



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

# Memorandum

DATE: December 2nd, 2014

MEMO TO: Planning and Natural Resources Committee

THROUGH: Stephen E. Abbors, General Manager 

FROM: Aaron Hébert, Contingent Project Manager

SUBJECT: Car Removal at Long Ridge Open Space Preserve

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## SUMMARY

The Board approved, as part of the FY2014-15 Action Plan, the removal of abandoned cars at Long Ridge Open Space Preserve. The project is proposed to be 'delayed' in the Midyear Action Plan update to next FY because woodrat nests were discovered in the cars, requiring an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration of the proposed project. The purpose of this memorandum is to update the Planning and Natural Resources Committee on the overall project and the anticipated release of a Request for Proposal for a CEQA consultant's services.

## BACKGROUND

Beginning in the 1970s, roughly twenty (20) cars were rolled off the side of the hill in Long Ridge OSP, located in Santa Cruz County directly off Highway 9. Most of the cars were stripped of all parts before being abandoned, i.e. just the chassis are left. Open grasslands permitted these cars to freefall far down the hillside; the cars are located anywhere from 150'-400' down slope from the ridge on slopes that range from 35% to 65%. These cars are partially embedded in soil and in the Douglas fir-oak woodland forests, which have encroached on the grasslands since the 1970s (as is evident from older aerial photographs).

### Exploration of Alternatives

Staff analyzed three methods of removal. The first was to use a Skyline Yarder, a piece of timber harvesting equipment, in order to cable across the canyon and lift the wreckage out to minimize disturbance. Anchor points across the canyon were minimal, the lift gained was modest (would require dragging the cars), significant tree removal would be required, and the seven plus staging spots added to the total time and cost of the project, estimated at \$30,000, not including disposal costs.

The District has removed individual cars with helicopters in the past. Significant tree removal would be required to properly attach to the chassis and they may break apart in the air. Costs were estimated at \$24,000, not including disposal costs.

The final method analyzed was to winch the cars out using a bulldozer. This involves the direct skidding of the chassis through the forest and steep grasslands. Minimal tree removal would be required and would be done only as needed during operations. Post-operation erosion control would be required. No sensitive grassland species were identified by staff during initial field work of the site. Costs of this method were estimated at \$15,000.

Each method analyzed requires disturbing the local environment. The winch system is the safest, most cost effective and certain method, and minimizes lasting impacts (tree removal). Any disturbances to the slopes would be ephemeral and can be mitigated through Best Management Practices for erosion control adopted by the District.

Staff's initial analysis suggests impacts to woodrats, steelhead, and migratory birds would need to be analyzed, along with any other potential environmental impacts, through the CEQA process.

