

November 5, 2015

Subject: Public Meeting Comments and Responses - Pedro Point Headlands Restoration Project, Pacifica, California

Dear Kathy,

Fall Creek Engineering, Inc. (FCE) has prepared the following letter to consolidate all of the questions and comments that resulted from our public meeting on September 10, 2015, at the Pacifica Community Center. The comments are the result of the small group breakout session and also include any additional comments that were presented via the website or e-mail. As many of the comments and questions were duplicative, FCE limited those comments to a single comment. The questions and comments are presented below. FCE responses are presented in italics.

Q1: What do you like about the project?

1. Gratitude to Pacifica Land Trust (PLT) for moving forward with plans to improve the Pedro Point Headlands – thrilled about open space.

Our design team is thrilled to be involved in this project.

2. Showing added trail – additional connectivity.

The additional trail, Option 1, was considered to allow for better connectivity from the bluff to the future California Coastal Trail (CCT). Unfortunately this connection will not be made as part of this project. Locations with unstable soils have been identified in the proposed trail area and increase the complexity of the construction. The cost to build this trail exceeds the budget allocated for all of the other trail improvements. A connecting trail between the Middle Ridge Trail and the future CCT may be considered in the future, if and when more funds become available.

3. Decreasing slopes to allow for better access.

Slopes have been decreased to improve access and safety on the site. The proposed trail grades are consistent with the San Mateo County Trails Plan. The trail grades will not exceed 12.5% without the use of switchbacks.

4. Increased slope/trail stability through erosion control and restoration.

The proposed restoration and trails will improve overall stability throughout the Pedro Point Headlands.

5. Happy to see the restoration plans moving forward.

We are happy to be a part of this important and unique project located on one of the most beautiful sites in California.

6. Narrower trails to allow for restoration of native vegetation.

The proposed trails will be narrowed from almost 20 feet in some areas to a 4-foot wide pedestrian trail. In areas where a multi-use trail is proposed, the trail will be 6-foot wide with additional 4-foot wide passing areas. The narrowed trails will reduce site erosion and enhance habitat throughout Pedro Point Headlands.

7. Happy to see multi-agency collaboration.

We are too. It has been a transparent and seamless process working with the Pacifica Land Trust, City of Pacifica, San Mateo County, and the Coastal Conservancy. A real sense of commitment and appreciation around the project has been expressed by all of the agencies involved in the project.

Q2: What improvements would you like to see to the plans?

1. Multiuse trail to include bikes and equestrian.

The construction of a multiuse trail will be considered for a limited portion of the trail network as part of this project. Due to the overwhelming responses expressing a desire for a multiuse trail, the PLT will revise the proposed trail plan so that a portion of the South Ridge Trail will be multiuse. This portion will start at the staging area and end at a new lookout/vista point at the top of the trail. All of the new switchbacks at the lower end of the trail will be designed as a multiuse trail. The multiuse portion of the trail will be terminated after the lookout, and new signs will be placed to inform users that the remainder of the trail is limited to pedestrian use. The reason for this limitation is that, beyond this point in the trail, there are several areas of significant soil instability. To try to create a wider multiuse trail in these areas would exceed the financial limitations of this restoration project. A multiuse loop trail that connects this new trail to the middle ridge trail and ultimately back down to the future California Coastal Trail (CCT), may be considered during the planning of the CCT.

2. Consider a looped multiuse trail (multiuse does not have to include all trails).

See Response to #1 above.

3. Include information about how quickly erosion and land-sliding is occurring.

The rate of erosion is difficult to quantify as it is the result of many environmental factors including the rainfall, land movement, bluff retreat/erosion, soil cover, soil type, and even wind patterns. A complete study of erosion rates and coastal bluff retreat is beyond the scope of this project.

4. Include information about how poison oak will be managed.

Poison oak will not be actively managed at the Pedro Point Headlands (PPH). Trail management by the volunteer PPH Stewards will prevent encroachment by all foliage, including poison oak.

5. Include signage for trails, colors for trail levels, distances, and elevation.

Signs indicating trail names are currently found in several locations within PPH. These signs will be replaced, as necessary, to indicate the proposed trail network. The trail signs are not part of the current scope of work and will be updated over time. A new kiosk is planned as part of this project and will identify the new trail network. Additionally trail closures and other information will be posted on the new kiosk.

6. If dogs are allowed provide trash cans and bags for dog waste.

Dogs are currently allowed at PPH. Dogs will continue to be allowed; however, must be on leash. It will be the responsibility of dog owners to provide dog waste management materials. A trash receptacle will be considered adjacent to the new kiosk.

7. Keep some trails steep.

Several of the trails at PPH exceed standards for trail slope. Some of the over-steepened trails are experiencing high rates of erosion. The trails that have been identified for realignment currently have slopes in excess of 25%. The proposed trail grades are consistent with the San Mateo County Trails Plan. The trail grades will not exceed 12.5% without the use of switchbacks.

