

Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 25 (October 26-30)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 25, October 26-30 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. This is the final update. Check out the glamour shots (below) of the finished project!

Also, remember that all of the project photos, videos and a pdf of these updates can be found at the RCD website: [Dark Gulch Project Gallery](#).

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

The requisite panoramic of the restored crossing from the northwest side. Downstream Dark Gulch is to the left and to the right is Old Haul Road heading west. (My car is parked on the crossing... because I can.)



Another panoramic from above the crossing (on the Ocean View Trail) looking downstream on Dark Gulch (straight ahead).



Yes... I took a selfie with the crossing.



Close up of the erosion control on the north slope (downstream side) of the crossing. Already seeing growth (barley, sterile).



Example of the improvements to Old Haul Road west of the Dark Gulch construction site: rocked road and new ditch relief culvert (inlet).



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 24 (October 19-23)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 24, October 19-23 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. We are at the finish line....:

- Re-doing a bit of road shaping. (See pics.) Unfortunately a very large redwood had to be removed by CAL FIRE over the previous weekend. It was still burning (higher up) and CAL FIRE had to drop water on it multiple times because they were concerned the burning tree posed a risk of spreading the fire across the road to the north/unburnt area). It was at risk of falling, so CAL FIRE had to cut it and the emergency work damaged a section of the freshly graded road. (In fact, the damaged section of road is the same as the area that the crew was working on in the picture from the Week 23 update.)
- Finished up erosion control measures at Dark Gulch.

Looking ahead to next week:

- Laying down rock on portions of Old Haul Road.
- Finishing up any remaining touch-ups to the road drainage and installation of erosion control measures.

As I have previously noted, although this project is wrapping up, the Giacomini crew will continue to do fire suppression repair and recovery work for CAL FIRE on Old Haul Road and elsewhere in the Pescadero Creek County Park Complex for a little while longer. Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) with photos and videos.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic of the restored crossing from the northwest side. Downstream Dark Gulch is to the left. Old Haul Road heads east straight ahead. The different color on the sloped side of the crossing is the erosion control.



Panoramic including large stump from burning hazard tree removed by CAL FIRE along of Old Haul Road west of the Dark Gulch crossing. On the right, the road heads west. The stump is center, right up high. When the tree was downed, it fell across the slope in the center of the panoramic and over the road (just below the view of this photo).



Hazard tree after CAL FIRE had to remove it (with Les Giacomini for scale.)



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 23 (October 12-16)

Good Afternoon,

This is the – very, very belated – Week 23, October 12-16 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. Not much to report as the crew is finishing the last of the work:

- Road drainage improvements (e.g., culverts, critical dips, etc) along Old Haul Road between Dark Gulch crossing and the start of the road at Hoffman Creek Bridge.
- Erosion control measures at Dark Gulch.
- Moving equipment out from the Dark Gulch site (i.e. “demobilizing”)

Looking ahead to next (i.e. this) week:

- Finishing up any remaining touch-ups to the road drainage and installation of erosion control measures.

As I have previously noted, although this project is wrapping up, the Giacomini crew will continue to do fire suppression repair and recovery work for CAL FIRE on Old Haul Road and elsewhere in the Pescadero Creek County Park Complex for quite awhile.

Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) with photos and videos.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic of the restored crossing. Old Haul Road heads west on the left side and east towards the right. For comparison the Week 3 panoramic from (basically) the same location is included.



Panoramic of the “bench” next to the crossing where the excavated material was stored during the construction. It got really big and then shrank back down to this size. The crew spread wood chips on the lower portion and the road sloping up from the left to right side leads to the skid road that the crew created for CAL FIRE access during the CZU August Lightning Fires. Going forwards, it’s going to be maintained for fire response access.



Excavator working on reshaping the road (east of Dark Gulch crossing) for proper drainage of stormwater.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 22 (October 5-9)

Good Morning,

This is the – very belated – Week 22, October 5-9 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. Great news to share: The crossing is really a crossing again!! (Yes, that merits 2 exclamation points :o)

Accomplishments this week:

- The Giacomini crew finished backfilling the excavated crossing (i.e. the pit) with engineered fill to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height. See photos below.
- Installation of road drainage improvements (e.g., culverts, critical dips, etc) along Old Haul Road between Dark Gulch crossing and the start of the road at Hoffman Creek Bridge. As noted last week, the crew had already been doing some road work as part of the fire “suppression repair” work for CAL FIRE.
- Moving excavated logs and stumps to stockpile areas.
- Grading the “bench” area adjacent to the Dark Gulch crossing (where the excavated fill had been temporarily stored).

Looking ahead to next (i.e. this) week:

- Finishing up work around the Dark Gulch crossing (e.g., seeding, permanent erosion control)
- Finishing up road drainage improvements.

Lastly, I want to note that although this project is wrapping up, the Giacomini crew will continue to do fire suppression repair and recovery work for CAL FIRE on Old Haul Road and elsewhere in the Pescadero Creek County Park Complex for quite awhile.

Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) with photos and videos.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic of the restored crossing (left side) and “bench” next to the crossing. Excavator (to the far right) is finishing up the last of the grading.



Obligatory panoramic overlooking the crossing from NW side.



View of the crossing from the east side.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 21 (September 28- October 2)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 21, September 28- October 2 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. The story this week was – once again – moving dirt!

Accomplishments this week:

- The Giacomini crew are almost done backfilling the excavated crossing (i.e. the pit) with engineered fill to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height. See photos below. Note that I took pictures first thing in the morning on Friday, and there is a good chance that they finished this up by the end of the day today... which is finishing up about now (5p).

Looking ahead to next week:

- Road drainage improvements along Old Haul Road between Dark Gulch crossing and the start of the road at Hoffman Creek Bridge. (Note that some of this work has already begun in conjunction with the “suppression repair” work for CAL FIRE along the road.)
- Finishing up work around the Dark Gulch crossing (e.g., permanent erosion control, moving logs to stockpile sites, etc.)

Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) with photos and videos.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic of the stockpile on the “bench” next to the crossing excavation. Most of the excavated material that was suitable for reconstructing the crossing has been stored here.



Overlooking the crossing from NW side. It's almost completely filled in!



In the crossing, looking upstream. Note that the bottom of the crossing is noticeably higher than just a week ago.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 20 (September 21-25)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 20, September 21-25 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. Not sure this update is needed – it is exactly the same as last week's, and even some of the photo descriptions are the same! But for you die-hard Dark Gulch fans, here goes:

Accomplishments this week:

- The Giacomini crew continued backfilling the excavated crossing (i.e. the pit) with engineered fill to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height. (See photos below.) They made really good progress this week.

Looking ahead to next week:

- ...Continue placing engineered fill into the excavation to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height.

Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) each week in case you want to check out most recent videos as well.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic of the stockpile on the “bench” next to the crossing excavation. Most of the excavated material that was suitable for reconstructing the crossing has been stored here. The pile shrank significantly this week as the crew backfilled the crossing.



Overlooking the crossing from NW side. Downstream on Dark Gulch is to the left. The crew has made good progress backfilling the crossing with engineered fill.



In the crossing, looking upstream. Note how much higher up the bottom of the crossing is now (compared with weeks 11 and 12) that the crew has backfilled with engineered fill.



View of the culvert outlet from just downstream and looking upstream at the crossing fill.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 19 (September 14-18)

Good Morning,

This is the Week 19, September 14-18 update (much delayed) on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. It was a (happily) uneventful week of moving dirt...

Accomplishments this week:

- The Giacomini crew continued backfilling the excavated crossing (i.e. the pit) with engineered fill to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height. (See photos below.) They made really good progress this week.

