



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-23-52
Meeting 23-14
May 24, 2023

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA ITEM 1

AGENDA ITEM

Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area Feasibility Study, Preferred Trail Alignment and Parking Area Conceptual Design

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review and affirm, with any final modifications as directed by the Board of Directors, the findings and recommendations of the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area Feasibility Study.
2. Accept the recommended Trail Alignment 1, Connector Trails A, B, C and D, Trail Crossings 1, 2 and 3 and the Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternative C as the project scope and description to initiate environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act.
3. Direct staff to collaborate with partners in identifying the lead agency for the implementation of Connector Trail D and Trail Crossing 1.

SUMMARY

The Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area (Project) Feasibility Study (Study) seeks to identify a new regional trail alignment to facilitate a link between Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (Preserve) and the existing Cowell-Purisima Coastal Trail as well as a new public access trailhead and parking area. This trail alignment will create a critical east-west link in the regional trail network between the Bay Area Ridge Trail and the California Coastal Trail and is intended to be a contributing alignment of the more extensive Bay to Sea Trail. Staff will present the findings and recommendations of the Study, including recommendations for the primary trail alignment, connector trails, trail crossings of Verde Road and Highway 1 and the conceptual parking area design. If the General Manager's recommendations are accepted by the Board of Directors (Board), staff will initiate comprehensive planning and environmental review of the project and will collaborate with partners to identify the appropriate agency for implementing the project elements not located within Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) lands. Completion of the trail is a priority project as identified in the public-supported and Board-approved 2014 Vision Plan, with significant funding approved by the voters as part of Measure AA Portfolio #03: *Purisima Creek Redwoods, Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing*.

FEASIBILITY STUDY BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Feasibility Study is to analyze several key elements, including new trail alignment options, a new trailhead location with a parking area off Verde Road or Highway 1, and trail crossings at Verde Road and Highway 1 to ultimately facilitate a link between the Preserve and the existing Cowell-Purissima Coastal Trail. Ultimately, the Project would result in a critical 15-mile east-west link in the regional trail network between the Bay Area Ridge Trail and the California Coastal Trail and is anticipated to be a significant alignment of the more extensive Bay to Sea Trail. The Feasibility Study includes field investigations, as well as technical and planning studies and design exercises to analyze opportunities for a multi-use trail alignment, connector trails, parking area, trailhead, and pedestrian roadway crossings. This effort also includes significant stakeholder engagement and public outreach, as well as consultation with appropriate agencies, organizations, and neighbors. (Attachment 1: Study Area and Project Elements Map).

Since initiation of the Feasibility Study in 2020, the following key tasks have been completed:

Technical Studies

- Biological Assessment
- Archaeological / Cultural Resources Study
- Boundary and Topographical Survey
- Culvert Drainage Study
- Traffic Study
- Riparian Setback Analysis
- Geotechnical Engineer Assessment

Planning and Design

- Vision and Goals
- Existing Conditions / Opportunities and Constraints Analysis
- Trail Alignment Alternatives
- Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternatives
- Caltrans / San Mateo County Road Consultation
- Permitting Requirements Analysis
- Preliminary Cost Estimates

Engagement and Consultation

- Neighbor, Stakeholder and Public Outreach and Engagement
- Farm Bureau Consultation
- Partner Coordination
- Caltrans and County of San Mateo Consultation

At the December 1, 2021 Board of Directors (Board) meeting, staff presented the results of the preliminary technical studies and the opportunities and constraints analysis (R-21-157). Staff also presented the proposed Project vision and goals, designed to guide the development and selection of elements to be incorporated into a comprehensive use and management plan, including trail alignment alternatives and conceptual parking area designs, as well as other use and management considerations for the Project. The vision and goals were informed by the findings of the opportunities and constraints analysis, public comments, and the 2014 Board-

approved Vision Plan and 2014 voter-approved Measure AA expenditure plan. The Board approved the Project's vision and goals at the December 15, 2021 meeting (R-21-174).

At the October 11, 2022 Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee meeting, staff presented the identified trail alignment options and the conceptual parking area design alternatives. Staff described the trail scouting and alternatives analysis process, the factors considered, the design for the parking area layouts and the public engagement process and feedback received. The PNR Committee accepted the General Manager's recommended Trail Alignment 1 and Connectors A and B, and the Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternative C to forward to the Board for consideration as the proposed project description to initiate environmental review (R-22-111).

With the support of the PNR Committee on the preferred trail alignment and conceptual parking area design, staff initiated further analysis of the potential trail crossing locations and additional connector trails needed to connect the overall trail alignment to the Cowell-Purisima Coastal Trail. Following the fall PNR meeting, staff conducted an additional biological assessment, archaeological and cultural resources study, and boundary and topographical survey, developed conceptual trail crossing designs and consulted with regulatory agencies to confirm the feasibility of the necessary connector trails and trail crossings.

DISCUSSION

The intent of this agenda item is to present the findings and recommendations of the Feasibility Study. The following sections of the report describe the trail and parking area alternatives and the supporting information justifying the recommended project elements. The Board is asked to consider affirming the findings of the Feasibility Study and accepting the recommended Trail Alignment 1, Connector Trails A, B, C and D, Trail Crossings 1, 2 and 3 and the Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternative C as the project scope and description to initiate environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (Attachment 2: Trail Alignment Options, Connectors and Crossings Map).

Trail Alignment Options

District trail crews began field scouting efforts in late 2020 to evaluate potential trail connections from the existing Irish Ridge Trail to the proposed parking area on Verde Road. Staff evaluated a trail connection from the proposed Verde Road parking area to the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) Trail Easement that would provide access to the Cowell-Purisima Coastal Trail. Based on the District's trail design standards that aim to provide an optimal trail user experience in an ecologically sensitive way, the trail crew evaluated various trail options, including re-use of existing ranch roads, conversion of abandoned or poorly maintained roads to trails, and construction of new single-track trails. Potential trail alignments were identified using Lidar, contours, and satellite imagery maps and then ground-truthed in the field.

During the trail scouting effort, staff considered many factors in evaluating feasible alignments. Some of these considerations included constructability and long-term maintenance, impacts to sensitive natural resources and associated regulatory permitting requirements, proximity to private property, visibility of trails from the Highway 1 scenic corridor, the onsite conservation grazing operation, trail user experience, and patrol/emergency access. As part of the feasibility assessment, consulting biologists and cultural resource experts joined District staff to complete

reconnaissance-level surveys for rare plants and plant communities, wetlands and riparian habitats, and determine the potential for cultural and archaeological resources. The findings of these surveys factored into defining the proposed trail alignments.

Through the field scouting effort and subsequent biological and cultural resource surveys, three primary trail alignment alternatives were identified, along with two connector trail options. For all trail options, relocation of critical cattle grazing infrastructure may be necessary to balance public access with the grazing operation. Due to site constraints, the three trail alternatives converge in the eastern portion of the project area where there is only one feasible connection (shown in gold on Attachment 2) that connects to the existing Irish Ridge Trail in the current Preserve trail network. The existing Irish Ridge Trail is steep in certain locations, and staff will evaluate opportunities to re-route this existing trail in the future, however, this area is constrained due to steep topography, intermittent and ephemeral drainages, and property boundaries. The two connector trails provide access to the primary trail alignment. Connector A provides the most direct access to the Preserve trail system while Connector B, which would parallel Verde Road, would provide a more direct access to the Coastal Trail via the POST trail easement. Connector B would cross the front of the South Cowell residence, which is scheduled to be under District ownership by the end of June (R-23-40).

