



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-16-130
Meeting 16-25
October 12, 2016

AGENDA ITEM 9

AGENDA ITEM

Resolution in Support of National Monument Status Designation for Cotoni-Coast Dairies.

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Discuss and consider adoption of a resolution in support of the establishment of a Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument as part of an expansion of the existing California Coastal National Monument.

SUMMARY

At the September 28, 2016 Board meeting, staff made the Board aware of a request by Sara Barth, Executive Director of the Sempervirens Fund, to endorse the establishment of a Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument as part of an expansion of the existing California Coastal National Monument and its potential to forward the District's mission. A majority of the Board directed staff to research the matter.

The **California Coastal National Monument Expansion Act** authored by Sen. Barbara Boxer seeks to add six land-based "gateways" to the California Coastal National Monument (CCNM), established in 2000 to protect islets, reefs and outcroppings along the 1100-mile California coastline, most of which are inaccessible.

The gateways will provide places for the public to view, access and appreciate a national treasure: California's magnificent coastline. They include:

- Cotoni-Coast Dairies Public Lands (5800 acres, Santa Cruz County)
- Piedras Blancas Light Station (20 acres, San Luis Obispo County)
- Trinidad Head (12 acres including lighthouse, Humboldt County)
- Lost Coast Headlands (465 acres, Humboldt County)
- Lighthouse Ranch (8 acres, Humboldt County)

A sixth gateway, the 1665-acre Point Arena–Stornetta Public Lands, was added to the California Coastal National Monument in March 2014 by President Obama and is now called the Point Arena–Stornetta National Monument.

The establishment of the Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument as part of the California Coastal National Monument Expansion Act is consistent with the District's mission of open space preservation and habitat restoration in that it would preserve 5800 acres of land in Santa Cruz County that has scenic, environmental, and anthropological significance. This District has interests in Santa Cruz County where it owns and manages 1,511 acres.

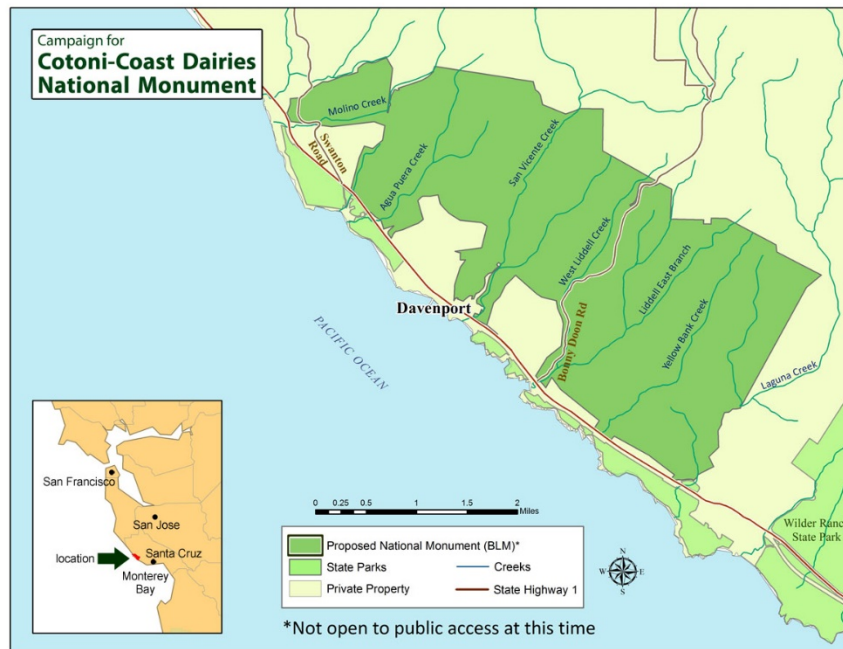
MEASURE AA

This measure does not have direct impact on Measure AA Priority Actions, although it would protect habitats and species in Santa Cruz County in a manner similar to the protection afforded to habitats and species in San Mateo County to the north, all of which is part of the Santa Cruz Mountains bioregion.

DISCUSSION

Background:

The Cotoni-Coast Dairies lands offer significant views of the California Coastal National Monument and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. From atop its highest marine terrace, at an elevation of 800 feet, one can see the sweep of the California coast and the curve of the Monterey Bay, one of the richest nearshore marine environments on earth.



The Cotoni-Coast Dairies lands were occupied by the Cotoni people for some 12,000 years pre-contact. Four archeological sites have been found on the Cotoni-Coast Dairies lands, but only 2% of the property has been surveyed. There could be many more.

The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, which represents the descendants of the Cotoni people, supports the CCNMEA and specifically the Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument.

Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument would be the first national monument to honor the indigenous people of California's Central Coast—which had the densest population north of Mexico City in the Western Hemisphere at the time of European contact. Anthropologists estimate that some 30,000 Ohlone-speaking people occupied what we now call the Greater Bay Area. (The desert Southwest, by contrast, was far less populated, yet is home to nearly two-dozen national monuments honoring native peoples.)

Cotoni-Coast Dairies is also a significant source of biodiversity. Most of the state lies within a global biodiversity hotspot called the California Floristic Province, where the Mediterranean climate fosters high biodiversity. Within the CFP are four regions of exceptional biodiversity, one being the Coast Range, the home of Cotoni-Coast Dairies. Cotoni-Coast Dairies offers an especially dense and varied selection of plant communities even for the Coast Range, with 14 native vegetation communities including redwoods and two types of grasslands. It is home to many special-status plant and animal species.

Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument would be the first monument in the national portfolio to recognize the globally significant biodiversity of California's Coast Range. The marine terraces of Cotoni-Coast Dairies offer a unique window onto the geological history of the continent and the Pacific Ocean.

Also of significance is the wildlife connectivity Cotoni-Coast Dairies provides. Home to six watersheds and multiple ecosystems, Cotoni-Coast Dairies provides food and shelter for many animals, including the iconic mountain lion. It connects to 15,000 acres of protected lands, forming a 21,000-acre bloc of wild lands just an hour from the Bay Area's 7 million people.

Proposal:

The request by the Executive Director of the Sempervirens Funds is for the Board of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to consider adopting a resolution in support of the establishment of a Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument as part of an expansion of the existing California Coastal National Monument.

For the Board to consider taking a position on this measure, the following criteria contained within Board Policy 1.11 "Positions on Ballot Measures and Legislative Advocacy" must be met:

"The Board may consider taking a position on the measure/proposition if the measure/proposition:

- i. Would directly impact the District's finances, responsibilities, legal authority, or operations; AND
- ii. Is in line with or inconsistent with the District's mission and/or commitment to preserve open space within its boundaries and sphere of influence. "

The primary means by which this action is consistent with Board Policy is through its direct impact on local habitats and historic, cultural resources that ultimately link to District lands and resources.

The CCNMEA has received broad support from elected representatives, nonprofit organizations and the public. Authored by Sen. Barbara Boxer, it is supported by Gov. Jerry Brown, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Rep. Anna Eshoo, Rep. Jared Huffman, Rep. Lois Capps, Rep. Sam Farr and California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird.

Among the many environmental groups supporting the act are: Sempervirens Fund, the Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, Save the Redwoods League, The Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, the Wilderness Society, and Latino Outdoors.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with adoption of a resolution in support of Santa Clara County Measure A.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

This item was not previously reviewed by a Board Committee.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. No additional notice is required.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

If approved by the Board of Directors, a copy of the resolution in support of the establishment of a Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument as part of an expansion of the existing California Coastal National Monument will be sent to the Sempervirens Fund and the Office of the President of the United States.

Attachment

1. Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Supporting Endorsing the Proposed Establishment of a Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument as Part of an Expansion of the Existing California Coastal National Monument.

Responsible Department Head:
Shelly Lewis, Public Affairs Manager

Prepared by:
Joshua Hugg, Legislative/External Affairs Specialist

Contact Person:
Shelly Lewis, Public Affairs Manager

RESOLUTION 16-__

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT SUPPORTING
THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A COTONI-COAST DAIRIES
NATIONAL MONUMENT, AS PART OF AN EXPANSION OF THE
EXISTING CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT**

WHEREAS, according to information provided by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Antiquities Act of 1906 grants the President authority to designate national monuments in order to protect “objects of historic or scientific interest;” and,

WHEREAS, the California Coastal National Monument was established in 2000 and expanded in 2014; and,

WHEREAS, the 5,800 acre Cotoni-Coast Dairies property on the north coast of Santa Cruz Count, currently held by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), is being considered by the Obama Administration for designation as a National Monument, to become an expansion of the California Coastal National Monument; and,

WHEREAS, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, as expressed in its Mission Statement and 2014 Vision Plan, considers protection of large, interconnected landscapes in the Santa Cruz Mountains an important strategy for climate change resilience that benefit the portion of the Santa Cruz Mountains in the District’s jurisdiction.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District hereby endorses the proposed establishment of a Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District on ____, 2016, at a regular meeting thereof, by the following vote:

* * * * *

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Secretary
Board of Directors

President
Board of Directors

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

General Counsel

I, the District Clerk of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District by the above vote at a meeting thereof duly held and called on the above day.

District Clerk