



# MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

## Special Board Meeting

La Honda Creek Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study  
La Honda Public Access Working Group (PAWG)

October 21, 2020



# Agenda

- 🌿 Introductory remarks
- 🌿 Presentation
  - Project background
  - PAWG background and process
  - PAWG assessment, discussion, decisionmaking and recommendation
  - PNR comments and feedback
- 🌿 Board questions
- 🌿 Public comments
- 🌿 Board discussion and action





# General Manager's Recommendations

1a. Direct the General Manager to proceed with feasibility studies of the parking, trailhead, and public access recommendations as presented by the La Honda Public Access Working Group, with any modifications requested by the Board of Directors.

**OR**

1b. Direct the Planning and Natural Resources Committee or La Honda Public Access Working Group to reconvene to respond to Board of Directors requests for additional information.

**AND if Recommendation (1a) is approved, either:**

2a. Determine that the La Honda Public Access Working Group has fulfilled its charge and direct the General Manager to dissolve the group and issue a special recognition for their dedication and contributions, and keep members on the project notification list to solicit their individual input as part of future Committee and Board meetings on the project.

**OR**

2b. Direct the General Manager to return to the Board for consideration and approval of a revised La Honda Public Access Working Group charter, purpose, and term to extend their work through the Feasibility Study Phase.

**AND if Recommendation (2a) is approved:**

3. Approve the draft March 5, 2020 La Honda Public Access Working Group meeting summary since the Working Group will no longer meet as a body to approve their last meeting summary.





# Project Background



*Photo credit  
Xucan Zhou*



# District Jurisdiction and La Honda Creek Preserve





# Vision Plan and Measure AA priorities

5

## La Honda Creek:

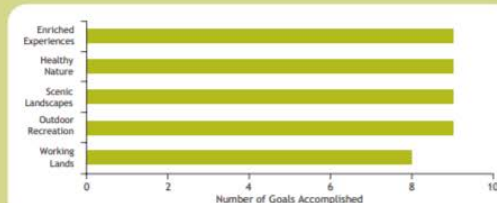
Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration, and Conservation Grazing Projects



Open Upper Area; provide biking/hiking trails, dog access, staging areas. Develop Red Barn area as educational destination. Plan new activities such as night hikes, community events. Provide loop & connector trails. Improve habitat for rare species. Expand conservation grazing to manage grasslands; improve fencing, cattle watering methods to protect streams.



### Goals Accomplished by This Action



Top  
25

## 5 La Honda Creek: Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects

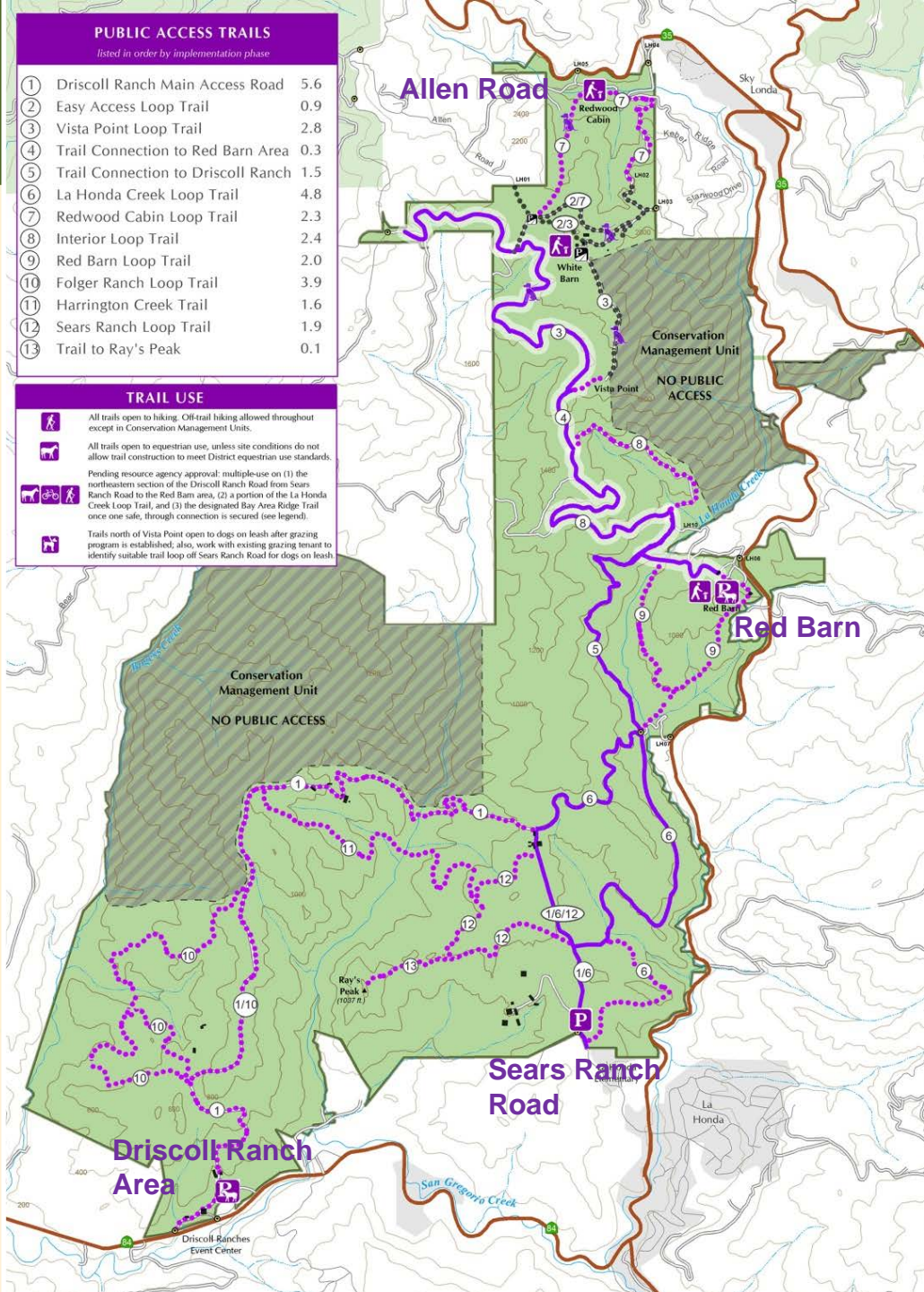
Open upper half of the preserve to public; provide biking/hiking/equestrian trails, dog access, and staging areas. Provide loop & connector trails. Restore habitat for rare species. Improve fencing, corrals, and water systems to reintroduce conservation grazing. **\$11,733,000**





# 2012 Master Plan

- ❖ Four distributed parking areas
- ❖ Connection between upper and lower areas
- ❖ Multiple trail loops and easy access trails
- ❖ Bay Area Ridge Trail alignment
- ❖ Hiking and equestrian use
- ❖ Bicycle and dog use (on select trails, contingent on resource agency approval)







# Future Bike and Dog Access

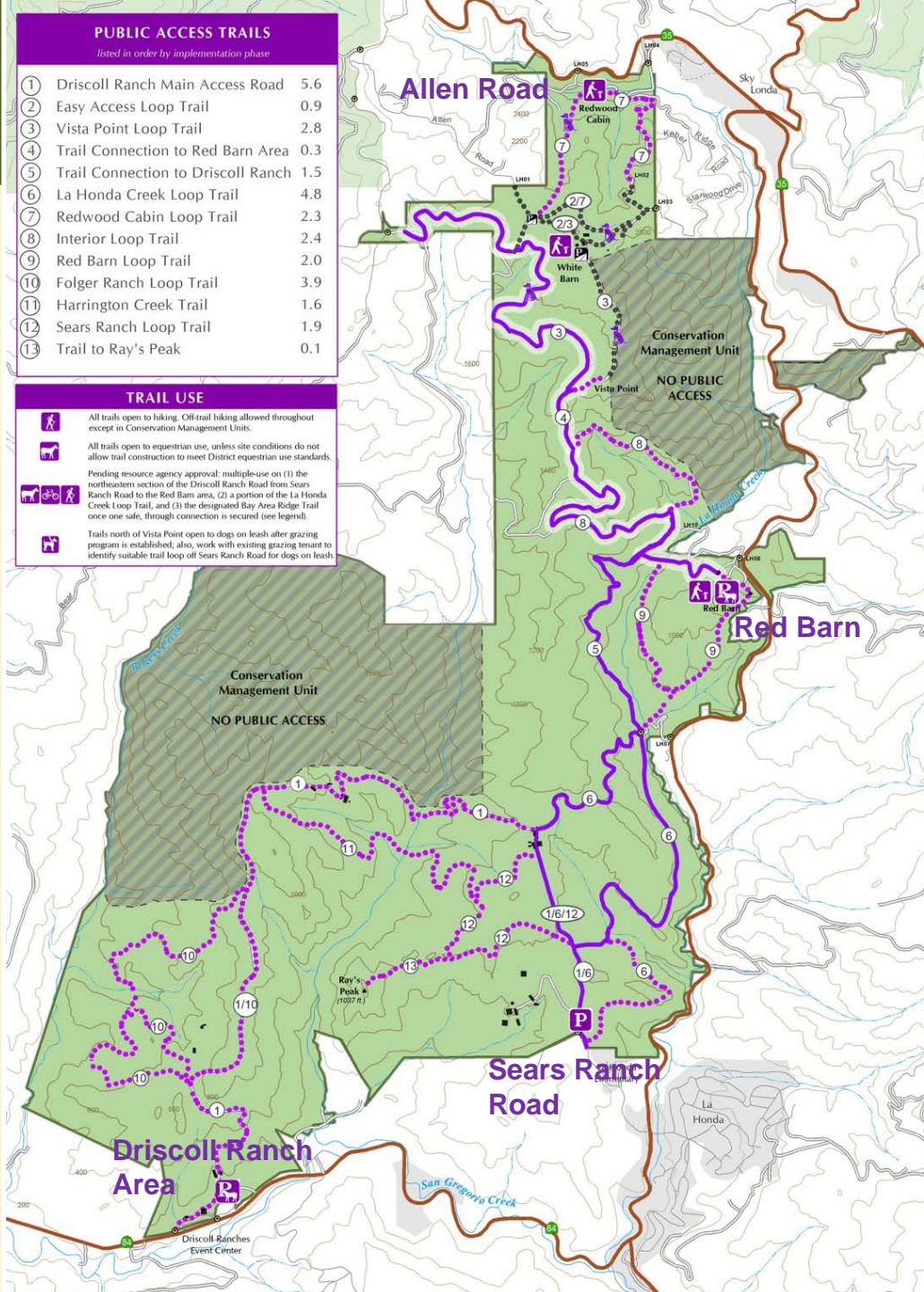
## Dog

- Trails north of the vista point in northern La Honda Creek OSP
- Loop trail near the Sears Ranch Road entrance

## Bicycle

- Sears Ranch Road trailhead to the northeastern boundary of the Driscoll Ranch
- Trail west of La Honda Creek in the northeastern corner of the Driscoll Ranch area to establish a loop trail
- Northeastern boundary of the Driscoll Ranch area to the Red Barn
- The Bay Area Ridge Trail alignment

