



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PROCUREMENT AGENDA ITEM

R-26-152
Meeting 26-25
October 14, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 7

AGENDA ITEM

Contract Amendment with Ascent Environmental for Environmental Consulting Services for 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 additional environmental consulting services for the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan in the amount of \$39,969, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount to \$340,800.
2. Authorize an additional 15% contingency in the amount of \$5,995 to cover unforeseen tasks and unanticipated issues beyond the current scope, bringing the not-to-exceed contract amount to \$346,795.

DISCUSSION

Background

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) is developing a Comprehensive Use and Management Plan (CUMP) for Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (Purisima, Preserve) with management prescriptions for the Preserve's natural resources; historic, cultural, and tribal resources; aesthetic resources; public use and access; and operations and maintenance activities. The CUMP incorporates multiple Measure AA-funded public access and habitat restoration projects, including the Purisima-to-the-Sea (Verde Road) Parking Area, Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Highway 35 Multi-use Crossing and North Ridge Parking Expansion, Purisima Multimodal Access Implementation, and Irish Ridge Restoration, while consolidating and documenting ongoing use and management activities at Purisima (refer to Attachment 1).

The District entered into a contract with Ascent Environmental (Ascent) in 2024 for environmental review services to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Purisima CUMP. The District executed the original contract for \$183,501, which included a 15% contingency in the amount of \$21,326 and an allowance of \$20,000 for additional technical studies. On January 28, 2026, the Board approved a contract amendment expanding Ascent's scope to include the development of the San Mateo County Coastal Development Permit (CDP) application, increasing the contract total to \$262,511. On March 25,

2026, the Board approved a second contract amendment to address District-requested updates to the CEQA project description, bringing the total contract amount to \$300,831.

Additional Work to Complete the CEQA Phase of the CUMP

The CEQA document (a Mitigated Negative Declaration) is nearing completion, with public circulation of the document anticipated in early October. A total contract amendment in the amount of \$45,964 is requested to fund the following additional tasks to complete the CEQA phase of the CUMP.

1. Updating the description of the new public access projects as follows:

- *Cellular Infrastructure for the Pilot Shuttle Program* – to successfully implement a three-year pilot shuttle program, cellular service is needed at the Purisima Creek Trailhead to improve communications for both visitors and shuttle operators. As cellular service is not currently available, staff provided Ascent with a range of small scale infrastructure options for bringing cellular service to this trailhead for inclusion in the CEQA analysis.
- *Infrastructure and Tree Removal Updates for New Parking and Trails* – as designs progressed for the Verde Road Parking Area and Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, staff requested that Ascent incorporate additional culverts necessary to construct the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and found opportunities to reduce the overall tree removal for parking and trail construction.
- *Additional Data Analysis* - staff worked with Ascent to provide more relevant examples of similar pedestrian highway crossing infrastructure to discuss in the transportation analysis for the proposed Highway 1 pedestrian crossing for a comparison analysis.

2. Additional Coordination with District Staff and Board

Additional coordination meetings with the Project Team will likely be necessary to reach CEQA certification. Other meetings that may be necessary in the months ahead include Board briefings and additional meetings to review the findings and responses to public comments.

3. ADA Web Accessible Version of the CEQA Document

The contract amendment includes funding for the creation of an ADA Web Accessible version of the final CEQA document that would be uploaded into the District's publicly available Laserfiche file system. Per new federal law, special districts are mandated to ensure their web content is ADA accessible by April 2028. These additional services include: document tagging, formatting adjustments, alternative text for figures and graphics, and other modifications necessary to provide compliance with the accessibility standards.

Once the CUMP CEQA document is certified by the Board, the District will be able to secure permits to construct the new public access improvements. Pending no other issues or permitting delays, construction of the first project may begin as early as Spring 2027.

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 based on the latest expenditure projections. On June 14, 2023 (R-23-67), the Board reallocated \$6.4 million more to Measure AA Portfolio #03 from other completed portfolios to reduce the funding gap. This Measure AA portfolio contains an unfunded amount anticipated to be supported through a combination of future portfolio reallocation requests, grants, partnership funding, interest income allocations, value engineering and Fund 40 General Fund Capital monies.

Measure AA Portfolio #MAA03 Purisima Creek Redwoods: Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing	
Portfolio Reallocation:	\$13,965,920
Grant Income (through FY29):	\$2,577,561
Interest Income Allocation:	\$450,000
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$16,993,481
03-001 Purisima Uplands Lot Line Adjustment and Property Transfer	(\$425,113)
03-002 Purisima Upland Site Clean Up and Soil Remediation	(\$1,372,948)
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 and Water Supply Improvement Plan	(\$270,867)
03-008 Rieser-Nelson Land Purchase	(\$16,715)
03-009 Purisima-to-the-Sea Parking	(\$8,346,932)
03-010 Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail	(\$2,066,861)
03-011 Lobitos Creek Fisheries Restoration	\$0
03-012 Purisima Preserve Comprehensive Use and Management Plan*	(\$377,540)
03-013 Highway 35 Multi-Use Trail Crossing and Parking Implementation	(\$4,341,573)
Total Projected Expenditures (life of project):	(\$24,730,744)

Portfolio Balance Remaining (proposed):	(\$7,737,263)
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* This amount includes projected expenditures with future budget adjustments.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND SELECTION

Ascent was selected to perform environmental consulting services for the Purisima CUMP 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 the 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](#))

January 28, 2026 Board Meeting: Contract Amendment with Ascent Environmental for Permitting Support to Implement the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan ([R-26-11](#), [meeting minutes](#))

March 25, 2026 Board Meeting: Contract Amendment with Ascent Environmental for Additional Work to Complete Environmental Review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan ([R-26-36](#), [meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

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 is underway as part of the Purisima CUMP CEQA review.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Board approval, the General Manager will execute a contract amendment with Ascent to complete the CEQA work for the CUMP. Following CEQA certification and Project approval, the District will seek permit approval for new proposed projects located within the coastal zone from the County of San Mateo for a CDP and Planned Agricultural District permit (PAD). Additional permits required by the County (i.e. building, grading) for parking area and trails projects would be issued following CDP/PAD approval. Construction for each project will commence after permitting is complete. General timelines for subsequent permitting and construction phases are included in the table below by project.