8. Add raised overlooks for plant protection at vista points.

We are considering several types of vista point/overlook configurations. Raised overlooks are an option that we are considering.

9. Natural ways to keep users safe on trails.

We are considering several natural methods to keep users safe on the trails. Natural berming, reduced grades, safe switchbacks with landings, and designated overlooks are all part of the project. Additionally, new trail maps, signs, and possibly fencing will all help to keep users on the trails and minimize dangers of bluffs, steep slopes, and unstable surfaces.

10. Include interpretive signs about history, plants, habitats (Shelter Cover, Sweeny Ridge, Portola Point, Coastal Prairie).

We will be working with the Pacifica Land Trust and the County of San Mateo Parks department to decide on a comprehensive educational and interpretative plan for the site. The plan will be implemented as funds are available. The PLT also has an "Explore the Coast" grant to create educational content to be accessed by scanning QR chips located throughout PPH. In addition, the USDI Bureau of Land Management will be partnering with the PLT and San Mateo County Parks to develop signage about nesting seabirds on Pedro Rock.

11. Ensure that trails are sustainable, minimizing erosion and limiting maintenance.

The intent of the project is to restore the land where old trail scars remain throughout the Pedro Point Headlands. The proposed restoration will minimize erosion throughout the site. The proposed trails are planned to be sustainable and require limited maintenance.

Q3: What is your vision for PPH beyond the scope of this project?

These comments have been included for completeness; however, some of the ideas expressed are not within the scope of this project. These ideas should be carried forward and considered during future development of the site. FCE has indicated additional information that would be required to consider these ideas in the future.

1. Loop Trail from South Ridge Trail to Devil's Slide Trail.

Additional technical studies would be required to evaluate the feasibility for constructing a trail from the South Ridge Trail to the Devil's Slide Trail. The technical studies would include:

- *Geologic and geotechnical Investigation of the area immediately upslope of the Devil's Slide Trail;*
- *Biological and cultural resource assessment of the hillside between the South Ridge Trail and Devil's Slide Trail; and*
- *Topographic mapping of the hillside between the South Ridge Trail and Devil's Slide Trail.*

2. Accommodate more tourist interest with the promotion of parks across agencies.

- *Additional multi agency coordination between PLT, City, County, etc., is recommended to determine how additional tourism could be linked to the PPH site project.*

3. Connect Shamrock Ranch to Pedro Point Headlands/Future Coastal Trail with a direct trail.

To connect the Shamrock Ranch to the PPH would require additional technical studies and evaluation, as discussed above, for the connector trail from the South Ridge to the Devil's Slide Trail.

4. Multi-use access for pedestrians, equestrians, and mountain bikers.

- *Coordination between property owners and community to determine the extent of multi-use trails.*

5. More visitor destination and businesses serving the destination.

- *FCE would recommend that the PLT continue to work with local businesses, business associations, and educational organizations to promote the PPH as an eco-tourist destination for outdoor recreation and education.*

6. Continue restoration with volunteers.

- *PLT has established a strong local volunteer program that will hopefully continue to grow and be more supported as the site is restored and made more accessible through the trails projects.*

- *The PPH Stewardship program, supported by the Coastal Conservancy, is entering its sixth year of trail maintenance, land restoration and invasive plant removal.*

7. Rank and prioritize the removal of invasive species of plants (cape ivy/Eucalyptus).

- *This is a priority of the PLT and efforts to restore the site will continue with additional funding and volunteer efforts.*

8. Add additional parking to accommodate users and provide better access to the site.

- *Parking for the site is located at the trail head for the Devil's Slide Trail. Trail access is available from the parking area to the Pedro Point Headlands trail network. These facilities will be maintained.*
- *No additional Parking is planned for the site at this time.*
- *Development of the new CCT will allow for better pedestrian and bicycle access to the site from Pacifica.*
- *Development of the Green Valley Trail will also increase access to the site.*

9. Shuttle Access (via SamTrans).

With the completion of the overall trail networks in the PPH area, such as this project and the Green Valley Trail project, FCE expects that the demand of a coastal shuttle to serve this area from San Francisco will increase over the next few years. To facilitate the establishment of a eco - tourist shuttle from San Francisco that could serve San Francisco, Daly City, Pacifica and potentially Half Moon Bay would require some baseline work to be completed to determine the following:

- *Public involvement to identify need for additional shuttle access;*
- *Rider/use study and cost/benefit analysis; and*
- *Coordination between agencies.*

10. Interpretative signage and/or virtual tours via QR Codes.

- *The PLT is developing extensive interpretive information funded by an Explore the Coast / Virtual Pedro Point Headlands grant from the Coastal Conservancy. Additional signage will be developed in collaboration with San Mateo County Parks and USDI Bureau of Land Management (see #10, Q2 above).*

This concludes our responses to the comments received during our public meeting, via e-mail, and comment cards. We have also documented and cataloged the comments from the meeting, which can be made available upon request.

Sincerely,

ROBYN COOPER, MS, PE
Senior Engineer