Looking ahead to next week:

- ...Continue placing engineered fill into the excavation to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height.

Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) each week in case you want to check out most recent videos as well.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic of the stockpile on the “bench” next to the crossing excavation. Most of the excavated material that was suitable for reconstructing the crossing has been stored here. The pile shrank significantly this week as the crew backfilled the crossing.



Overlooking the crossing from NW side. Downstream on Dark Gulch is to the left. The crew has made good progress backfilling the crossing with engineered fill.



In the crossing, looking downstream. Note how much higher up the bottom of the crossing is now (compared with weeks 11 and 12) that the crew has backfilled with engineered fill.



In the crossing, looking upstream at the culvert inlet and Dark Gulch creek.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 18 (September 8-11)

Good Morning,

This is the Week 18, September 8-11 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park.

Accomplishments this week:

- With the culvert installation completed last week, the Giacomini construction crew began this week by digging out the fill around the culvert at the downstream end and replacing it with engineered, compacted fill. (See photo below.) Recall that this short segment of the trench (and culvert) were filled in quickly on Aug 19 during the fire response on Old Haul Road to allow for vehicle access across the Dark Gulch crossing excavation. This connected to a temporary access (skid) road that the Giacomini crew cut from the bottom of excavation up to Old Haul Road on the east side.
- Also on Tuesday, the dewatering system was removed. (See photo below.) This system was temporarily diverting the creek flow around the construction site. Now that the culvert pipe is in place to convey the flow through the crossing, the dewatering system is no longer needed. (Check out the video at the [Dark Gulch gallery page](#) – with slo-mo (thank you, Kiel ;o) – of the flow from the culvert outlet, here:
- During the rest of the week the crew made impressive progress on backfilling the excavated crossing (i.e. the pit) with engineered fill to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height. (See photos below.) To clarify, Wednesday was less productive... the reason for which will be obvious from the photos, below.
- County Parks and CAL FIRE are coordinating and planning fire recovery and repair in park properties, and I am working with them to support their efforts along Old Haul Road.

Looking ahead to next week:

- ...Continue placing engineered fill into the excavation to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height.

Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) each week in case you want to check out most recent videos as well.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Tuesday September 8: Giacomini crew digging out the fill around the culvert at the downstream end and replacing it with engineered, compacted fill. Also, crew are carrying out the last of the white dewatering pipes. (Looking downstream.)



Tuesday September 8: Kiel Rosetti (construction foreman) finishing removal of the dewatering system coffer dam upstream of the crossing. This was where the creek water was temporarily diverted (into the white pipes) around the construction and back into the creek below the crossing construction. With the new culvert fully installed and functioning, dewatering is no longer necessary!



Thursday September 10: Overlooking the crossing from NW side. Downstream on Dark Gulch is to the left. The crew has made good progress backfilling the crossing with engineered fill.



Comparing afternoon on Mars Day (September 9, 2020) vs. on a “regular” day (9/10/2020).



Dark Gulch crossing on Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 3:00pm



Dark Gulch crossing on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 5:30pm

Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 17 (August 31-September 4)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 17, August 31- Sep 4 update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. CAL FIRE crews are still working hard to fully contain the CZU August Lightning Complex fires, but the Dark Gulch construction crew was able to return to work fully on the crossing repair project.

Accomplishments this week:

- The Giacomini construction crew completed installation of the culvert pipe segments. On Thursday, they poured the concrete for the pipe connections and the headwall at the culvert inlet. (See pic) The culvert is not fully installed!
- The crew backfilled the rest of the culvert trench such that the pipe is no longer visible. (See pics below)

Looking ahead to next week:

- The crew still has to dig out the fill around the culvert at the downstream end and replace it with engineered, compacted fill. (Note: This short segment of the trench (and culvert) were filled in quickly on Aug 19 during the fire response on Old Haul Road to allow for vehicle access across the Dark Gulch crossing excavation. This connected to a temporary access (skid) road that the Giacomini crew cut from the bottom of excavation up to Old Haul Road on the east side. (See pics below))
- Now that the drainage features are installed, the crew will start placing engineered fill into the excavation to build up a stable crossing back to the original road height. (In other words, soon we'll be saying 'bye bye' to the giant pit.)

A note about the fire impact at Dark Gulch:

- As I mentioned in last week's update, the fire was held at Old Haul Road. The fire burned right up to the south side of the Dark Gulch construction site, but caused no damage to the site itself.
- For the most part, the fire around Dark Gulch was probably pretty low and not very intense.
- One exception was in a spot on Old Haul Road about 500 feet west of Dark Gulch where a small Humboldt (crib log) crossing under the road burned. (For reference, the original Dark Gulch crossing that we just removed was the same type of crossing – just much much bigger. Also, Parks and the RCD had not known that this crossing was there. It was well-hidden!) As is visible in the picture below, the fire burned much higher near this crossing, and when I visited on Friday (September 4) this area was still smoking a bit, and CAL FIRE crews were checking it periodically.

Photos are below. Also, remember that I am updating the website [project gallery](#) each week in case you want to check out most recent videos as well.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Giacomini crew monitoring the concrete pour and along the culvert pipe. The concrete strengthens the connections between pipe segments to prevent against separation or leaks. (Upstream is to the left in this photo.)



Panoramic overlooking the crossing from NW side. Downstream on Dark Gulch is to the left. The temporary access (skid) road is opposite towards the left side. This was taken after the poured concrete had set, and the culvert trench had been backfilled.



The crew finishing up work on the culvert inlet.



CAL FIRE truck coming back (through the crossing) from checking hotspots on Old Haul Road to the east.



Upstream of the Dark Gulch crossing, showing the burned area. (The white pipe is the dewatering pipe that is carrying the creek flow around the construction site during construction.)



A couple of tree panoramics showing the ash and burn at the bases of the trees, and the green tree tops.



Small Humboldt (crib log) crossing on Old Haul Road about 500 feet west of Dark Gulch the burned under the road. The piles of dirt are where CAL FIRE buried the burning logs to smother the fire. Note that this spot was still smoking on September 4, two weeks after the fire reached this spot.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 16 (August 24-28) – CZU August Lightning Complex Fires (Week 2)

Hi All,

Again, this week's (Week 16, August 24-28) update on [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park, focuses on the CZU August Lightning Complex fires that hit San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties, and the response on Old Haul Road.

Fires near Old Haul Road:

- As noted last week, the spread of the original fires (caused by lightning on August 16th) to the north into Pescadero Creek County Park (and towards the Dark Gulch project) was slow for the first week of the fire. (For the most part the winds blew south and southeast – away from the park during this period.) This northward fire spread remained low, along the ground.
- Fortunately, the lightning and wind storm predicted for Sunday through Monday (8/23-24) bypassed the area.
- By Monday (8/24) afternoon, the fire was fully contained at Old Haul Road – from the western end at Wurr Road all the way east (about 16 miles) almost to Highway 9. (see pic)

Response along Old Haul Road:

As described last week, the RCD, San Mateo County Parks and CAL FIRE worked together have the Dark Gulch construction contractor, Giacomini Enterprises with the help of the project engineer, Tim Best, pivot to work for County Parks on key access and veg management for fire protection on Old Haul Road – alongside Parks staff as well as crews from Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and CAL FIRE.

