recommended contract amendment includes its own separate contingency amount to address any new issues that may arise from the additional botanical survey.

	Original Contract	Amendment	Totals
Base	\$69,170	\$34,774	\$103,944
Allowance	\$14,517	\$0	\$14,517
Contingency	\$8,300	\$5,216	\$13,516
Totals	\$91,987	\$39,990	\$131,977

FISCAL IMPACT

The FY23 adopted budget includes \$85,000 for the La Honda Creek Phase II Trail Connections project MAA05-007. There are sufficient funds in the project budget to cover the recommended action and expenditures. Funding for FY24 will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

La Honda Creek Phase II Trail Connections MAA05-007	Prior Year Actuals	FY23 Adopted	FY24 Projected	FY25 Projected	Estimated Future Years	TOTAL
Total Budget:	\$28,079	\$85,000	\$105,000	\$306,500	\$460,000	\$984,579
Spent-to-Date (as of 01/24/23):	(\$28,079)	(\$14,624)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$42,703)
Encumbrances:	\$0	(\$16,438)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$16,438)
AECOM Contract Amendment:	\$0	(\$16,813)	(\$17,961)	\$0	\$0	(\$34,774)
15% Contingency:	\$0	\$0	(\$5,216)	\$0	\$0	(\$5,216)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$0	\$37,125	\$81,823	\$306,500	\$460,000	\$885,448

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. There is a \$2.4 million funding gap projected in the portfolio in the foreseeable future. A future reallocation of MAA funds, allocation of interest earnings, or general fund reserves may be needed to close the funding gap.

MAA05 La Honda Creek—Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 1/24/23):	(\$3,030,371)
Encumbrances:	(\$69,949)
Remaining FY23 Project Budgets:	(\$1,048,224)
Future MAA05 project costs (projected through FY26):	(\$9,968,483)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$14,117,026)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	(\$2,384,026)

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
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	
05-001 La Honda Creek Land Conservation Opportunities	(\$1,756,093)
05-002 Upper La Honda Creek Grazing Infrastructure	(\$297,432)
05-005 La Honda Creek Red Barn Parking Area and Easy Access Trail	(\$327,513)
05-007 La Honda Creek Phase II Trail Connection	(\$984,578)
05-008 La Honda Creek White Barn Structural Rehabilitation	(\$558,446)
05-009 La Honda Creek Redwood Cabin Removal and Site Restoration	(\$582,375)
05-010 Restoration Forestry Demonstration Project	(\$1,770,795)
05-011 Lone Madrone Ranch Fence Installation	(\$257,614)
05-012 Paulin Culvert/Bridge Improvements	(\$629,000)
05-013 La Honda Parking and Trailhead Access – Implementation	(\$3,556,000)
05-014 Lone Madrone Corrals	(\$57,000)
05-015 Eberhard Land Acquisition	(\$3,340,180)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$14,117,026)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	(\$2,384,026)

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

On February 9, 2022, the Board authorized the General Manager to enter into a multi-year contract with AECOM to provide botanical services to support multiple projects, including the La Honda Phase II Trail Connections project (R-22-15, Minutes).

The Board certified the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approved the La Honda Creek Master Plan on August 22, 2012 (R-12-83, Minutes). The Project is part of Phase II of the Master Plan for trail alignments for public access.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

An amendment to a contract is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Additionally, the proposed botanical surveys to be provided by the consultant are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Article 19, Section 15306:

Section 15306 exempts basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded.

In addition, the Board certified the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approved the La Honda Creek Master Plan on August 22, 2012 (R-22-15, Minutes). The Project is part of Phase II of the Master Plan for trail alignments for public access.

NEXT STEPS

Following Board approval, the General Manager will amend the contract with AECOM Technical Services, Inc., for a two-year period beginning in FY23.

