



MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting

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

July 28, 2020

Agenda

- Introductory remarks
- Presentation – Staff
 - Project background
 - PAWG background and process
 - PAWG assessment, discussion, decisionmaking and recommendation
- Closing remarks
 - PAWG Chair, Vice-Chair reflections on process
- Committee questions
- Public comments
- Committee discussion and action





General Manager's Recommendation

Select one of the following actions:

Forward the La Honda Public Access Working Group's recommendations to the full Board of Directors for consideration of approval with any modifications as requested by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee, and recommend that the Working Group be dissolved, and a recognition issued thanking the group for their contributions.

OR

Direct the Working Group to reconvene to respond to any requests for additional information needed by the Committee.



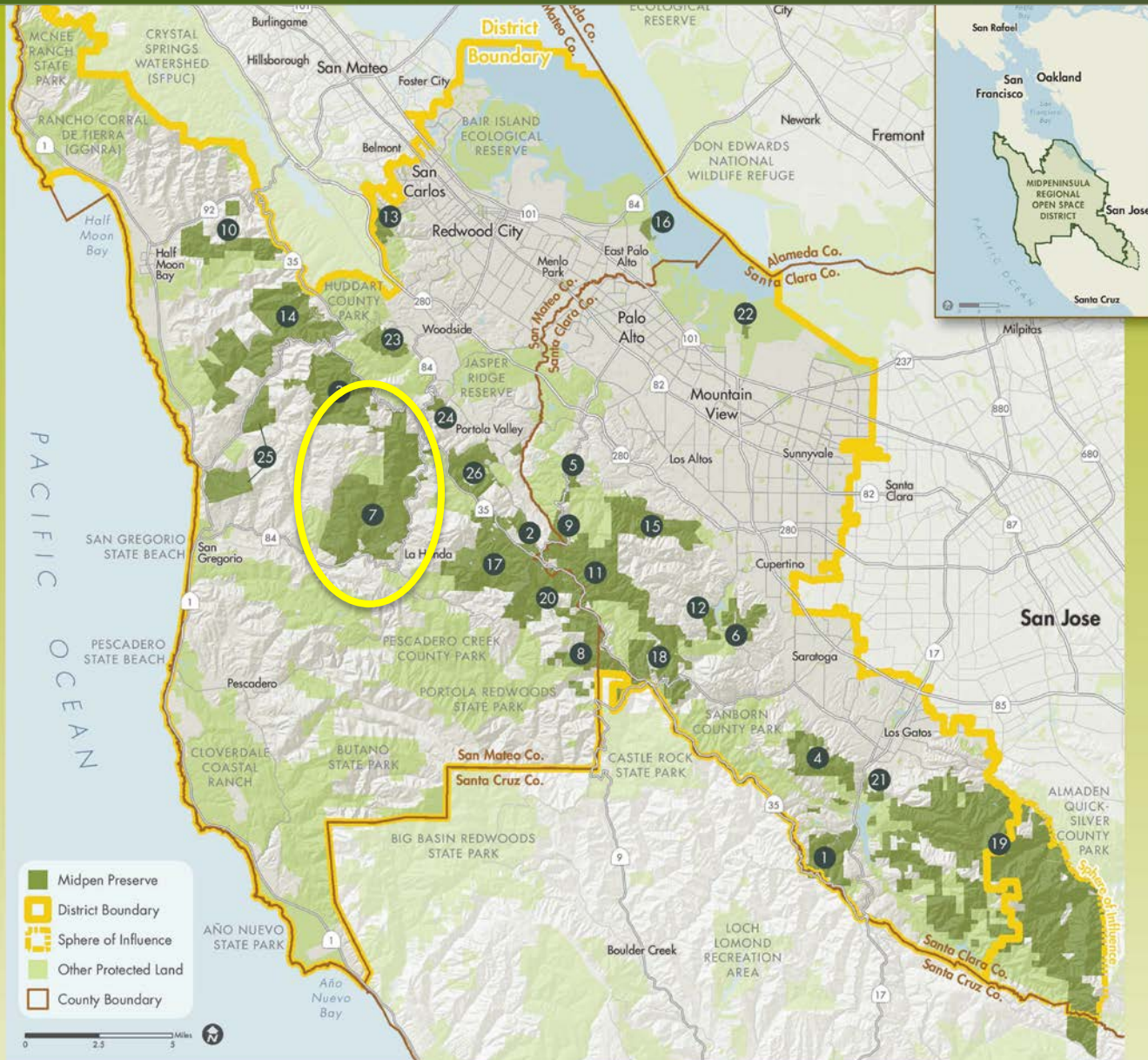
Project Background



*Photo credit
Xucan Zhou*



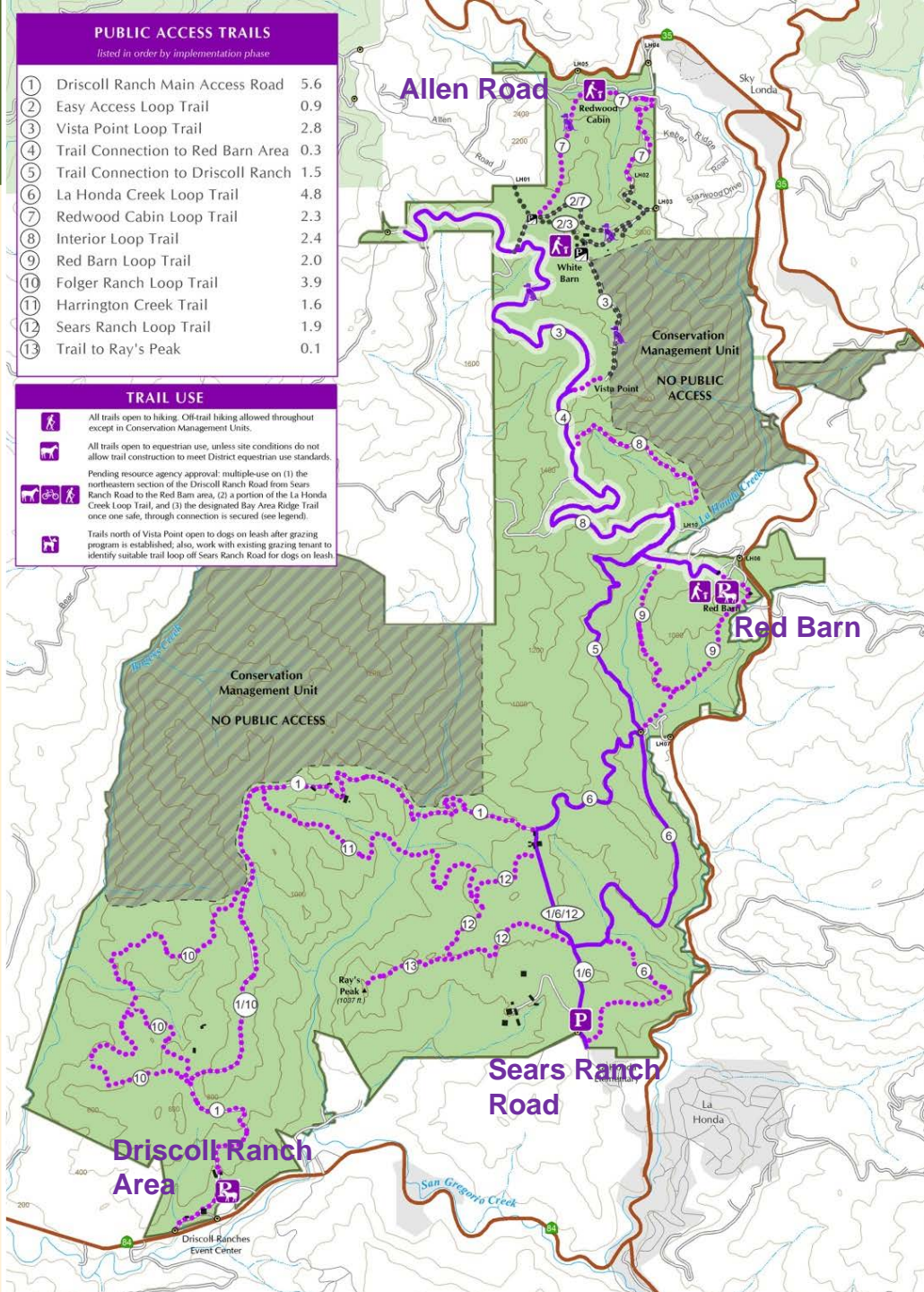
District Jurisdiction and La Honda Creek Preserve





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)