- Access at Dark Gulch crossing: Thursday (8/20, PM) & Friday (8/21, AM): (see pic)
 - The Giacomini crew finished create access through the excavated Dark Gulch crossing (temporary) to allow for equipment to reach the east side of Old Haul Road.
- Trestle Creek Bridge: Friday (8/21)- Tuesday (8/24): (see pics)
 - The crew replaced the impassable bridge on Old Haul Road (over Trestle Creek) at the east end of the park to restore access for fire trucks and other equipment. This bridge is at the very eastern-most end of Pescadero Creek County Park. Old Haul Road continues east onto Red Tree (private property) for miles, reaching almost to Highway 9.
 - A couple of really positive things to note about this work: The bridge itself was in good condition and could be reinstalled once the failed abutments had been removed and replaced, and the crew had the right equipment to complete the work from the road itself.
 - The process involved removing the train trestle bridge; pulling out “perched” fill (from the old bridge support) that was failing; placing engineered fill and concrete blocks to build the bridge abutments; dragging the bridge back into place; leveling the bridge and placing fill on the road at either end to level the road with the bridge deck.
 - Big shout out to Pescadero Creek County Park neighbor Matt Bissel at Red Tree who helped us out big time. Tim Best and the Giacomini crew needed rock to build up the bridge supports and were at a loss as to how to get the rock in time. Matt offered up the rock he had onsite – which we will replace! – and that made a world of difference in getting the bridge done right and quickly!
- Fire breaks and veg management: (see pics)
 - When the Giacomini crew returned last Thursday (8/20) from Ukiah, they brought a large masticator which they put to good use throughout the last week to clear fuels back from the road to reduce the likelihood that the fire would jump the road.
 - The crew also used their excavators to help create fire breaks wherever needed.
 - Crucially, on Saturday (I think), Les and Mike from Giacomini quickly created a fire break around the slash pile of wood next to Dark Gulch. This is wood that has been pulled out of the crossing during excavation. Park Ranger David Vasquez noted the approaching fire, and they got right on it! (see pics)

Looking forward to next week:

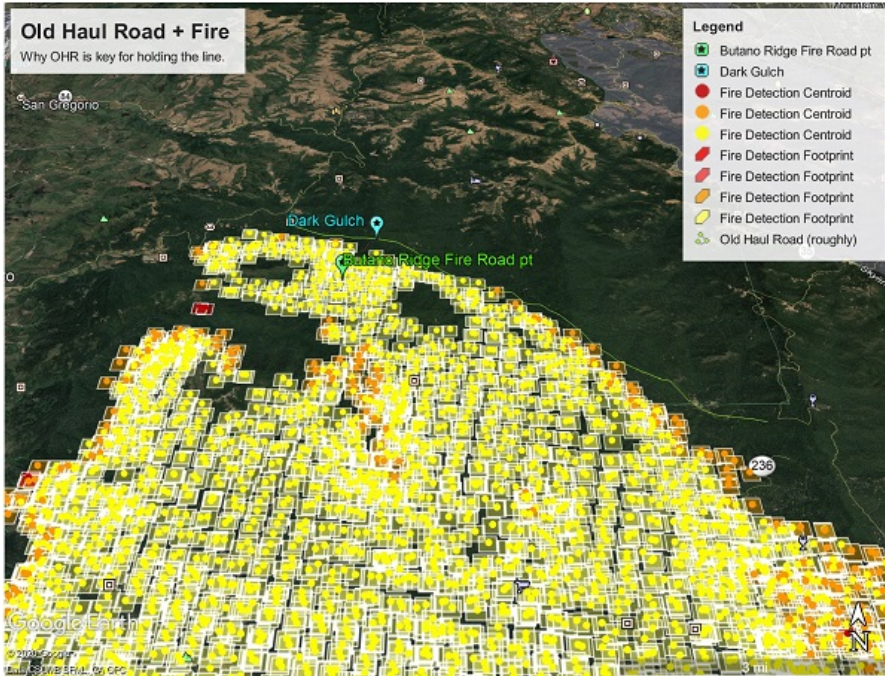
- The Giacomini crew headed home to Ukiah on Wednesday for a well-deserved break.
- They will return Monday (8/31) to get back to work on the Dark Gulch project, installing the rest of the culvert pipe sections and connections.

I hope that you are all well and safe.

Sincerely,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

8/21 (Friday): Map of the fire progression on Friday afternoon. Old Haul Road is roughly drawn (faint green line) just north of the fire boundary. This shows why Old Haul Road ended up being such an important line to hold in the effort to protect areas north if the winds had changed to blow strongly north or northeast.



8/21 (Friday): Temporary access that Giacomini crew created through the excavated Dark Gulch crossing. To the left is Dark Gulch creek downstream. They had to fill in a little section of the trench where they had placed the culvert already. (They will have to pull that fill out later.) Left of center beyond the crossing you can see the skid trail road that they cut to connect back up to Old Haul Road on the east side. This was critical for providing access for trucks and equipment for fire protection work!



8/23 (Sunday): Trestle Creek Bridge: One of the abutments (concrete block in place). Smoky conditions!



8/25 (Tuesday): Trestle Creek Bridge: Dragging the bridge back into place onto the new abutments.



8/26 (Wednesday): Trestle Creek Bridge: Completed!



8/22 (Saturday): Masticator at work.



8/22 (Saturday): Fire approaching the slash (wood) stockpile next to the Dark Gulch construction site.



8/22 (Saturday): Les (Giacomini) in the excavator creating a fire break around the slash pile next to Dark Gulch construction site.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 15 (August 17-21) – CZU August Lightning Complex Fires

(Week 1)

Hi All,

This should be the Week 15 (August 17-21) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park, but with the CZU August Lightning Complex fires that hit San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties this week, priorities have shifted so this update will be about the fires and response in the vicinity of the Dark Gulch project area.

Fires near Dark Gulch:

- 2 of the fires started by lightning strikes on Sunday (“5-15” and “5-14”) were near Butano Ridge which runs (basically) parallel to Old Haul Road to the south by about 1.5 miles. They grew to a few hundred acres by Tuesday and then with very strong winds blowing to the south and south east over Tuesday night, spread and merged with another fire and traveled ~10 miles SSE over a 12 hour period, reaching almost to Bonny Doon. (See satellite photos below from Tuesday 10p & Wednesday 10a)
- Spread of the fires to the north into Pescadero Creek County Park (and towards the Dark Gulch project) was relatively minimal over this same period (Sunday through Wednesday) – mostly because of the wind direction.
- As of yesterday (Thursday) early evening, the fire was slowly creeping its way downslope (north) towards Old Haul Road had reached the road in one or two spots east of Dark Gulch, but had not (to my knowledge) crossed the road. Based on the pictures and information I have received, this northward fire spread has remained low, along the ground. By my estimates, it has traveled less than a mile in 2 days. Based on this progression, the fire will likely reach the Dark Gulch construction site itself later today.

Response along Old Haul Road:

County Parks staff has been working tirelessly throughout the Memorial Park Complex (which includes Pescadero Creek County Park) to assist CALFIRE with access and veg management for fire protection. To assist these fire response efforts, RCD, County Parks and CALFIRE, worked together to repurpose the Giacomini crew and equipment towards helping CALFIRE with access and fire protection. This made complete sense – the Giacomini crew are all certified CALFIRE interagency emergency equipment operators; the company has the right equipment already onsite where it was needed; the crew has experience in working on fires; and they were more than willing to help. Project engineer, Tim Best, is also working with the Giacomini crew to provide engineering design and guidance on the access work.