The table below further describes each trail alignment alternative:

Alternative	Mileage	Opportunities	Constraints
Irish Ridge to Lobitos Creek Connection	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The only feasible, sustainable trail alignment to connect from the existing trail network to the convergence of Alignments 1 - 3 The trail is a combination of new trail and segments of repurposed legacy and ranching road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to riparian habitat and other sensitive resources Multiple crossings of Lobitos tributaries and one crossing of Lobitos Creek mainstem
1	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New trail with low average trail grade Minimizes interaction with conservation grazing and associated infrastructure Offers vistas of the Pacific Coast to the west, Purisima Creek Canyon to the north, and Lobitos Creek drainage to the south 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction cost will be higher due to proposed new trail development New trail construction is typically more impactful than repurposing existing/legacy roads due to a new development footprint on the land Several self-closing gates would be necessary due to trail crossing in and out of grazing lease area
2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizes existing ranch road to minimize natural resource concerns Traverses the ridgeline, providing panoramic vistas Provides highest potential for patrol and emergency access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overlaps with existing grazing infrastructure resulting in higher potential for cattle/visitor interactions Grades are steep in some locations (>18%) and require rock surfacing to allow for increased use

<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2.5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids drainage crossings since it stays high in the watershed • New trail with low average trail grade • Offers panoramic vistas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher visibility of trail with switchbacks on the hillside • Closest alignment to adjacent private property (>100') • Trail is near stock ponds and traverses an active pasture • New trail construction is more costly and typically more impactful than repurposing existing/legacy roads due to a new development footprint on the land
<p style="text-align: center;">Connector A</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizes existing ranch road • Provides excellent vistas after short climb to hilltop • Opportunity for short loop trail in conjunction with Connector B 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires use of the main ranch road that connects to Verde Road; same road is also used by the grazing tenant to access the property • Will likely require additional fencing and relocation of grazing infrastructure • May require periodic closure to allow for grazing tenant to move cattle to the corral
<p style="text-align: center;">Connector B</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">0.5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the most direct route from the proposed Verde Road parking area to the POST trail easement • Opportunity for short loop trail in conjunction with Connector A • Encourages the public to use the trail adjacent to Verde Road rather than the road itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires multiple minor/ moderate drainage crossing improvements • Crosses the driveway of the South Cowell residence • Likely will require fence relocation to separate visitors/ cattle

Alignment 1 has been identified as the preferred trail alignment as it provides a sustainable new trail alignment with panoramic vistas of the Pacific Coast to the west, Purisima Creek Canyon to the north, and the Lobitos Creek Drainage to the south. Alignment 1 minimizes the overlap of public access with grazing activities and infrastructure. Alignment 1 provides an enjoyable trail user experience while avoiding/minimizing impacts to known sensitive resources and supporting the ongoing operation of working/grazing lands. Moreover, Connector Trails A and B are also recommended to provide a unique loop trail opportunity from the proposed parking area.

The total mileage of this proposed trail alignment is over seven (7) miles, and encompasses the Lobitos Ridge to Irish Ridge connection, Alignment 1, and the Trail Connector Loop (Connectors A & B). Approximately 4.4 miles would be new trail construction and 2.8 miles would be improvements to existing roads/trails. Adjustments to the final trail alignment may be required as a result of future resource surveys, technical studies, and the design and engineering process.

Additional Trail Connections and Crossings (Outside of District Lands)

Trail Connections

Connector Trail C (Attachment 2) would provide a link between the proposed parking area and the primary trail alignment's Connectors A and B. Connector C runs along the edge of the South Cowell Farm Property. As part of the ongoing South Cowell land division, the District would receive a Public Trail Easement across the Farm Property along a short segment of Verde Road to provide for a safe crossing of the road (R-23-40).

Connector Trail D allows for a trail link between Verde Road and Highway 1 across the Purisima Farms Property. The Purisima Farms Property is subject to a trail easement held by POST and allows for public trails. The 25-foot-wide trail easement area runs along the southern boundary of the farm parcel and is adjacent to active agricultural fields. The site is designated as Unique Farmland according to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program and currently serves as an agricultural access road.

Trail Crossings

Trail Crossing 1 (Attachment 2) would connect the Trail Connector D to the Cowell-Purisima Trailhead and parking area that are located on the west side of Highway 1. The crossing of Highway 1 is within the Caltrans Right-of-Way. The conceptual design of the crossing infrastructure is based on the sight distance, posted vehicle speeds and traffic volumes in accordance with the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM) and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The conceptual design identifies the minimum standards to meet Caltrans design guidelines and consultation with Caltrans confirmed that the minimum standards have been correctly identified. Caltrans agreed that over or under crossings structures are not warranted based on the site conditions. The conceptual design includes advanced warning pedestrian crossing signage, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, ladder crosswalk, and yield to pedestrian signage. However additional pedestrian safety measures can be proposed during the design and permitting process (Attachment 3: Conceptual Trail Crossing Designs).

Trail Crossings 2 and 3 are within San Mateo County Right-of-Way. Trail Crossing 2 would connect the primary Trail Alignment 1 (and Connectors A and B) to Trail Connector D. Trail Crossing 3 would connect the proposed new trailhead and parking area to the primary Trail Alignment 1 (and Connectors A and B). The conceptual designs for both crossings are identical to Crossing 1 and include the advanced warning pedestrian crossing signage, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, ladder crosswalk, and yield to pedestrian signage. Based on the site conditions along Verde Road, including line of sight, traffic speeds and volume, the rapid flashing beacon is not a requirement. However, the design includes these minimum measures to provide consistency among all three proposed crossings that are within close proximity and for added safety.

Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternatives

Staff developed various preliminary parking area site designs for two locations, one on the east side of Verde Road, and one on the west side of Verde Road. Key considerations of the design process include public safety, sensitive habitats, riparian setbacks, scenic resources, the grazing operations, and adjacent farmlands. Additionally, the designs incorporate transportation demand

management (TDMs) strategy recommendations from the Purisima Multimodal Access Study (R-22-123). The potential for locating a parking area to the east side of Verde Road that meets the Project's goals is highly limited due to required riparian setbacks and existing grazing infrastructure that limit the number of viable parking spaces.

Three conceptual parking area design alternatives have been identified that primarily focuses development on the west side of Verde Road (Attachment 4: Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternatives).

