



Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
Thursday July 17, 2025
4:00 – 6:00 pm

The hybrid meeting will be accessible via Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89675733636>

If you are using a computer or other device to join the meeting, you may click [here](#). A computer video camera is not required to participate. If you do not have access to a computer or internet during this meeting, or if your computer does not have audio, you can call in by phone: (669) 900-6833 and enter the meeting ID: 896 7573 3636 when prompted.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Introduction of Guests and Staff
4. Public Comment- The Board will hear comments on items that are not on the agenda. The Board cannot act on an item unless it is an emergency as defined under Government Code §54954.2.
5. Consent Agenda <u>The Board of Directors approves:</u> 5.1. April 2025 Draft Regular Meeting Minutes 5.2. Recommendation to contract with Minerva Construction Inc. for the Peters Creek Streamflow Enhancement Project at Portola Redwoods State Park <u>The Board of Directors receives into record:</u> 5.3. June 18, 2025 Coastside Buzz article, “ San Mateo Resource Conservation District to Design and Launch a Carbon Sequestration Farm Fund to Help Farmers Finance the Implementation of Climate-Beneficial Agricultural Practices ” 5.4. June 25, 2025 Coastside Buzz article, “ Supervisors Approve \$650k for San Mateo Resource Conservation District Old Haul Road Repairs for Critical Firefighting Access, Fuel Reduction and Park Operation in Pescadero Creek County Park ” 5.5. June 29, 2025 Santa Cruz Sentinel article, “ Pescadero struggles with unclean water, rising rates ”
6. Regular Agenda 6.1. San Mateo County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan Project Specific Analysis for the Coastal Santa Cruz Mountains: State Parks Forest Health Initiative 6.2. Executive Director’s report 6.3. USDA NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) report 6.4. Directors’ connection and reports
7. Adjourn Meeting The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be August 21, 2025. There will be a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors on August 8, 2025.

Public records that relate to any item on the open session agenda for a regular board meeting are available for public inspection. Those records that are distributed less than 72 hours prior to the meeting are available for public inspection at the same time they are distributed to all members, or a majority of the members of the Board.



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday, July 17, 2025

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: 80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019 and via Zoom

Directors: Michelle Weil, Steve Stielstra, Troy Guy, Barbara Kossy (virtual) (On leave: Adrienne Etherton)

Associate Directors: (Absent: Denise Phillips, Zahra Kassam, Helen Wolter, John Wade)

RCD staff: Kellyx Nelson, Lau Hodges, Kati McHugh, Timothy Federal, Amy Kaeser (virtual), Ryan Silsbee (virtual)

NRCS staff: Annie Edwards

Guests (all virtual): David Cowman (Sempervirens Fund), Gina Quiney (of Sup. Ray Mueller's Office)

1. Call to Order

Guy called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

ACTION: Stielstra motioned to approve agenda, Weil seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Introduction of Guests and Staff

All in attendance introduced themselves.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Consent Agenda

ACTION: Weil moved to approve the consent agenda. Stielstra seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Regular Agenda

- Item 6.3 (USDA NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) Report) was moved above 6.2 to accommodate staff availability.
- **ACTION:** Weil motioned to approve agenda as amended, Stielstra seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6.3. USDA NRCS (National Resources Conservation Service) Report

- Edwards introduced herself as an Urban Agriculture Conservationist with the NRCS. In addition to her normal full-time duties, she has been serving as Acting District Conservationist for San Mateo County following the retirement of Jim Howard. She enjoyed the opportunity to see what Howard had done and drew upon the similarities between urban agriculture and San Mateo County agricultural farming operations, including a lot of diversified growers and people with a strong passion for conservation.
- She is at the San Mateo RCD one day per week, maintaining NRCS presence and keeping forward momentum on projects in the area.
- She appreciated the strong RCD presence and working relationship with the NRCS, which she was excited to continue.
- She shared about a recent combined NRCS and RCD site visit to provide technical assistance to a San Mateo County grower.
- There is a hiring freeze until October 15, the earliest date the open position for the District Conservationist could be posted.
- Critical vacancies were being filled internally by moving NRCS staff who applied for lateral positions (supervisors could apply for other supervisor roles), according to state-identified "critical" vacancies. The list had been posted the morning of July 17, and she reported that the Half Moon Bay District Conservationist role was not included on that list. These critical roles were scheduled to be filled prior to October 15, and NRCS staff were also waiting on news about a reorganization following the early retirement and deferred resignation program to reduce the overall staff numbers and create a new staffing plan to identify which positions would be filled. She was not aware of how this would ultimately impact the Half Moon Bay office.
- Another NRCS staff member will take over the coverage of this office in August. She is happy to assist with the transition.
- Nelson shared how the RCD Board's strong advocacy had led to the full-time District Conservationist position which Howard had held. She anticipated a near-future need for the current Directors to maintain this local position. She recognized that the NRCS had shifted more towards demonstrating and articulating their value in terms of numbers of contracts, acres, and dollars such as those of Central Valley farmers. Comparatively, San Mateo County's small family farms generated low numbers, and she anticipated that the hiring freeze may last longer than it was currently slated to, and even after it is lifted, that the vacancy could take over a year to backfill the position. She was concerned that in the interim period between now and the position being filled, there would start to be gaps in between the NRCS staff who would come in to cover the vacancy, and that this could lead to as-needed coverage from District Conservationists in the adjacent counties, and local office coverage would continue to decline to less than a day per week. Eventually, she thought it could lead to the position disappearing.
- Nelson was ultimately concerned for the San Mateo County farmers who had benefitted from having a full-time District Conservationist and half-time Ag Engineer, and wanted the Board members to also stay aware of how farmers access NRCS resources.
- Kossy shared one of the concerns she recalled Howard and others sharing: once a farmer feels betrayed or that they were not understood by the government, it required

redoubled efforts to gain their trust back. She expressed gratitude for Edwards stepping into the role.

- Stielstra agreed, and added that he understood that employees filling in for vacant roles would need a break, while also finding it counterintuitive to limit the length of time a single employee could cover these positions, since they would develop more efficiency in their role and relationships as time progressed. He found that this would be detrimental both to the customers who would continuously need to reconnect with new temporary NRCS staff, or for the NRCS replacement employee who would take over the position.
- Nelson pointed out that Edwards had been trained by Howard, and that the next person to take over the temporary coverage role would do so without the benefit of onboarding from the person who had been in that role and performing the duties associated with it.
- Stielstra understood that the end of the hiring freeze would only signal the beginning of the next step in the process of advertising and possibly filling the District Conservationist role. He expressed his willingness to provide the support necessary to effectively advocate for Coastside agriculture.
- Edwards would share the thoughts from Nelson and RCD Board members with her supervisors. She anticipated that the next placement in the temporary position might be Mather, because he was geographically close and had history at the office and in the community. She reported that Mather was currently covering a secondary office in Vacaville and was therefore stretched thin, and recently lost another staff member out of his office in Capitola.
- She reported that since the Vacaville position was on the critical vacancy list, she anticipated that position being filled by the end of July and that Mather might have more bandwidth to cover the Half Moon Bay office. She was going to speak with her supervisor to see if she and Mather could both provide support to the office, which might be deemed too complicated for leadership decision-making, but she thought might provide some more continuity without placing the high demands of the coverage onto a single individual.
- Stielstra expressed appreciation on behalf of the Board that in addition to covering both jobs that Edwards was additionally advocating, and understood the energetic demand that this placed on her.
- Edwards reported that the NRCS was aware of the issues presented by the “revolving door,” and felt that her supervisor valued this office and wanted it to be served to the best of their abilities. She looked forward to hearing more of his ideas as the timeline progressed.
- Nelson appreciated Edwards advocacy and asked her to share that the RCD had an interest in the continuity. She shared that Mather had been a soil conservationist in the Half Moon Bay office, and that the RCD staff therefore knew him, and that he knew some of the local farmers and RCD partners already. Additionally, the adjacency to Santa Cruz County and the projects which crossed the San Mateo-Santa Cruz County border in partnerships with RCD of Santa Cruz County made her feel that it would be a right-fitting interim measure to have Mather step in to assist with transitioning Edwards out of the coverage role.