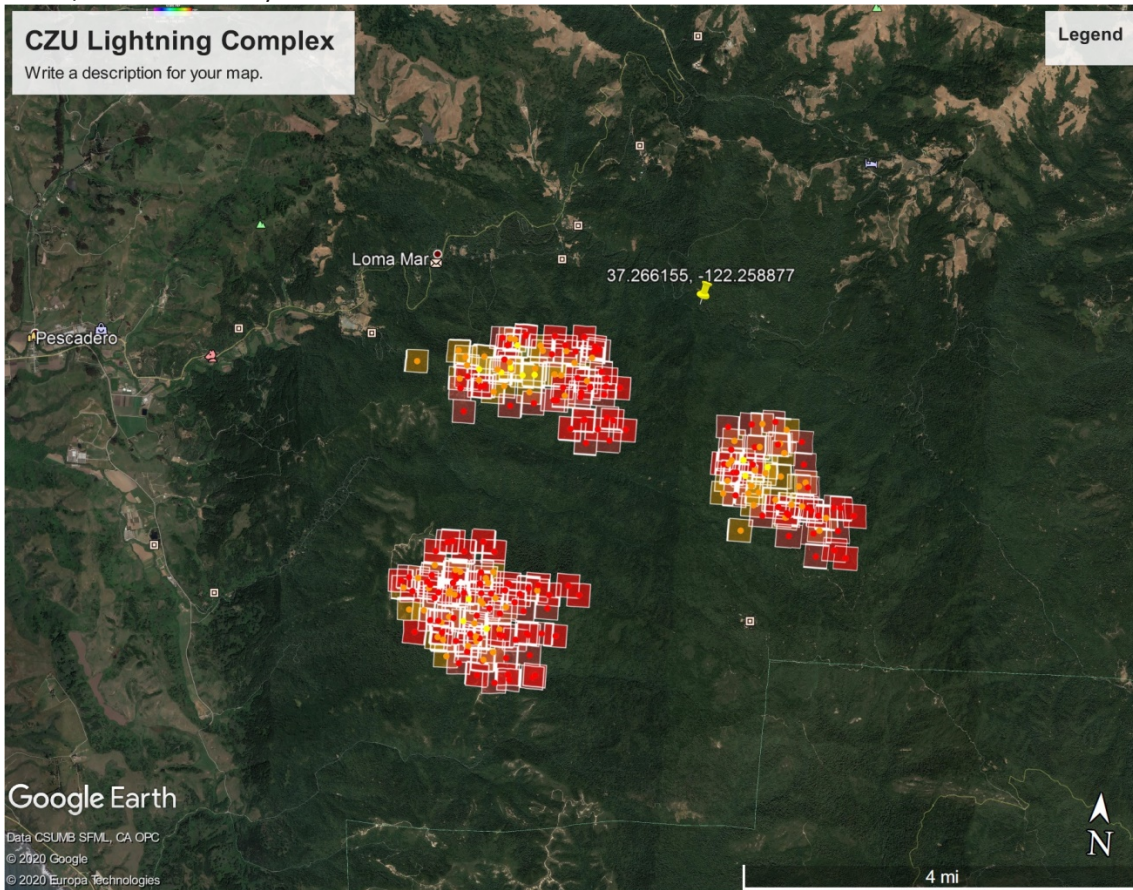
- Tuesday:
 - The crew spent all day cutting a road from Old Haul Road up to Butano Ridge Fire Road (along Butano Ridge) to give CALFIRE access to the north side of the fire.
 - After finishing the road, the crew parked the equipment (dozers, excavators and dumptrucks) in the excavated crossing itself as well as the cleared stockpile (bench) area, knowing that if the fire burned over the site, the equipment would safest in these cleared locations.
 - They then evacuated at about 9pm (per CALFIRE request) and headed back home (Ukiah)
- Thursday:
 - The crew returned (with additional equipment) late Thursday afternoon to assist with more access and veg management work that CALFIRE needs. First thing they did was to create access through the Dark Gulch crossing (temporary) to allow for equipment to reach the east side.
- In upcoming days, the crew will be working on:
 - Replacing an impassable bridge on Old Haul Road at the east end of the park to restore access for fire trucks and other equipment.
 - Fuel load reduction right along Old Haul Road to help prevent the fire from crossing north. (Old Haul Road is an important barrier/line to hold.)

I’ve focused on the project site and what’s going on in the area, but as you can imagine this is just one tiny piece of the events of the past week. And, I’m guessing that many of you are also experiencing impacts from fires. I hope that you are all well and safe.

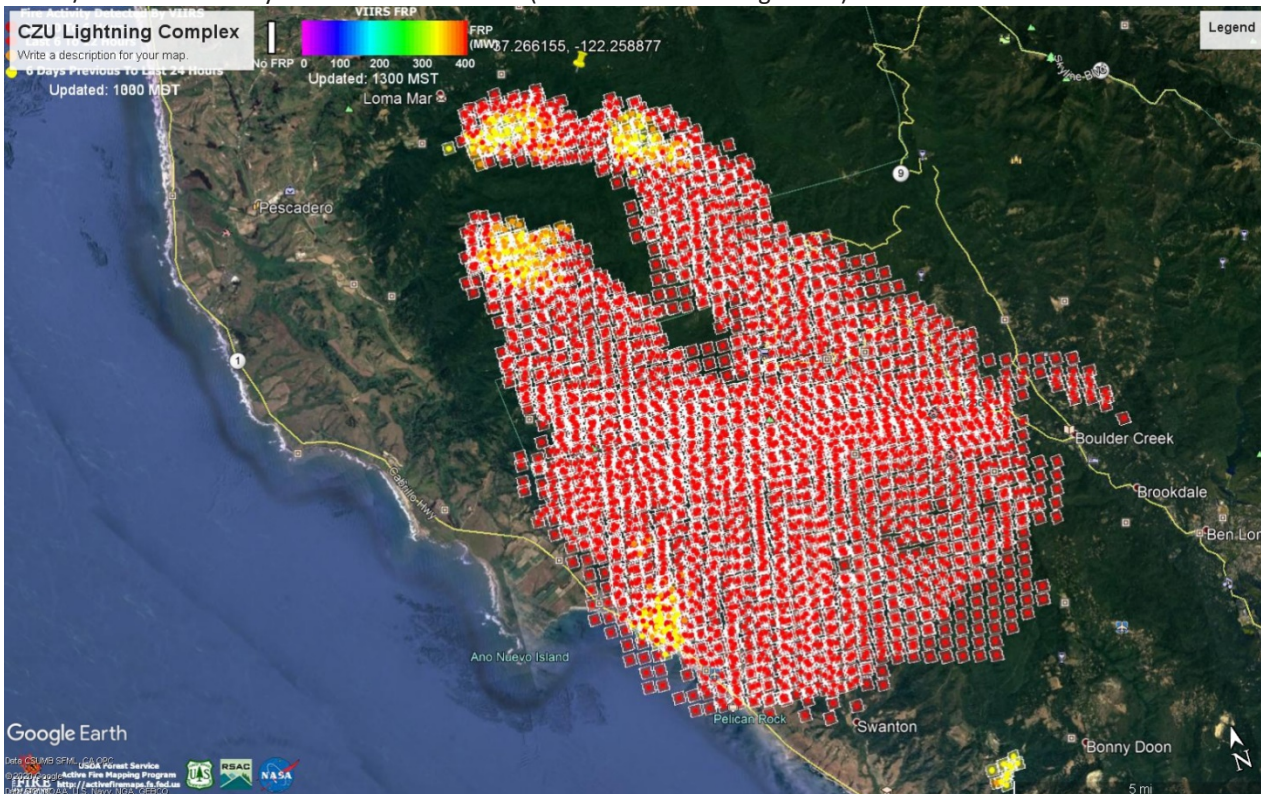
Sincerely,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Satellite (infrared) image of the fires near Dark Gulch (indicated by the yellow pin) on Tuesday 8/18 at 10p. Red dots indicate recent/active fire activity.