\*Contingent on resource agency approval



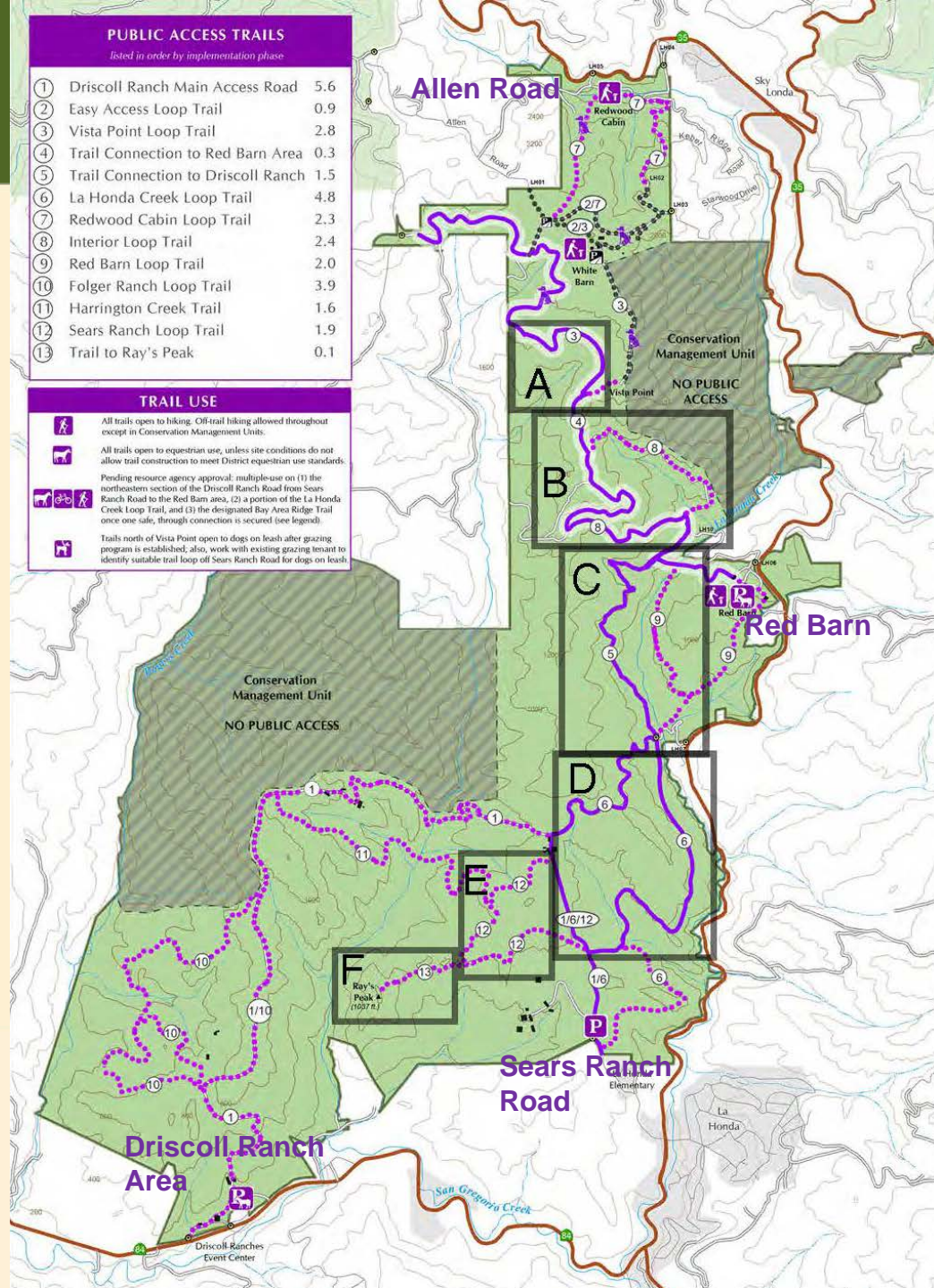




# Future Trail Work

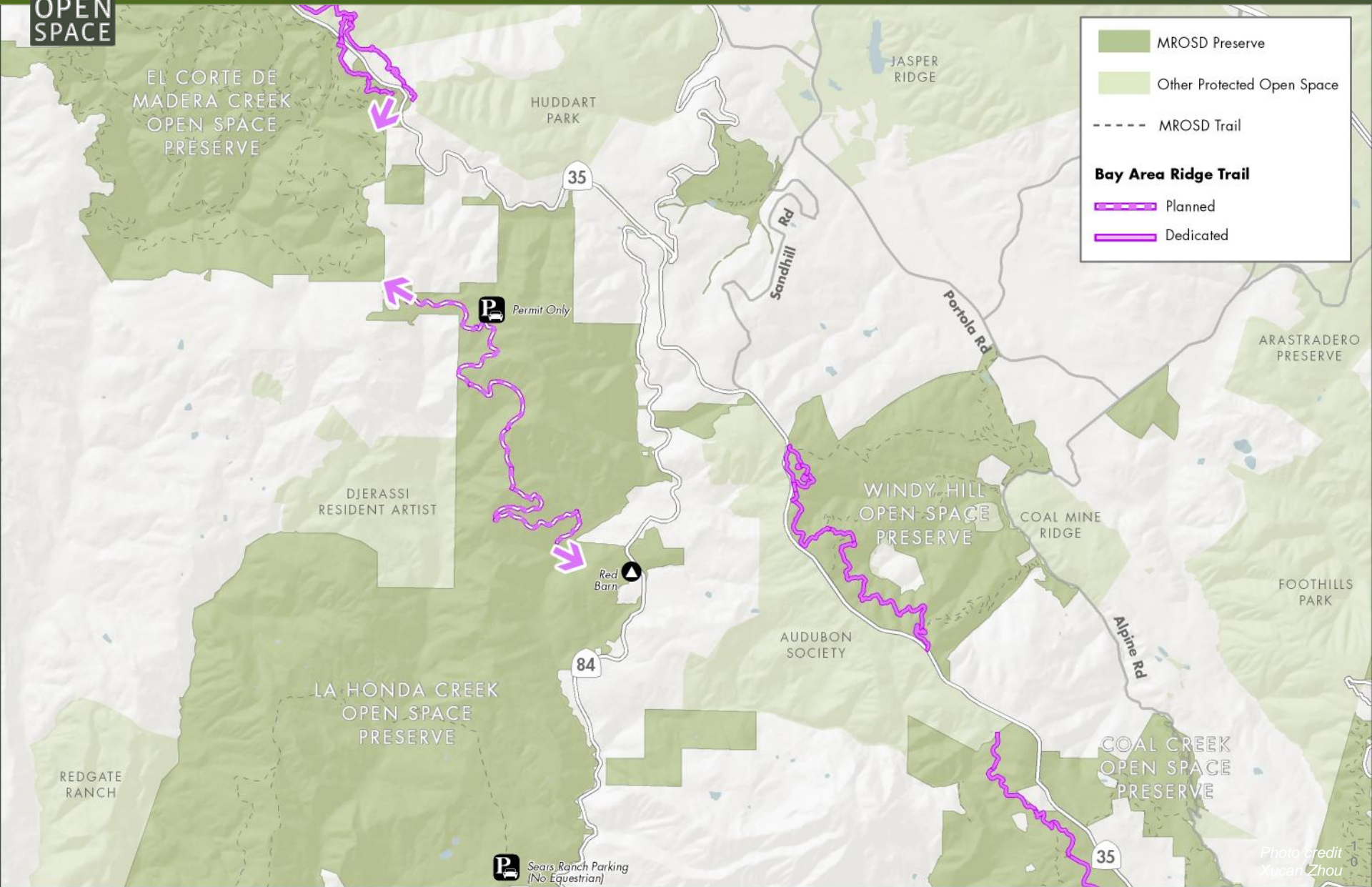
PUBLIC ACCESS TRAILS		
Listed in order by implementation phase		
①	Driscoll Ranch Main Access Road	5.6
②	Easy Access Loop Trail	0.9
③	Vista Point Loop Trail	2.8
④	Trail Connection to Red Barn Area	0.3
⑤	Trail Connection to Driscoll Ranch	1.5
⑥	La Honda Creek Loop Trail	4.8
⑦	Redwood Cabin Loop Trail	2.3
⑧	Interior Loop Trail	2.4
⑨	Red Barn Loop Trail	2.0
⑩	Folger Ranch Loop Trail	3.9
⑪	Harrington Creek Trail	1.6
⑫	Sears Ranch Loop Trail	1.9
⑬	Trail to Ray's Peak	0.1

TRAIL USE	
	All trails open to hiking. Off-trail hiking allowed throughout except in Conservation Management Units.
	All trails open to equestrian use, unless site conditions do not allow trail construction to meet District equestrian use standards.
	Pending resource agency approval: multiple-use on (1) the northeastern section of the Driscoll Ranch Road from Sears Ranch Road to the Red Barn area, (2) a portion of the La Honda Creek Loop Trail, and (3) the designated Bay Area Ridge Trail once one safe, through connection is secured (see legend).
	Trails north of Vista Point open to dogs on leash after grazing program is established; also, work with existing grazing tenant to identify suitable trail loop of Sears Ranch Road for dogs on leash.





# Regional Trail Connections – Bay Area Ridge Trail







# CHP Collision and Injury Data 2009-2019

**Highway 84 from Hwy 35 to Hwy I (15-mile segment) – 20.5 collisions per mile**

# Collisions	# Fatalities	# Severe Injuries
308	12	36

**Highway 35 from Hwy 92 to Hwy 9 (26-mile segment) – 43.3 collisions per mile**

# Collisions	# Fatalities	# Severe Injuries
1126	23	83

# Prior Planning Work

- ✿ Red Barn site planning process initiated 2016
- ✿ Technical studies and analyses
- ✿ Conceptual designs
- ✿ Community, Committee and Board meetings in 2017 and 2018
- ✿ June 12, 2018 Board directed General Manager to put Red Barn project on hold to form a working group and evaluate access alternatives







# PAWG Background



# Formation of PAWVG

- ✿ June 12, 2018 Board directed General Manager to put Red Barn project on hold to form a working group and evaluate alternatives
- ✿ Development of the composition and formation process of the working group
- ✿ PAWVG formed on June 26, 2019
- ✿ PAWVG kicked off on August 22, 2019

Member Type	Member
Board Director liaison	Larry Hassett, Ward 6
Board Director liaison	Curt Riffle, Ward 4
La Honda Area Representative	Ari Delay
La Honda Area Representative	Karl Lusebrink
La Honda Area Representative	Kathleen Moazed
Ward 1 Stakeholder	Melany Moore
Ward 2 Stakeholder	Art Heinrich
Ward 3 Stakeholder	Willie Wool
Ward 4 Stakeholder	Sandy Sommer
Ward 5 Stakeholder	Andie Reed
Ward 6 Stakeholder	Lou Bordi
Ward 6 Stakeholder	Barbara Hooper
Ward 7 Stakeholder	Denise Philips





# PAWG membership



Barbara Hooper, Chair  
*Ward 6*



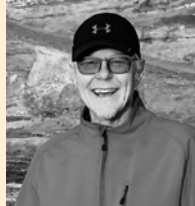
Ari Delay  
*La Honda Area Rep*



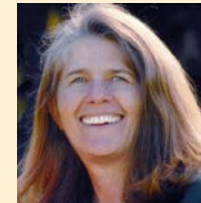
Willie Wool  
*Ward 3*



Denise Phillips, Vice-Chair  
*Ward 7*



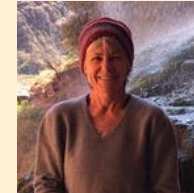
Karl Lusebrink  
*La Honda Area Rep*



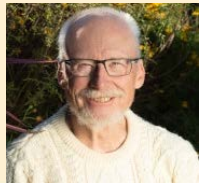
Sandy Sommer  
*Ward 4*



Kathleen Moazed  
*La Honda Area Rep*



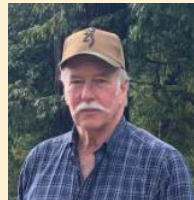
Andie Reed  
*Ward 5*



Larry Hassett  
*Ward 6 Board liaison*



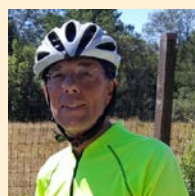
Melany Moore  
*Ward 1*



Lou Bordi  
*Ward 6*



Curt Riffle  
*Ward 4 Board liaison*



Art Heinrich  
*Ward 2*



# Purpose of Forming the PAWG

- Forum for Board members, community and stakeholders to interact and discuss the project
- Local, community perspectives
- District-wide, ward, user group perspectives
- Input to project team, Planning and Natural Resources Committee, and Board on parking and trailhead access alternatives that meet project goals



# Responsibilities and Charge of the PAWVG

- ✿ Work with and provide input to District staff
- ✿ Understand goals, opportunities, constraints, challenges
- ✿ Evaluate alternative access options that meet project goals and objectives
- ✿ Represent Board, community, and stakeholder interests and values
- ✿ Provide a forum for Board members to work with Working Group members
- ✿ Provide feedback to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee







# La Honda Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study

## Project Goals and Objectives

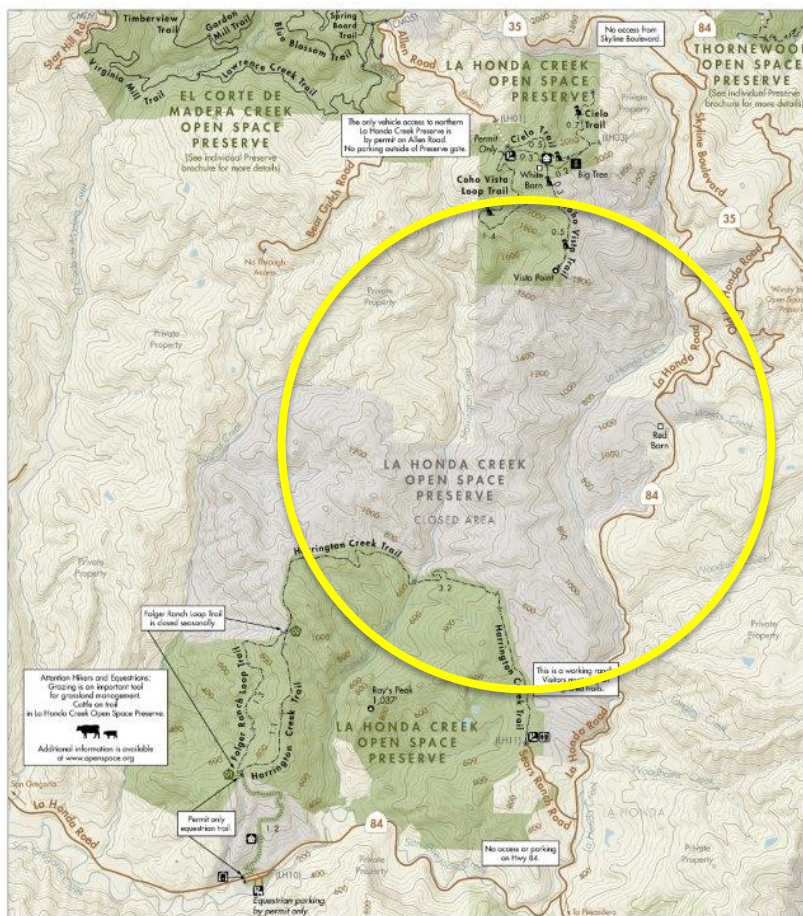
- ✿ Establish new public access in the central portion of the Preserve.
- ✿ Design elements to reflect the rural character of the site and the Red Barn.
- ✿ Provide safe public access.
- ✿ Balance public access with grazing activities.
- ✿ Include amenities that facilitate environmental education.
- ✿ Protect scenic views of and from the site.