6.1. San Mateo County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan Project Specific Analysis for the Coastal Santa Cruz Mountains: State Parks Forest Health Initiative

- Federal shared the attached presentation
- Discussion focused on understanding CEQA and permitting tools, pathways, and strategies for forest health and fire projects; the complexities of the regulatory compliance; uncertainties moving forward with this project related to a recent legal decision that is not right-fitting for our local ecosystems; ecosystem type conversion; and that this agenda item was informational for the Board to understand the ins and outs of the RCD's work.
- Discussion about science-informed forest management included the January 2026 Santa Cruz Mountain Stewardship Network Science Symposium and the forest health research grant with University of California to create a monitoring protocol tailored to the Santa Cruz Mountains forest.

6.2. Executive Director's Report

- Project on Little Butano Creek along Cloverdale Road will remove a barrier to fish passage, in week 3 of implementation. Findings of around 200 trout from different age classes above the barrier indicated very good habitat upstream. Below the barrier were a number of Coho, which would not have been present in the watershed without previous RCD projects. The current project goal was to remove two barriers and restore the access into Butano State Park, which provides some of the best existing habitat for Central Coast Coho Salmon.
- North Marsh North Pond project is nearing completion in Pescadero. The earthwork had been completed, lowering and shaping the levee, and current tasks included installing the large wood structures, allowing for freshening of the system and providing quality freshwater habitat.
- Seining in the lagoon, part of an ongoing research study to determine quantity and species of fish in the lagoon at this time of year. She reported findings of hundreds of steelhead, along with a Coho.
- Guy also participated in the seining, including finding an adult Coho as well.
- Three different large wood projects will soon begin—two in San Gregorio Creek, and one in Butano. They were delayed from last year due to the complexities with NOAA's tribal engagement.
- Pescadero Arts & Fun Festival, August 16-17: Nelson asked for Board volunteers to help out at the RCD booth at the festival on both days, between 9 AM and 6 PM, and would follow up with Board members via email.
- Minor updates to the DEIJ Plan coming to the Board for approval in August.
- Website redesign is nearing completion, with designs nearly finalized, staff drafting new content, and improvements underway to enhance visual accessibility and enable automatic translation.
- Developing a Tribal Consultation SOP that outlines our values and approach, supports staff in navigating legal requirements and on-the-ground complexities with additional support from a UC Santa Barbara student focused on law and environmental justice.
- Working on an interactive mapping tool to help staff identify disadvantaged and low-income communities in our district using various data to support work in areas where

key information is often missing or undercounted. In our district billionaires and farm workers live within the same census tract, causing the data to average out in a way that doesn't adequately show the needs that exist. The tool will help make the case to bring resources to people who are vulnerable within the district.

- La Honda Fuel Break project is 85% complete. Remaining work is on Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District property, is set to start on October 1.
- The Regional Priority Plan (RPP), a regional approach to identify and prioritize forest health and fire projects across the Santa Cruz Mountains for state and other funding pathways, received a total of 108 project submissions across the three counties: 56 from San Mateo, 50 from Santa Cruz, and 4 from Santa Clara Counties.
- Upcoming fuel reduction project in the eucalyptus grove on the Wavecrest property between Cameron's and Seymour Street, including the farm field and the Coastal Trail near the Seymour Ditch. Coastal Conservancy funded it as a demonstration project for how to do fuel load reduction in eucalyptus groves that have monarchs. The project was developed with the Xerces Society, a scientific and advocacy group for invertebrates. It will clear understory, removing small eucalyptus trees that are under 8 inches in diameter, removing limbs up to 8 to 12 feet. It is the only RCD project running through the Governor's emergency proclamation and will utilize CEQA exemptions for emergency work.
- Kossy asked if there were any updates on the wetlands restoration in the Wavecrest area. Nelson shared that it was brought to the Coastal Conservancy for funding of the next phase. She reported that the Coastal Conservancy wanted to focus on clean closure of the landfill near the wetlands, whereas the RCD had planned to do wetlands restoration first and during the restoration work, scope out the requirements to do a clean closure, estimating that the clean closure work would likely be at least \$100 million to complete. Staff is looking to advance the more actionable habitat restoration portions of the project. There was discussion about clean closure of landfills and right-fitting roles for the RCD: soil protection, erosion, water quality, and habitat; not waste management; strengths as a convener and facilitator for holistic, integrated work would help in ensuring that a clean closure project would not be siloed.

6.4. Directors' Connections and Reports

- Stielstra reported that he was planning to attend Pescadero Art & Fun Festival (PAFF), the October 23 Regional Fall Meeting, hosted by Coastal San Luis RCD at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and the Annual CARCD Conference, November 18-20, in Sacramento. He invited Board members and staff to also attend the Regional Fall Meeting in San Luis, and noted that it would include a
- Weil reported that she planned to volunteer for PAFF, and was considering attending the annual CARCD meeting in November. She noted that she had been dropped off the email for website redesign updates. She asked if there was an update on the accountant. Hodges shared that the contract with the RCD's accountant would not be renewed. Nelson added that they were reaching out to people in their network and had received a number of responses that they would be pursuing.
- Kossy reported that she had been traveling around in open spaces and parks, and appreciating California, Oregon and Washington. She shared that when traveling, she realized how hard-hit California was early on that created a lot of invasive plant problems. She recognized that the history of California brought a lot of damage which

brought invasive plants, and this gives the state an added load that other areas don't have quite as much of the same kinds of ubiquitous weeds that are present locally. She expressed gratitude for the RCD and work being done, and the chance to see good things working when so many things are broken all the time.

- Guy reported visiting RCD project sites and other projects where there were RCD people. He reported learning a lot over the last year about the RCD and that he is getting a lot from his participation on the Board.
- Nelson provided an update on behalf of Etherton, who was going through chemotherapy and doing well, and had a surgery planned for October. Nelson was staying in touch with her a bit, and wishing her well wishes, and reported back that Etherton was fighting a good fight right now, and that she had some choice words for cancer.

7. Adjourn Meeting

- Meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.
- There will be a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors on August 8, 2025.
- The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be August 21, 2025.

Memorandum

Date: July 17, 2025
To: Board of Directors
From: Kellyx Nelson
Re: Recommendation to contract with Minerva Construction Inc. for the Peters Creek Streamflow Enhancement Project at Portola Redwoods State Park

RCD staff recommends the board of directors approve contracting with Minerva Construction Inc. to implement the Peters Creek Streamflow Enhancement Project at Portola Redwoods State Park. This project will improve streamflow on Peters Creek in the Pescadero-Butano Watershed and provide increased water storage and security for Portola Redwoods State Park.

The project will construct a 600,000-gallon storage tank, diversion and pump system, pre-treatment system, and aeration system to enable Portola Redwoods State Park to store water in the winter for use in the summer, when streamflow is lower and demand for water in the park is higher. The project will benefit coho salmon, steelhead trout, and other species of wildlife; improve water supply reliability for the park, even in drought years; and provide a new point of connection for fire hydrants to improve fire protection.

