



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-25-129
Meeting 25-29
October 22, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 4

AGENDA ITEM

Partnership Agreement with Grassroots Ecology to Complete the Bear Creek Stables Hillside Restoration

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Authorize the General Manager to enter into a partnership agreement with Grassroots Ecology for native plant installation and establishment with a term of two (2) years and a not-to-exceed contract amount of \$98,430 to complete the Bear Creek Stables Hillside Restoration consistent with the Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan and Bear Creek Stables Repair Plan.

SUMMARY

The General Manager recommends entering into two-year agreement with Grassroots Ecology, a local nonprofit, to implement Hillside Restoration at the Bear Creek Stables site in Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve. The work would commence in the fall of 2025 and extend through the summer of 2027. Project activities include planting approximately 1,200 native container plants and acorns, invasive species removal, and maintenance by Grassroots Ecology staff and volunteers, with assistance by the San Jose Conservation Corps. The two-year not-to-exceed contract amount is \$98,430.

DISCUSSION

On January 25, 2017, the Board of Directors (Board) adopted a resolution certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and approved a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) for the Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan (Preserve Plan), which includes both an early concept of the Bear Creek Stables Site Plan and the Alma College Cultural Landscape Rehabilitation Plan ([R-17-15, Minutes](#)). These actions established the framework for improving Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (Bear Creek Redwoods, Preserve), including addressing drainage issues, erosion, and long-term ecological health at the Bear Creek Stables site.

As part of this framework, the Preserve Plan identified the need to establish native vegetation on the hillside above Bear Creek Stables to reduce runoff impacts, improve soil stability, increase fire resiliency, and enhance habitat values ahead of future facility improvements. These recommendations were also included in the more recent Board-approved 2024 Bear Creek Stables Repair Plan. The hillside area above the level stables site was formally used as an open pasture, which resulted in large scale denuding and subsequent colonization by invasive plants.

Grassroots Ecology, a nonprofit with extensive experience in volunteer-based ecological restoration, has worked with the District since 2016 on invasive plant removal and native plant installation across multiple preserves, including Bear Creek Redwoods. Under this proposed partnership agreement, Grassroots Ecology would coordinate plant installation, invasive species removal, and maintenance activities to restore the hillside over a two-year period.

Grassroots Ecology is prepared to lead volunteer workdays, partner with the San Jose Conservation Corps for large-scale efforts and provide professional oversight to ensure successful plant establishment. Approximately 1,200 container plants and acorns would be installed over the first two years, followed by invasive plant management and plant maintenance to improve survival rates, if needed. District staff and contractors procured through a separate bidding process will implement tasks related to site maintenance, such as irrigation and erosion control measures, to complement the restoration work led by Grassroots Ecology.

District staff are working to ensure adequate access and parking for Grassroot Ecology volunteers, coordinating work with other contractors to avoid overlap, and managing site conditions to withstand changes that may affect planting success, such as heavy rainfall or drought. This agreement would advance the Board-approved site restoration goals, leverage community engagement, and build upon an established partnership with Grassroots Ecology.

FISCAL IMPACT

The current fiscal year budget includes \$58,000 for the Hillside Restoration (VP21-007). There are sufficient funds in the FY26 project budget to cover the recommended action and expenditures. Additional funds will be programmed in FY27 to cover the second year of work as part of the upcoming new budget process.

VP21-007 Hillside Restoration Above BCR Corrals	Prior Year Actuals	FY26 Adopted	FY27 Projected	FY28 Projected	Estimated Future Years	TOTAL
District Funded (Fund 40 GF Capital)	\$0	\$58,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$58,000
Total Budget:	\$0	\$58,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$58,000
Spent-to-Date (as of 10/8/2025):	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Encumbrances:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GRE Contract Costs:	\$0	(\$51,500)	(\$46,930)*	\$0	\$0	(\$98,430)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$0	\$6,500	(\$46,930)	\$0	\$0	(\$40,430)

* Additional funds will be programmed in FY27 as part of the upcoming budget process to cover the second year of work. In FY28 and FY29, plant maintenance resulting from this project will shift to departmental core/operating activities under Fund 10 - General Fund Operating.

This recommended action is not funded by Measure AA.

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

On January 25, 2017, the Board of Directors (Board) adopted a resolution certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report, approved a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and approved the Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan, including the Bear Creek Stables Site Plan and the Alma College Cultural Landscape Rehabilitation Plan ([R-17-15](#), [Minutes](#)).

On November 20, 2024, the Board authorized the continuation of the stables boarding utilizing a site plan option as modified by staff ([R-24-142](#), [Minutes](#)).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This project is consistent with the Board-approved Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan and Bear Creek Stables Repair Plan by implementing restoration actions to address erosion, drainage issues, and habitat improvements. The proposed work follows the Board-approved Integrated Pest Management Program and is in compliance with District policies. The project also aligns with the Open Space Maintenance and Restoration Program (State clearinghouse number 2021080129) by restoring native plant communities, engaging volunteers in stewardship, and providing long-term ecological benefits that support the Preserve's natural resource goals. All activities will be carried out in accordance with Best Management Practices and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting requirements adopted by the Board.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Board approval, the General Manager will sign a partnership agreement with Grassroots Ecology and begin implementing the restoration activities.

Attachments

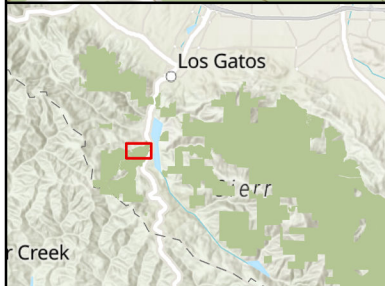
1. Restoration Site Map

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BCS Hillside Restoration

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Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane California III FIPS 0403 Feet