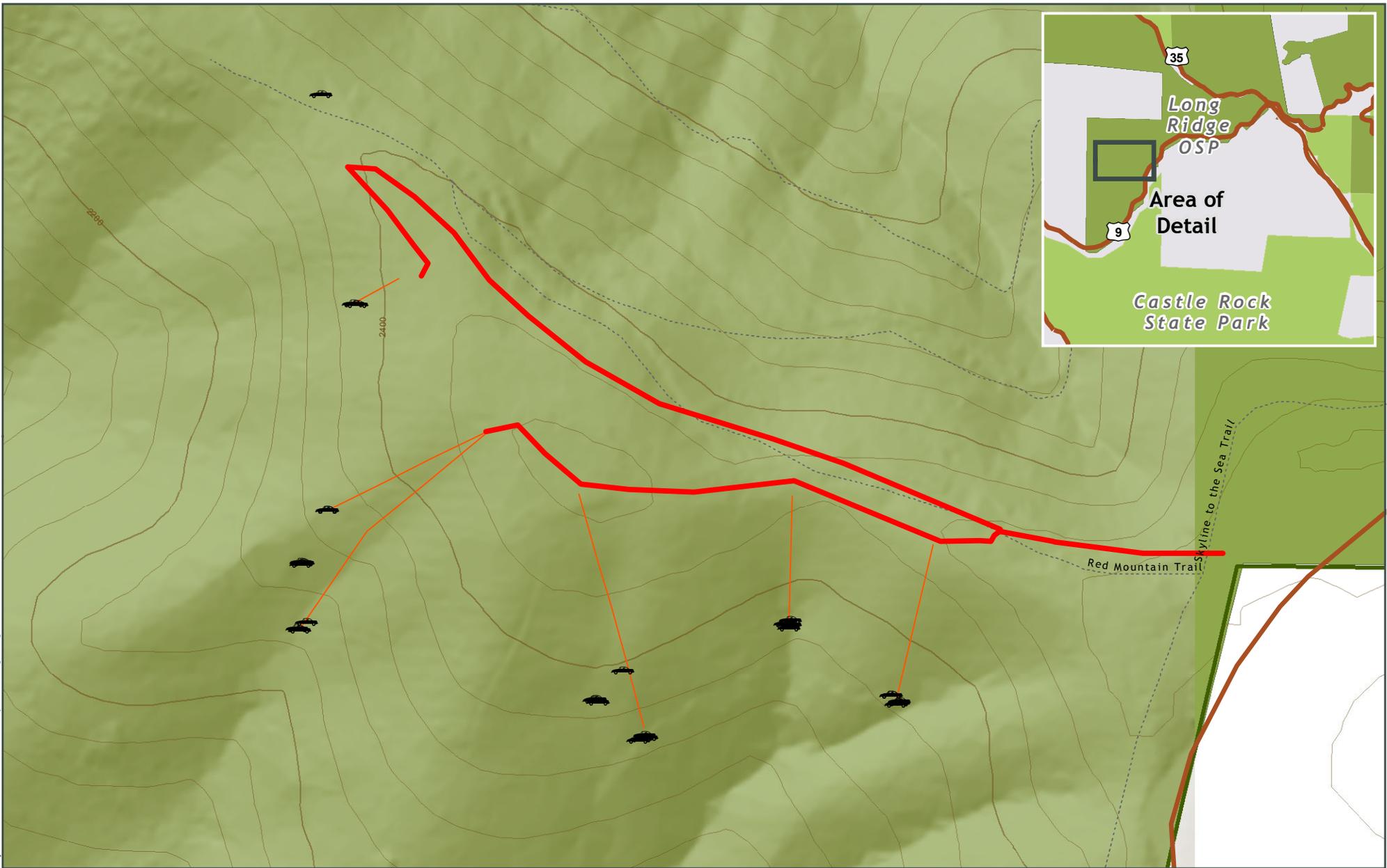
### **Next Steps**

A Request for Proposal will be issued for CEQA services to four consultant firms who were qualified under the Request for Proposals & Qualifications issued by the District on July 10, 2013 to perform services in five categories, including California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) expertise. This request is primarily focused on CEQA expertise but may draw on other expertise as necessary (erosion control in particular).

The CEQA analysis and construction costs are estimated to cost around \$20,000 and \$15,000 respectively. If either of those contracts exceeds \$25,000, the contract would be brought to the Board for approval. Disposal costs will vary based on the price of steel at recycling facilities and may be minimal. Permitting and construction is estimated to occur in FY2015-16.

#### **Attachments:**

1. Car Removal Map
2. Aerial View



### Attachment A: Long Ridge Car Removal

-  MROSD Preserves
-  Other Protected Open Space or Park Lands
-  Car
-  Towline
-  Access Route

This map was used by \_\_\_\_\_  
at the (date) meeting to  
communicate \_\_\_\_\_.

Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District  
(MROSD)

November, 2014



Attachment 2: Aerial View



Image Landsat  
© 2014 Google  
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO

Google earth

Imagery Date: 2/23/2014 37°15'06.96" N 122°08'18.93" W elev 2355 ft eye alt 2976 ft