A Request for Bids was distributed to approximately 100 construction contractors and shared publicly via the RCD's website, San Mateo Daily Journal, and three trade journals. Thirteen firms attended a mandatory pre-bid site tour. Two of the thirteen firms submitted bids by the deadline of July 3, 2025. Bids were opened during a public bid opening held on July 3, 2025 with the following results:

- Minerva Construction Inc. (\$3,373,000)
- McGuire and Hester (\$4,350,000)

The RCD and the consulting engineer for the project, SRT Consultants, Inc., reviewed the bid documents and determined that Minerva Construction Inc. was the lowest cost, responsible bidder for the project. Minerva Construction Inc. has local experience on projects involving water storage and water infrastructure, and submitted a comprehensive work plan for the project.

Figure 1. Project Location Map

Little Butano Creek Fish Passage and Habitat Enhancement Project Location



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San Mateo Resource Conservation District to Design and Launch a Carbon Sequestration Farm Fund to Help Farmers Finance the Implementation of Climate-Beneficial Agricultural Practices

June 18, 2025



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04:08

STAFF REPORT. From [San Mateo County Board of Supervisors' meeting](#) on Tuesday, June 10th, 2025 at 9:00am, as a hybrid meeting. [Agenda](#). Staff Report for Consent Agenda [Item #126](#).

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Jasneet Sharma, Director, Sustainability Department

Subject: Agreement with San Mateo Resource Conservation District for Carbon Farm Fund

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution authorizing an agreement with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) to design and launch a carbon farm fund that will advance carbon sequestration efforts, for the term of June 10, 2025 through June 9, 2030, in an amount not to exceed \$395,000.

BACKGROUND

On October 18, 2022, the Board approved Resolution No. 079264, adopting the San Mateo County General Plan Climate Element and the Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP). As part of the CCAP's overall emissions reduction target of carbon neutrality by 2040, it sets forth a target to sequester 39,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e) by 2030 and 166,000 MTCO₂e by 2045. To accomplish this goal, the CCAP recommends implementing a funding program to help farmers and ranchers implement and maintain climate

beneficial agricultural practices, or carbon farming. The CCAP also has a land management goal to “support ranchers and farmers to plan, implement, and scale climate beneficial practices on the County’s working lands to mitigate climate change and build agricultural resiliency.”

DISCUSSION

The proposed Carbon Farm Fund (Fund) would seek to establish a self-sustaining funding program to support producers in carbon sequestration. The Fund would advance progress on both the CCAP’s carbon sequestration and land management goals.

The proposed agreement consists of three key activities. First, the contractor will conduct extensive research, stakeholder surveying, and fund model analysis, development and testing, to create a Funding Pathways Memorandum with recommendations for a sustainable long-term Fund program. Second, the contractor will develop a complete program design for administering the Fund. Third, the contractor will implement the program and distribute the funds. Each phase will be evaluated by the County before the contractor is given approval to move on to the next phase. The grant fund will be implemented with oversight and approval by the County.

The Sustainability Department released a Request for Proposal (RFP) on June 20, 2024, for a contractor to conduct all aspects of the proposed project: background research, program design, and program implementation. The RFP was posted on OpenGov for four weeks and generated one response, from the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD). Following evaluation by the selection committee, the Department recommended moving forward with RCD’s proposal.

The County Attorney’s Office has reviewed and approved the resolution and agreement as to form.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Measure	Amount sequestered by end of contract period
MTCO2e sequestered	7,900 MTCO2e

COMMUNITY IMPACT

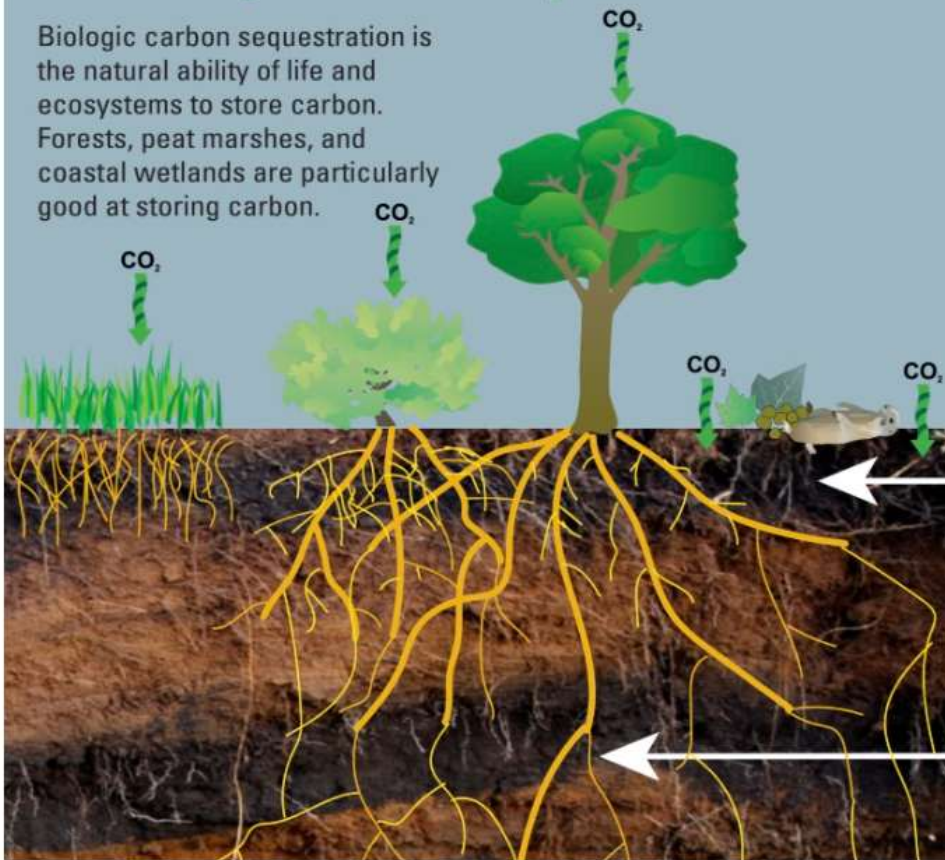
Work under this agreement will identify and address the agricultural community’s financial barriers to implementing climate-beneficial agricultural practices. The Fund will provide a sustainable model for supporting the agricultural community to help mitigate carbon emissions, provide cleaner air and promote a suite of agricultural practices that bring numerous ecological co-benefits.

FISCAL IMPACT

The contract allocates \$195,000 for background research and program design, and \$200,000 for grant funding. Funding in the amount of \$395,000 is included the Sustainability Department’s FY 2024-25 Approved Budget and the FY 2025-26 Recommended Budget. There is no new Net County Cost associated with this agreement.

Biologic Carbon Sequestration

Biologic carbon sequestration is the natural ability of life and ecosystems to store carbon. Forests, peat marshes, and coastal wetlands are particularly good at storing carbon.



U.S. Geological Survey studies plants and animals. Scientists identify which ecosystems naturally store higher levels of carbon.