# Middle Closed Area of Preserve



**La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve**

For More Information  
Visit [www.openspace.org](http://www.openspace.org)  
or call (650) 691-1200

**Map Legend**

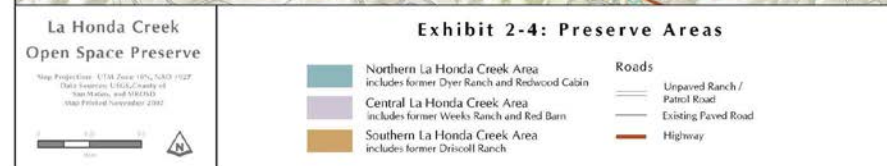
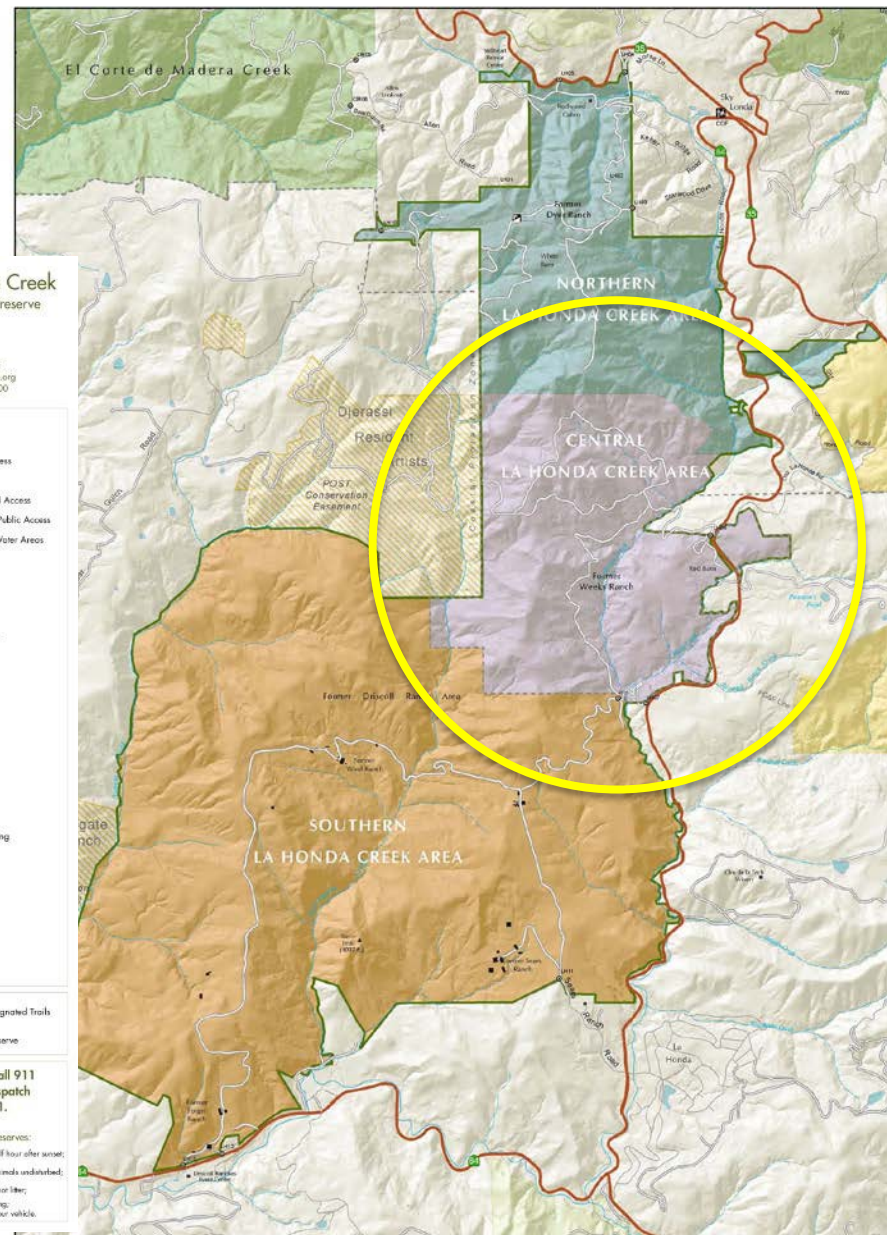
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Preserve
- Closed Area - No Public Access
- Other Public Land
- Other Public Land - Restricted Access
- Private or leased land - No Public Access
- No Public Entry in Midpen Water Areas
- Road
- Vehicle Driveway
- Equestrian Only
- Hiking, Equestrian
- Hiking, Bicycling, Equestrian
- Trail Junction
- Numbered Trail Junction
- Gate (G)
- Parking Lot
- Equestrian Parking
- Restroom
- Point of Interest
- Notable Flora
- Tunnel
- Other Public or Private Building
- Residence

Dogs on leash Permitted on Designated Trails

Bicycles not permitted in this Preserve

**In case of emergency, call 911 or 24-hour Ranger Dispatch at (650) 968-4411.**

For your safety, and the protection of the preserves:  
The preserve is open from dawn until one-half hour after sunset.  
Please leave natural features, plants, and animals undisturbed.  
Pack it in, pack it out please do not litter.  
Auto burnables are prohibited.  
Take vehicles with you and lock your vehicle.



Preserve Brochure

[www.openspace.org](http://www.openspace.org)

2012 La Honda Master Plan





# Distances\* and Elevation Gain

## Event Center to Allen Road:

9.8 miles 2,100-foot elevation gain

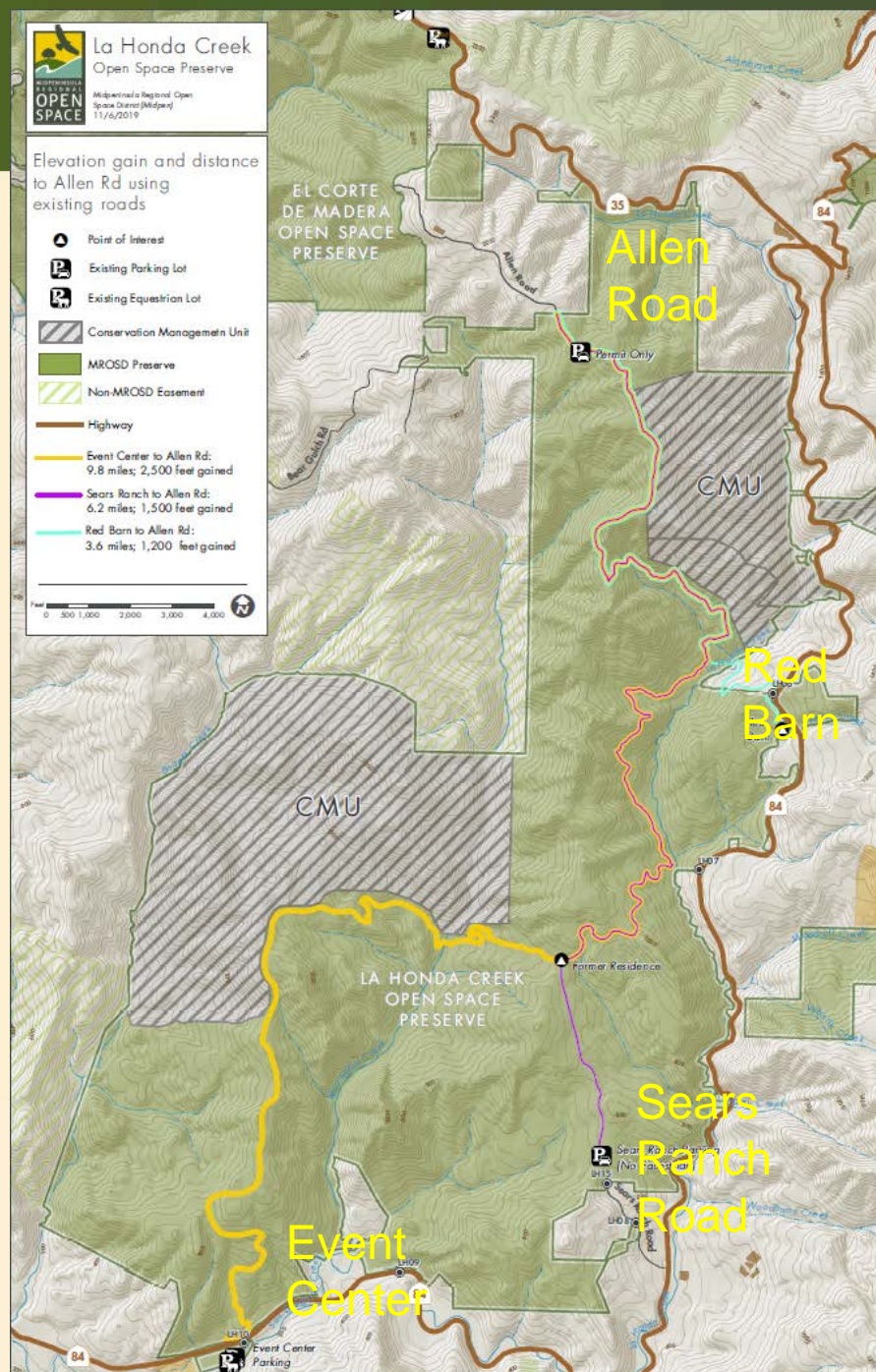
## Sears Ranch Road to Allen Road:

6.2 miles 1,500-foot elevation gain

## Red Barn to Allen Road:

3.6 miles 1,200-foot elevation gain

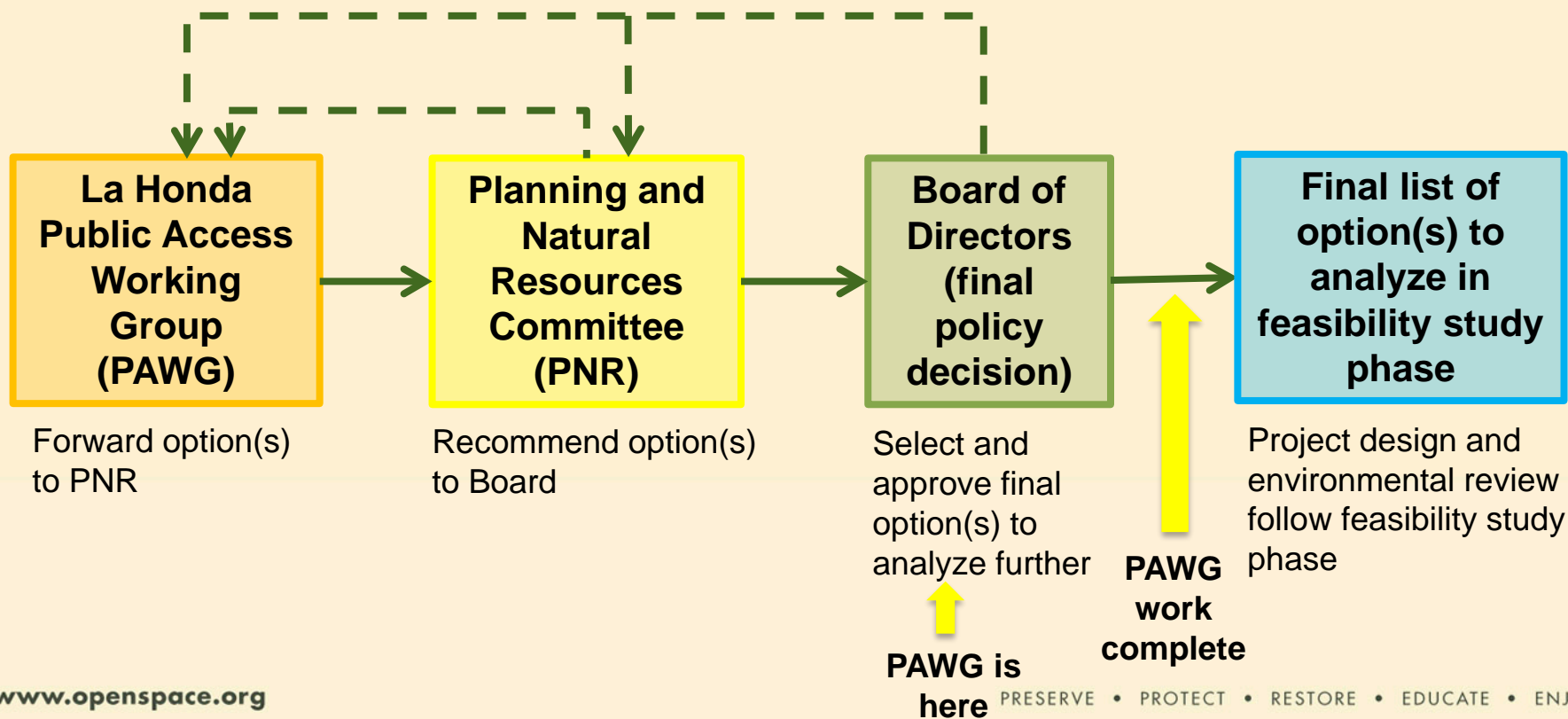
\* Using existing roads



# Decision-Making Process

## PAWG Charge:

Work with the District project team to evaluate option(s) for potential to meet project goals and objectives and recommend option(s) for PNR and Board to forward into feasibility study phase