Design elements common to each alternative are as follows:

- Works with existing topography
- Incorporates the necessary riparian corridor protections
- Minimizes environmental impacts
- Minimizes impacts to the existing grazing infrastructure
- Incorporates TDM strategies
- Includes ADA-accessible trailhead and restroom, pathways, signage and overlook
- Includes a setback from the scenic corridor along Highway 1

The parking area alternatives differ in the following ways:

- Parking lot size and capacity
- Entry road configuration and trailhead location
- Equestrian parking layout and capacity
- Use of the potential parking area to the east of Verde Road

Alternative A

- Smallest project footprint (~40 general parking spaces, ~20 priority spaces, including ADA-parking spaces, 4 equestrian/shuttle/large vehicle spaces)
- Minimizes user conflicts with grazing operations and avoids grazing infrastructure
- Central pull-through for equestrian trailer/bus lot
- Entry road is located to the north of the trailhead and trail access pathway
- No development east of Verde Road

Alternative B

- Intermediate project footprint west of Verde Road (~40 general parking spaces, ~35 priority spaces, including ADA-parking spaces, 2 equestrian/shuttle/large vehicle spaces)
- Limited development footprint east of Verde Road (restroom, education area, equestrian/bus parking)
- Entry road is located to the south of the trailhead and trail connector pathway

Alternative C (*Recommended*)

- Larger project footprint (~70 general parking spaces, ~35 priority spaces, including ADA-accessible parking spaces, ~6 equestrian/shuttle/large vehicle spaces)
- Equestrian/shuttle/large vehicle lot along perimeter of the parking lot for ease of circulation and pull-through parking
- Most effectively incorporates TDM strategies, including an overflow parking/expansion area (potential for ~80 additional parking spaces)
- Entry road is located to the south of the trailhead and trail access pathway

- No development east of Verde Road
- Minimizes impacts on the existing grazing operation by avoiding existing grazing infrastructure

Alternative C is identified as the preferred parking area design alternative. First, this alternative provides the parking capacity that most effectively accommodates the recommended TDM strategies, such as priority parking spaces, additional parking supply, and bicycle infrastructure. In addition, Alternative C includes the potential for overflow parking, or a future parking expansion, with minimal impacts to the initial site improvements. Finally, Alternative C minimizes the impact of the new public access improvements on the existing grazing operation by avoiding the area with existing grazing infrastructure.

Conservation and Trail Easements

The project area parcels are subject to conservation and trail easements.

South Cowell Conservation Easement

The parking area and much of the primary trail alignment are located on the South Cowell Ranch property, which is subject to a Restated and Amended Grant of Conservation Easement (conservation easement) recently entered into by the tenants-in-common owners (Marsh Trust, POST, and the District). The conservation easement was recorded in September 2022 and is now held by POST. The conservation easement combines and modernizes the 1989 conservation easement, which was held by the California Coastal Conservancy, and a 1991 conservation easement held by POST over the South Cowell property. The conservation easement continues to protect the land's conservation values (agriculture, scenic, habitat and natural resources, open space and recreation), and modifies the conditions of the allowable subdivision for the ownership of the South Cowell Upland property by the District, providing flexibility in locating public trails and eliminating the potential to develop a second residential site on the Upland parcel. Additionally, a third trail easement will be granted to the District to allow for the potential public trail connector along Verde Road (Connector C) from the proposed parking area to the southern Verde Road trail crossing (Crossing 3).

Purisima Upland Conservation Easement

A segment of preferred Trail Alignment 1 traverses the Purisima Upland Property. The Purisima Upland Property is subject to a conservation easement and a trail and conservation easement, both held by POST. The conservation easement protects the land's conservation values and the trail and conservation easement allows flexibility in locating public trails on the Purisima Upland Property.

Purisima Farms Conservation Easement

Connector Trail D traverses the Purisima Farms Property. The Purisima Farms Property is subject to a trail easement and a trail and conservation easement, both held by POST. The trail easement was established because the site was identified as highly desirable for a future trail linkage to be managed in a manner that is compatible with the existing agricultural use. The trail easement allows for a public trail within a 25-foot wide easement running from Verde Road to Highway 1 along the southern parcel boundary. The conservation easement protects the conservation values and agricultural use of the Property.

Construction Cost Estimates (2027 Dollars*)

Project Element	Conceptual Cost Estimate
Trail Alignment Options (with Connector A and B)	
Trail Alignment 1 (<i>Preferred Alignment</i>)	\$3.4 M
Trail Alignment 2	\$3.3 M
Trail Alignment 3	\$3.8 M
Connector Trails C and D	\$500K
Trail Crossings 1, 2, and 3	\$400 K
Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternatives	
Alternative A	\$3.1M
Alternative B	\$4.1 M
Alternative C (<i>Recommended Alternative</i>)	\$4.5 M

*Construction costs have been escalated to Fiscal Year 2026-27 dollars to reflect likely construction costs based on the tentative project schedule.

Preliminary cost estimates are based on the findings of the site assessment and geotechnical assessment and include recommended construction methods and soil treatments to address the highly expansive soils within the project location. These cost estimates were developed after the Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget and action plan process therefore these refined estimates are not reflected in the MAA03-009 and MAA03-010 budgets listed in the fiscal impact section below. Budget refinements will be included in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget and action plan cycle.

Public Engagement and Feedback

Public engagement has consisted of focused stakeholder meetings, one-on-one meetings, public workshops and open houses, visitor surveys and pop-up events in the community, many of which were held with the Purisima Multimodal and Highway 35 Multi-use Trail Crossing and Parking Study Projects. Attachment 5 lists the various meetings and events held to date and the groups involved, which include Purisima neighbors and visitors, agricultural community members, local agencies, advocacy groups and subject matter experts.

The Purisima-to-the-Sea and Purisima Multimodal project teams collaborated to develop and release a joint visitor survey that ran online from April 2022 to May 2022. The goal of the survey was to solicit feedback on the desired trail experience, parking lot size preference, configuration, amenities, parking needs, proposed TDMs and visitor likelihood of using them, e.g., bicycling to the Preserve, taking a shuttle, using a reservation system, paying for parking, utilizing a carpool priority lot, etc. Over 400 responses were received. The project team also solicited input on the preferred parking area conceptual design alternatives at two community open house events (in-person and virtual).

Attachment 6 summarizes the key themes and topics emerging through the visitor surveys and public and stakeholder engagement. The feedback confirmed the preference for prioritizing biological site attributes balanced with maximizing parking capacity to accommodate TDMs recommended from the Purisima Multimodal project. The additional feedback received revealed the following:

- Regardless of activity, most visitors will not travel the entire distance of the proposed trail network, supporting the need for mid-trail facilities. Survey

respondents expressed a strong preference for a rest area/bench and a restroom along the trail route.

- Equestrian amenities would also be suitable mid-trail, including a hitching post, mounting block, and water trough.
- Additionally, there was interest in a backpack camp along the proposed trail network (Note: camping is prohibited within the District's Coastal Service Plan Area, therefore, consideration of this use, if pursued, would need to be restricted to areas within the Preserve that are outside of the Coastal Service Plan Area).
- Preference for multi-use trail. Cyclists expressed interest in narrow, purpose-built trail with a moderate gradient.
- Preference for a loop trail experience.
- Support for the largest parking area (Alternative C) to accommodate TDM strategies.
- Importance of educating the public on the value of the conservation grazing program and sharing the trail with cattle.
- Visitors coming to Purisima primarily come to see the Preserve's unique features.
- Minimize trail user conflicts with vehicles by locating the pedestrian crossing away from the driveway entrance.
- Interest in maximizing the quantity of equestrian parking and locating it on the perimeter of the proposed parking area. A little over a third of survey respondents identifying as an equestrian indicated they would use the proposed Verde Road lot at least once a month.
- Support for flexible parking uses during different times.
- Support for interpretive signage, in particular discussing wildlife, Native American history, and ecosystems.