Vision Plan and Measure AA priorities

5

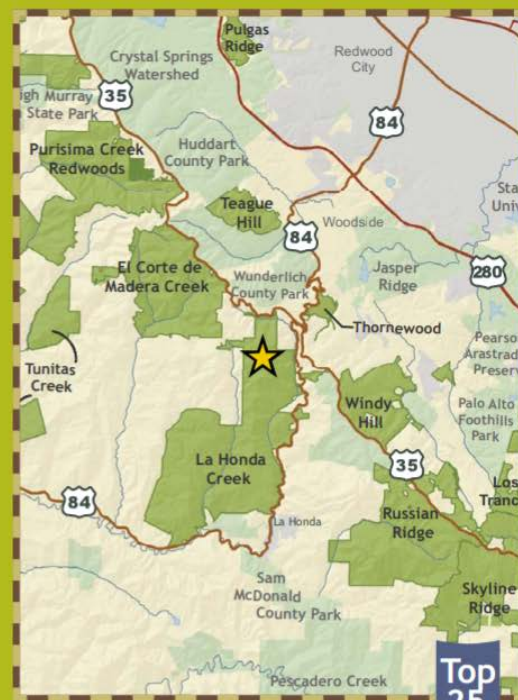
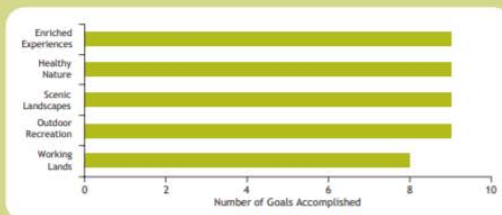
La Honda Creek:

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**

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



*Photo credit
Xucan Zhou*



Formation of PAWG

- 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
- PAWG formed on June 26, 2019
- PAWG 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



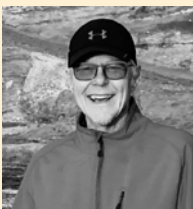
Ari Delay
La Honda Area Rep



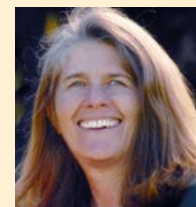
Willie Wool
Ward 3



Denise Phillips, Vice-Chair
Ward 7



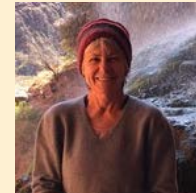
Karl Lusebrink
La Honda Area Rep



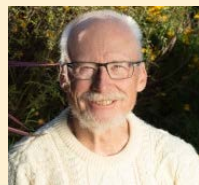
Sandy Sommer
Ward 4



Kathleen Moazed
La Honda Area Rep



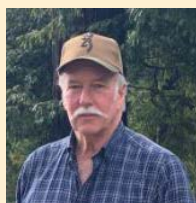
Andie Reed
Ward 5



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 PAWG

- ✿ 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

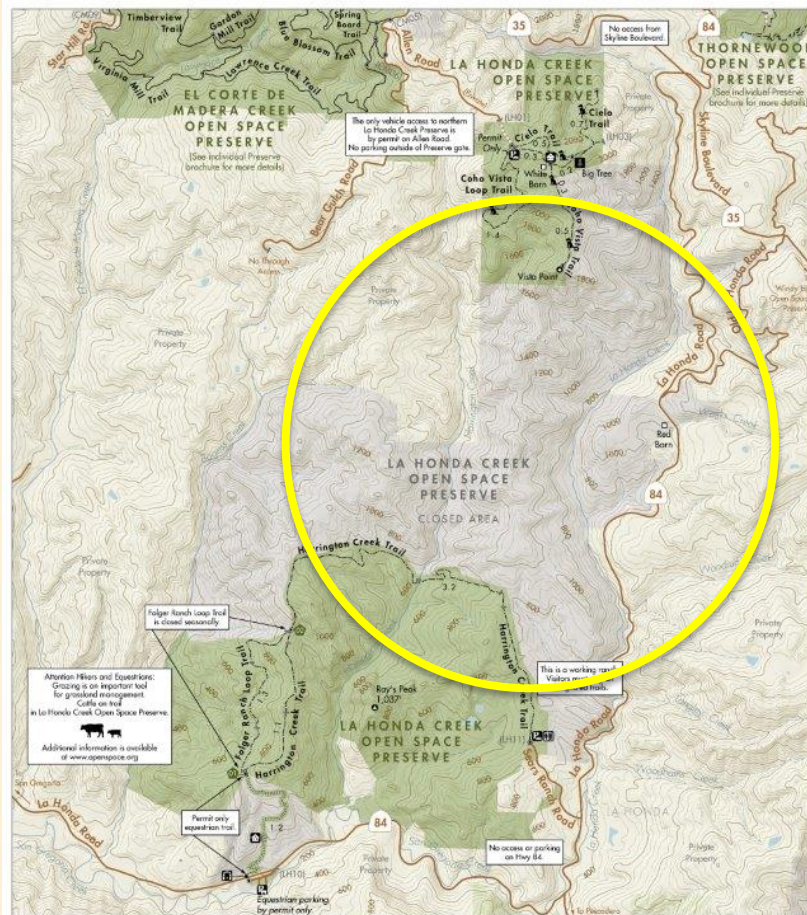
Project Goals and Objectives

- ✿ 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

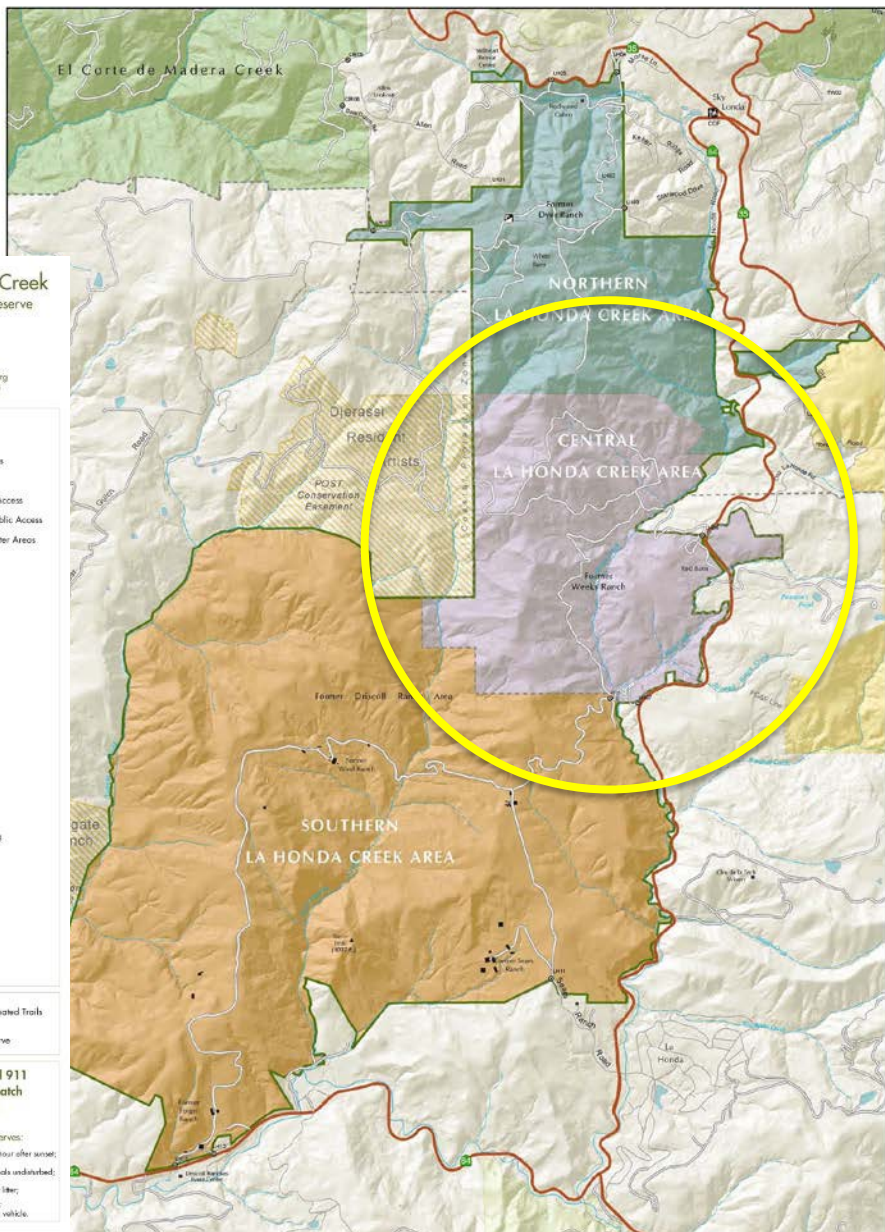
For More Information
Visit www.openspace.org
or call (650) 691-1200

Map Legend

- Midpen 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

Additional Information:
 - Anytime Hikers and Equestrians: Grazing is an important tool for riparian management. Cattle on trail in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve.
 - Fajal Ranch Loop trail is closed seasonally.
 - This is a working ranch. Visitors need to be quiet.
 - Permitted only equestrian trail.
 - Equestrian parking by permit only.
 - No access or parking on Hwy 84.

Emergency Contact:
 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. Aids for people are provided. Take vehicles with you and lock your vehicle.