# *Board Questions on Project and PAWG Background*



*Photo credit  
Melissa Borges*





# PAWVG Process



Photo credit  
Xucan Zhou





# PAWG Meetings

Date	Location	Task/Milestone
August 22, 2019	330 Distel Circle, Los Altos	Kick off
September 12, 2019	330 Distel Circle, Los Altos	Orientation and background
October 19, 2019	La Honda Elementary School	Site Tour #1 – Event Center, Sears Ranch, Red Barn sites
November 16, 2019	La Honda Elementary School	Site Tour #2 – PAWG-suggested sites
December 12, 2019	330 Distel Circle, Los Altos	Discussion of sites/options
February 6, 2020	La Honda Elementary School	Determination of sites/options to forward to PNR
March 5, 2020	330 Distel Circle, Los Altos	Continuation of February meeting

# Work of the PAWG

- ✿ Orientation
- ✿ Site tours
- ✿ Meeting material review
- ✿ Homework
- ✿ Individual site visits





# Site Options

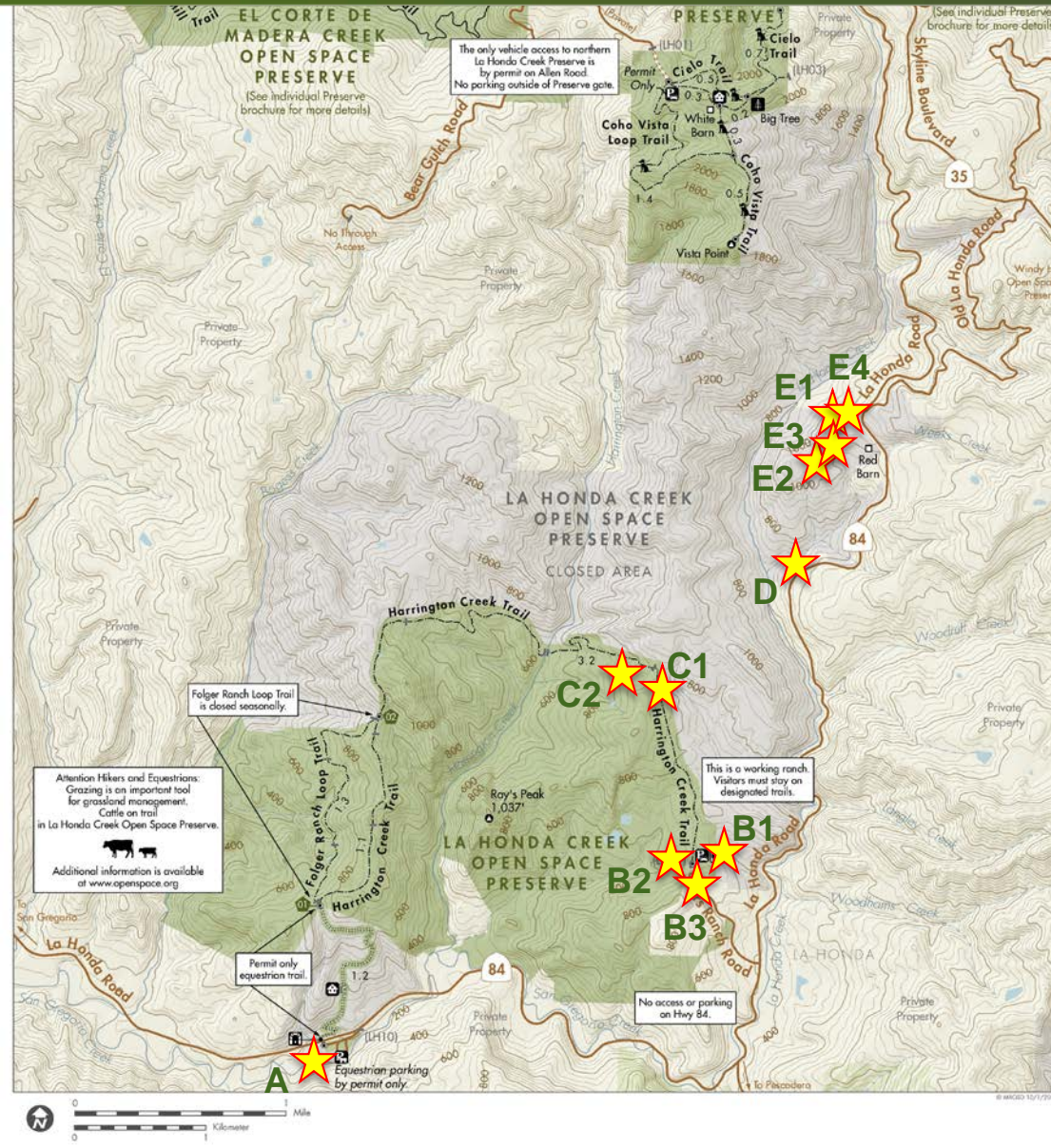
**A:**  
Event Center

**B1, B2, & B3:**  
Sears Ranch Road  
Parking Area

**C1 & C2:**  
Sears Ranch Road  
Interior – Former  
Residence Area (1 mile  
north)

**D:**  
Preserve Gate LH07

**E1, E2, E3, & E4:**  
Red Barn Area



**OPEN SPACE**

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**Map Legend**

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- Restroom
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- Notable Flora
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**Additional Information:**

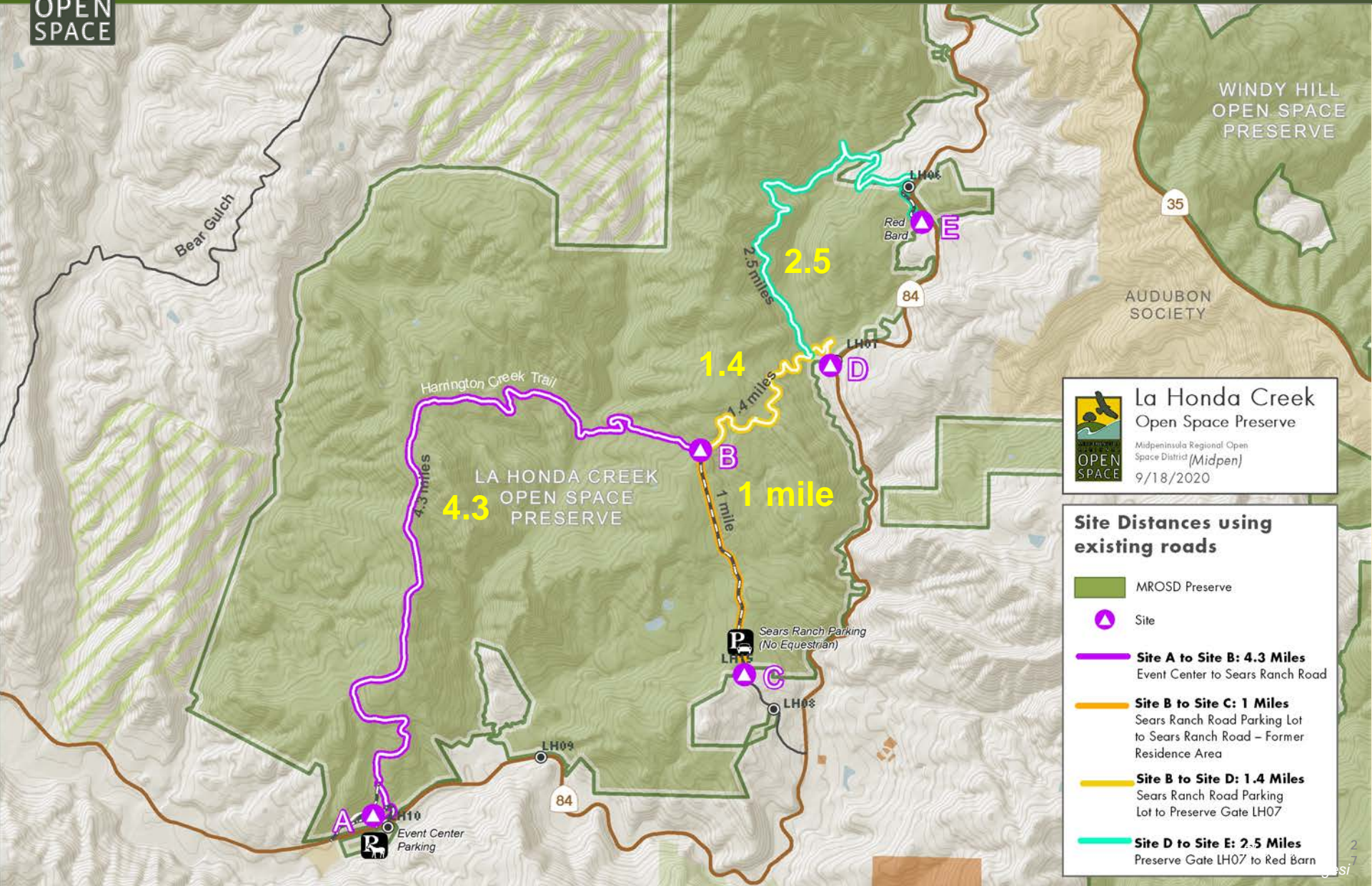
- Dogs on Leash Permitted on Designated Trails
- Bicycles not permitted in this Preserve

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Auto burglaries are increasing:  
Take valuables with you and lock your vehicle.



# Site to Site Distances




**La Honda Creek  
Open Space Preserve**  
Midpeninsula Regional Open  
Space District (Midpen)  
9/18/2020


## Site Distances using existing roads

-  MROSD Preserve
-  Site
-  **Site A to Site B: 4.3 Miles**  
Event Center to Sears Ranch Road
-  **Site B to Site C: 1 Miles**  
Sears Ranch Road Parking Lot  
to Sears Ranch Road - Former  
Residence Area
-  **Site B to Site D: 1.4 Miles**  
Sears Ranch Road Parking  
Lot to Preserve Gate LH07
-  **Site D to Site E: 2.5 Miles**  
Preserve Gate LH07 to Red Barn