Feedback also garnered concerns such as:

- Road safety and emergency vehicle access.
- Trespassing over private property.
- Lack of stormwater drainage on the coastside as it relates to impervious surfaces.
- Safety of the at-grade crossing along Highway 1.
- Overdevelopment of the site, quantity of infrastructure and amenities.
- Compliance with the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program
- Delineated parking as it relates to parking capacity and the need to pave surfaces.
- Impacts to prime agricultural land, sensitive habitats, and views.
- Designation of trail uses, balancing user conflict, and allowing for various user types.

The Project and the recommendations before the Board have been informed by the public and stakeholder feedback received through these extensive outreach and engagement opportunities.

FISCAL IMPACT

The General Manager's recommendation has no immediate fiscal impact. The FY23 adopted budget includes \$176,000 for the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area - Phase I Feasibility Study project. Funding for future implementation efforts will be requested and incorporated in future years budgets in the MAA03-009 Purisima-to-the-Sea Parking, MAA03-010 Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, and MAA03-012 Purisima-to-the-Sea Comprehensive Use and Management Plan projects.

Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area - Phase I Feasibility Study MAA03-005	Prior Year Actuals	FY23 Adopted	FY24 Projected	Estimated Future Years	TOTAL
District Funded (Fund 30):	\$288,596	\$115,237	\$0	\$0	\$403,833
Grant Amount:	\$154,063	\$60,763	\$0	\$0	\$214,826
Total Budget:	\$442,659	\$176,000	\$0	\$0	\$618,659
Spent-to-Date (as of 05/01/23):	(\$442,659)	(\$82,110)	\$0	\$0	(\$524,769)
Encumbrances:	\$0	(\$81,249)	\$0	\$0	(\$81,249)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$0	\$12,640	\$0	\$0	\$12,640

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio #03 *Purisima Creek Redwoods* — *Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing* allocation, costs-to-date, projected future project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining. There is a ~\$7.8 million funding gap projected in the portfolio. A future reallocation of MAA funds, allocation of interest earnings, or general fund reserves will be needed to close the funding gap.

MAA03 Purisima Creek Redwoods — Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing Portfolio Allocation:	\$7,608,000
Grant Income (through FY26):	\$292,306
Interest Income Allocation:	\$450,000
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$8,350,306
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 5/01/23):	(\$6,885,401)
Encumbrances:	(\$83,441)
Remaining FY23 Project Budgets:	(\$1,334,863)
Future MAA03 project costs (projected through FY26):	(\$7,836,189)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$16,139,894)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	(\$7,789,588)

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 03 allocation, costs to date, and the fiscal impact related to the Property purchase.

MAA03 Purisima Creek Redwoods — Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing Portfolio Allocation:	\$7,608,000
Grant Income (through FY26):	\$292,306
Interest Income Allocation:	\$450,000
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$8,350,306
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	

03-001 Purisima Uplands Lot Line Adjustment and Property Transfer	(\$425,113)
03-002 Purisima Upland Site Clean up and Soil Remediation	(\$922,823)
03-003 Purisima Creek Fence Construction	(\$169,190)
03-004 Harkins Bridge Replacement	(\$516,916)
03-005 Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area - Phase I Feasibility Study	(\$618,659)
03-006 South Cowell Upland Land Conservation	(\$6,252,707)
03-007 Purisima-to-the-Sea Habitat Enhancement and Water Supply Improvement Plan	(\$568,674)
03-008 Rieser-Nelson Land Purchase	(\$16,715)
03-009 Purisima-to-the-Sea Parking*	(\$3,991,687)
03-010 Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail*	(\$2,120,000)
03-011 Lobitos Creek Fisheries Restoration	(\$397,410)
03-012 Purisima-to-the-Sea Comprehensive Use and Management Plan	(\$140,000)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$16,139,894)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	(\$7,789,588)

* The MAA03-009 and MAA03-010 project budget allocations in the proposed FY24 Budget (separate Agenda Item) were developed prior to the refined preliminary cost estimates shown in the above table. Budget refinements will be included in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget and action plan cycle. Based on the preliminary numbers, the funding shortage in this portfolio will increase.

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

October 28, 2020 Board Meeting: Proposed purchase of an undivided 54% interest in the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) South Cowell Property, located at 1000 Verde Road, Half Moon Bay, in unincorporated San Mateo County, as an addition to Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve ([R-20-122](#), [meeting minutes](#))

December 1, 2021 Special Board Meeting: Purisima-to-the-Sea Regional Trail and Parking Area Feasibility Study – Opportunities and Constraints Analysis and Project Vision and Goals ([R-21-157](#), [meeting minutes](#))

December 15, 2021 Board Meeting: Purisima-to-the-Sea Regional Trail and Parking Area Project Vision and Goals ([R-21-174](#), [meeting minutes](#))

March 15, 2022 PNR Committee Meeting: Preliminary Findings from the Purisima Creek Preserve Multimodal Access Project ([R-22-38](#), [meeting minutes](#))

August 2, 2022 PNR Meeting: Proposed Transportation Demand Management Strategies and Preliminary Recommendations from the Purisima Creek Preserve Multimodal Access Project ([R-22-87](#), [meeting minutes](#))

October 11, 2022 PNR Committee Meeting: Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area Feasibility Study – Trail Alignment Options and Parking Area Conceptual Design Alternatives ([R-22-111](#), [meeting minutes](#))

November 9, 2022 Board Meeting: Affirmation of the Findings and Recommendations of the Purisima Multimodal Access and Transportation Demand Management Study Report ([R-22-123](#), [meeting minutes](#))

April 12, 2023 Board Meeting: Proposed Purchase of a Remaining 33% Undivided Interest in the 611.7-acre South Cowell Property from Peninsula Open Space Trust, which is located at 1000 Verde Road, Half Moon Bay, in unincorporated San Mateo County, as an addition to Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve ([R-23-40](#)).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. In addition, post cards were sent to project area neighbors within the Coastal Service Area and public email notices were sent to interested parties of the Preserve and hiking, biking, equestrian, accessibility, Regional Trails, and Coastal interested parties.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

If the Board of Directors accepts the General Manager’s recommendation, staff will conduct environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) with Trail Alignment 1, Connectors Trails A, B, C and D, Trail Crossings 1, 2 and 3 and the Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternative C as the project scope and project description

NEXT STEPS

If the Board of Directors accepts the General Manager’s recommendation, staff will initiate environmental review under CEQA and incorporate the Project recommendations into a Comprehensive Use and Management Plan (CUMP). The CUMP would include recommendations from this Project and other ongoing Preserve projects, including:

- Purisima-to-the-Sea Preferred Project Elements (Trail Alignment 1, Connectors Trails A, B, C and D, Trail Crossings 1, 2 and 3 and the Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternative C)
- Highway 35 Multi-use Trail Crossing and North Ridge Parking Expansion (pending Board approval of preferred project alternative)
- Purisima Multimodal Access Study Priority Recommendations

Additional future tasks and the related schedule for the Project is as follows:

Project Phase	Tentative Project Schedule
Develop Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan / Conduct Environmental Review	FY 24 – 25
Partner Collaboration on Connector Trail D and Trail Crossing 1	Ongoing
Design Development / Permitting	FY 24 – 26
Parking Area Construction	FY 27 – 28
Trail Construction	FY 27 – 29