Microbes break down plants and animals through decomposition



Plants store carbon in their bark, tissues, and root systems



[More on the San Mateo Resource Conservation District on Coastside Buzz](#)

2025 Board of Supervisors



District 1
Jackie Speier



District 2
Noelia Corzo
Vice President



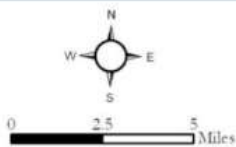
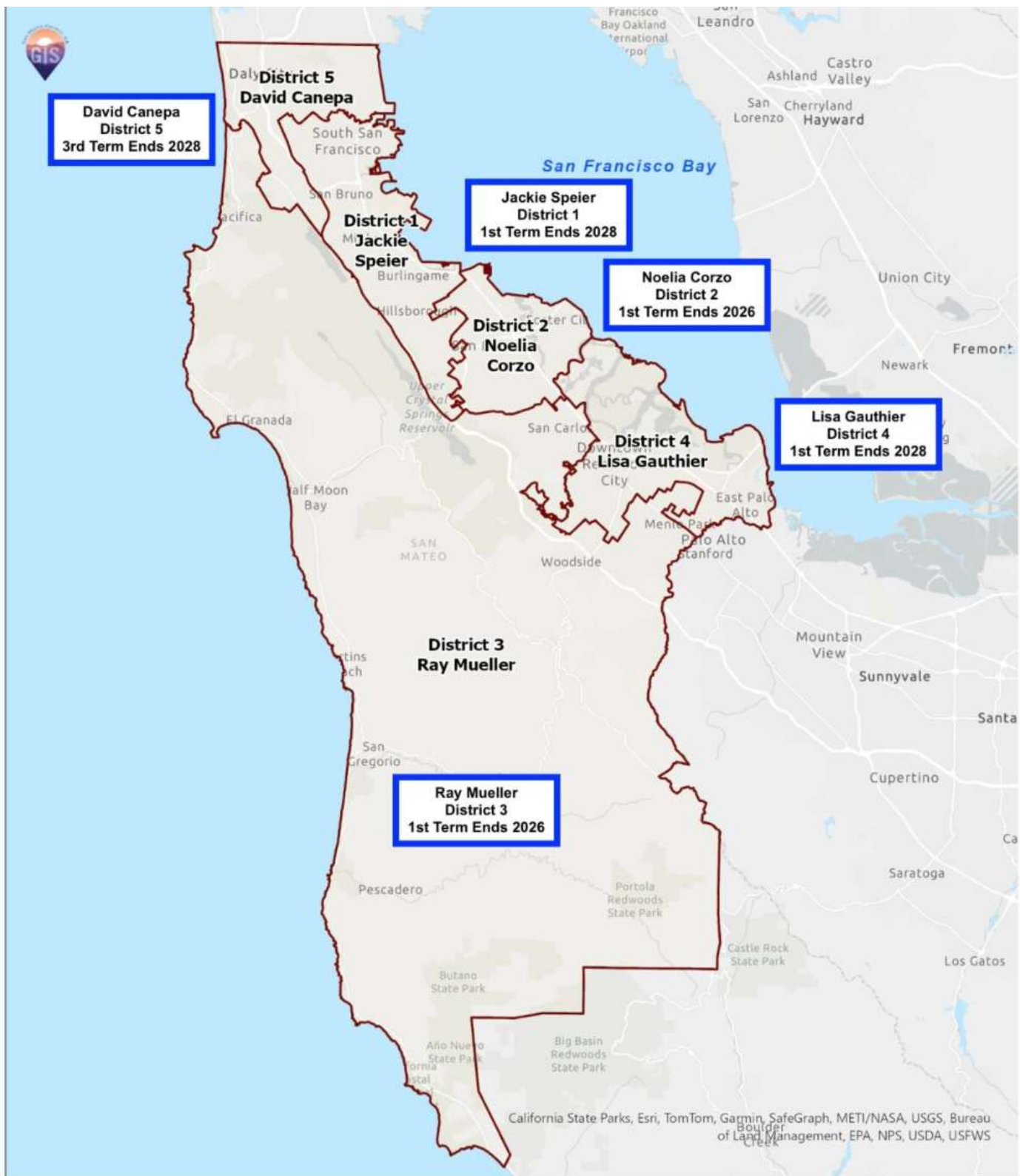
District 3
Ray Mueller



District 4
Lisa Gauthier



District 5
David Canepa
President



SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO CA

**Supervisor boundaries approved by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, December, 2021*

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← Using Their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Montara Water and Sanitary District Board and Staff Step Up to Help the Sewer Authority Mid-Coastside Receive FEMA Reimbursements as HMB and GCSD Deferred

The Ritz Looks to Upgrade Workers' Miramontes → Point Road Parking Lot on Midpen Open Space's New Property with Stormwater Bioretention, Bike Parking and Eight 10' LED Lights

Related Buzz

Statement from the County of San Mateo Regarding Sheriff Corpus's \$10 Million Government Claim & Release of Full Report Transcript which Cost \$200k

PRESS RELEASE. From the San Mateo County Executive's Office on January 7th, 2025. Redwood City — The following is a statement...

Share The Buzz



Rising Groundwater Will Be a Problem Before Sea Level Rise

VIDEO. Sewer Authority Mid-Coast (SAM) Director and City Councilwoman, Debbie Ruddock, reports back about the California State Assembly Select Committee...

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Montara Water (MWSD) Receives Report on "How to Reach a Sustainability Pumping Rate for the Alta Vista Well"

VIDEO. From the Montara Water and Sanitary District (MWSD) Director's meeting on Thursday, November 2nd, 2023 at 7:30pm, as a hybrid meeting....

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RECENT BUZZ



Pillar Point Harbor Surfer's Beach Dredge Project Notice of Shutdowns to Coastal Trail, East Inner Harbor Entrance Scheduled to Begin Thursday 7/10/2025

July 9, 2025



Coastside Allies Collects 1,100 Signatures and Works with San Mateo County to Allocate Budget to Continue Firebreak Tree Mitigation in El Granada

July 9, 2025



Midpen Open Space 2025 Annual Photo Contest ~ Deadline July 31st

July 9, 2025



Big Basin Redwoods State Park Fire Rebuilding Plan Summary Now Available ~ Webinar July 10th, 2025 to Learn More About the Plan and Preparation of Environmental Review



July 3, 2025



Document

July 3, 2025



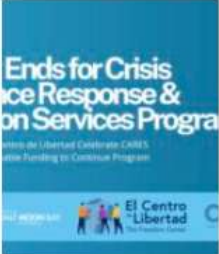
**Coastside Land Trust Presents ~
Wavecrest Coastal Trail Project
Update with Sara Polgar, Trail Project
Manager**

July 3, 2025



**San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury
Returned Accusation Against Sheriff
Corpus; Corpus Attorney's Release
Documents ("Keker Report") as
Measure A Removal Process
Continues**

July 3, 2025



**Half Moon Bay Ends Crisis Assistance
Response & Evaluation Services
(CARES) until New Funding is ID'd to
Continue Program; Now Call SMCo
Mobile Crisis Response Team (650)579-
0350 or 988**

July 3, 2025



**Apply to Serve on the Half Moon Bay
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Available; Deadline August 4th, 2025**

July 2, 2025





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Supervisors Approve \$650k for San Mateo Resource Conservation District Old Haul Road Repairs for Critical Firefighting Access, Fuel Reduction and Park Operation in Pescadero Creek County Park

June 25, 2025



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07:15

STAFF REPORT. From the [San Mateo County Board of Supervisors' meeting](#) on Tuesday, June 10th, 2025 at 9:00am, as a hybrid meeting. [Agenda](#). Staff Report for Consent Agenda [Item #107](#).