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## A. Event Center



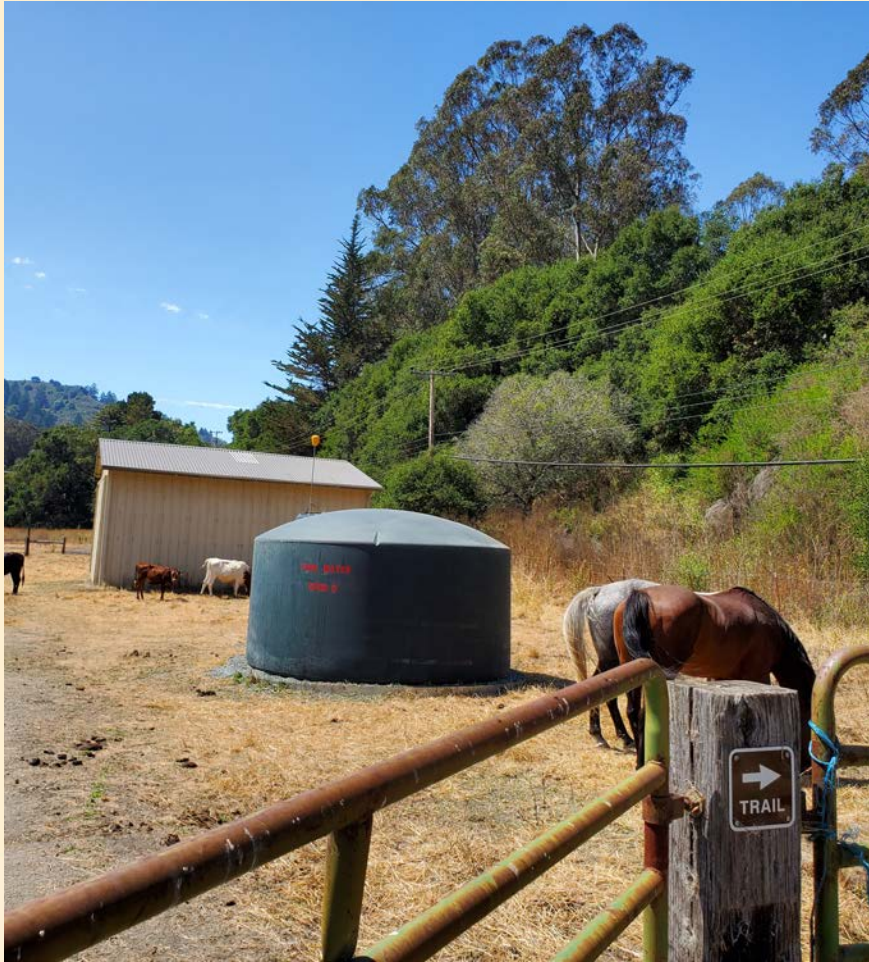


## A. Event Center – From Driveway looking West



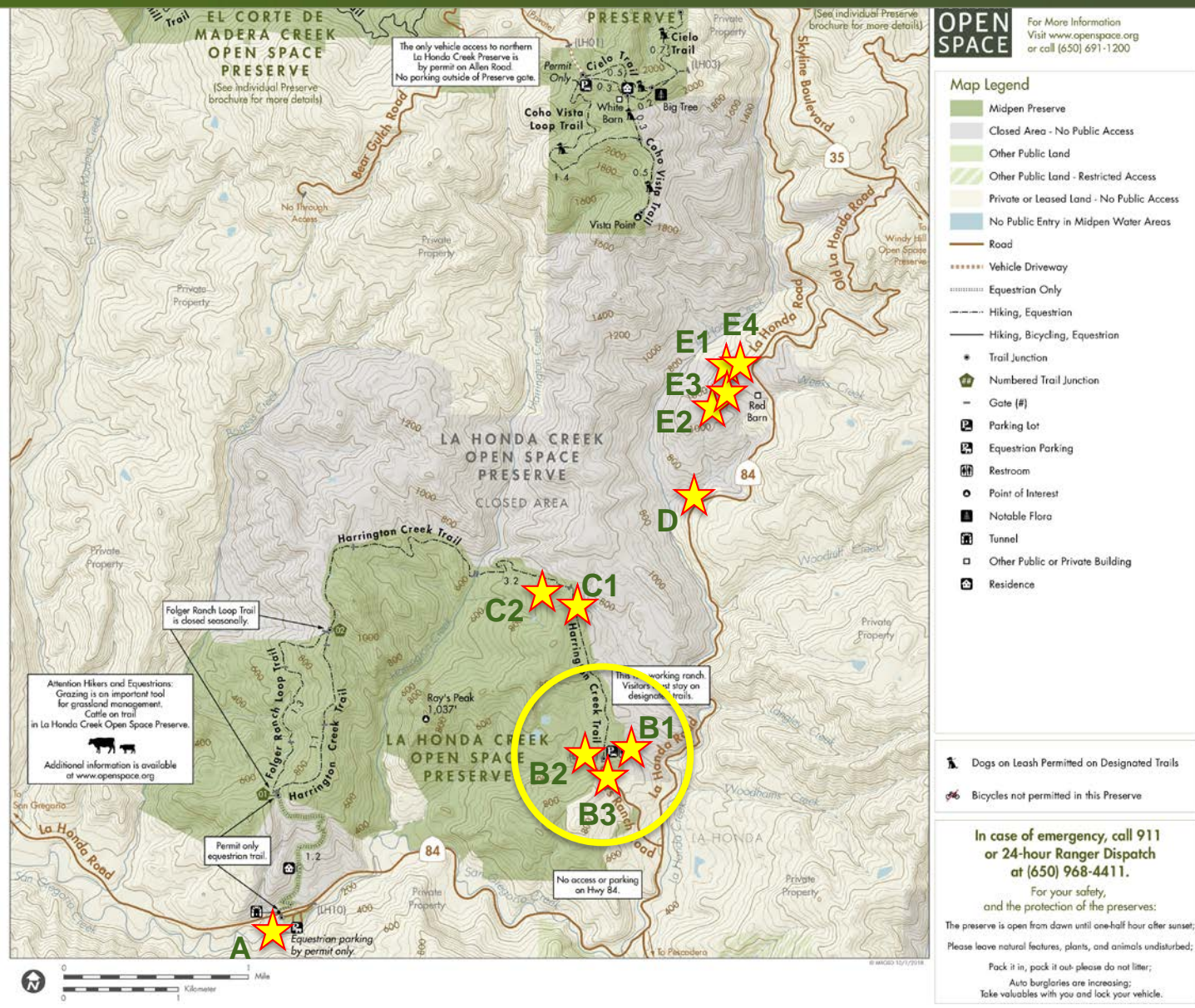


## A. Event Center – Tunnel under Hwy 84 to Preserve





# Sites B1, B2, and B3. Sears Ranch Road – Existing Lot Area





## B1. Sears Ranch Road – Potential Expansion of Existing Lot



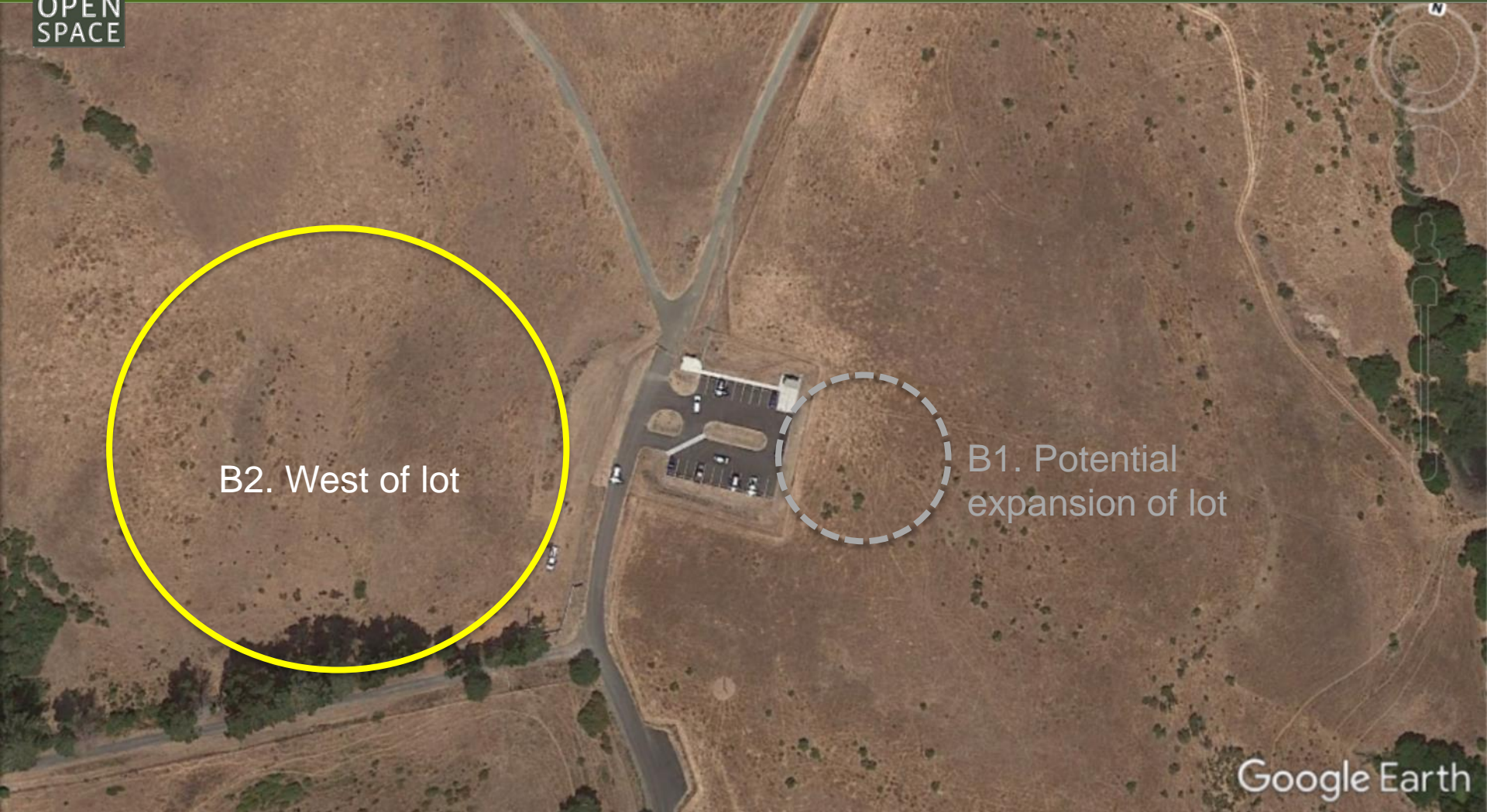




## BI. Sears Ranch Road – Potential Expansion of Existing Lot



## B2. Sears Ranch Road – Site West of Parking Lot





## B2. Sears Ranch Road – Site West of Parking Lot







## B2. Sears Ranch Road – West of Parking Lot





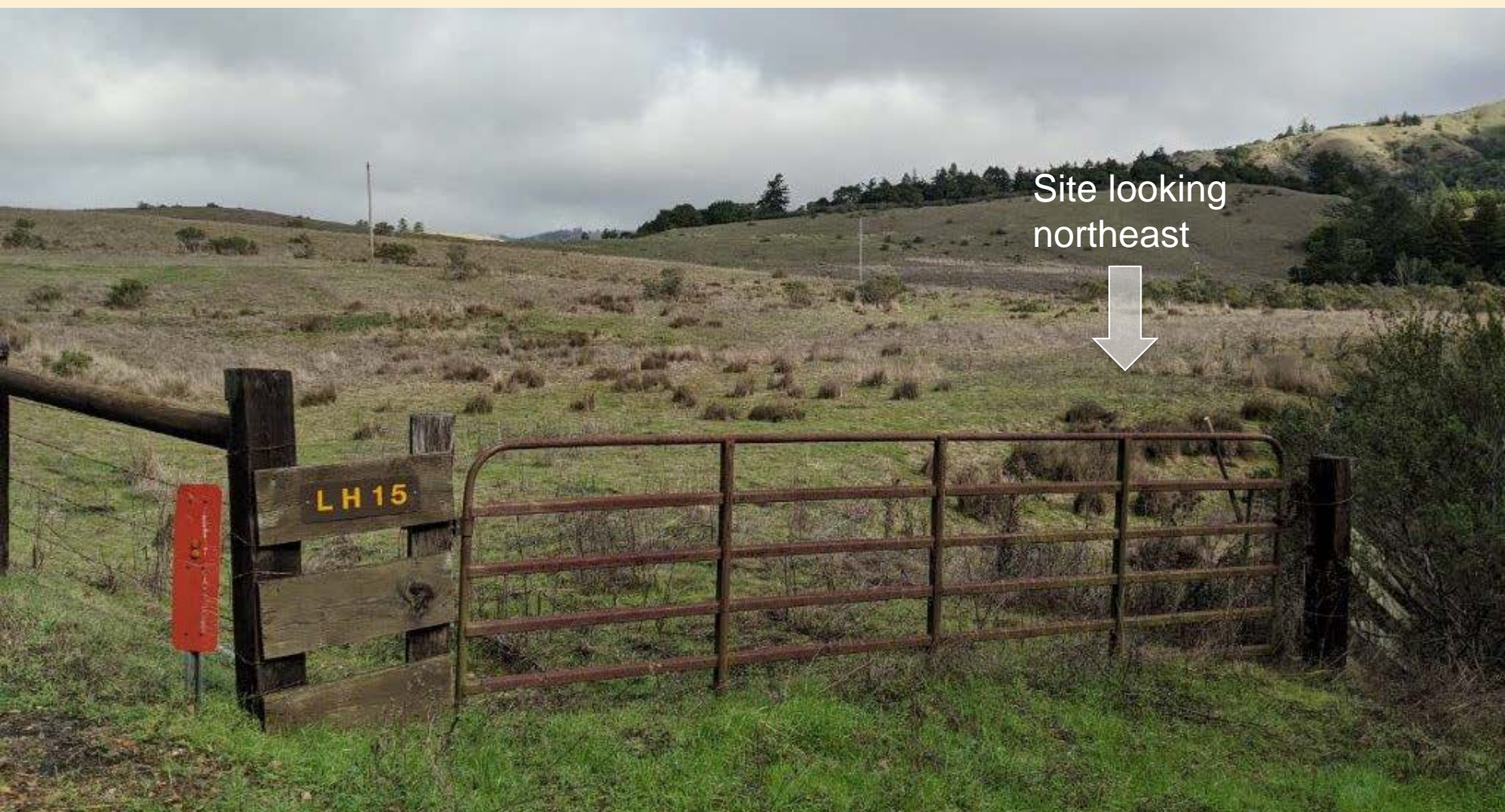


## B3. Sears Ranch Road – Gate LH15





## B3. Sears Ranch Road – Gate LH15





## B3. Sears Ranch Road – Gate LH15

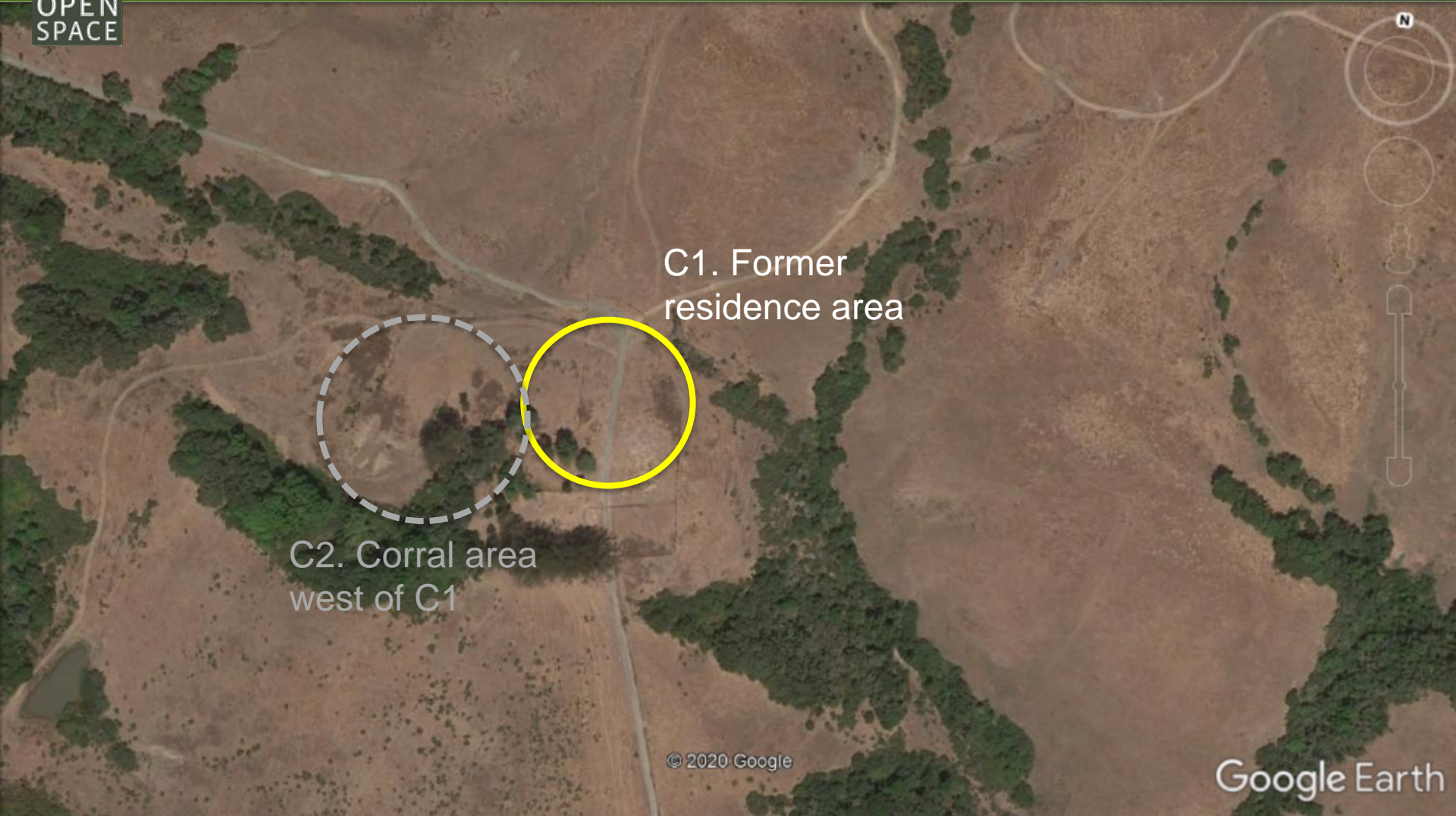