Attachment

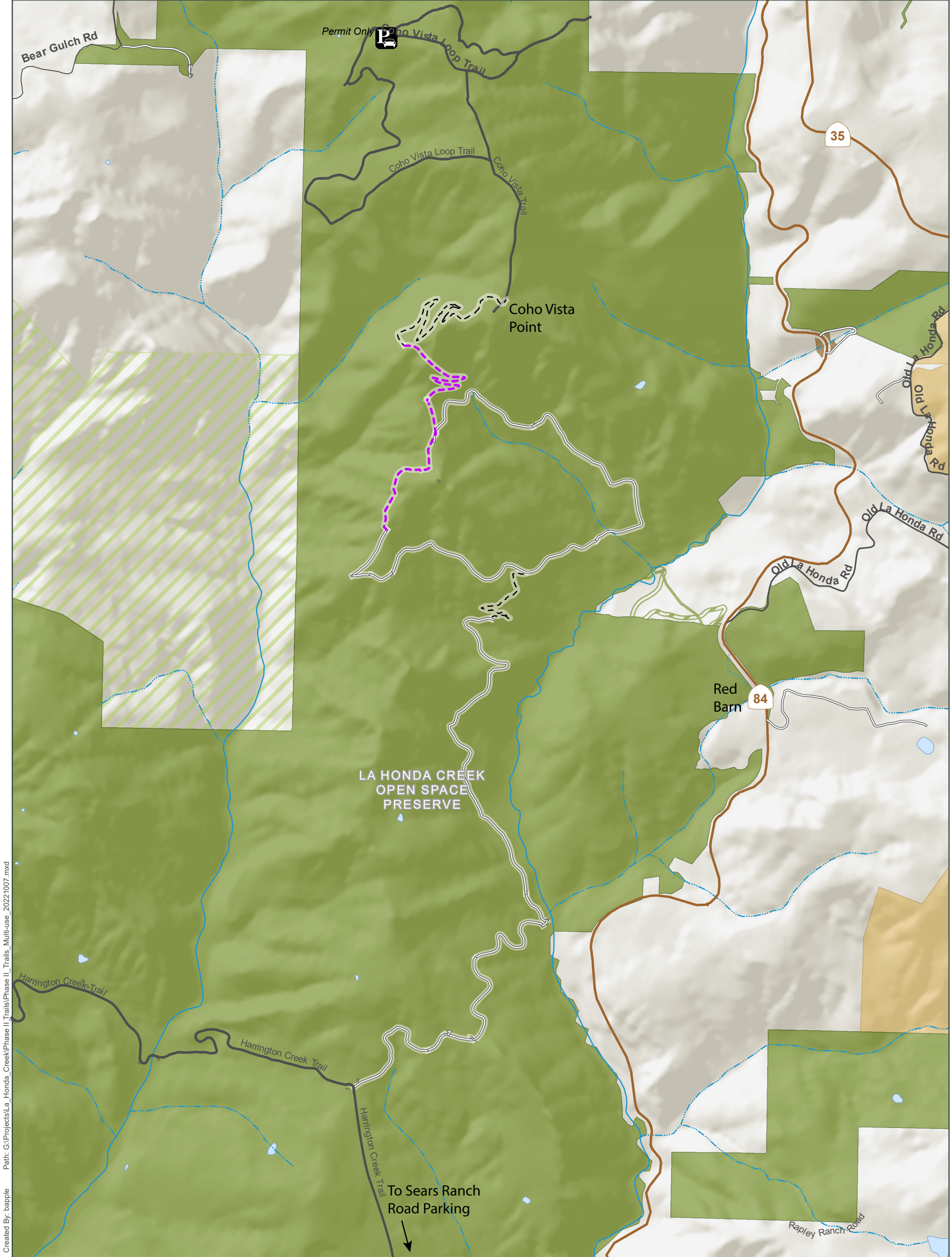
1. Project Location Map

Responsible Department Head:
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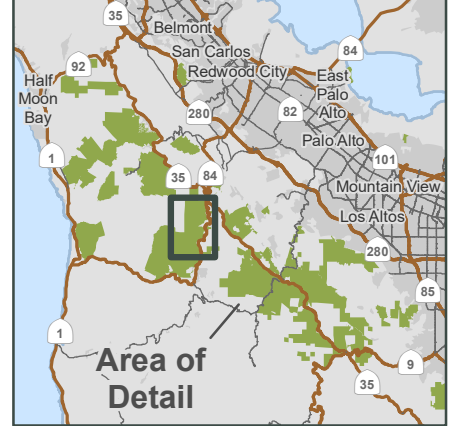
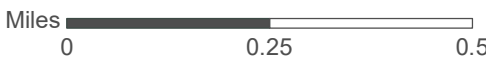


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Created By: bappple

La Honda Phase II - Multi-Use Trail - Plant Surveys

- New Trail Construction Requiring Botanical Surveys
- New Trail Construction - Botanical Surveys Completed in 2022
- Existing Road Alignment to be Incorporated into Trail Network
- Trails Currently Open to the Public

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
10/7/2022



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.