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Nicholas J. Calderon, Parks Director

Subject: Agreement with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District for Management Services to Conduct Critical Access Repairs and Sediment Reduction Along Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution authorizing:

- A) The President of the Board of Supervisors to execute an agreement with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) for project management, engineering, and construction management services to conduct critical access repairs and sediment reduction projects along Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park, for the term of June 10, 2025 through November 30, 2026, in an amount not-to-exceed \$650,000; and
- B) The waiving of the County's formal competitive procurement process for this agreement; and
- C) The Parks Director, or the Parks Director's designee, to execute amendments to the agreement to modify the County's maximum fiscal obligation by no more than \$25,000, and/or to modify the Agreement's terms and/or services, so long as the modified term(s) and/or services is/are within the current or revised fiscal provisions.

BACKGROUND

The San Mateo Resource Conservation District ("RCD") is a non-regulatory, special district that provides technical support to landowners and land managers during the planning and implementation of restoration projects that achieve watershed protection goals. Due to the RCD's ability to navigate complex environmental regulatory processes and secure grant funding to supplement project budgets, the Parks Department ("Department") regularly collaborates with the RCD to implement sediment reduction and stream crossing repairs, water infrastructure improvements, and various wildfire resiliency projects.

As a result of prior successes conducting critical access repairs and sediment reduction projects in Pescadero Creek County Park, the Department desires to contract with the RCD for project management, engineering, and construction management services to repair two failing stream crossings on Old Haul Road in Pescadero Creek County Park ("Project").

The Schenly Creek crossing has severely deteriorated and is at risk of failure. The outer edge of the road is eroding, the culvert has corroded, and water is flowing under the culvert destabilizing the embankment. The project engineer determined that due to accelerating degradation of the culvert, the crossing has a high risk of failure and should be prioritized for repair. Moreover, the current condition of the crossing does not permit heavy equipment to safely pass along the road impeding fire engines, Department vehicles, and equipment used to conduct planned forest health and fuel reduction projects from accessing the interior of the park.

The Rhododendron Creek crossing, located on Old Haul Road approximately 2.6 miles east of Schenly Creek, is also in need of repair and has a significant potential for failure. At this crossing, water frequently overtops Old Haul Road during storms depositing fine sediment into the creek. An active gully has also formed as a result, which is undermining the downslope embankment of the road.

Repair of both stream crossings will prevent an estimated 555 tons of sediment from entering Pescadero Creek, which provides critical habitat for federally protected coho salmon and steelhead trout. The Pescadero Creek watershed has a total maximum daily load requirement for sediment reduction established by the California State Water Resource Control Board, which the County is required to meet.

As was experienced during the CZU Lightning Complex Fires, Old Haul Road is a critical access route for firefighting in the Santa Cruz Mountains and is considered by CAL FIRE to be a priority resource in the region. The road is also essential for park operations and maintenance activities including fire fuel reduction and forest health activities.

DISCUSSION

In accordance with the terms and provisions of the proposed agreement ("Agreement"), the RCD will provide various services including administration support, project management, engineering design services, and construction oversight. The RCD will also be responsible for selecting licensed contractor(s) through a competitive solicitation and entering into contracts with the selected contractor(s) to perform the above-described work. In accordance with the terms of the Agreement, the Department will reimburse RCD for up to \$650,000 in Project-related costs. The RCD is contributing \$255,000 in previously secured grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The total Project cost is \$905,000.

The Department recommends that the Board waive the formal competitive procurement process for this agreement pursuant to Section IV(B)(2) of County Administrative Memorandum B-1 (May 9, 2022), which states that the competitive solicitation requirement may be waived for “agreements with other public entities, including governments, universities, schools, or other organizations acting as governmental agencies.” The RCD is a special district, a form of local government created and established under California law to be locally governed with independent board of directors that are accountable to local communities. In addition, the RCD is a division of the California state government under Division 9 of the Public Resources Code.

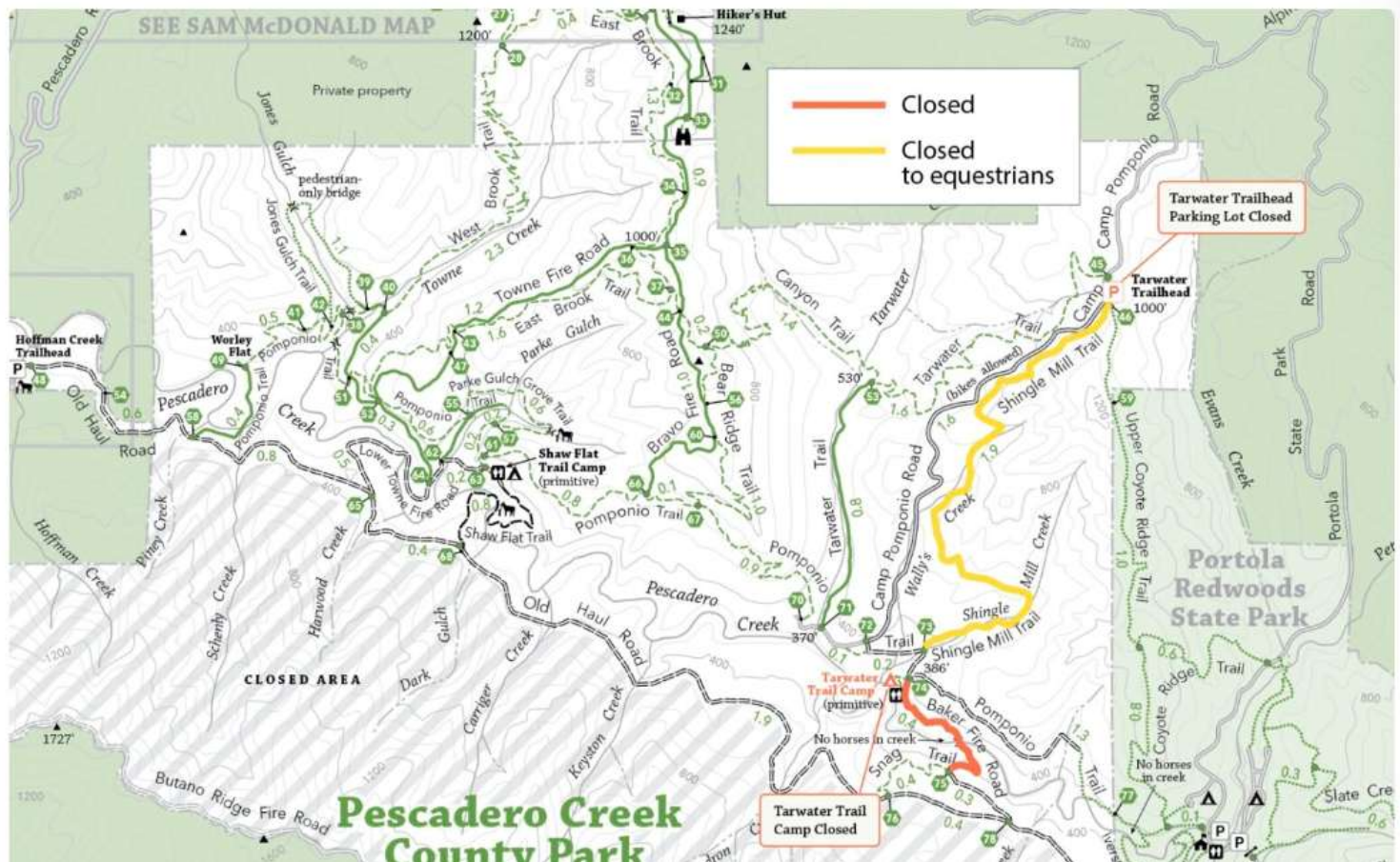
The County Attorney has reviewed and approved the resolution and Agreement as to form.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Repairs to this fire road are necessary to maintain critical access for first responders to access Pescadero Creek County Park and conduct wildfire containment and suppression efforts. Extreme wildfire can adversely impact communities through poor air quality and related health conditions, and threaten livelihoods dependent on agriculture, forestry, and tourism.