Attachment(s)

1. Study Area and Project Elements Map
2. Trail Alignment Options, Connectors and Crossings Map
3. Conceptual Trail Crossing Designs
4. Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternatives
5. Summary of Engagement Activities
6. Summary of Public Feedback

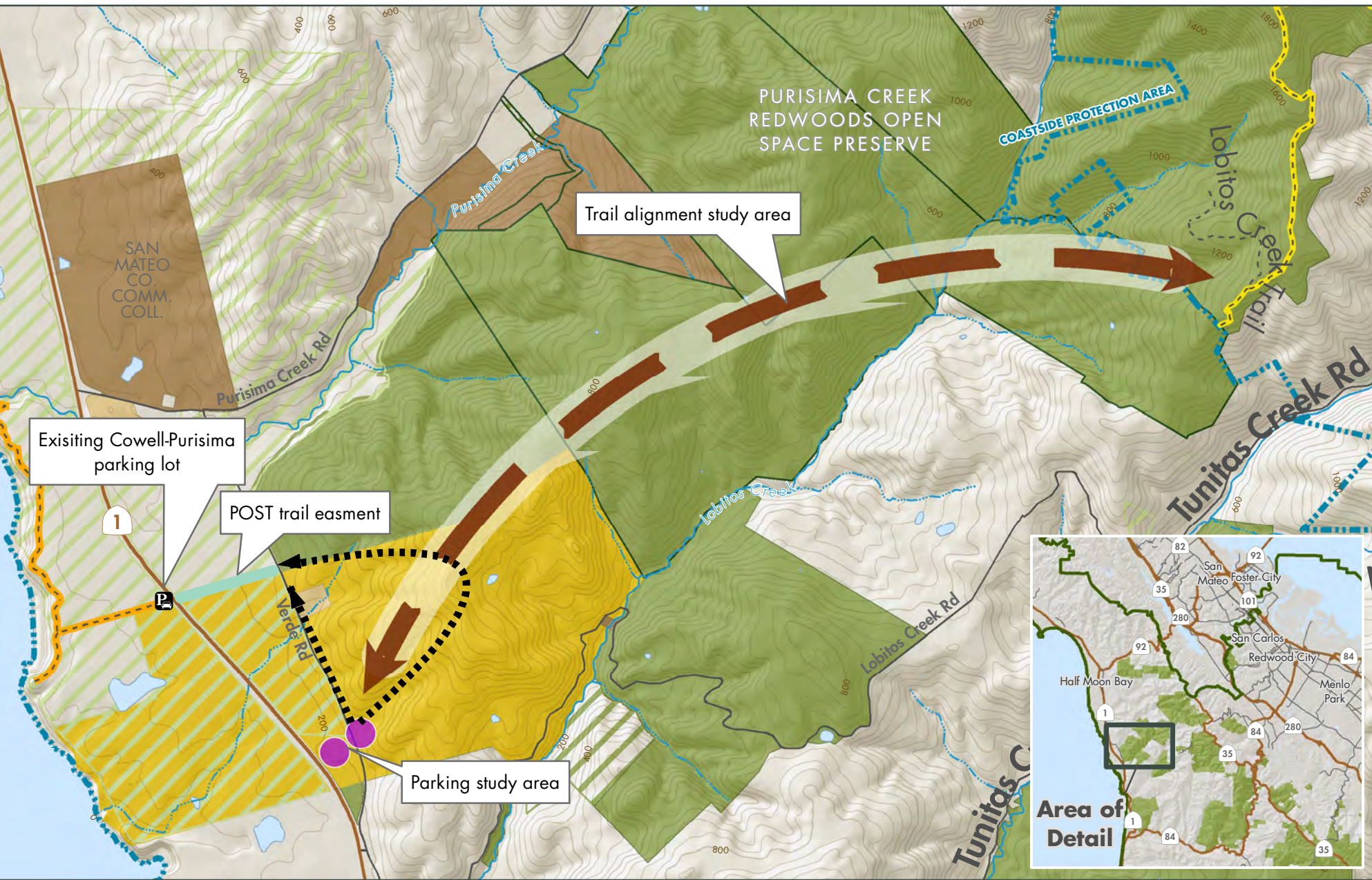
Responsible Department Head:
Jane Mark, AICP, Planning Department

Prepared by:
Gretchen Laustsen, Senior Planner, Planning Department
Bryan Apple, Capital Projects Field Manager, Land and Facilities Department

Contact person:
Gretchen Laustsen, Senior Planner, Planning Department

Graphics prepared by:
Anna Costanza, GIS Technician, IST Department
Bryan Apple, Capital Projects Field Manager, Land and Facilities Department
SWCA Environmental Consultants

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Created By: acostanza



Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area Feasibility Study Area and Project Elements


- Midpen preserves
- South Cowell property
- POST easement
- Midpen easement
- Existing public trail
- Existing Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail
- Cowell-Purisima Trail & Coastal Trail
- Connector trail options

- Study Areas**
- Trail alignment study area
 - Parking study area
 - Pedestrian crossing and connector trail study area