La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

Exhibit 2-4: Preserve Areas

Legend:

- Northern La Honda Creek Area** (Teal): Includes former Dyer Ranch and Redwood Cabin
- Central La Honda Creek Area** (Purple): Includes former Weeks Ranch and Red Barn
- Southern La Honda Creek Area** (Brown): Includes former Driscoll Ranch

Roads:

- Unpaved Ranch / Patrol Road
- Existing Paved Road
- Highway

Map Projection: UTM Zone 10N, NAD 83
 Data Sources: USGS, County of San Mateo, and MWD
 Map Printed November, 2002

Preserve Brochure

www.openspace.org

2012 La Honda Master Plan



Distances and Elevation Gain

Event Center to Allen Road:

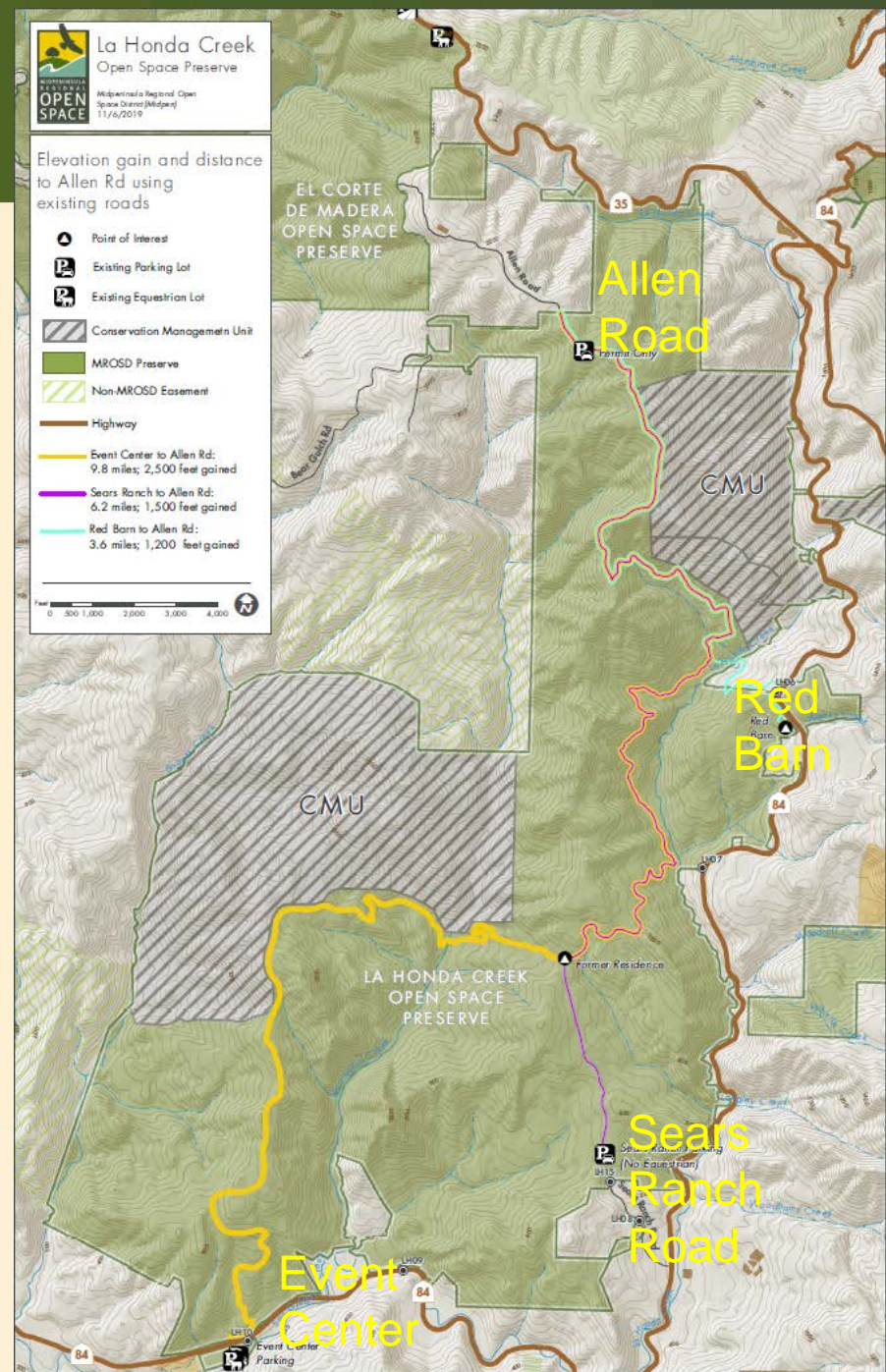
9.8 miles 2,500 foot elevation gain

Sears Ranch Road to Allen Road:

6.2 miles 1,500-foot elevation gain

Red Barn to Allen Road:

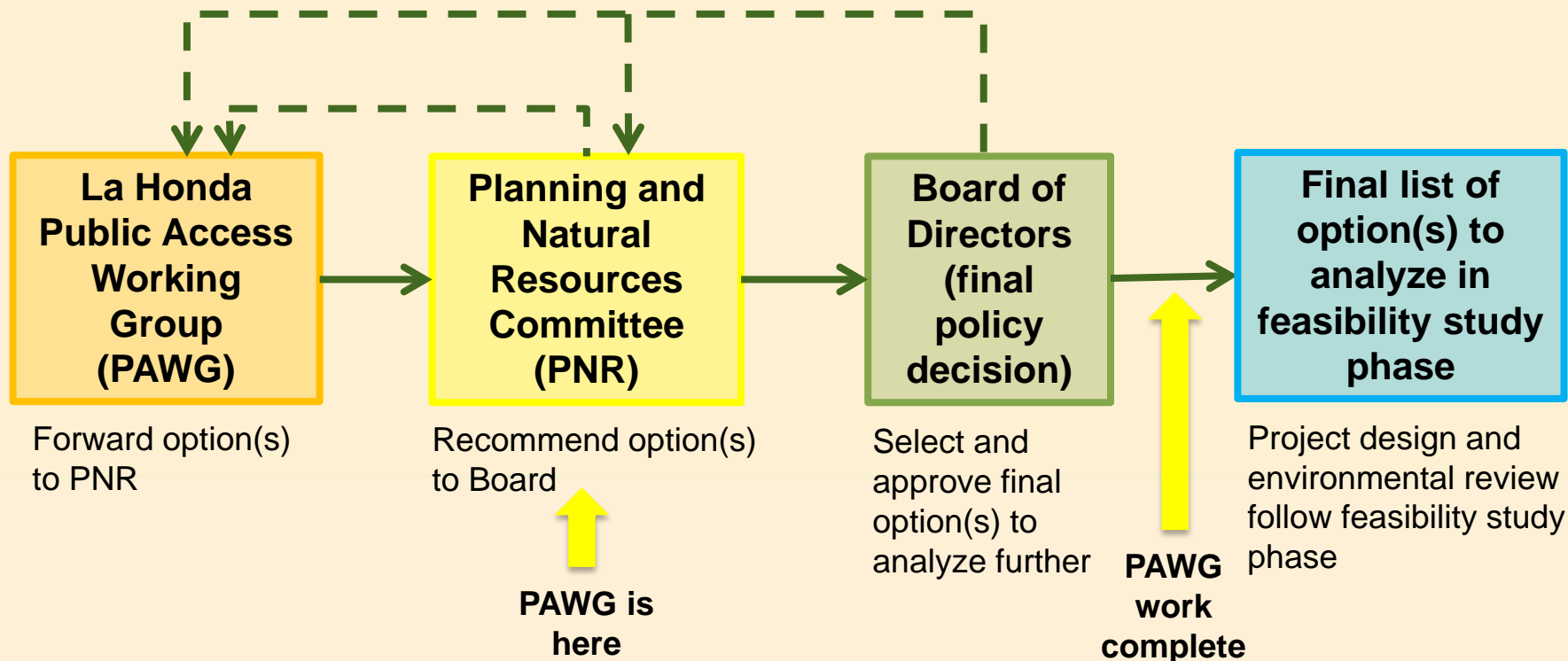
3.6 miles 1,200-foot elevation gain



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





Committee Questions on Project and PAWG Background





PAWG 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

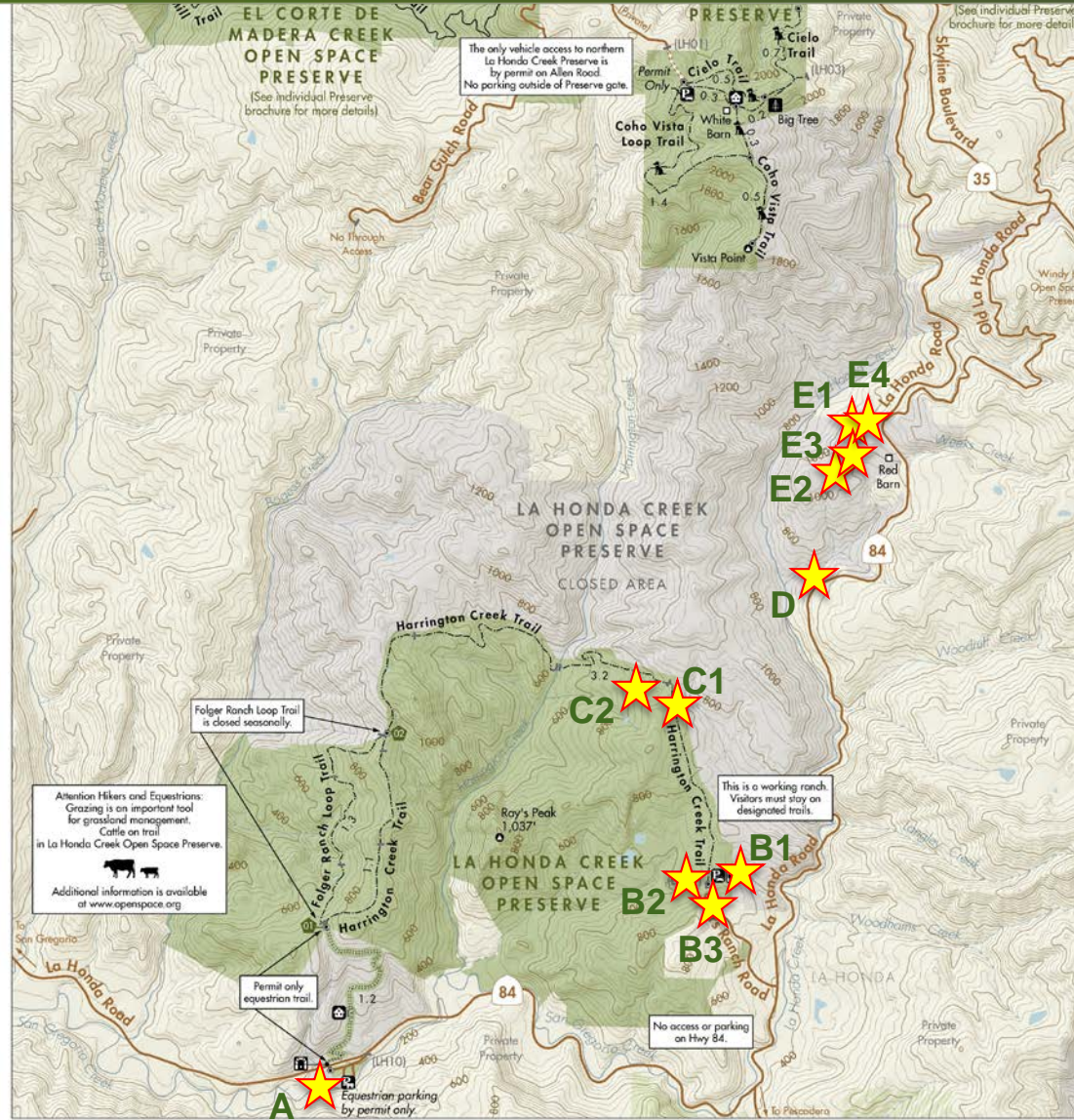
A:
Event Center

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

For More Information
Visit www.openspace.org
or call (650) 691-1200

Map Legend

- Midpen 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 (#)
- 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.**

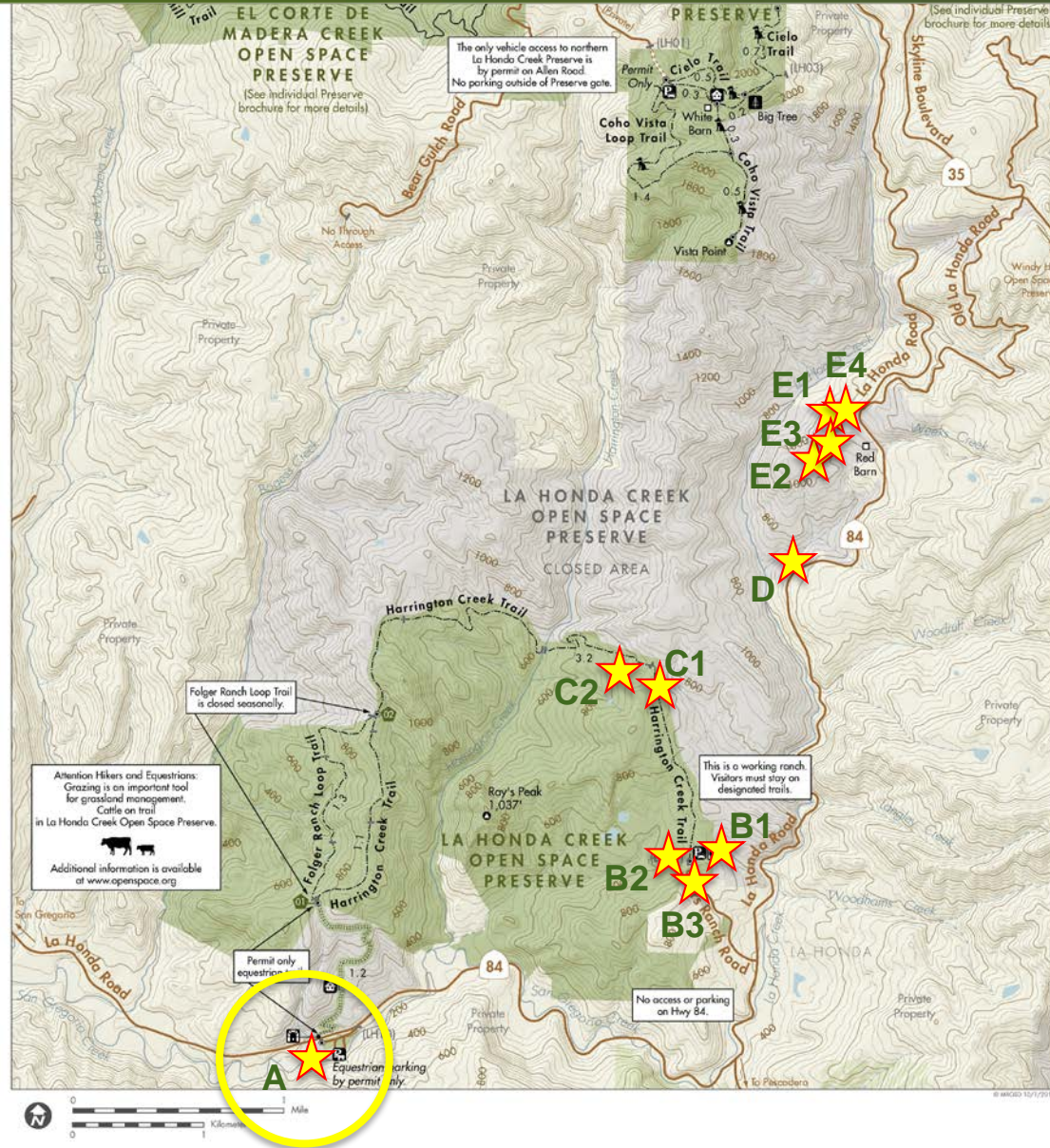
For your safety,
and the protection of the preserves:
The preserve is open from dawn until one-half hour after sunset;
Please leave natural features, plants, and animals undisturbed;

Pack it in, pack it out please do not litter;
Auto burglaries are increasing;
Take valuables with you and lock your vehicle.





Site A. Event Center



OPEN SPACE

For More Information
Visit www.openspace.org
or call (650) 691-1200

Map Legend

- Midpen 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 (#)
- 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 burglaries are increasing;
Take valuables with you and lock your vehicle.



A. Event Center





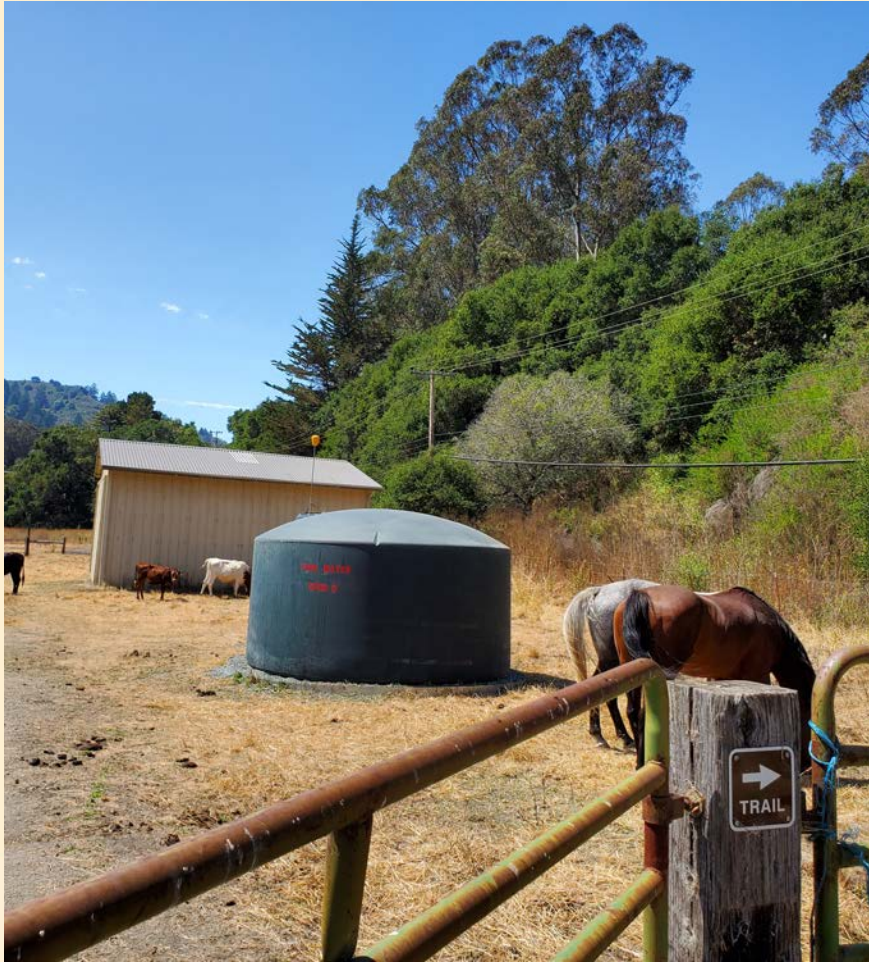
A. Event Center – From Driveway looking West