FISCAL IMPACT

The total not-to-exceed amount of the Agreement is \$650,000. The Department has secured \$307,500 from the California State Water Resource Control Board Nonpoint Source 319(h) grant program. This is a reimbursement-based grant. Sufficient **Measure K** appropriations for the remaining \$342,500 of the Project are included in the Parks Department’s FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget. **Measure K** appropriations will be included in the Parks Department’s FY 2025-26 Recommended Budget and future budgets to fully fund the Project through its completion.





[The History and Rebuild of the Dark Gulch Culvert. Do You Know How Important Old Haul Road Is?;](#)
A San Mateo Resource Conservation District Project; September 2, 2020

[More on the San Mateo Resource Conservation District on Coastside Buzz](#)

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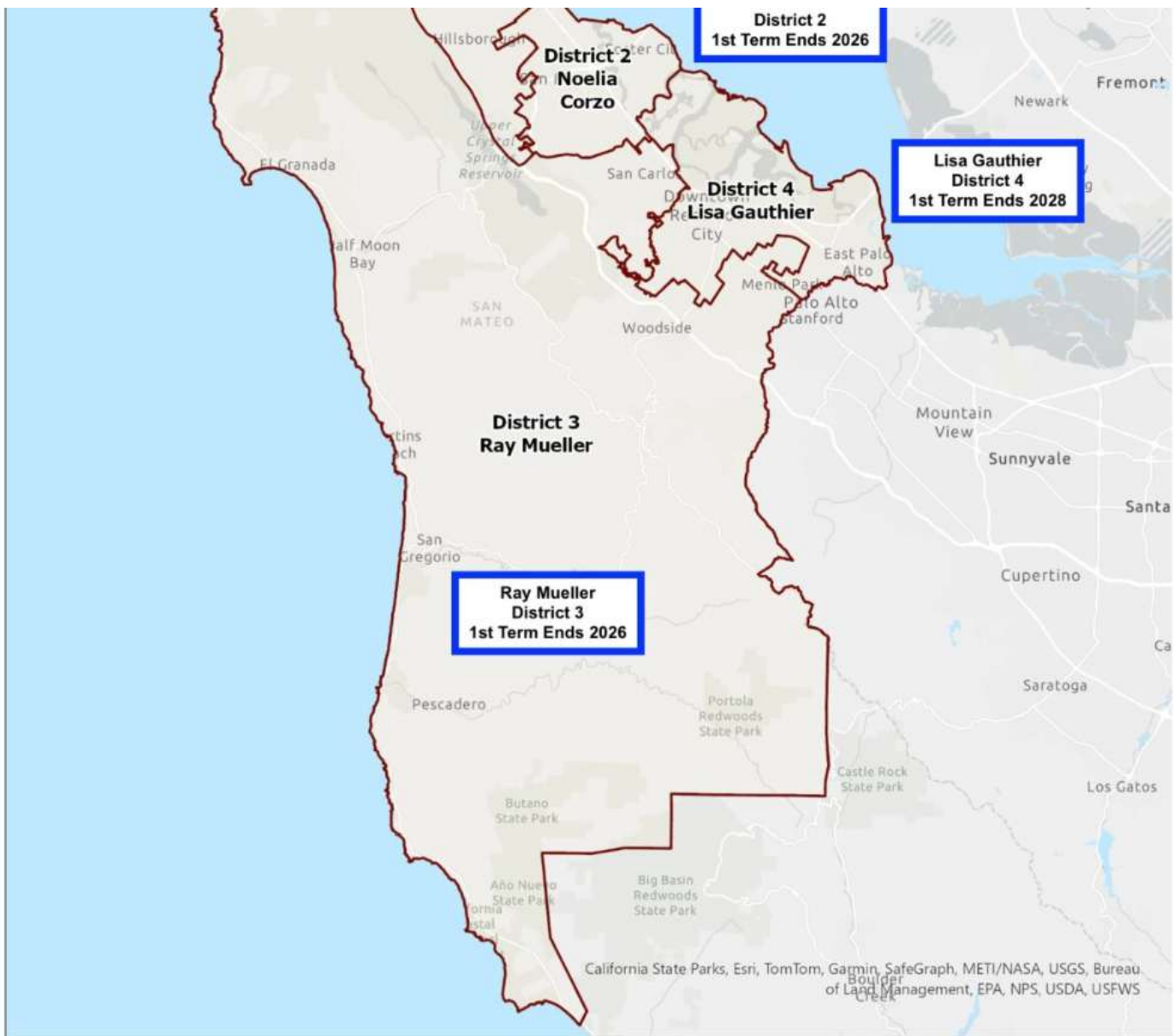


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COUNTY OF SAN MATEO CA

*Supervisor boundaries approved by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, December, 2021

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PODCAST. From the KPDO interview on Friday, February 14th, 2025 interviewed by Catherine Peery and Irma Mitton. Author: mdrag x

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NEWS > ENVIRONMENT

Pescadero struggles with unclean water, rising rates

Many residents still rely on rain and creek water decades after instillation of clean water system



Farm worker Gabriel Echeverria, 79, of Pescadero, washes his hands with cloudy water after having dinner at Pescadero Community Church in Pescadero, Calif., on Thursday, June 12, 2025. Pescadero, a small agricultural community on the San Mateo County coast of less than 600 people, is facing a deepening water crisis. Residents are reeling from proposed water rate hikes from County Service Area 11. (Jose Carlos Fajardo/Bay Area News Group)



By **RYAN MACASERO** | rmacasero@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group and **LUIS MELECIO-ZAMBRANO**

UPDATED: June 29, 2025 at 11:12 AM PDT

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When it rains in Pescadero, Irma Rodriguez gets to work — lining up containers on her patio to catch as much water as she can.

It may seem unusual in a town just 30 miles southwest of the wealth and power of Silicon Valley along the Peninsula's coast. But for Rodriguez, it's a matter of survival.

For the past 20 years, she has relied on water pumped from a nearby creek to bathe and wash dishes. But when it rains, the water turns dark and murky — “like chocolate,” she says — forcing her to depend on rainwater to brush her teeth or flush the toilet in the tiny rental that she shares with her daughter.

Her experience reflects a chronic crisis in Pescadero: a lack of access to clean water.

The small rural town has one public water system, and it serves less than half of the population. Now, San Mateo County is preparing to raise rates for that system — potentially tripling costs — deepening concerns among residents already struggling to get by and not addressing those who have no clean running water at all.

A stark economic divide runs through the county. In 2020, U.S. Census data showed the average income for residents countywide was \$132,000. In Pescadero, it was just \$42,000 — with many residents relying on Social Security, other government benefits, or working as farm laborers.

AD



For many of the town's roughly 600 residents — a figure locals say vastly undercounts those living in crowded farmworker housing — wages are even lower. Some townspeople told this news organization that many farmworkers in the area earn just \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year.

Of the seven public water systems within 2 miles of Pescadero assessed by the California State Water Resources Control Board in 2024, six were either failing or at risk of failing. Only one — County Service Area No. 11, or CSA-11 — was deemed to have “no risk.”

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- 4 **Pope prays for world to recognize urgency of climate crisis as he celebrates Mass' using new rite**
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- 6 **Men under 40 are most at risk for testicular cancer. Few know it**
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The “no risk” rating doesn’t reflect how many people in the area actually get their water from creeks or private wells that may never be tested, leaving their water safety uncertain. In the two decades Rodriguez has lived in Pescadero, she said her water has never been tested.