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
7/29/2022

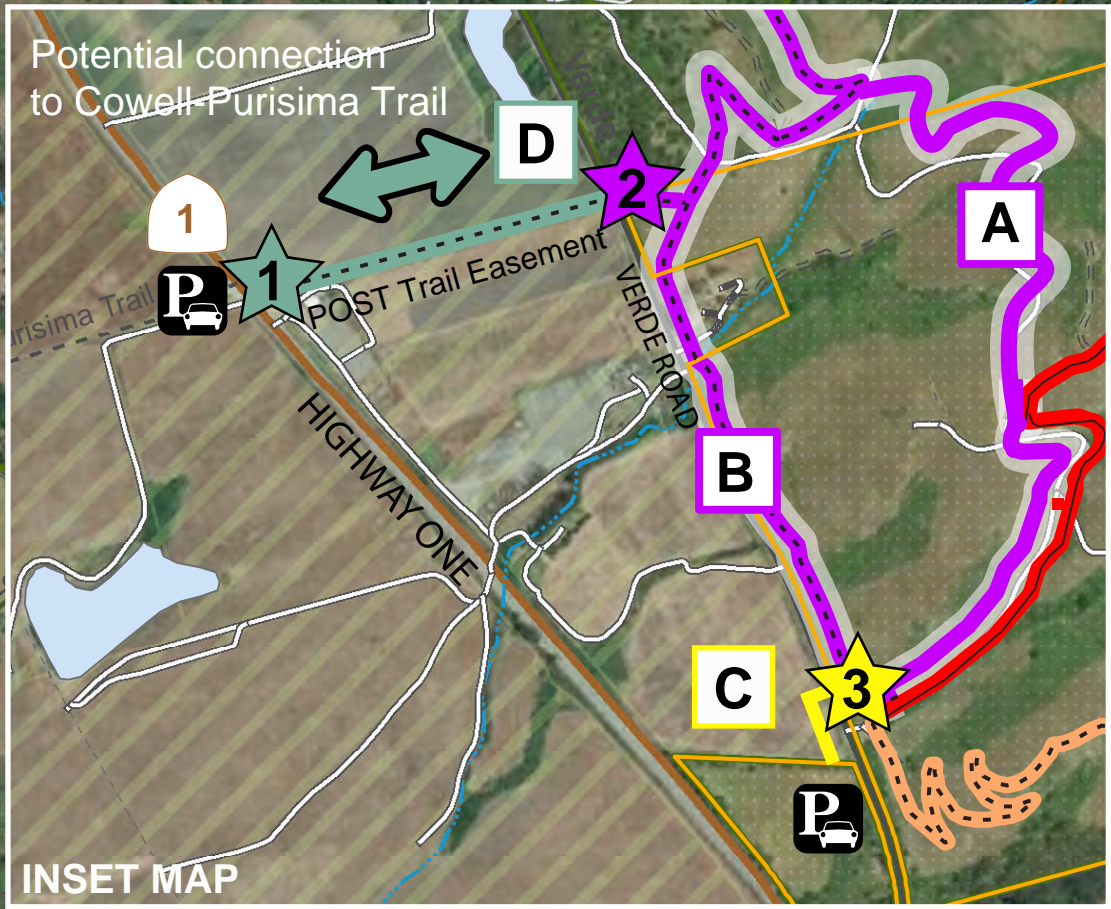
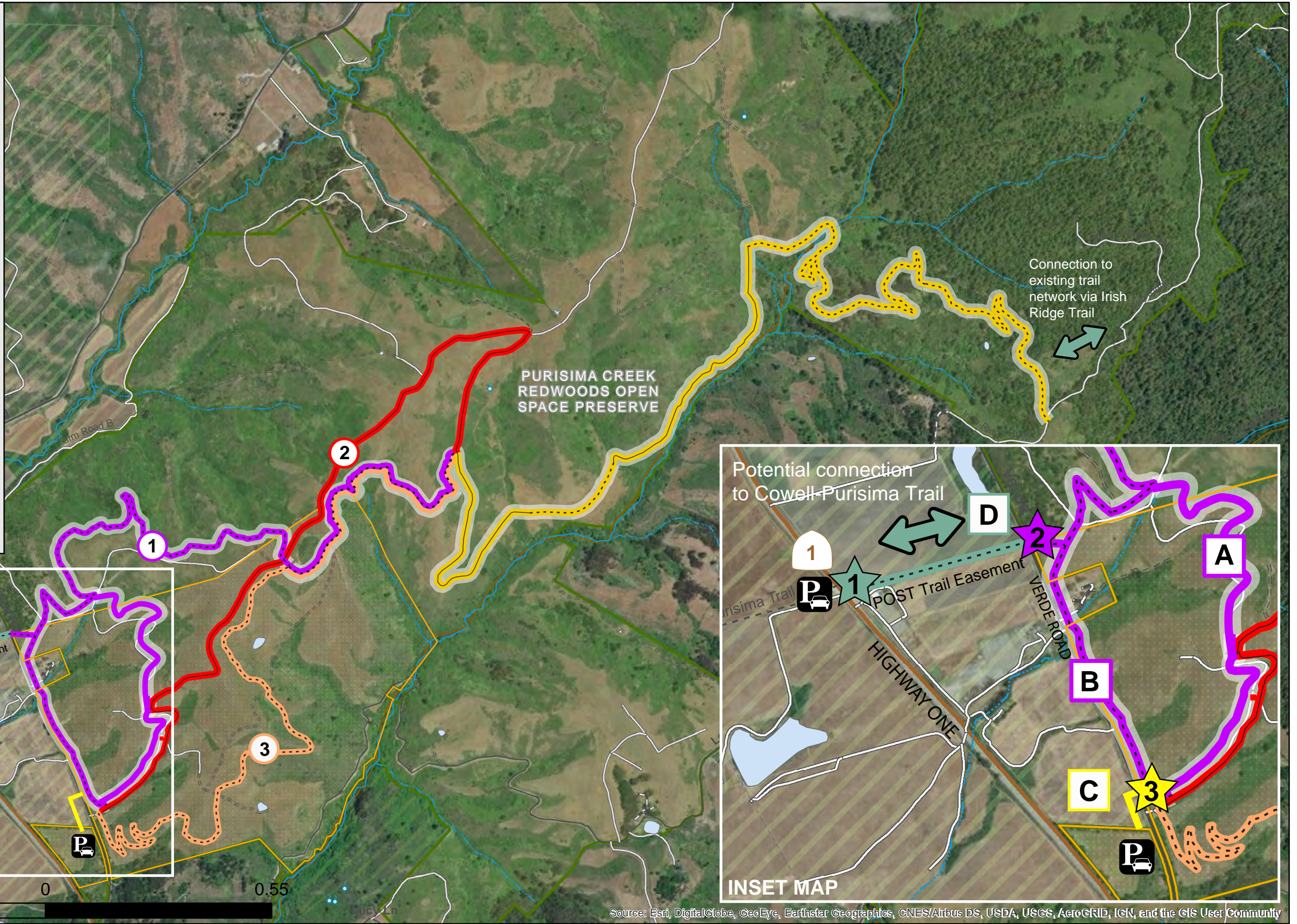


While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.