To tunnel
under Hwy 84

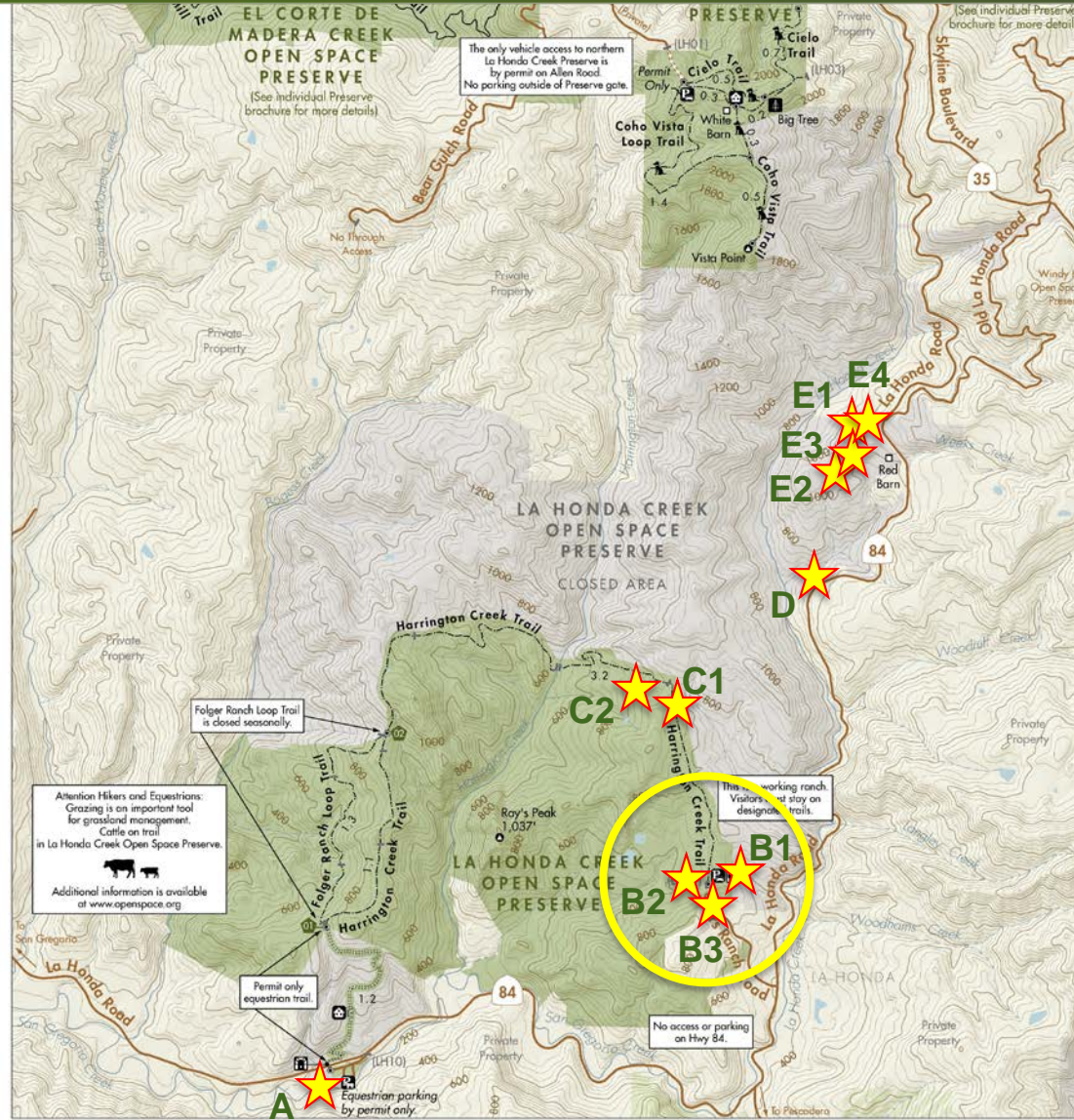


A. Event Center – Tunnel under Hwy 84 to Preserve





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



OPEN SPACE
For More Information
Visit www.openspace.org
or call (650) 691-1200

- Map Legend**
- Midpen 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 (#)
 - 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 burglaries are increasing:
Take valuables with you and lock your vehicle.