Before CSA-11 was created, the town’s residents relied on domestic wells. But by the 1970s and 1980s, county officials found dangerously high levels of nitrates and naturally occurring salts in many wells. In response, CSA-11 was established in 1988 to fund and operate a public groundwater system.

Today, that system includes two wells, a 135,000-gallon storage tank and a distribution network. It serves about 90 residential and commercial connections — less than half of Pescadero’s estimated 205 households, according to Census data.

Rodriguez is among those whose dwelling is not connected to the system.

“We don’t have potable water. I’m worried because it isn’t water that’s 100% purified,” she said. “Pescadero is a historic town, and they want to keep it that way. They don’t want to add housing, they don’t want to add water, they don’t want to make any changes. But there are farmers here. There are farmworkers working in the fields. We’re already here.”

For residents like Rodriguez, getting clean water is a daily challenge. Some drive a half-hour round trip to Half Moon Bay — or even an hour to Santa Cruz — to buy bottled water in bulk. Others rely on neighbors or local churches willing to share water.

The shortage touches nearly every part of daily life. Sediment and inconsistency in her water rendered her washing machine unusable, Rodriguez says. Many farmworkers depend on mobile laundry services just to wash their clothes.

For those connected to CSA-11, a different concern is looming: steep rate hikes. The county had planned to raise water rates starting in July, but during an April 8 Board of Supervisors meeting, officials received 52 written protests. Although some were deemed technically deficient, the board ultimately decided to pause the increases — at least for now.

Rates were set to triple over the next five years. County officials say the increases are necessary to keep Pescadero’s water system running safely and sustainably. The revenue would help cover rising operating and maintenance costs, repay a loan brought on by a major 2011 water outage, and build a reserve for future emergencies.

Longtime resident and rancher Dante Silvestri said rate hikes would hurt low-income residents the most.

“It would hit us hard,” he said.

County Supervisor Ray Mueller, who represents the coastside, said the Department of Public Works will revisit the proposal and re-engage with residents.

“There’s no guarantee the next proposal will be lower,” Mueller said. “But they’re working to see if there’s anything that can make the increase more palatable. I still plan to go out and knock on doors, to meet with ratepayers and hold public hearings to explain why the rate increase — if there is one — is necessary.”

Another persistent challenge in Pescadero, the housing shortage, is deeply intertwined with water issues.

Despite wide stretches of farmland, development is constrained by the lack of water infrastructure, among other issues limiting new construction.

Rita Mancera, executive director of the nonprofit Puente, which works primarily with

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immigrant farmworkers, said many residents are reluctant to report poor water quality for fear their homes will be declared uninhabitable, putting them at risk of eviction in an already tight housing market.

"I think we could still preserve this place and build affordable housing," Mancera said. "There's a lot of money around here. The people with resources, the community, the county — we need to work together to figure it out. How do we distribute that in an equitable way so people can actually live?"

"Honestly, we're not asking for much. Livable housing conditions. Water. I go home, turn on the faucet, and I don't have to think about anything. That's not the lifestyle of many people here."

Despite the hardships, Pescadero remains a postcard-perfect destination, known for its beaches, farmland and lighthouse. Tourists fill its quaint downtown on weekends. But for locals, the heart of town beats in quieter spaces: the post office, the community center, the fields.

And yet, frustration runs deep. Progress on water access has been slow. Many feel left behind — or forgotten altogether.

Pescadero Middle/High School has not had access to potable water for at least 27 years. A project to connect the campus to CSA-11 was approved earlier this month and is expected to be completed by 2027.

"When they have sports, they have to let the other teams know they don't have potable water so they can prepare," Mancera said. "What the students themselves are saying is that they feel embarrassed about the situation at the high school."

Mancera doesn't just want new connections or adjusted rates, but a long-term commitment to clean, accessible water.

"I think the county should work with the community and establish what is going to be the water plan for this community, not just now, but for the next 30 years," she said.

Michael Polacek, a resident who has studied the town's water issues extensively, said the solution may lie in applying state resources more effectively.

"So the magic wand would be: run this thing like a business, reach out to everybody that wants to connect to it, and let them connect under a program called SAFER," he said, referring to California's Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience program. "All humans have rights to safe water."

Originally Published: June 29, 2025 at 10:53 AM PDT



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San Mateo County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan Project Specific Analysis for the Coastal Santa Cruz Mountains: State Parks Forest Health Initiative

Project-Specific Analysis and Addendum to the CalVTP PEIR
Coastal Santa Cruz Mountains: State Parks Forest Health Initiative



Prepared for:
California State Parks
Santa Cruz District



California Vegetation Treatment Program – Programmatic EIR (CalVTP PEIR)

-Brief Overview-



Board of Forestry and Fire Protection certified the CalVTP PEIR in December of 2019



Designed to help public agencies expedite implementation of treatments consistent with the CalVTP to reduce wildfire risks and avoid or diminish the harmful effects of wildfire on the people, property, and natural resources of California (BOF's CalVTP Implementation Training)



Treatments would occur within the “Treatable Landscape” of the State Responsibility Area

Defined as the portion of the SRA with vegetation conditions suitable for treatments. **Areas outside treatable landscape can be included as addendums to the PEIR if conditions warrant.**



20.3 million acres total – Tree, **shrub**, and grass fuel types

San Mateo County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan

- **Purpose & Context**

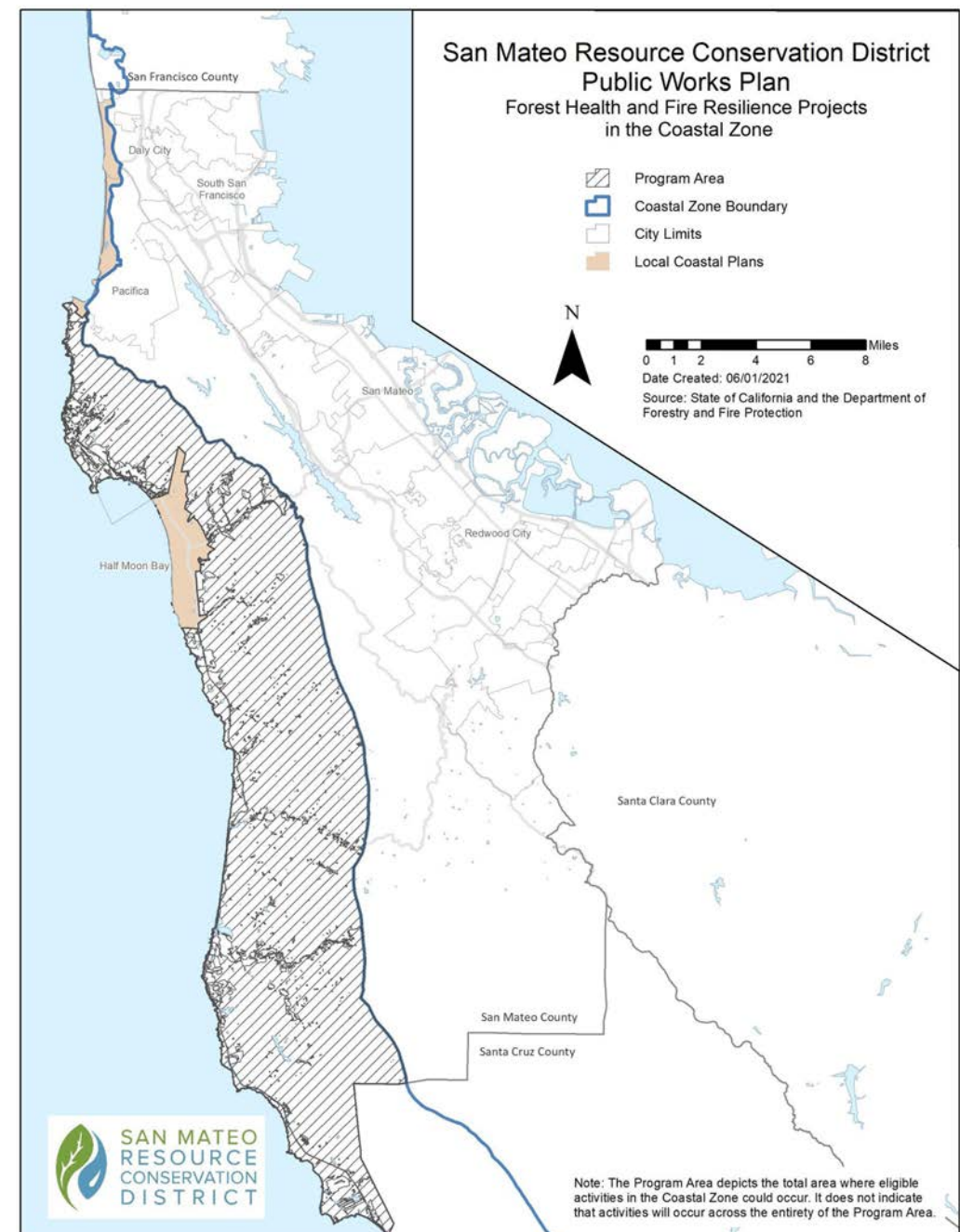
- Framework for forest health & fire resilience projects within the coastal zone
- Designed to streamline compliance with the California Coastal Act