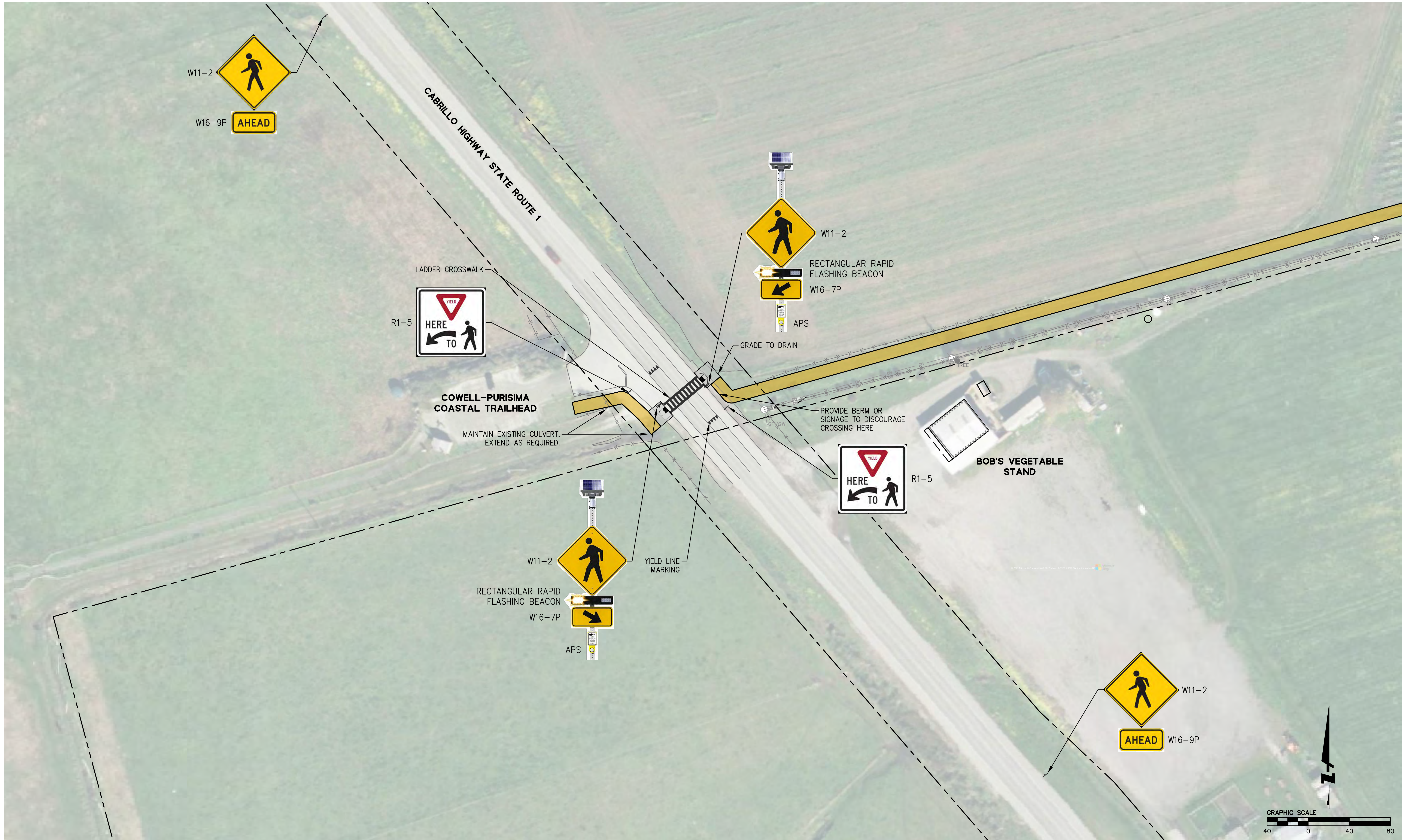


Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail Alignment Alternatives

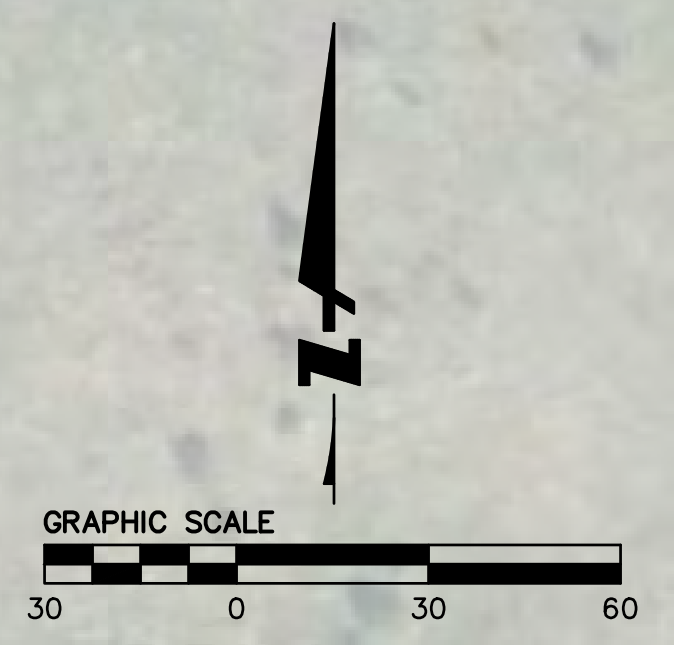
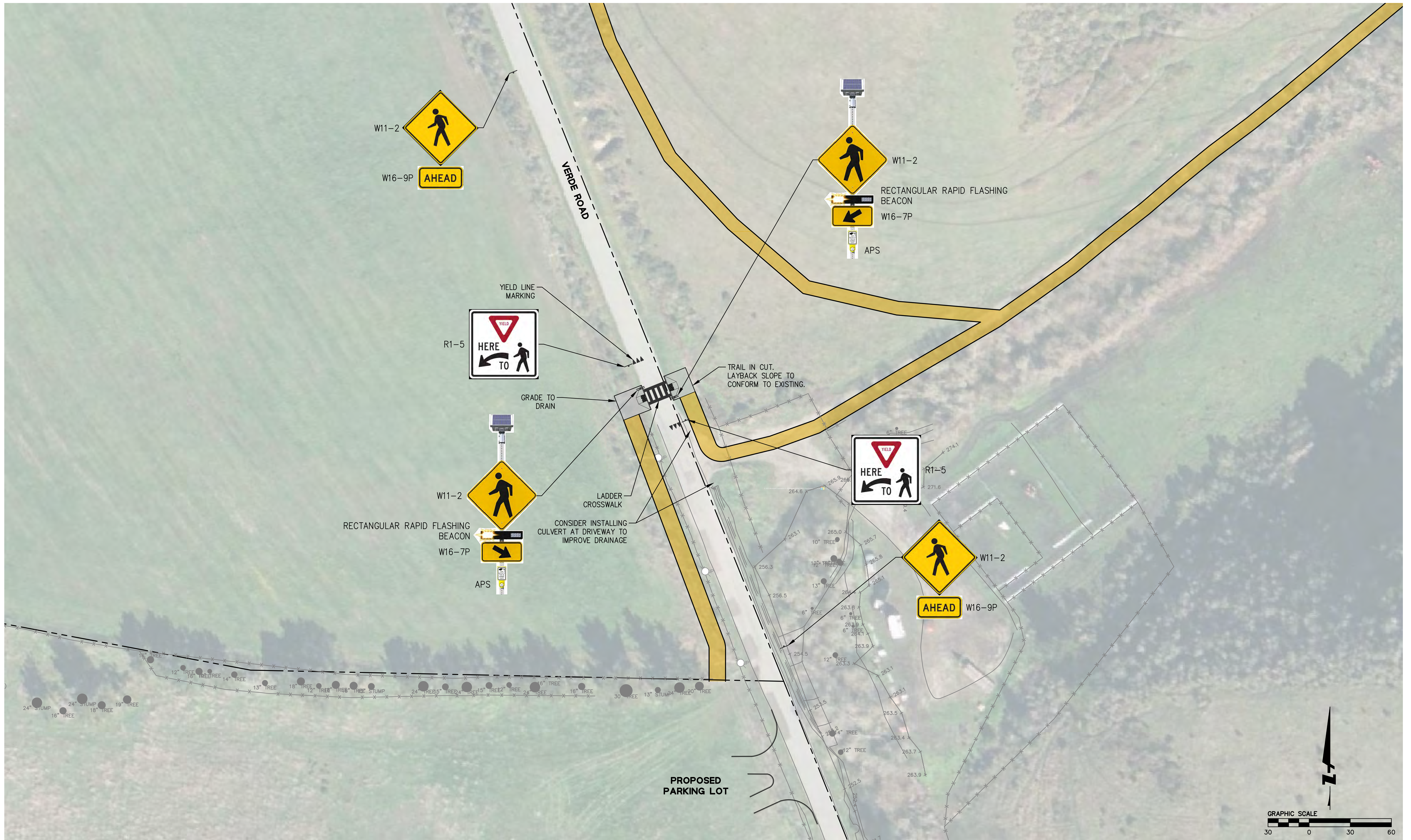
- Preferred Trail Alignment
- Alignment Linking Irish Ridge Road to Alternatives 1-3
- Alignment Alternative 1
- Alignment Alternative 2
- Alignment Alternative 3
- POST Trail Easement
- Improve Existing Road/Trail
- New Trail Construction
- South Cowell Property Boundary
- 1 Proposed Roadway Crossing
- B Connector Trail



