



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## PROCUREMENT AGENDA ITEM

R-26-11  
Meeting 26-03  
January 28, 2026

## AGENDA ITEM 6

### AGENDA ITEM

Contract Amendment with Ascent Environmental for Permitting Support to Implement the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan

### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with Ascent Environmental for permitting support to implement the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan within the San Mateo Coastal Zone in the amount of \$60,009, bringing the contract base amount to a not-to-exceed total of \$202,184.
2. Authorize an additional 15% contingency in the amount of \$9,001 to cover unforeseen tasks and unanticipated issues beyond the current scope.
3. Authorize a separate contract allowance of \$10,000 for additional project management, application review and consultations with the permitting agency to avoid potential delays, if needed, bringing the not-to-exceed contract amount to \$262,511.

### DISCUSSION

On January 10, 2024, the Board of Directors (Board) approved a contract with Ascent Environmental (Ascent) to provide planning and environmental review services for the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan (CUMP) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation. The CUMP incorporates proposed new public access improvements and resource and land management activities, including recommended actions for the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area, Highway 35 Trail Crossing and Parking Expansion, Purisima Multimodal Access Implementation, and Irish Ridge Habitat Restoration (Project) at Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (Attachment 1). The District executed an original contract total of \$183,501, including a 15% contingency in the amount of \$21,326 and an allowance of \$20,000 for additional technical studies. Ascent is working with the District to complete the original scope of work and plans to bring the CUMP and CEQA document for Board review in Summer 2026.

To facilitate timely implementation of projects covered under the CUMP and meet the Measure AA 20-year Implementation Schedule, the District is expediting the development and submittal of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) through San Mateo County Planning Department to run concurrently during the ongoing CUMP and CEQA review process. Projects located within the

California Coastal Zone must comply with the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program consistent with the California Coastal Act. Portions of the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Verde Road Parking Area, Verde Road crossings, Irish Ridge habitat restoration areas and other project elements associated with the Purisima Multimodal Access Improvements are located within the Coastal Zone, therefore, their implementation are subject to a CDP. In consultation with the County of San Mateo Planning Department, the District and the County recognized an efficiency opportunity in submitting a comprehensive CDP application that incorporates all the mentioned project elements located within the Coastal Zone, instead of submitting multiple separate CDP applications. Once the CEQA document is certified, the CDP will be ready for final review and consideration by the County Planning Commission. Initiating this comprehensive CDP at this earlier stage may allow the District to obtain the permit by late 2026/early 2027 and start construction of the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail as early as Spring 2027.

Coastal regulations are designed to balance developments within the coastal zone with the protection of the coastal environment. The CDP application requires demonstration of consistency with the CEQA analyses performed for the Project. Ascent is the most qualified firm to work with the District to develop the CDP given the firm's familiarity with the Project and their current preparation of the CEQA document for the CUMP. Continuing work with Ascent would be the most effective and efficient approach to streamline the CDP process. In addition, Ascent possesses extensive experience working with Coastal Act policies, CDPs and obtaining approvals from the State Coastal Commission. Ascent also has experience coordinating with the Coastal Commission on public access projects in the Coastal Zone during the planning stage, such as with the Carmel Area State Parks General Plan for California State Parks.

The proposed contract amendment in the amount of \$60,009 expands the scope of work to include project management and environmental services for preparing and submitting the CDP, addressing County comments, and presenting the CDP before the San Mateo County Agricultural Advisory Committee and Planning Commission public hearing for their review and approval. Additionally, given that the CDP will cover multiple projects, the General Manager recommends authorizing a 15% contingency in the amount of \$9,001 and an allowance of \$10,000 for a total not-to-exceed new contract amount of \$262,511. The contingency amount would cover unanticipated tasks associated with the submittal of the CDP application packet, whereas the allowance would cover additional coordination and tasks to address County comments that may require revisions to the CDP application.

## **BUDGET / FISCAL IMPACT**

**The current fiscal year budget for project MAA03-012 Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan contains:**

- ☐ sufficient funds.
- ☒ insufficient funds; the next quarterly budget update will include a reallocation of unspent funds from other budgets to cover for this expenditure.
- ☐ insufficient funds; approval of this item requires a fiscal year budget augmentation.
- ☒ future fiscal year budgets will include additional funds to complete the contracted work.