# CI. Sears Ranch Road – Former Residence Area





# CI. Sears Ranch Road – Panorama of Former Residence Area





## CI. Sears Ranch Road – Former Residence Area



PAWVG standing within Site CI





## C2. Sears Ranch Road – Cattle Corral West of Former Residence Area





## C2. Sears Ranch Road – Cattle Corral at Former Residence Area





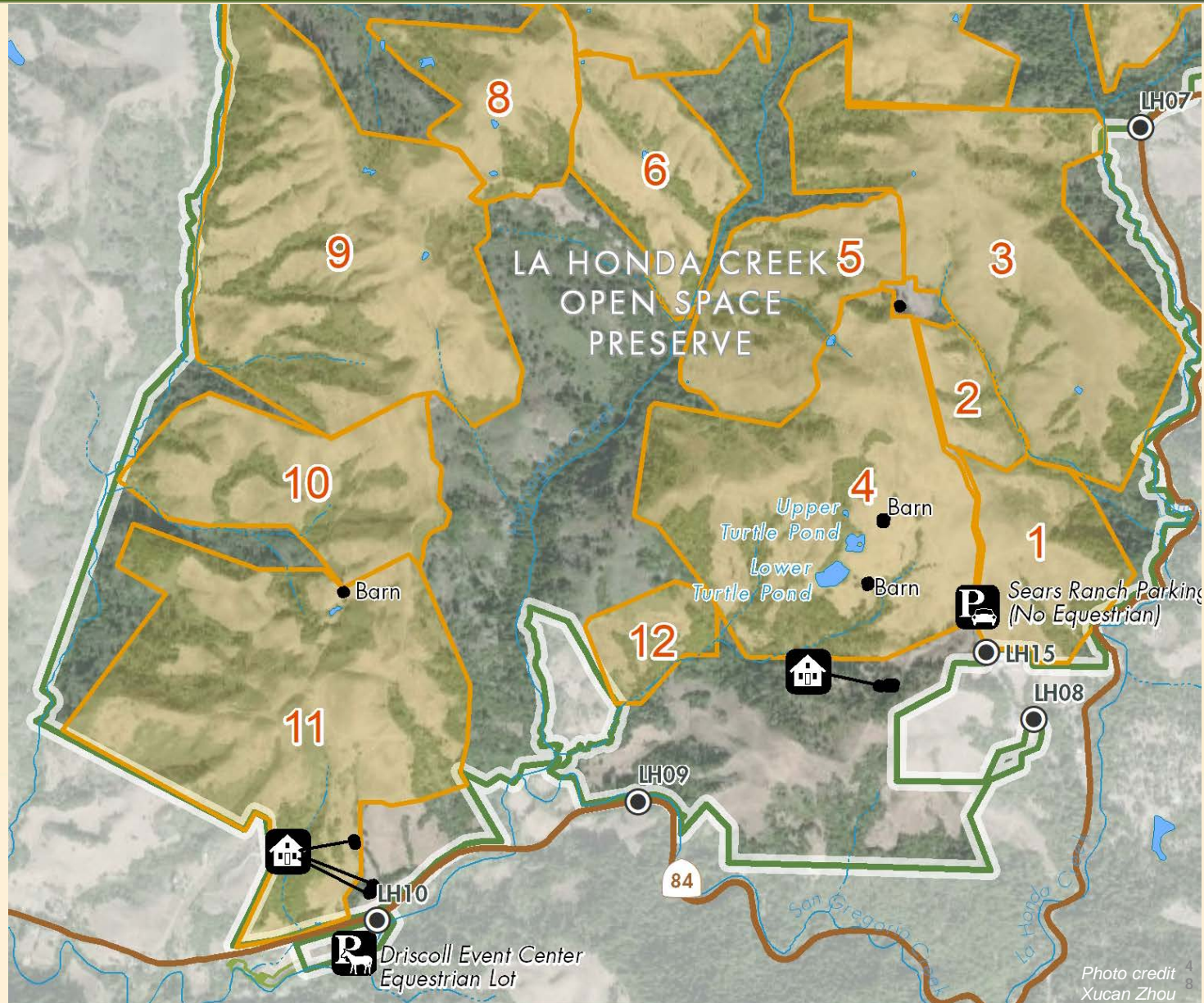


## C2. Sears Ranch Road – Cattle Corral West of Former Residence Area – Site on the Left Side



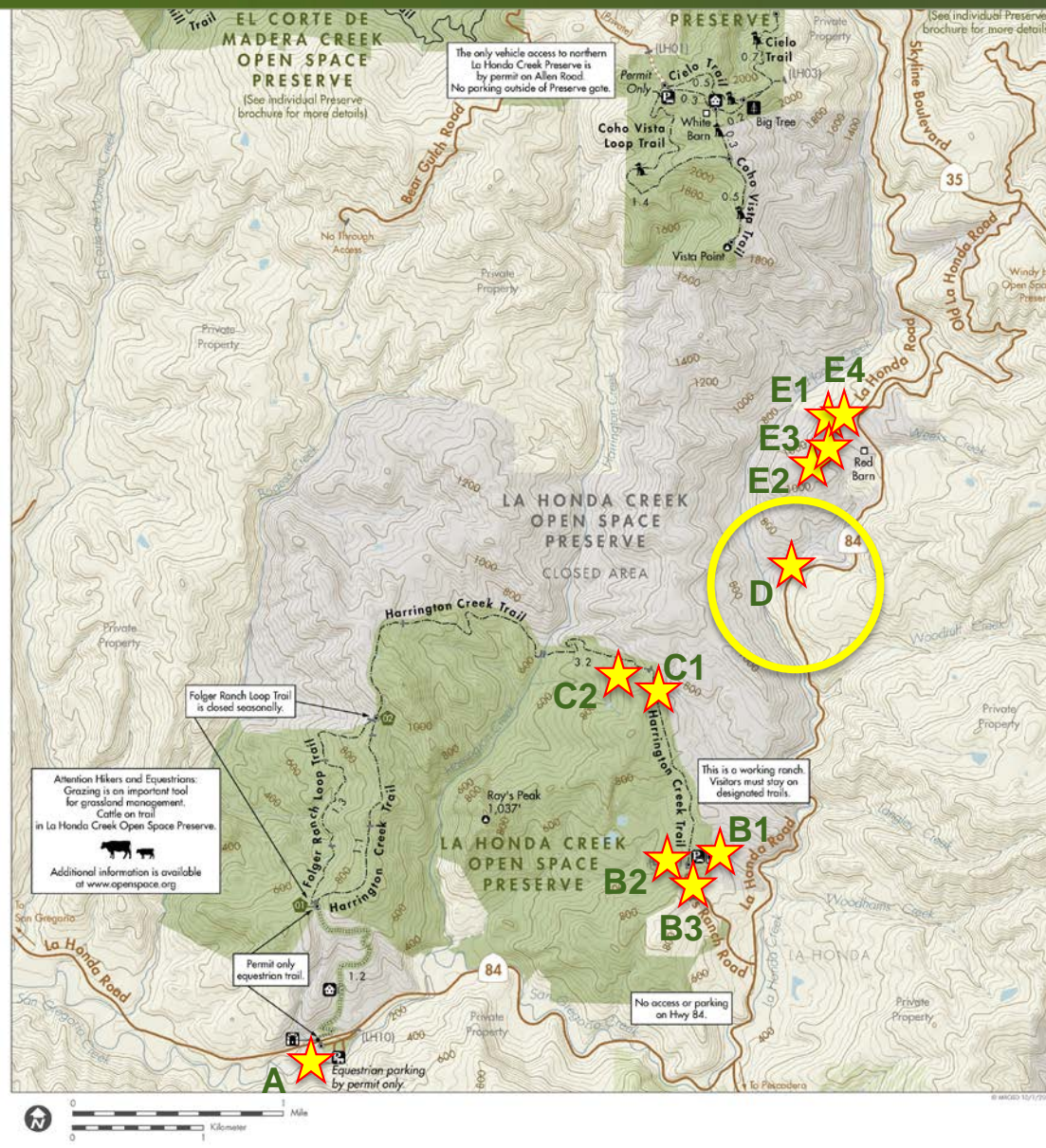


# Grazing / Calving Operations near Sears Ranch Road





# Site D. Preserve Gate LH07



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SPACE**

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## D. Preserve Gate LH07 (southwest of Red Barn)