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community







Purisima-to-the-Sea Parking Area & Trails Feasibility Study

Conceptual Design | Alternative A

Attachment 4



ANSI D (22"x34") SCALE: 1"=40'
TABLOID (11"x17") SCALE: 1"=80'
0 20 40 80

Purisima-to-the-Sea Parking Area & Trails Feasibility Study

Conceptual Design | Alternative B



Purisima-to-the-Sea Parking Area & Trails Feasibility Study

Conceptual Design | Preferred Alternative C



Attachment 5:

Purisima-to-the-Sea – Summary of Engagement Activities

May 24, 2023

Date	Meeting / Event
July 13, 2021	Purisima-to-the-Sea Neighbor Meeting
July 27, 2021	Coastal and Trail User Community Meeting
August 18, 2021	Peninsula Trails Team (Bay Area Ridge Trail, Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network, National Park Service, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, County of San Mateo)
September 28, 2021	Agricultural Community Onsite Meeting
November 4, 2021	Make It Main Street (Half Moon Bay community event)
November 9, 2021	Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council
December 1, 2021*	Purisima-to-the-Sea Public Open House and Special Meeting
December 15, 2021*	Purisima-to-the-Sea Revised Vision and Goals
December 18, 2021	Tabling at Coastside Farmers Market (Half Moon Bay)
February 23, 2022	Midcoast Community Council
March 15, 2022	Kings Mountain Association
May 14, 2022	College of San Mateo Farmer's Market
May 15, 2022	Purisima hike with Spanish speaking group
June 07, 2022	San Mateo County Farm Bureau consultation
June 29, 2022	Purisima projects open house (in-person)
July 12, 2022	Purisima projects open house (virtual)
July 27, 2022	Green Foothills staff
September 21, 2022	Trail User Stakeholder Meeting
September 29, 2022	Trail User Stakeholder Meeting
October 11, 2022*	Purisima-to-the-Sea Feasibility Study Trail Alignment and Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternatives
May 1-2, 2023	Neighbor Consultation
May 8, 2023	Partner Consultation
May 24, 2023*	Purisima-to-the-Sea Feasibility Study Findings and Recommendations

* Board or Committee Meeting

Attachment 6: Summary of Public Feedback Received to Date

Purisima-to-the-Sea Feasibility Study – Trail Alignment Options and Parking Area Conceptual Design Alternatives

May 24, 2023

Theme/Topic	General Feedback/Comments ¹
Visitor Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% are hikers, with a preference for 4 to 7-mile hikes. • 45% ride their bicycle or horse, with a preference for 10 to 15-mile rides. • 90% prefer a loop trail, as opposed to 7% preferring out and back, and 3% preferring a one-way with shuttle. • 75% stated they come to Purisima either on weekday mornings or afternoons; 50% visit on weekday mornings.
Destinations people are interested in seeing when coming to Purisima	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% prefer Purisima’s unique features. • 19% prefer the nearby inland vistas and viewpoints. • 15% prefer the coastal overlooks and beaches.
Priorities of survey respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked about the most important factors that should be considered in planning for the Purisima-to-the-Sea project, 50% prioritized biological site attributes, and 25% prioritized physical site attributes.
Preferred parking design alternative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At open house events, members of the public overwhelmingly supported a larger parking area to accommodate TDM strategies. • Survey respondents heavily favored standard and larger parking area sizes.
Impacts to Parking Lot Design and amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail Access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preference for accessing the trail without having to cross the drive aisle near the parking area’s drive entrance. • Shuttle Pick-Up/Drop-Off <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 50% reported that they would use a shuttle if their preferred parking area was full; 25% said that they may be interested. ○ Design should consider shuttle pick-up/drop-off area and parking quantity to accommodate those taking the shuttle in addition to parking for those using the trailhead. • Electric vehicle parking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public expressed interest in electric vehicle parking. • Flexible Parking Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 66% were open to flexible parking uses at different times. ○ Commenters noted that flexible parking areas would need to be clearly signed. Education would be necessary to inform the public.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bikes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ~50% indicated they would visit by bike ○ Interest in bike racks, bike lockers, and bike repair stations ○ Bike brushes to remove debris off tires and prevent spread of Sudden Oak Death ○ E-bike charging station • Equestrians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Majority of those parking with equestrian trailers would like to see at least 4 equestrian trailer spaces at the new lot. ○ ~66% prefer having a natural surface parking area and pathways ○ ~50% expressed interest in having hitching posts and mounting blocks available. ○ Preference for having equestrian parking on the outer ring in the parking alternatives • Parking / Parking Surface <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interest in loading zone adjacent to / back of parking spaces ○ Commenters note that the coastal areas lack storm water drainage and that the proposed parking should incorporate impervious surfaces into the design ○ If overflow lot is proposed, there was interest in natural surface for overflow parking. • Restroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interest in having a second vault toilet near equestrian parking. • Other amenities suggested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Availability of restrooms ○ Stroller and wheelchair rentals ○ Seating / rest area ○ Potable water / drinking fountains ○ Trash collection ○ Pay phone ○ Connections to other transit ○ Signboard w/ maps, showing nearby points of interest ○ Interpretive signage ○ WiFi ○ Cell phone charging ○ Wayfinding signage ○ Animal waste bags ○ Fire lanes / loading zones
Mid-Trail facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% expressed interest in a rest area / bench and 82% in a restroom as mid-trail (interior preserve) amenities. • 22% were interested in a picnic area as a mid-trail amenity • Hitching post, mounting block, and non-potable water trough received support from 8% of respondents

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over half of survey respondents identifying as equestrians would like to see a hitching post, mounting block, and water trough at a mid-trail location. • Backpack camping
Impacts to Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked what measures the District should consider to ensure compatibility of the existing conservation grazing and future recreational access, 50% supported providing on-site education about the value of the conservation grazing program. ~25% supported providing education on sharing the trail with cattle.
Interpretive Signage Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey respondents had a preference for interpretive signage topics discussing wildlife (20%), Native American history (19%) and Ecosystems (19%).
Trail Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in allowing multi-uses on trails • Interest in single-track bike trails
Highway Crossing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about at grade crossing • Suggestions for above grade or below grade crossings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Underpass study to accommodate wildlife crossing
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage available in English and Spanish
Additional comments / concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road safety and emergency vehicle access • Traffic circulation safety for vehicles traveling to and from parking lot • Concerns about preserve visitors trespassing over private property • Consider that Cowell Ranch Beach trailhead exceeds capacity on good weather days, this lot may be used as an overflow lot for beach use and other nearby open space destinations. • Ensure project is compatible with San Mateo Local Coastal Program. • Consider impacts to prime agricultural land, sensitive habitats, views. • Balance square footage of parking area with protecting habitat • Allow backpacking and reservation camping • Allow dog access • Real-time parking information • Clear signage, and enforcement of violations • Strong etiquette education program • Allow e-bike use • Limit equestrian use / limit bike use • Minimize infrastructure in parking areas

¹Feedback noted above is based on visitor survey and input received during engagement activities; percentages reflect respondent responses from the visitor survey.