Satellite (infrared) image of the fires near Dark Gulch (indicated by the yellow pin) on Wednesday 8/19 at 10a. Red dots indicate recent/active fire activity. Yellow are less recent (ie. where the fire originated).



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 14 (August 10-14)

Good Morning,

This is the Week 14 (August 10-14) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park.

Accomplishments this week:

- The crew made big progress with installation of the culvert pipe that will convey the stream flow through the reconstructed crossing. At the start of the week they cut the large trench from the downstream to upstream end for placement of the 6-foot diameter pipe. By Friday, they had placed more than a third of the culvert pipe.
- RCD staff Amy Kaeser, Joe Issel and I visited on Monday to look at the logs and stumps that have been dug out and removed from the crossing to see if some might work well as large woody debris (LWD) for enhancing and restoring fish habitat along Pescadero Creek.

Looking ahead to next week:

- The crew will continue installing the culvert pipe segments and securing them in place. Then they will install the upstream headwall.

Photos are below signature. Also, I am updating the website [project gallery](#) each week. **Note that I added a few more videos from this week at the gallery page.**

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

A new view: from the east side of the site looking down on the construction crew (I made them wave :o) at the upstream end of the crossing excavation. This was taken on Monday before the crew had finished cutting the trench for the culvert pipe.



Another view from the east side of the crossing – looking across towards Old Haul Road heading west.



Panoramic overlooking the crossing from the NW side. Towards the left is Dark Gulch downstream, and toward the right is upstream. The partially-placed culvert is visible in the trench.



View of the crew preparing to place a segment of the culvert in the trench.



Panoramic view of the stockpile of excavated material next to the crossing (on the “bench”). The crew is using the excavated material to build the crossing back up.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 13 (August 3-7)

Good Morning,

This is the Week 13 (August 3-7) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. I feel like Alice in Wonderland when I visit the site these days... after weeks of witnessing the excavated crossing (the pit) grow deeper and deeper and the stockpile area (the bench) grow taller and taller, they are now shrinking noticeably!

Accomplishments this week:

- Recall from last week that the crew installed subdrains which go below the culvert to prevent groundwater that enters the crossing from accumulating under the culvert (which could be destabilizing). They continued this work this week on installing subdrains further upstream in the crossing. (See photos below.)
- They also continued backfilling the crossing with engineered fill. (The elevation change might not be evident in the photos, but the bottom of the crossing it is significantly higher.)

Looking ahead to next week:

- The crew will be working on trenching for, and installing the culvert pipe segments. This will take at least another week.

Photos are below signature. Also, I am updating the website [project gallery](#) each week.

Also, another shameless plug to check out the videos from the past couple of weeks:

- [Week 11](#)
- [Week 12](#)

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

A composite of photos overlooking the crossing excavation from the NW side of the crossing. Towards the left is Dark Gulch downstream, and toward the right is upstream. Towards the right side, up higher is Old Haul Road heading east.



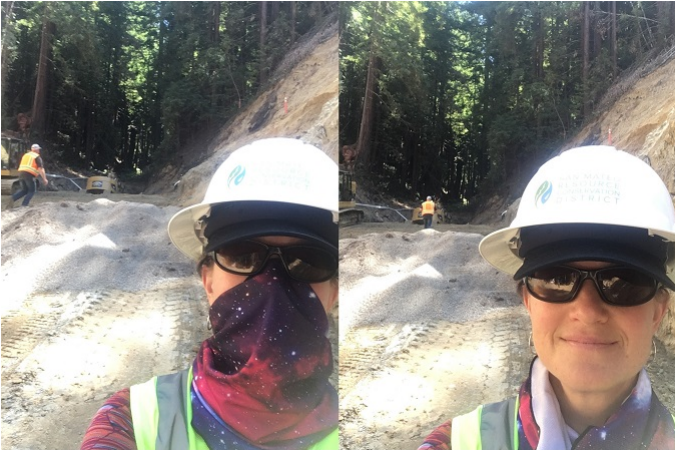
A panoramic taken from the bottom of the crossing near the downstream end and looking west – Old Haul Road heads off to the west at the top, left-center of the photo. Towards the left side is upstream on Dark Gulch, and downstream is to the right.



Looking downstream at the trench for one of the subdrains.



Selfie (Sara Polgar, RCD Project Manager), showing upstream end of crossing.



The stockpile of excavated material adjacent to the crossing (on the “bench”) continues to diminish as the crew is using the material to build the crossing back up.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 12 (July 27-31)

Good Evening,

This is the Week 12 (July 27-31) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park.

Accomplishments this week:

- The crew installed subdrains which (as the name implies) go below the culvert to prevent groundwater that enters the crossing from accumulating under the culvert (which could be destabilizing).
- They also finished placing rock at the downstream end of the excavation where the culvert pipe outlet will be located. This rock will dissipate the energy of the water as it leaves the culvert pipe, such that the water does not cause erosion.
- They also started backfilling the crossing with engineered fill to the elevation needed for installing the culvert pipe, and the geotechnical engineers were on site to monitor the placed fill to check that it is compacted properly (for stability).

Looking ahead to next week:

- After a bit more fill and compaction, the crew will begin installing the culvert pipe, starting at the downstream end of the crossing.

Photos are below signature. Also, I am updating the website [project gallery](#) each week.

AND... Please check out the recent video updates that I made:

- [Week 11](#)
- [Week 12](#)

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

A panoramic overlooking the crossing excavation from the NW side of the crossing. Towards the left is Dark Gulch downstream, and toward the right is upstream. Towards the right side, up higher is Old Haul Road heading east.



Another perspective of the crossing this week: a panoramic taken from near the bottom of the crossing on the downstream end (towards the right). Near the right side, the photo looks upstream on Dark Gulch – along the “alley.”



The crew measuring how much drainage cloth they will need to lay down beneath the rock that will be placed later.



Lest anyone forget the 30' high stockpile of excavated material adjacent to the crossing, on the "bench". This panoramic shows that the pile is just starting to diminish as the crew is using the material to build the crossing back up. This week, they placed about 15-20' of feet of engineered fill at the downstream end of the crossing (visible in the other Week 12 photos).



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 11 (July 20-24)

Good Morning,

Delayed again this week (by my internet connection this time)... this is the Week 11 (July 20-24) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. Excavation is now complete!

Accomplishments this week:

- The crew finished the last of the excavation at the bottom, downstream end of the crossing. Ultimately, the lowest point of excavation was over 100 feet down from the road surface, and they had to excavate more than we had anticipated – ~50,000 vs 42,000 cubic yards – due to the drop-offs and twists in the channel that were unearthed near the downstream end of the crossing. (See the updates for Weeks 9 & 10 for that saga.) Despite having to do this additional excavation, the crew and engineering team have kept the project on schedule.
- Tim Best, the project engineer, worked closely with the crew foreman, Kiel Rosetti, to plan out the upcoming installation of subdrains, culvert and more starting next week.

Looking ahead to next week:

- With excavation complete, the crew is shifting gears from removing stuff, to adding stuff. They will begin with putting in subdrains which (as the name implies) are installed below the culvert to prevent groundwater that enters the crossing from accumulating under the culvert (which could be destabilizing). After that they will start backfilling the crossing with engineered fill to the elevation needed for installing the culvert pipe. This work will take them well into next week.

Photos are below signature. Also, I am updating the website [photo and video gallery](#) each week.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

The obligatory panoramic overlooking the crossing excavation from the NW side of the crossing -- this time with Kiel Rosetti, construction foreman, for some helpful perspective! The equipment in the pit (toward the left side of the photo) is about 100 feet below us. Towards the left side is the downstream side of Dark Gulch creek. To the right side, upstream. To the middle right, high up is Old Haul Road heading east.