- **Why It Exists**

- Streamlines permitting by pairing CEQA and Coastal Act Compliance into a single document for each project.
- Aims for greater scale & pace of vegetation management while protecting sensitive coastal resources

- **What It Covers**

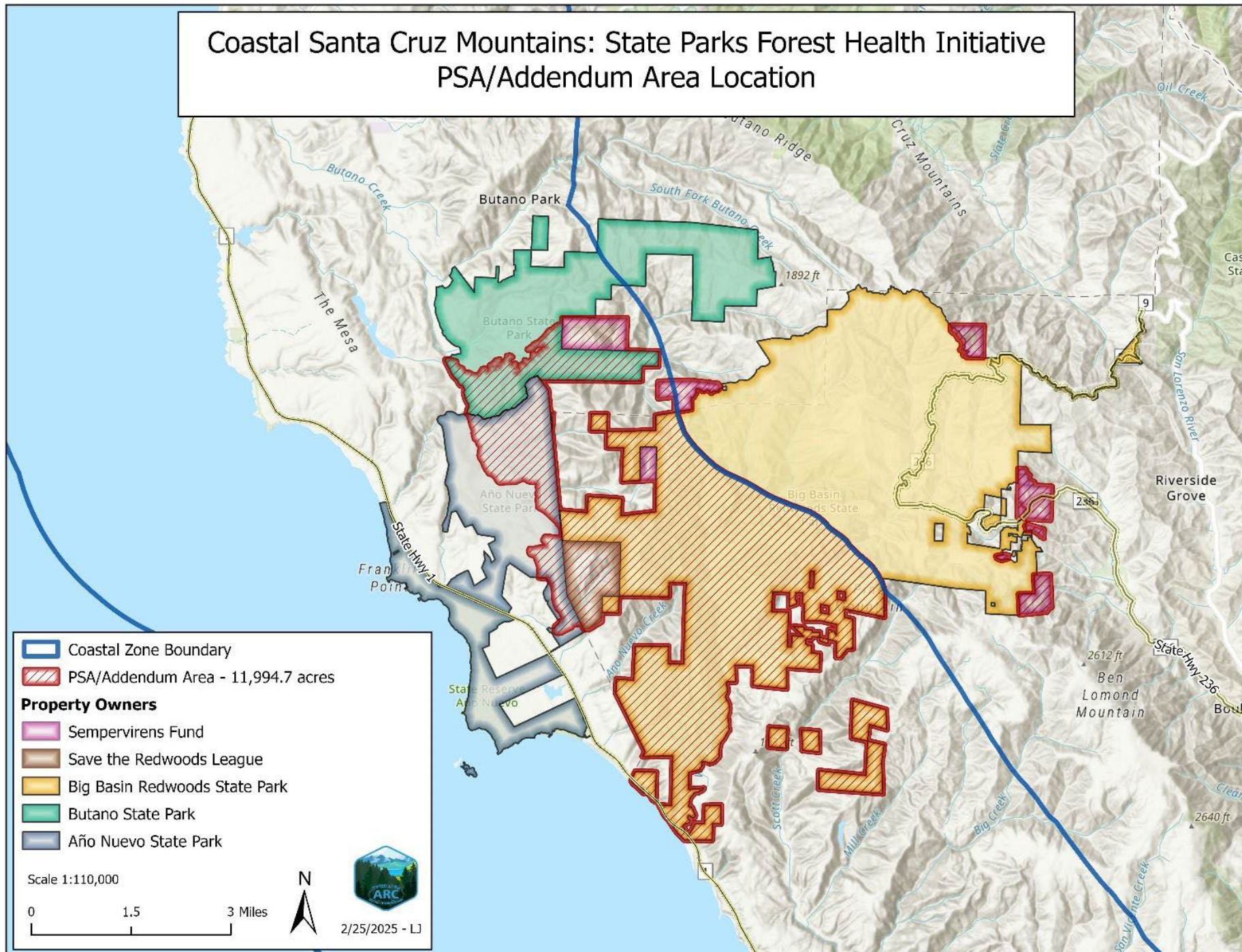
- Applies to vegetation management activities included in the CalVTP
- Includes additional **Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards**.



Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (VTS)

- Developed collaboratively with Commission, RCDs, State Parks, CalFire, County Planning, Fire Safe Councils, and local foresters.
- Goal is to provide additional guidance within the CalVTP PEIR PSA process to enable Commission staff to “approve” the project as consistent with local LCPs and compliant with the Coastal Act.
- Require, where possible, project designer to develop and articulate vegetation treatment activities through an ecological lens (goals, trajectory, natural associations, hierarchy, etc.)
- Require projects to consider public access.

Coastal Santa Cruz Mountains: State Parks Forest Health Initiative PSA/Addendum Area Location





Before Treatment



After Treatment

Change in plans

COURT OF APPEAL, FOURTH APPELLATE DISTRICT

DIVISION ONE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA CHAPARRAL
INSTITUTE et al.,

Plaintiffs and Appellants,

v.

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE
PROTECTION,

Defendant and Respondent.

D083484

(Super. Ct. No. 37-2020-00005203-
CU-TT-CTL)

APPEAL from a judgment of the Superior Court of San Diego County,
Kenneth J. Medel, Judge. Request for judicial notice granted, in part.
Reversed.

Law Office of Todd T. Cardiff and Todd T. Cardiff for Plaintiffs and
Appellants.

Rob Bonta, Attorney General, Tracy L. Winsor, Assistant Attorney
General, Janelle M. Smith and Micaela M. Harms, Deputy Attorneys
General, for Defendant and Respondent.

Coastal Santa Cruz Mountains: State Parks Forest Health Initiative PSA/Addendum Area Vicinity Vegetation Types