## D. Preserve Gate LH07 – Highway 84 – Looking Southwest







## D. Gate LH07 – Interior View Northeast





## D. Gate LH07 – PAWVG Standing Just Inside Gate





## D. Gate LH07 – Interior View Looking South Toward Gate





## D. Gate LH07 – Interior View Looking North Toward Hwy 84







## D. Gate LH07 – Hwy 84







# Views of Trail and Bridge near La Honda Creek







# Views of Trail and Bridge near La Honda Creek





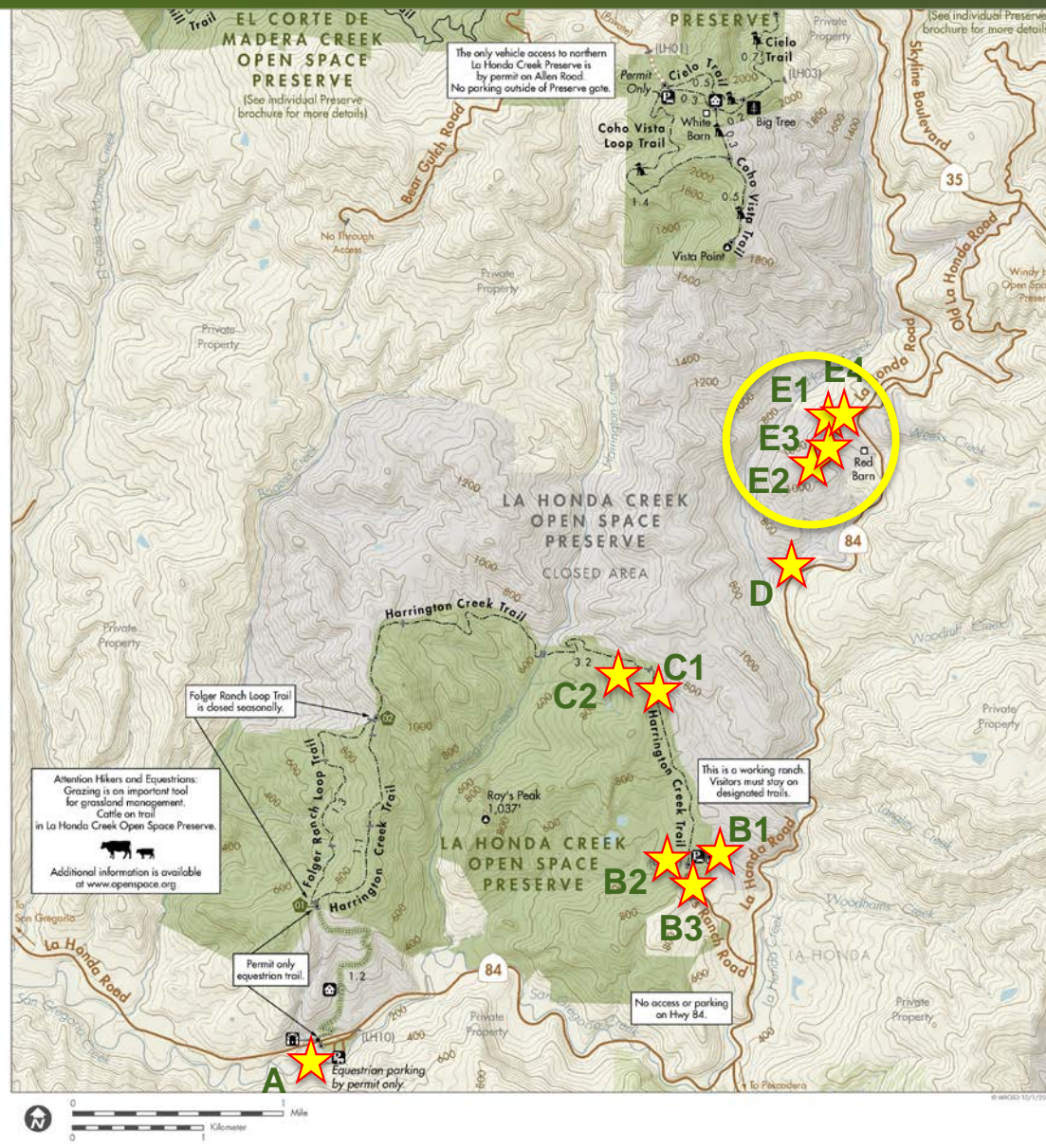


# Views near La Honda Creek





# Sites E1, E2, E3, and E4. Red Barn Area



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# E1 and E2. Red Barn Area – Site behind Ranger Residence and Corral Area below Red Barn

E1. Site behind  
Ranger  
Residence

E4. Site north of  
Ranger Residence

White Shed

E3. White shed  
area below  
Ranger Residence

E2. Corral area below  
and west of Red Barn

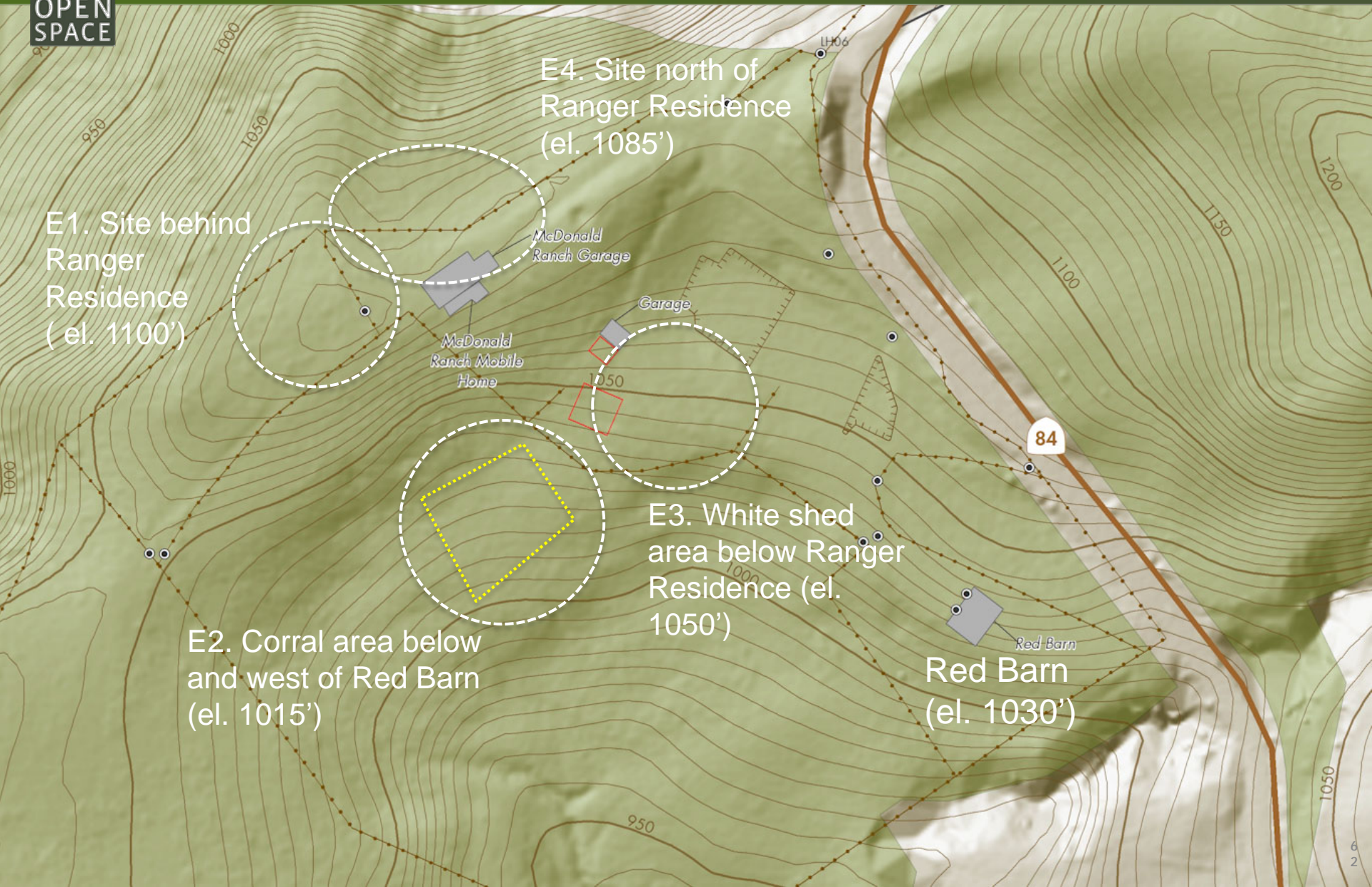
LHC Red Barn

© 2018 Google

Google Earth



## E3. Red Barn Area – White Shed Area below Ranger Residence – Topographic Relief Map





# View of Red Barn Area from the Barn







# View of Red Barn Area from the Barn





# View of Red Barn Area from the Barn





# E1 and E2. Red Barn Area – Site behind Ranger Residence and Corral Area below Red Barn

E1. Site behind  
Ranger  
Residence

E4. Site north of  
Ranger Residence

White Shed

E3. White shed  
area below  
Ranger Residence

E2. Corral area below  
and west of Red Barn

LHC Red Barn

© 2018 Google

Google Earth





## EI. Red Barn Area – Site behind Ranger Residence





## E2. Red Barn Area – Panorama of Corral Area below Red Barn





## E3. Red Barn Area – White Shed Area below Ranger Residence



E1. Site behind Ranger Residence

E2. Corral area below and west of Red Barn

E3. White shed area below Ranger Residence

E4. Site north of Ranger Residence

White Shed

LHC Red Barn

© 2018 Google

Google Earth



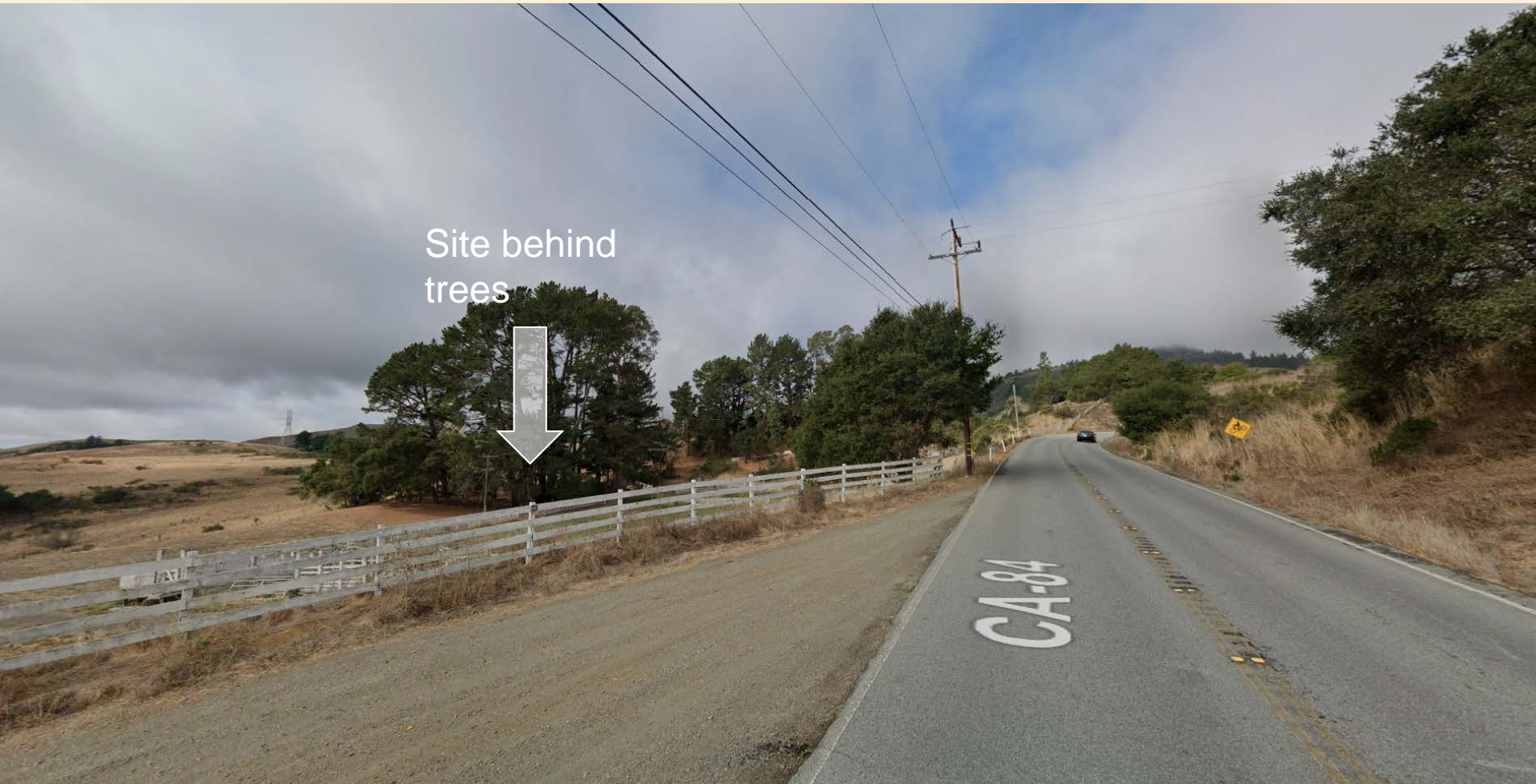
## E3. Red Barn Area – White Shed Area below Ranger Residence