A composite panoramic taken from down in the excavated pit, nearer to the downstream side. (From this spot, the panoramic feature on my phone can't capture the full height of the excavated walls.) To the left side is downstream on Dark Gulch and the base of the excavation. The left side of the composite looks upstream.



Hannah Ormshaw, County Parks Natural Resources Manager and the Parks lead for this project, making the climb up the construction access road after checking out to the excavated crossing!



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 10 (July 13-17)

Good Morning,

Better late than never... this is the Week 10 (July 13-17) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. Excavation continued this week... with a few more surprises.

Accomplishments this week:

- Two weeks ago the crew first reached the original (now collapsed) log structure overlaying creek, and last week they unearthed a ~20' drop in the crib log structure – like a giant step down. Before Dark Gulch creek was filled in (in the 1930s and 40s to make the rail line crossing), this drop off was likely a waterfall. This week, the crew found 2 more drop-offs (i.e. waterfalls) – smaller and farther downstream of the first one. Also, it is now clear that the original stream channel had a few twists and turns at this crossing site. Based on the debris that the crew is now finding at the bottom, it is clear that at these waterfalls (steps down), the logging company dumped a lot of logs and brush to fill them in, and then built the crib log culvert and rail line crossing over this material.
- As with last week, the project engineer and the geotechnical engineers were onsite a lot this week. They worked with the crew foreman on modifications needed to address the unexpected additional drop-offs and turns in the channel, and they continued to help with the excavation activities (e.g. surveying, monitoring excavation cuts for safety, testing for compaction levels).

Looking ahead to next week:

- The crew has almost finished the excavation at the bottom of the crossing (close at the downstream side). They will finish this up, and tackle the remaining excavation (mid crossing) which is needed to accommodate the pipe culvert that will be installed (in the upcoming weeks). The crew will continue to place engineered fill as needed towards the upstream side of the excavated crossing.

Photos are below signature. Also, I am updating the website [photo and video gallery](#) each week.

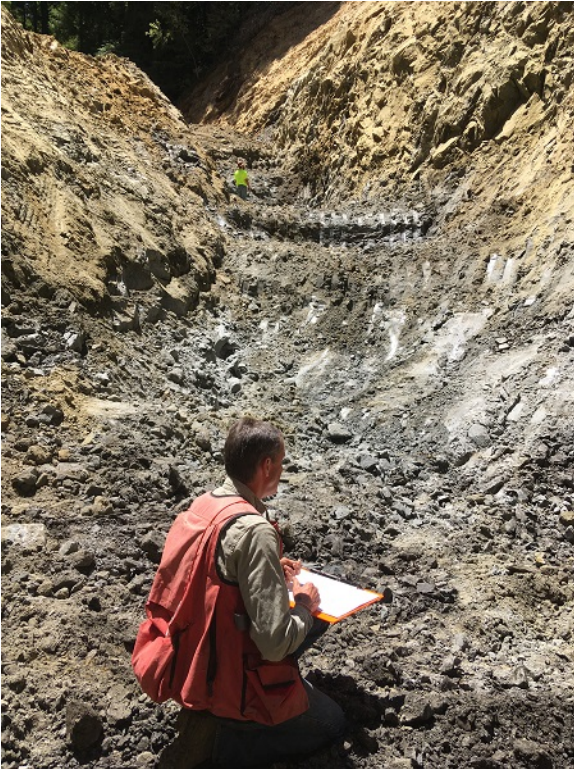
All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Composite of photos overlooking the crossing excavation from the NW side of the crossing. Towards the left side is the downstream side of Dark Gulch creek. To the right side, upstream. Straight ahead is Old Haul Road heading east. Down in the excavated crossing, below (and a bit right) of the 2 excavators is the lowest point in the “pit” —more than 100' below where this picture is taken from!



Taken from the lowest point in the 'pit' (>100 feet below the original road), this photo looks towards the upstream end of the crossing. It provides good perspective on the scale of the excavation that the crew has accomplished. In the foreground Tim Best (project engineer) is working on calculations, and behind him (up higher) is crew member Garren Bell standing just above the lowest of the 3 drop-offs (i.e. waterfalls) that were revealed in the excavation over the past week and a half.



This photo series, taken from the lowest point of the excavation, gives a perspective on how deep the pit currently is. The left photo looks straight up (>100 feet) to the west side of the crossing. Just to the right of the right hand photo is downstream Dark Gulch.



Looking downstream from the middle of the excavated crossing, this photo shows the excavated pit. The excavator is working on removing the last remaining debris from the downstream end of the crossing.



Panoramic taken from the upstream end of the excavated crossing. Towards the left (up high) is Old Haul Road heading west. Straight ahead, you are looking downstream along Dark Gulch, and to the right (up high) is the road heading east.



The crew found a piece of the original rail line!



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 9 (July 7-10)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 9 (July 6-10) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park.

Accomplishments this week:

- Recall from last week that the construction crew reached the original (now collapsed) log structure overlaying creek, and that they set up the dewatering system to keep the construction area dry. Starting Tuesday of this week, they continued to excavate this narrow (mine shaft-like) log structure. On Thursday they unearthed a ~20' drop in the crib log structure – like a giant step down. Based on our best estimate, prior to construction of the original Old Haul Road rail line (in the 1930s and 40s), the upstream native stream channel was relatively flat and then dropped off at this point – i.e. there was a waterfall! When the log culvert was constructed, it mimicked this profile.
- Also this week, the crew began placing engineered fill in fully-excavated upstream end of the crossing. This base fill needs to be place in advance of installing the new pipe culvert.
- The project engineer and the geotechnical engineers were onsite quite a bit this week to help with the excavation and fill placement activities (e.g. surveying, monitoring excavation cuts for safety, testing for compaction levels).

Looking ahead to next week:

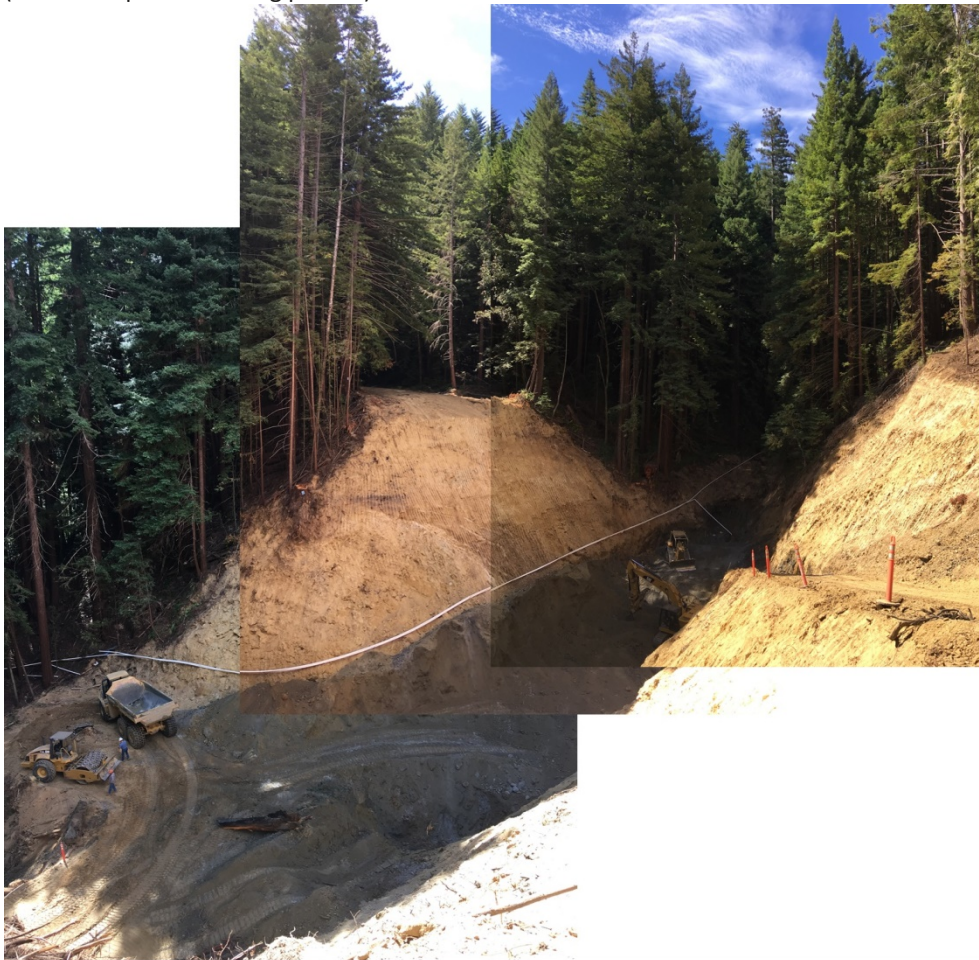
- The drop-off in the crossing was unexpected, but it doesn't really change the work for next week which is continued removal of the logs and debris, moving towards the downstream end of the crossing, and placing engineered fill as needed towards the upstream side of the excavated crossing.