B1. Sears Ranch Road – Potential Expansion of Existing Lot



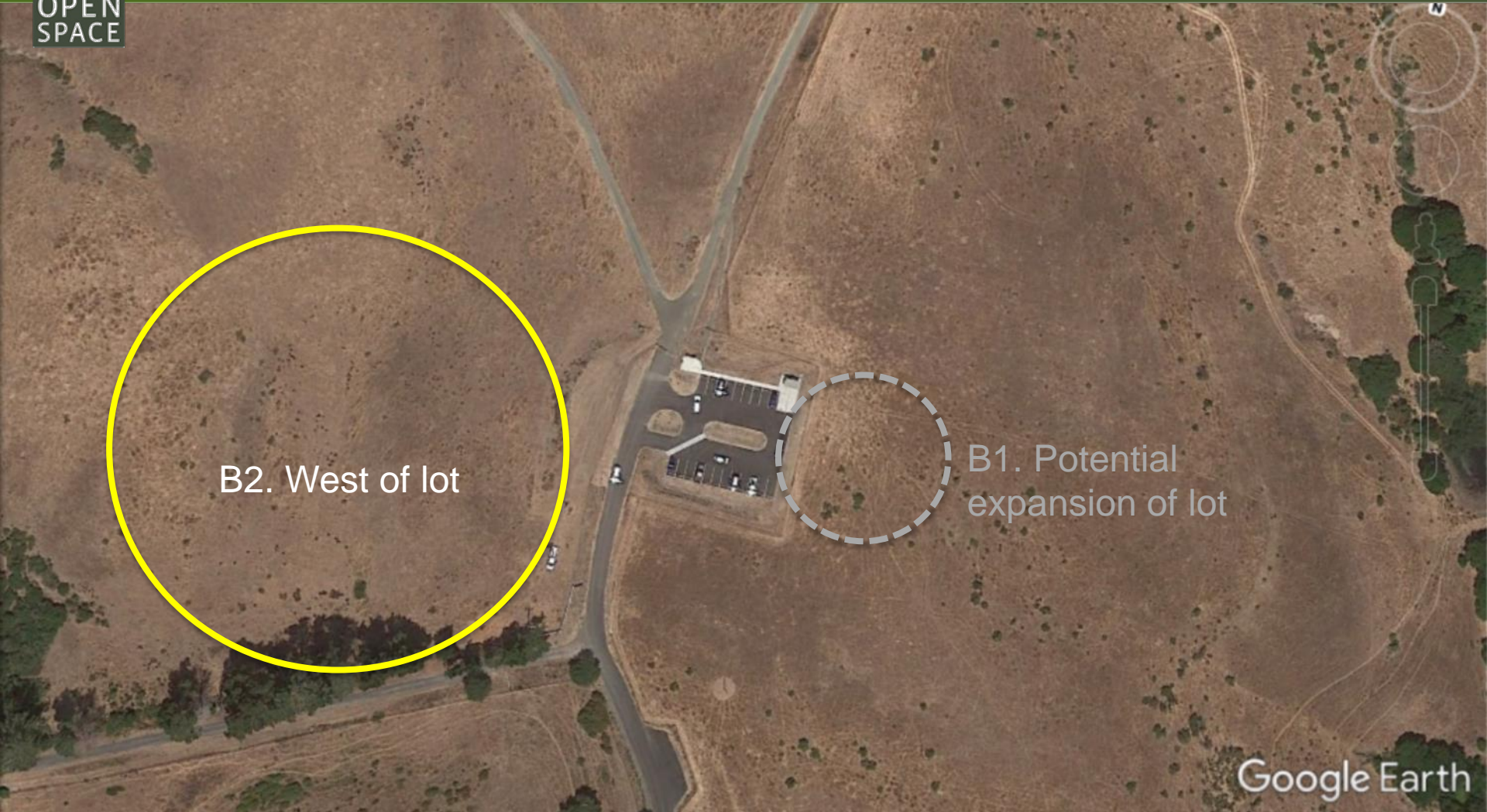


BI. Sears Ranch Road – Potential Expansion of Existing Lot



Expansion area looking east

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



Site looking
northeast





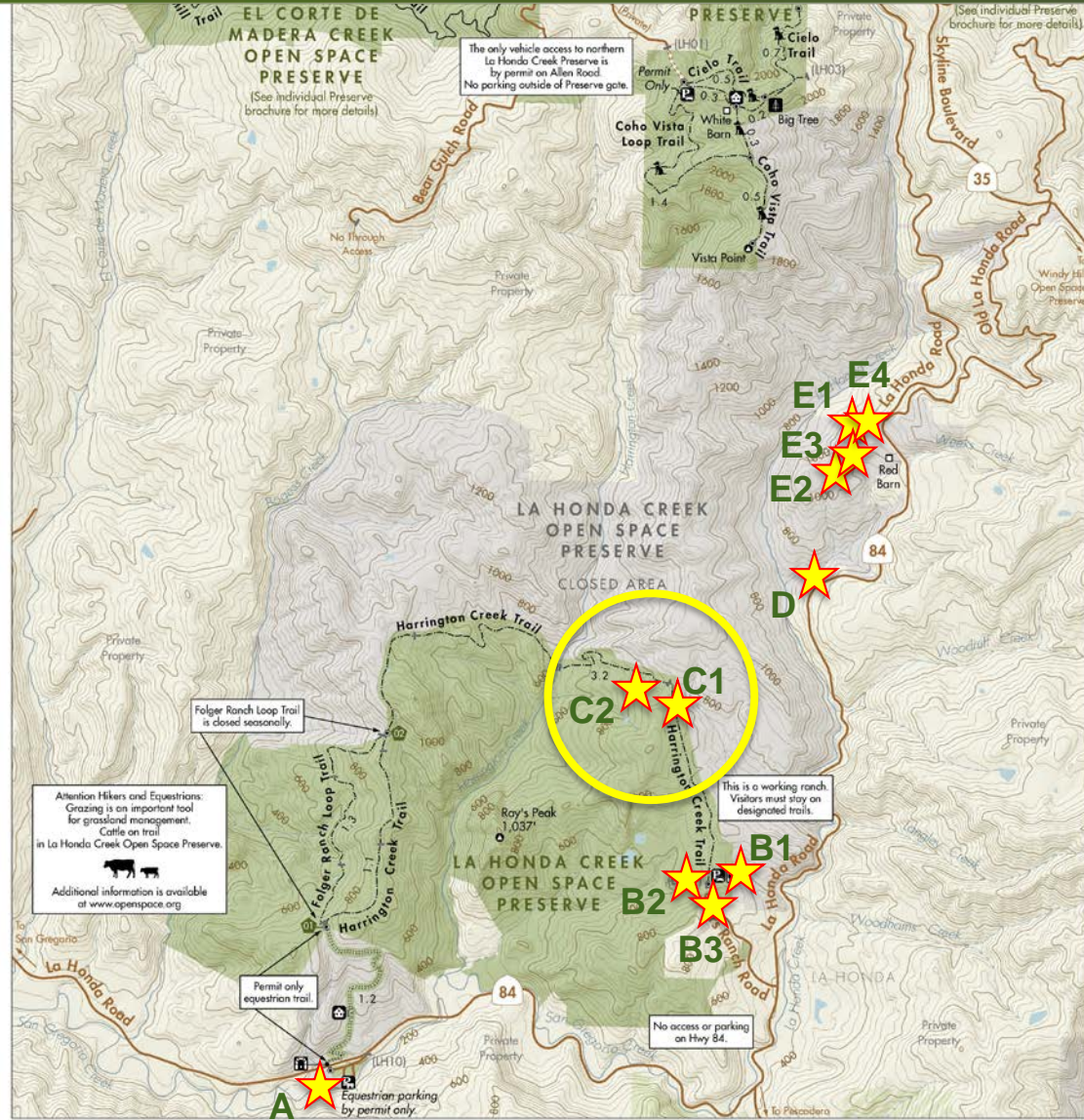
B3. Sears Ranch Road – Gate LH15





Site C1 and C2.

Sears Ranch Road – Former Residence Area



OPEN SPACE
 For More Information
 Visit www.openspace.org
 or call (650) 691-1200

Map Legend

- Midpen 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 (#)
- 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

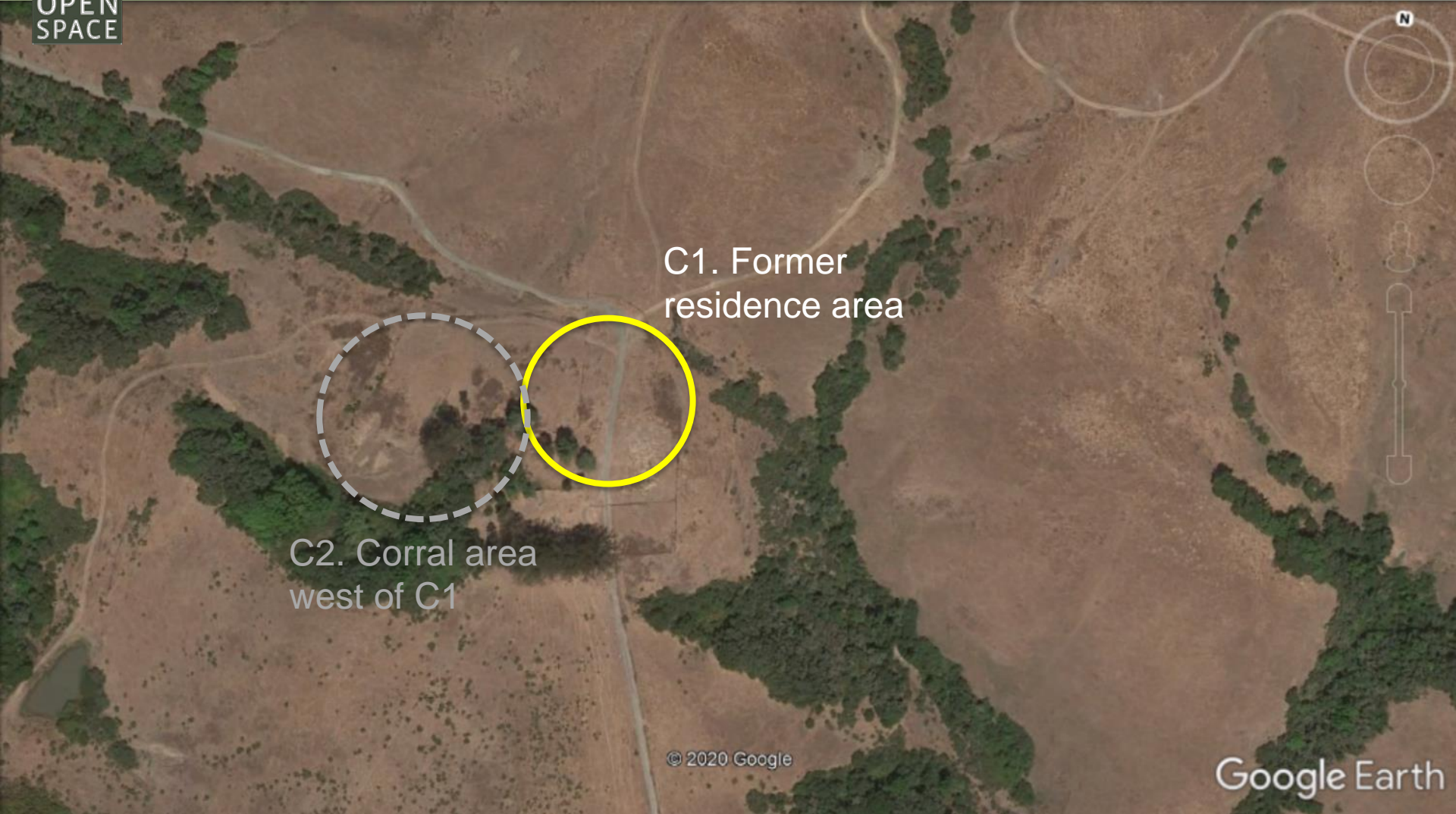
In case of emergency, call 911 or 24-hour Ranger Dispatch at (650) 968-4411.