## E3. Red Barn Area – White Shed Area below Ranger Residence – View from Highway 84



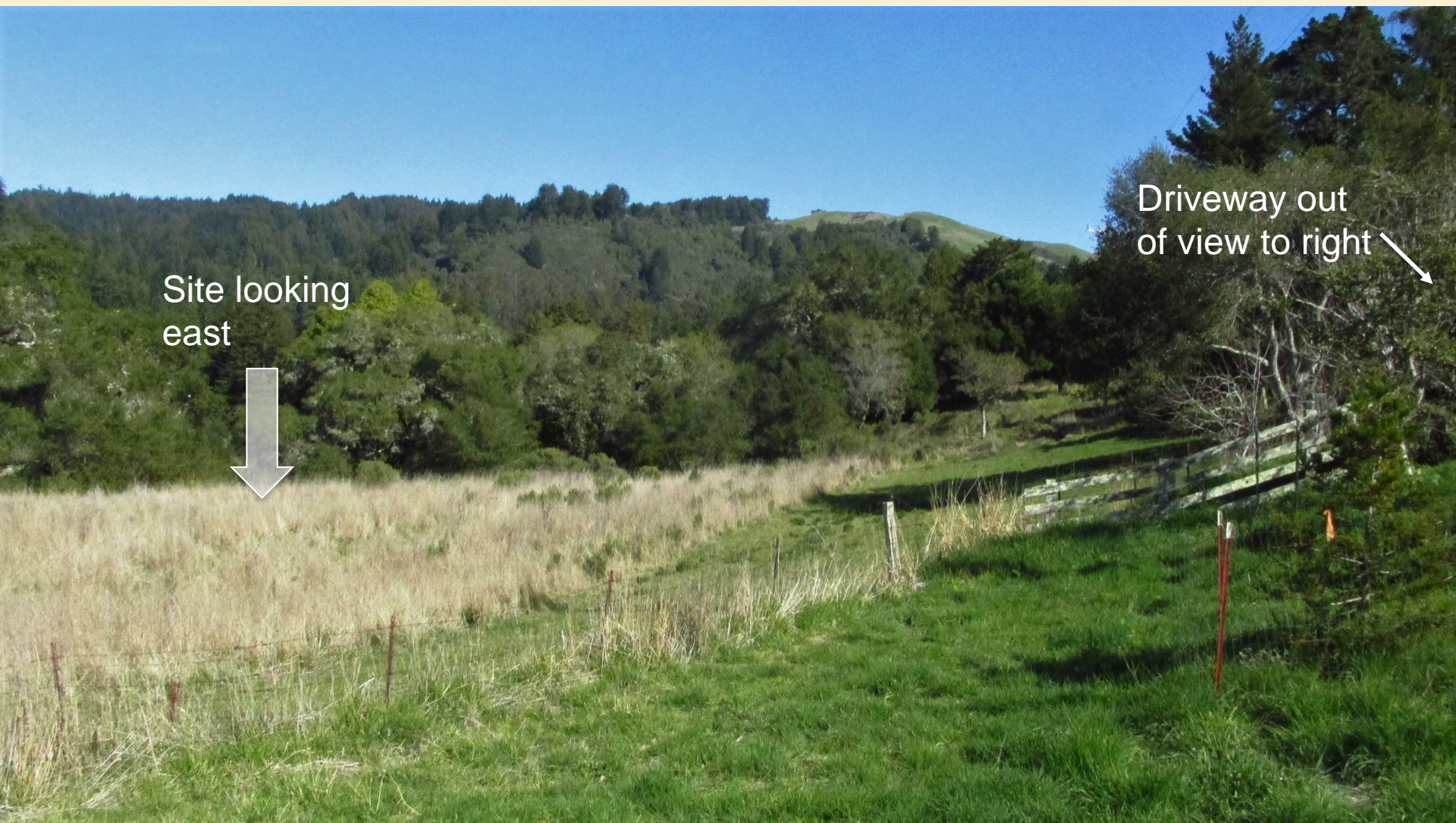


## E4. Red Barn Area – Area north of Ranger Residence





## E4. Red Barn Area – Area north of Ranger Residence





## E4. Red Barn Area – Area north of Ranger Residence





# Limited Access and Distribution of Use Options

- ✿ Access via permit only
- ✿ Access via docent-led activities
- ✿ Distribution or separation of uses among various sites
  - *Educational or interpretive elements*
  - *Picnic or family-oriented elements*
  - *Restroom access*
  - *Equestrian access*
  - *Dog access*







# PAWVG Deliberations and Recommendations

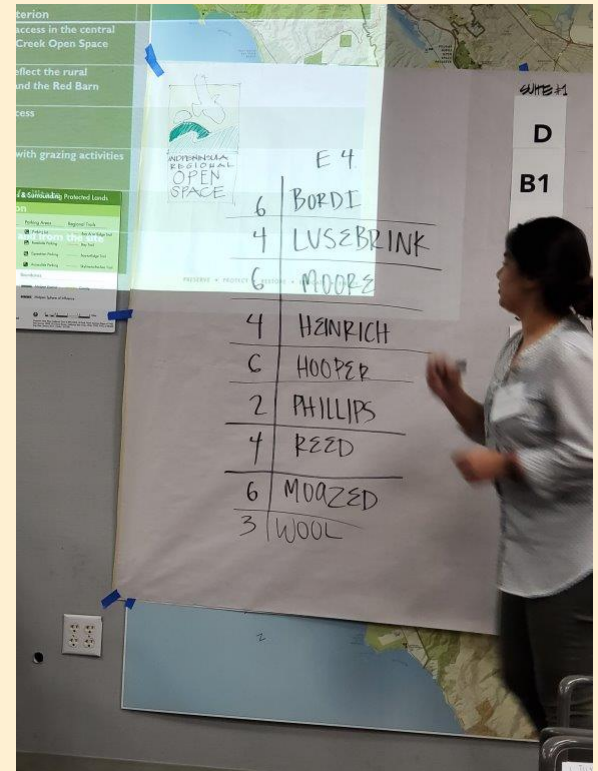


Photo credit  
Xucan Zhou



# PAWG Deliberations

- PAWG concluded that no one site can meet all project goals
- PAWG considered suites or package of options to fulfill the project goals
- Majority approved the final recommendation





# PAWG Recommendations

- ✿ **Sites B2 or B3 – Sears Ranch parking lot potential expansion:** Parking for equestrian trailers and future expansion for additional vehicles when use of existing lot exceeds its capacity
- ✿ **Sites C1 or C2 – Sears Ranch interior:** Picnic, family-friendly, equestrian-serving and interpretive amenities
- ✿ **Site D – Preserve Gate LH07:** A small parking lot with trailhead access and restroom facilities
- ✿ **Site E3 – Red Barn white shed area:** A small parking lot, with limited access







# Example of Permit Lots – Allen Road (La Honda)



Photo credit -  
Michael Barnes





# Example of Permit Lots – Waterwheel Creek (Monte Bello)







# Example of Permit Lots – Overlook (El Sereno)







# Near-term suggestions to expand public access

- ✿ **Signage at the existing pull out along Highway 84 near the Red Barn** – information on current Preserve access or interpretive information on the Red Barn and ranching history of the property.
- ✿ **Docent-led hikes north** towards La Honda Creek and currently closed area – depart from Harrington Creek Trail along the existing ranch road.
- ✿ **Prioritize new trail connections** from the Allen Road vista point and Sears Ranch Road parking lot to the Red Barn area.





# PNR Support of PAWG Recommendations

- ✿ Supported **B sites** for equestrian parking, particularly **Sites B2 and B3**
- ✿ For **Site B3**, suggested consultation with La Honda Elementary School regarding site's proximity to school grounds
- ✿ Agreed that **C sites** are not suitable for cars and are best for equestrian and picnic amenities with a sensitivity to grazing and calving operations
- ✿ Expressed enthusiasm for **Site D** due to location, shade, wide shoulder access from Hwy 84, and site's proximity to middle area of Preserve
- ✿ Supported a small parking lot and restroom at **Site D** and stressed importance to protect the creek
- ✿ Supported **Site E3** as a small permit lot rather than only for docent-led access
- ✿ Agreed that **E sites** need to be further studied, particularly traffic safety including ingress and egress points
- ✿ Supported PAWG's recommendations to advance **near-term options**





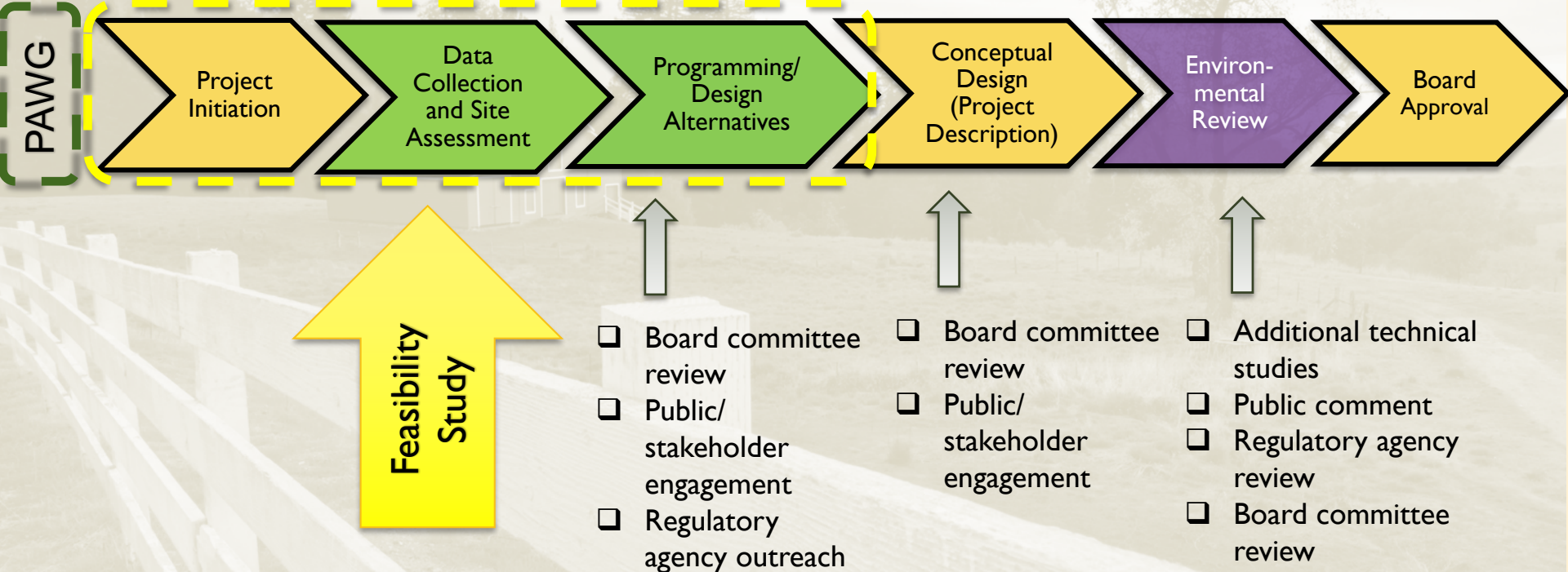
# Process and Next Steps



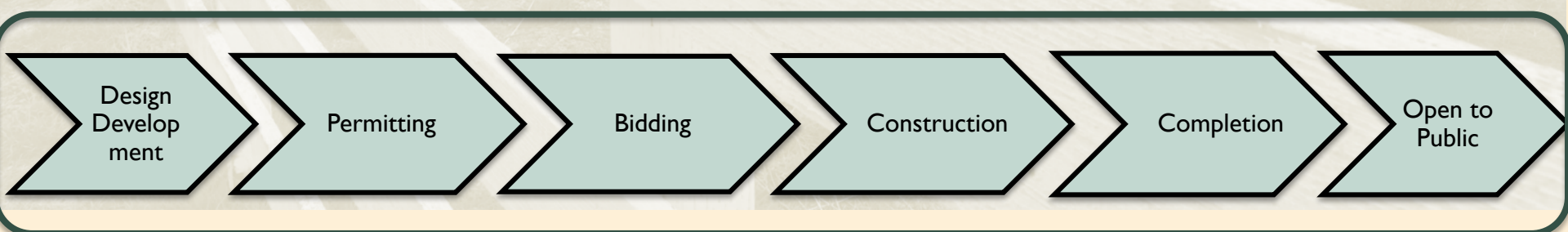


# Project Development and Implementation Process

## PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PHASE



## DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION PHASE







# Next Steps/Schedule

Date	Location	Task/Milestone
August 22, 2019		Kick off
September 12, 2019		Orientation and background
October 19, 2019		Site Tour #1
November 16, 2019		Site Tour #2 – PAWVG-suggested sites
December 12, 2019		Discussion of sites/options
February 6, 2020		Determination of sites/options to forward to PNR
March 5, 2020		Continuation of February meeting – determination of sites/options to forward to PNR
July 28, 2020		Planning and Natural Resources Committee – review PAWVG findings and recommendations
October 21, 2020	Virtual	<b>Board</b> meeting – review PAWVG recommendations
<b>Option 1:</b> Board approves recommendation	N/A	Feasibility study initiates Q3 FY2020-21
<b>Option 2:</b> Board requests additional information	Virtual	<b>PAWVG</b> or <b>PNR</b> meeting if needed to respond to Board feedback



# Thank you to the PAWG for all your efforts!







# Board Questions, Public Comment, Board Discussion and Action



Photo credit  
Xucan Zhou





# General Manager's Recommendations

1a. Direct the General Manager to proceed with feasibility studies of the parking, trailhead, and public access recommendations as presented by the La Honda Public Access Working Group, with any modifications requested by the Board of Directors.

**OR**

1b. Direct the Planning and Natural Resources Committee or La Honda Public Access Working Group to reconvene to respond to Board of Directors requests for additional information.

**AND if Recommendation (1a) is approved, either:**

2a. Determine that the La Honda Public Access Working Group has fulfilled its charge and direct the General Manager to dissolve the group and issue a special recognition for their dedication and contributions, and keep members on the project notification list to solicit their individual input as part of future Committee and Board meetings on the project.

**OR**

2b. Direct the General Manager to return to the Board for consideration and approval of a revised La Honda Public Access Working Group charter, purpose, and term to extend their work through the Feasibility Study Phase.

**AND if Recommendation (2a) is approved:**

3. Approve the draft March 5, 2020 La Honda Public Access Working Group meeting summary since the Working Group will no longer meet as a body to approve their last meeting summary.





# Thank you



*Photo credit  
Melissa Borges*