Photos are below signature.

All the best,

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Composite of photos overlooking the crossing excavation from the NW side of the crossing. Towards the left side is the downstream side of Dark Gulch creek. To the right side, upstream. Straight ahead is Old Haul Road heading east. Down in the excavated crossing, to the right of the large piece of wood is the opening/hole where the crew unearthed the 20' drop in the original crib log structure. (See closeups in following photos).



Tim Best (project engineer) doing a survey of the area where the crew unearthed the drop-off in the log structure. He's looking downstream.



View looking downstream inside the lower section of the crib log structure. Just like the section that the crew revealed last week, this part like a very narrow mine shaft.



Photo taken from the downstream end of the crossing excavation, looking upstream.



Panoramic taken from the upstream end of the excavated crossing. To the left (up high) is Old Haul Road heading west. Straight ahead, you are looking downstream along Dark Gulch, and to the right (up high) is the road heading east.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 8 (June 29 - July 2)

Good Evening,

This is the Week 8 (June 29-July 2) update on the [Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project](#) on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. Although this was a short week with the holiday, we reached a good milestone...

Accomplishments this week:

- The construction crew continued excavation of the crossing and on Wednesday afternoon they reached the original log structure (i.e. culvert) overlaying creek. This sounds grand, but really it is a pretty small hole (2' x 4') through which we can see the water flow and crib logs. (See pics below.)
- Once the crew reached this point, they paused excavation to set up the temporary diversion of the creek flow around the construction site (i.e. dewatering). This is important because if water continued to flow through the crossing at this point in the construction, the flow could pick up sediment and deliver it downstream to Pescadero Creek (which we want to prevent).

Looking ahead to next week:

- The crew is taking a well-deserved long weekend, and will be back on Tuesday to work on excavation of the log (culvert) structure.

Photos are below signature.

Best wishes for a happy and safe 4th of July!

Sara Polgar

Project Manager

Panoramic photo overlooking the crossing excavation from the NW side of the crossing. Towards the left side of the panoramic is the downstream side of Dark Gulch creek. To the right side, upstream. Straight ahead is Old Haul Road heading east. Note the shadowed area in the excavated crossing just right of center in the photo; this is the opening/hole through which the original crib logs and creek flow can be seen (in following photos).



Opening to original crib log structure...



Lester Giacomini (owner, construction company) takes a closer look at the opening to original crib log structure...



View inside the crib log structure, looking upstream. It looks like a very narrow mine shaft. (Check out the Week 8 video of the water flowing through this opening at the [Dark Gulch Construction Gallery](#).)



The growing stockpile at the “bench” next to the excavated crossing. To get a sense of the size of this, note that near the top left corner of the photo (in shadow) is a bulldozer on top of the pile.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 7 (June 21-26)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 7 (June 21-26) update on the Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. Huge progress this week!

Accomplishments this week:

- The construction crew is nearing the bottom of the crossing with the excavation. Still a ways to go, but the considerable progress from last week to this week is evident in the photos below. (However, the photos hardly do justice to the scale of the excavated crossing!) As expected, the excavated material is filled with woody debris from decayed crib logs (from the original crossing structure) as well as the occasional stumps and root wads (see photos below).
- I finally finished a web page and gallery to post photos and videos of Dark Gulch. I will be adding to the photos and videos as the project continues. The page also includes a project overview and links to a San Mateo County Parks pages about the project. Please check it out and pass it along: <http://www.sanmateorcd.org/dark-gulch/>

Looking ahead to next week:

- Excavation of the crossing continues next week!

Photos are below signature.

Have a great weekend!

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic overlooking the crossing (from NW side). Downstream Dark Gulch is to the left of the edge of the photo. Old Haul Road heads east to the left, center (up). Left of center is Dark Gulch creek upstream. To the right is the stockpile area (ie. the bench) and Old Haul Road heading west.



Panoramic in crossing (i.e. the "pit") looking downstream. Old Haul Road heads west to the left (up). Looking straight ahead is Dark Gulch creek downstream. To the right and up, Old Haul Road heads east.



Panoramic in the crossing (looking upstream). Old Haul Road heads east to the center, left (up). Looking straight ahead is Dark Gulch creek upstream. To the right and up, Old Haul Road head west.



Closeup of dug out stump in the crossing. Note Sara's less-than-a-foot foot for size comparison.



Another size comparison: Sara (5'4") next to dump truck wheel



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 6 (June 15-19)

Good Evening,

This is the Week 6 (June 15-19) update on the Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. More digging this week!

Accomplishments this week:

- The construction crew made a lot of progress excavation of the crossing despite encountering numerous crib logs from the original Humboldt crossing structure.
- The “tooth” has been extracted!! (See pics below.) Recall from the Week 5 photos that the crew was working with an excavator to dig out a very large, rooted stump from the crossing. They succeeded. Kiel Rosetti, the foreman estimates that the stump weigh at least 40,000 lbs!

Looking ahead to next week:

- Excavation of the crossing continues next week.

Photos are below signature.

Have a great weekend!

Sara Polgar

Project Manager

View of the crossing excavation from the west side. Looking across near the top of the photo you can see Old Haul Road heading off to the east. I would estimate that excavator in this photo is about 35'-40' down from where I am taking the picture.



This is a view from down in the pit. (For reference, I took this pano standing to the left of the excavator in that is shown in the previous photo.) The pano below shows Old Haul Road head off to the west (in center, high up) and Dark Gulch creek downstream towards the far right of the photo. Just to the left of where Kiel is standing is part of the original crib log crossing structure.



This pano is also taken from the pit, but I am standing towards the upstream side of the excavated crossing. (For reference, if you look at the first photo, I am standing just to the right of where the photo is cut off.) The panoramic below shows Old Haul Road heading off to the west on the left side, and to the east on the right side. (Downstream on Dark Gulch is past (and far below) the excavator in the center of the photo.)



Kiel (who is 6'4") standing next to the extracted "tooth."



Another view (from the opposite side) of the tooth with me (not-as-tall-as-Kiel) next to it.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 5 (June 8-12)

Good Evening,

This is the Week 5 (June 8-12) update on the Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. As with last week, this week was all about digging!