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





C1. 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



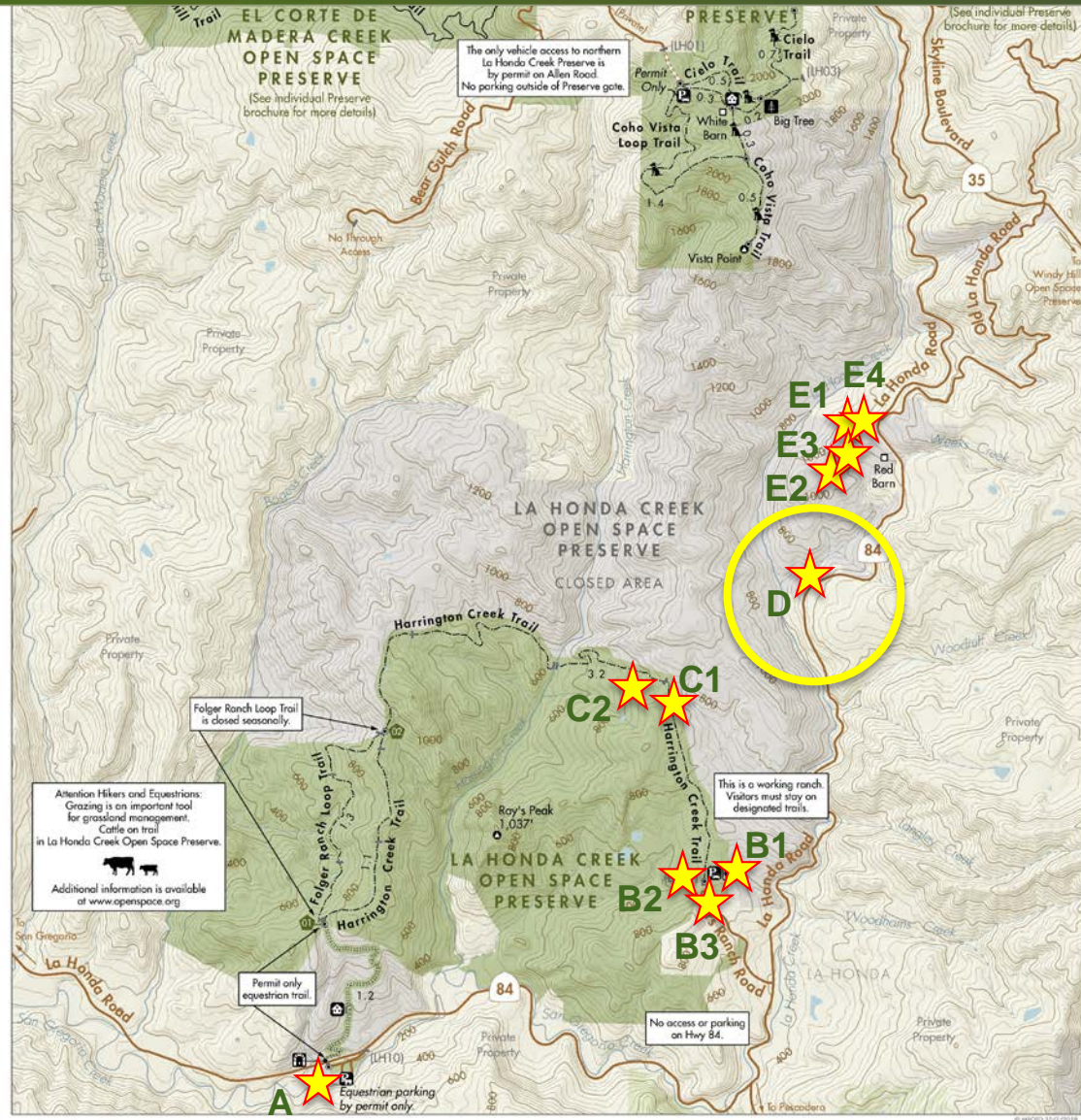


C2. Sears Ranch Road – Cattle Corral West of Former Residence Area – Site on the Left Side





Site D. Preserve Gate LH07



OPEN SPACE
 For More Information
 Visit www.openspace.org
 or call (650) 691-1200

Map Legend

- Midpen 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 (#)
- 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 burglaries are increasing;
 Take valuables with you and lock your vehicle.



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





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

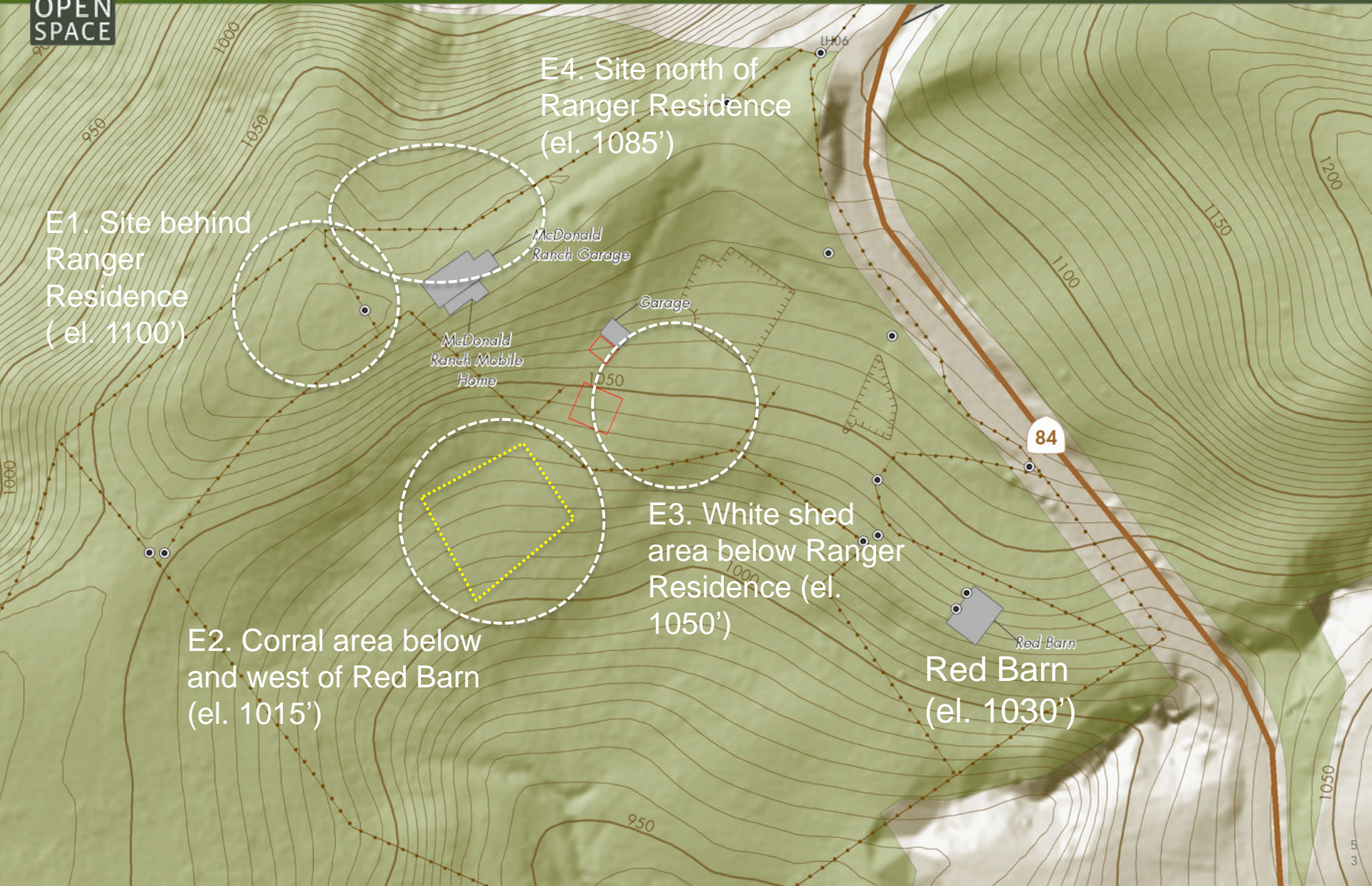
LHC Red Barn

© 2018 Google

Google Earth



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



E4. Site north of Ranger Residence (el. 1085')

E1. Site behind Ranger Residence (el. 1100')

E2. Corral area below and west of Red Barn (el. 1015')

E3. White shed area below Ranger Residence (el. 1050')

Red Barn (el. 1030')