Project	CDP/PAD*	Additional Permitting	Construction/ Implementation
Highway 35 Multi-use Crossing and Parking Expansion	N/A	Fall 2026 – Spring 2027	2027 – 2028
Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail	Spring 2027	Spring – Summer 2027	2027 – 2029
Verde Road Trailhead and Parking Area	Spring 2027	Spring – Summer 2027	2028
Pilot Shuttle Program	Spring 2027	TBD	TBD
Irish Ridge Habitat Restoration Plan	Spring 2027	N/A	Fall 2027 – Fall 2029

**Projects requiring a CDP and PAD permit will be submitted under a single application, per the recommendations of San Mateo County staff.*

Attachment:

1. CUMP Project Locations Map

Responsible Department Head:

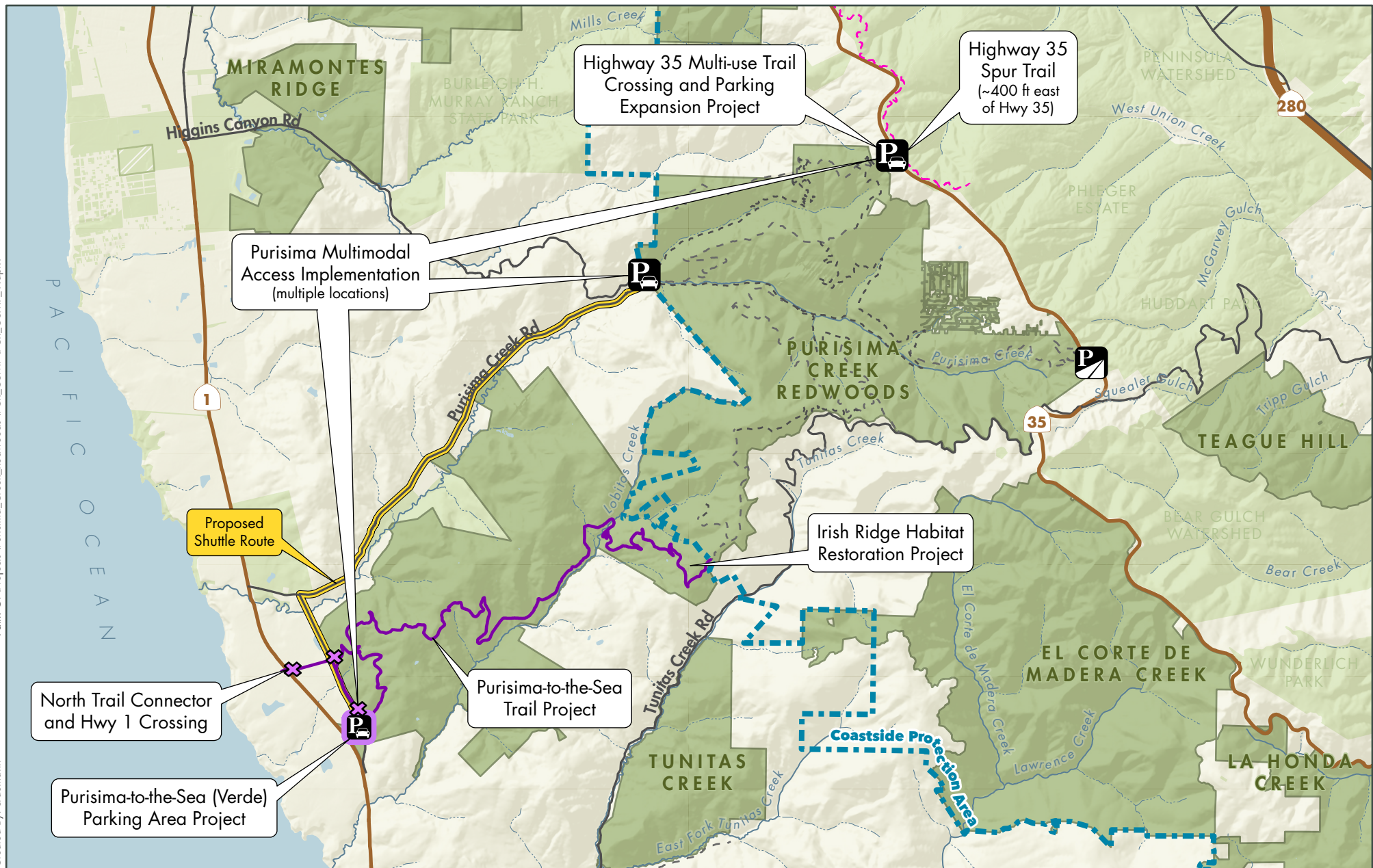
Jane Mark, AICP, Planning Manager

Prepared by/Contact person:

Brittany Wheatman, AICP, Planner II

Graphics prepared by:

Christian Raumann, Senior Technologist



New Project Sites – Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan

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| Midpen preserves | Existing parking area | Future Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail |
| Other protected lands | Proposed parking area | Future road crossing locations |
| Closed areas | Existing trails | Bay Area Ridge Trail Extension |

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
3/9/2026



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