Accomplishments this week:

- The contractor continued with excavation of the crossing. The project engineer estimates that they have completed more than a third of the excavation.

Looking ahead to next week:

- Excavation of the crossing continues next week. As the contractors lower the crossing further and they encounter more and more crib logs and large wood, the excavation will progress a bit slower than it has these past 2.5 weeks.

Photos are below signature.

Have a great weekend!

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

What the crossing looks like now when approached from the west along Old Haul Road.



Crossing excavation (from the southwest side) on Tuesday (6/9). Note the excavators working on digging out the very large, rooted stump in the bottom center of the photo.



Panoramic photo from the southwest side of the crossing on Friday (6/12). To the left (just beyond the photo edge) is Old Haul Road heading east and to the right side of the photo a dumptruck is heading west alongside the growing pile of excavated (clean) fill in the "bench" area next to the crossing.



Looking down on the crossing excavation from the northwest side on Friday (6/12). Note that the stump from the first photo is still there -- it is in the crossing just above where the pink ribbon is visible in the photo. The contractor says that removing is like pulling a tooth, and it just wasn't loose enough yet to extract.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 4 (June 1-5)

Good Evening,

This is the Week 4 (June 1-5) update on the Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. The pictures tell the story this week... which was all about digging.

Accomplishments this week:

- The contractor continued with excavation of the crossing, lowering the crossing substantially. (See pics comparing Monday to Friday.)

Looking ahead to next week:

- Continuing to excavate the crossing out!

Just a reminder: if you don't want to receive these emails, please let me know and I will take you off our list.

Photos are below signature.

Have a great weekend!

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Panoramic taken from the west side of the crossing on Monday 6/1. (View straight ahead is Old Haul Road looking east.)



Panoramic taken from the same spot (west side of the crossing) on Friday 6/5. (View straight ahead is Old Haul Road looking east.)



The crew removed a big log from the crossing on Friday 6/5:



Excavation at the crossing. Note the stump sticking up behind the dumptruck (closer to the top of the photo). As the crew dug out the crossing, they discovered that this big double tree must have been cut and left, and the original crossing constructed around it. Eventually, once the crew excavates far enough, they will be able to dig this large stump out.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 3 (May 25-29)

Good Evening,

This is the Week 3 (May 25-29) update on the Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. This week we are fully into the meat and potatoes part of the project (i.e. digging out the crossing).

Accomplishments this week:

- The contractor continued with excavation of the crossing, as well as vegetation clearing and grubbing out stumps (as needed) as they lower the crossing.
- Last week Parks and RCD staff and the construction contractor posted additional signage and fencing for trail closures. Also, I reached out to 3 biking organizations in the region -- Silicon Valley Mountain Bikers, Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz, and Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition -- asking for their help in getting the word out to their members regarding the trail closures associated with the project. All 3 responded immediately and posted info to their social media/websites. Happy to report that this week we had almost no Park visitors entering the construction site, so it looks like the combined efforts are having a positive effect.

Looking ahead to next week:

- Continuing to excavate the crossing out (i.e. lots of digging!)

Just a reminder: if you don't want to receive these emails, please let me know and I will take you off our list.

Photos are below signature.

Have a great weekend!

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Another panoramic photo of the crossing. To the left side of the panoramic Old Haul Road heads west (towards the ocean); right of the photo is Old Haul Road heading off to the east. Straight ahead looks downstream on Dark Gulch creek.



Excavation



Soon after the crew downed a large tree so that they could continue excavation, a crew member encountered a slight obstacle between himself and the dump truck. He couldn't go around or over, so he went through... :o)



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 2 (May 18-22)

Good Afternoon,

This is the Week 2 (May 18-22) update on the Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. With the rain last weekend and lingering into Monday we got off to a slow start with no work on Monday or Tuesday, but the contractor made quite a bit of progress the rest of the week.

Accomplishments this week:

- The contractor installed the subdrains in the stockpile area known as the "bench" near the Dark Gulch crossing to ensure proper drainage in this area.
- They also finished clearing vegetation (for now) and began excavation of the crossing (see pics below)
- RCD staff, County Parks staff and rangers, and the project engineer continue to work hard "behind the construction scenes" to keep things moving and address issues that come up. This week we worked on:
 - Logistics for storing the many stumps removed from the crossing site (see pics below).
 - Additional fencing and more emphatic signage to better convey to hikers and bicyclists -- in particular -- that trail and road closures are very real. Despite the chain link fencing across Old Haul Road and signage, there were park visitors going around or even knocking it down to continue through the construction site. We also did some outreach to local mountain and road biking organization to enlist their help in getting the word out. Here's the link again to the County Parks website about the trail closures -- please help us share far and wide:
 - <https://parks.smcgov.org/press-release/trail-closures-pescadero-creek-sam-mcdonald-parks>

A look ahead for next week:

- Continuing to excavate the crossing out (i.e. lots of digging!)

Just a reminder: if you don't want to receive these emails, please let me know and I will take you off our list.

Photos are below signature. **Plus I attached a cool panoramic photo of the excavation. To the left side of the panoramic Old Haul Road heads west (towards the ocean); center right of the photo is Old Haul Road heading off to the east and at the right end of the photo you can just see a short post with orange tape that marks the bottom of the Ocean View Trail (which heads off from the north side of the site).

Have a great weekend!

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

View of the excavation progress on the crossing (from the southwest side of the crossing)



Another view of the excavation progress on the crossing -- looking directly downstream Dark Gulch creek. The orange tape on the post in the foreground marks the (now) end of the Ocean View Trail... note the steep drop-off into the excavation site! (The trail will be rebuilt near the end of the construction. It's just out of commission temporarily.)



A big pile of stumps that were excavated from the crossing site.



Dark Gulch Construction Update: Week 1 (May 11-15)

Good Afternoon,

Welcome to our weekly email update on the Dark Gulch Crossing Stabilization Project on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park. This update will be coming to you every Thursday or Friday from now until the project is complete. If you don't want to receive these emails, please let me know and I will take you off our list. For those of you unfamiliar with the project, I have attached a short overview presentation, and I encourage you to reach out to me if you would like to learn more.

Accomplishments this week:

- L.D. Giacomini Enterprises, Inc, the contractor, has mobilized and began work on Monday with clearing space in the stockpile area known as the "bench" near the Dark Gulch crossing.
- After heavier than predicted rain on Monday night, they paused work on Tuesday to let the site dry out. Work resumed Wednesday with vegetation clearing (trees and brush) at the crossing site.
- Leading up to this week, a lot of work and coordination on the part of RCD staff, County Parks staff and rangers, and the project engineer went into getting us to construction. Some key (but not especially high-profile) accomplishments included:
 - Project construction COVID-19 protocols and signage (in compliance with latest State & County requirements) prepared and implemented/installed
 - Trail closure notifications posted: <https://parks.smcgov.org/press-release/trail-closures-pescadero-creek-sam-mcdonald-parks>
 - All photo monitoring sites set, and a time lapse camera installed
 - Pre-project permit and contracting requirements completed, including pre-construction biological surveys

A look ahead for next week:

- If predicted rain arrives, the contractor will pause on construction work to allow for the site to dry out. Once conditions are dry, the contractor will continue with vegetation clearing and grubbing out stumps.

Photos are attached or below signature.

Have a great weekend!

Sara Polgar, Project Manager

Cleared stockpile area (i.e. the bench).



Latest view of the Dark Gulch crossing (looking east).



On Wednesday the on-site biomonitor spied a CA Giant Salamander (away from where construction activities were taking place). It ambled out from under a log and wandered out of the project area on its own.