**Measure AA**

- ☐ No, this contract is not part of a Measure AA project.
- ☒ Yes, this contract is part of a Measure AA project.

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 life-to-date project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

<b>Measure AA Portfolio #MAA03 Purisima Creek Redwoods: Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing</b>	
Portfolio Reallocation Amount:	\$13,965,920
Grant Income (through FY29):	\$342,951
Interest Income Allocation:	\$450,000
Fund 40 Allocation:	\$7,661,000
<b>Total Portfolio Allocation:</b>	<b>\$22,419,871</b>
03-001 Purisima Uplands Lot Line Adjustment and Property Transfer	(\$425,113)
03-002 Purisima Upland Site Clean Up and Soil Remediation	(\$801,610)
03-003 Purisima Creek Fence Construction	(\$169,190)
03-004 Harkins Bridge Replacement	(\$516,917)
03-005 Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area - Feasibility Study	(\$609,818)
03-006 South Cowell Upland Land Conservation	(\$6,216,270)
03-007 Purisima-to-the-Sea Habitat Enhancement & Water Supply Improvement Plan	(\$270,867)
03-008 Rieser-Nelson Land Purchase	(\$16,715)
03-009 Purisima-to-the-Sea Parking	(\$6,620,856)
03-010 Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail	(\$1,381,314)
03-011 Lobitos Creek Fisheries Restoration	(\$1,779,549)
03-012 Purisima Preserve Comprehensive Use and Management Plan*	(\$231,286)
03-013 Hwy 35 Multi-Use Trail Crossing & Parking Implementation	(\$3,062,352)
<b>Total Projected Expenditures (life of project):</b>	<b>(\$22,101,857)</b>
<b>Portfolio Balance Remaining (proposed):</b>	<b>\$318,014</b>

\* This amount includes projected expenditures with future budget adjustments.

**PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND SELECTION**

Ascent was originally selected through a comprehensive request for proposal (RFP) process. On September 8, 2023, staff issued a RFP via Periscope, posted the RFP on the District's website, and sent direct emails to a list of qualified firms. A pre-proposal site tour was held on September 21, 2023, attended by representatives from four firms. Three firms submitted proposals by the October 5, 2023 deadline. Evaluation criteria were determined prior to the release of the RFP that included the quality of proposal, implementation approach and expertise. After a thorough review of all proposals, Ascent was deemed as the most qualified and best suited for the project at a fair and reasonable price.

Consultant	Location	Proposed Fee
Ascent Environmental	Half Moon Bay	\$142,175
AECOM	Sacramento	\$149,678
SWCA	Half Moon Bay	\$149,960

## PRIOR BOARD ACTION SUPPORTING THE PROJECT

**January 10, 2024 Board Meeting:** Award of Contract with Ascent Environmental to provide Planning and Environmental Review (CEQA) Services for the Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve Comprehensive Use and Management Plan ([R-24-07](#), [meeting minutes](#))

**August 26, 2025 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting:** Overview of the Proposed Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve - Comprehensive Use and Management Plan, Including New Public Access and Restoration Projects ([R-25-110](#), [meeting minutes](#))

**October 22, 2025 Board Meeting:** Consideration of the proposed Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve - Comprehensive Use and Management Plan, which includes New Public Access and Habitat Restoration Projects, as the project description to initiate CEQA Environmental Review ([R-25-133](#), [meeting minutes](#))

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. In addition, public email notices were sent to interested parties of the Preserve and Coastal interested parties.

## CEQA COMPLIANCE

This contract amendment is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Environmental review for the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Connectors Trails, Trail Crossings, Parking Areas, Irish Ridge Restoration activities and other project elements are currently under development as part of the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan CEQA review.

## NEXT STEPS

Pending Board approval, the General Manager will execute a contract amendment with Ascent to initiate the permitting work for the Project.

Attachment: Coastal Development Permit Projects Map

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