McDonald Ranch Garage

McDonald Ranch Mobile Home

Garage

Red Barn

84



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

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

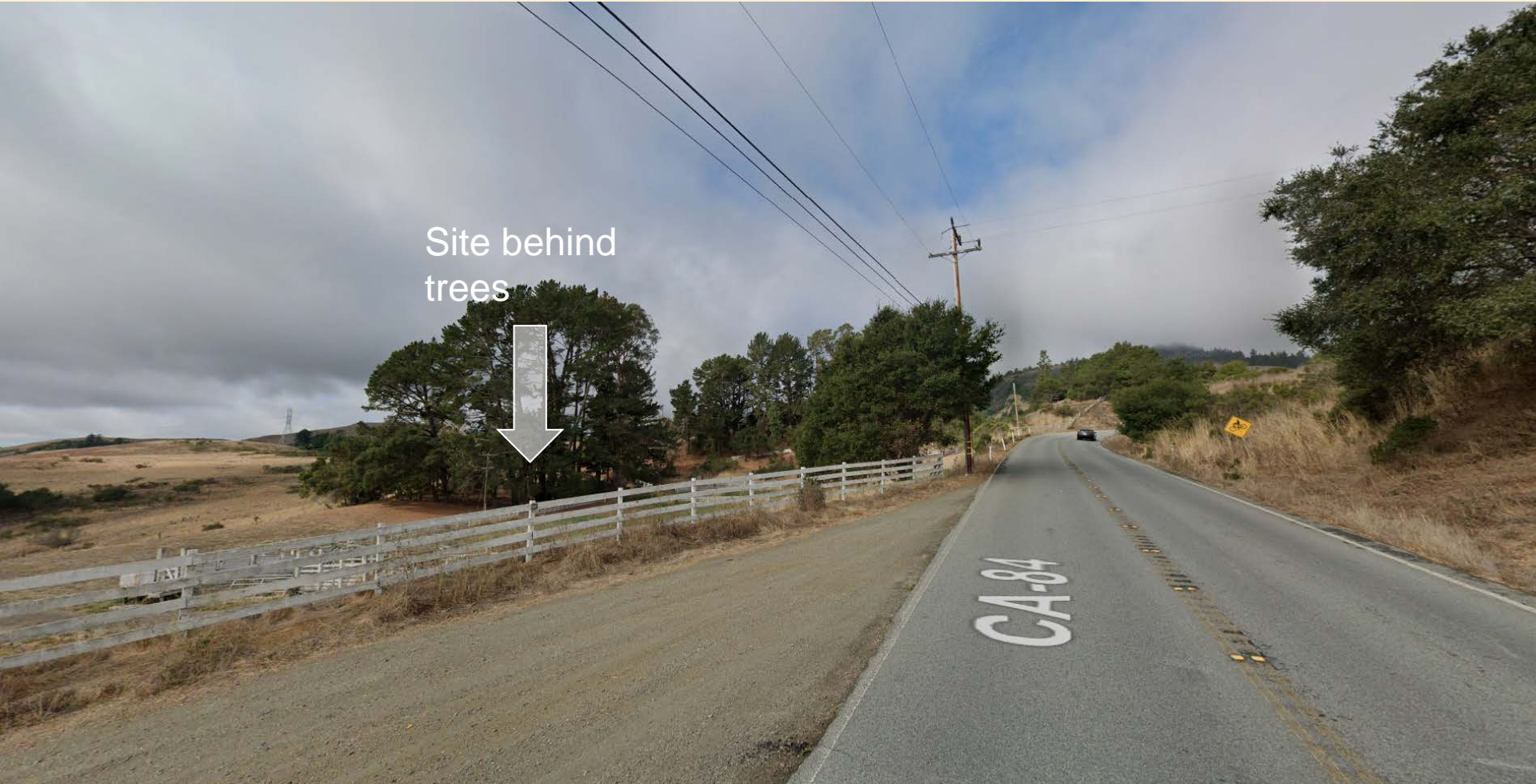


E3. Red Barn Area – White Shed Area below Ranger Residence





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



Site behind
trees



E4. Red Barn Area – Area north of Ranger Residence

E4. Area north of
Ranger Residence

E1. Site behind
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



E4. Red Barn Area – Area north of Ranger Residence



Site looking east



Driveway out of view to right





E4. Red Barn Area – Area north of Ranger Residence



Site looking east

Driveway out of view to right

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*





Committee Questions on Sites and Options



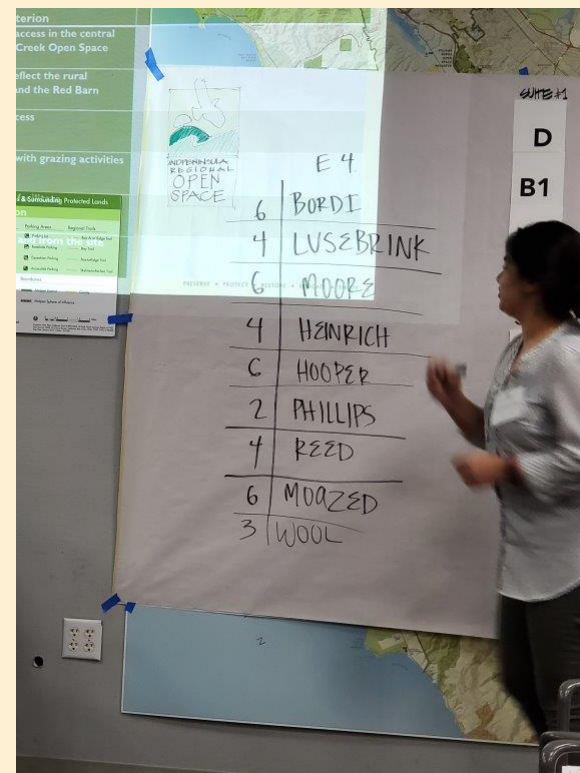


PAWVG Deliberations and Recommendation



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 Recommendation

- **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





Other 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.

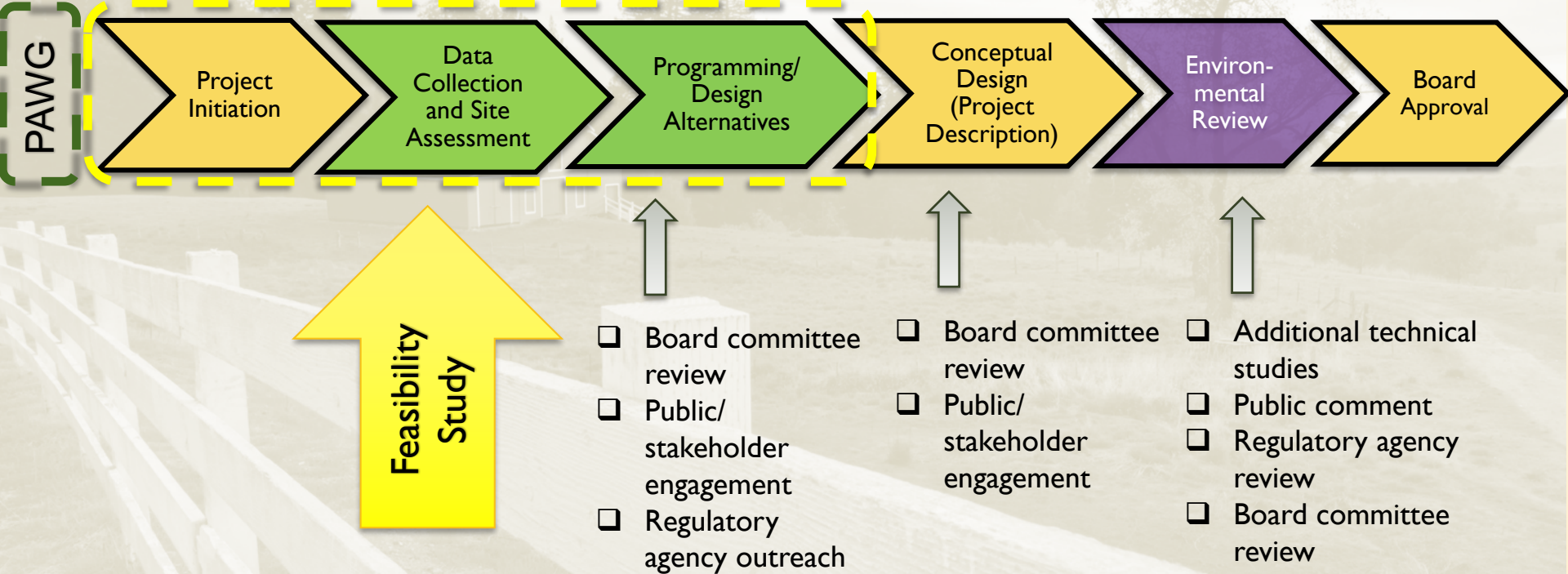


Timeline and Next Steps

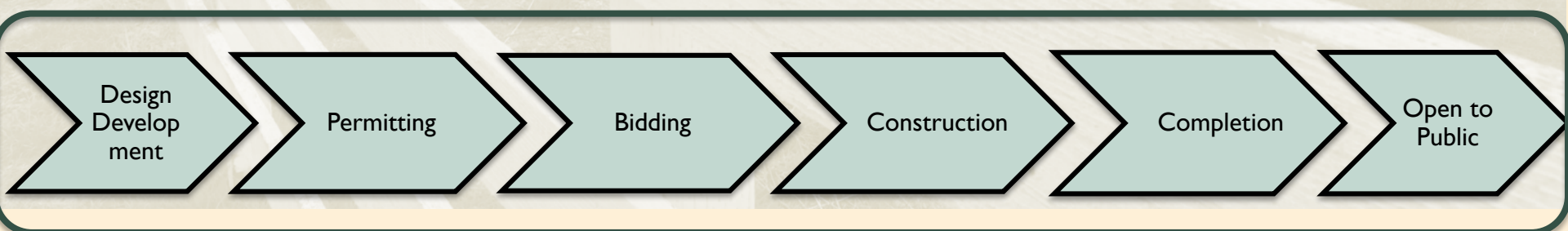


Project Development and Implementation Process

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 – PAWG-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
Option 1: PNR forwards to Board	Virtual	Planning and Natural Resources Committee – review PAWG findings and recommendations
Option 2: PNR requests additional information from PAWG	Virtual	Aug – PAWG meeting to respond to PNR feedback if needed Sept – PNR Committee meeting to receive PAWG response Nov – Board meeting (assuming PNR forwards to Board)



Chair and Vice-Chair Remarks





Committee Questions, Public Comment, Committee Discussion and Action





General Manager's Recommendation

Select one of the following actions:

Forward the La Honda Public Access Working Group's recommendations to the full Board of Directors for consideration of approval with any modifications as requested by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee, and recommend that the Working Group be dissolved, and a recognition issued thanking the group for their contributions.

OR

Direct the Working Group to reconvene to respond to any requests for additional information needed by the Committee.



Thank you



*Photo credit
Melissa Borges*