

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
November 21, 2024

PEDRO POINT HEADLANDS STEWARDSHIP - AUGMENTATION

Project No. 17-036-01
Project Manager: Erin Gravley

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$136,500 to the Pacifica Land Trust to augment a previously authorized Conservancy grant of \$103,270 for community-based habitat restoration and trail enhancement at Pedro Point Headlands in San Mateo County.

LOCATION: Pedro Point Headlands, San Mateo County

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)
Exhibit 2: [May 5, 2022 Staff Recommendation](#)
Exhibit 3: [January 18, 2018 Staff Recommendation](#)
-

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution and findings.

Resolution:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes a grant of an amount not to exceed one hundred thirty-six thousand five hundred dollars (\$136,500) to the Pacifica Land Trust (“the grantee”) to augment a previously authorized Conservancy grant of \$103,270 for community-based habitat restoration and trail enhancement at Pedro Point Headlands in San Mateo County (the “project”).

Prior to commencement of the project, the grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (Executive Officer) the following:

1. A detailed work program, schedule, and budget.
2. Names and qualifications of any contractors to be retained in carrying out the project.
3. A plan for acknowledgement of Conservancy funding.

4. Evidence that the grantee has entered into agreements sufficient to enable the grantee to implement, operate, and maintain the project.

Findings:

Based on the accompanying staff recommendation and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria.
3. Pacifica Land Trust is a nonprofit organization organized under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends that the Conservancy authorize disbursement of \$136,500 to the Pacifica Land Trust to augment an existing Conservancy grant, authorized January 18, 2018 and augmented on May 5, 2022, for community-based habitat restoration and trail enhancement on Conservancy- and City of Pacifica-owned property at Pedro Point Headlands in Pacifica, San Mateo County (the “project”) (see Exhibit 1). The proposed authorization will enable the Pacifica Land Trust to continue implementing this stewardship project for approximately five additional years. Pacifica Land Trust will continue accomplishing the following tasks:

- Hosting monthly volunteer workdays for habitat and trail enhancement and offering additional educational programs to the community.
- Repairing existing trails to improve visitor safety and comfort, including erosion control, installing water bars, minor rerouting, trimming back encroaching vegetation, removal of hazardous trees, and maintenance of signs.
- Revegetating landscape scars caused by previous off-road vehicle use, controlling invasive plants, and preventing further erosion.

This work is vital to keeping trails open and restoring habitat on this spectacular 255-acre, publicly-owned property. Without the proposed augmentation, Pacifica Land Trust would not be able to continue with the community-based restoration and trail enhancement work at Pedro Point Headlands past early 2025.

Site Description: See Exhibit 2.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: See Exhibit 2.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:

The proposed project remains consistent with the Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria, last updated on September 23, 2021, as described in the May 5, 2022 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy (proposed authorization)	\$136,500
Coastal Conservancy (SCC Board 2022 authorization)	\$41,800
Coastal Conservancy (SCC Board 2018 authorization)	\$48,000
Coastal Conservancy (Executive Officer authorization)	\$13,470
Project Total	\$239,770

Conservancy funds are anticipated to come from two sources. The first is an appropriation from the Conservancy’s Coastal Access Account (Public Resources Code Section 30620.2). Coastal Access Account funds are derived from coastal development permit application fees required by the California Coastal Commission and are appropriated to the Conservancy yearly. Coastal Access Account funds may be used for grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for the development, maintenance, and operation of new or existing facilities that provide public access to the coast. Pedro Point Headlands borders the Pacific Ocean, and the project will enhance trails to provide greater access to the San Mateo County coastline. It is expected that the yearly appropriation of Coastal Access Account funds for this grant will be no more than \$20,000 per fiscal year, for a total of 5 years. It is expected that the yearly appropriation will cover one year of stewardship work. In the event that the yearly appropriation is not available, one fewer year of maintenance will be achieved for each year that the appropriation is not available.

The second source of Conservancy funding is an appropriation to the Conservancy from the California Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, codified as Public Resources Code Sections 75001-75130 (Prop. 84). These funds may be used for projects that promote access to and enjoyment of the coastal resources of the state (Section 75060). Section 75060(c) allocates funding specifically for the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program (Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Sections 31160-31165). The proposed project is consistent with Section 75060(c), as under Section 31162(d), the Conservancy may provide grants in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area for projects that enhance open space and natural areas that are accessible to urban populations for recreational and educational purposes. The proposed project will enhance natural resources and public access at Pedro Point Headlands, an open space and natural area on the San Mateo Coast that is within a short drive of the urban population of the Bay Area.

Pacifica Land Trust will provide in-kind services consisting of volunteer hours for trail and habitat enhancement on the property.

Unless specifically identified as “Required Match,” the other sources of funding and in-kind contributions described above are estimates. The Conservancy does not typically require matching funds or in-kind services, nor does it require documentation of expenditures from other funders or of in-kind services. Typical grant conditions require grantees to provide any funds needed to complete a project.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project remains consistent with the Conservancy’s Enabling Legislation as described in the May 5, 2022 and January 18, 2018 staff recommendations (Exhibits 2 and 3).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S [2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN](#):

Consistent with **Goal 3.2 Restore or Enhance Habitats**, the proposed project will result in the restoration and enhancement of coastal scrub habitat on the Pedro Point Headlands property.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

The proposed project is categorically exempt from review of impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15304 (minor alterations to land) and 15301 (minor alteration of existing facilities).

Section 15304 exempts minor public or private alterations in the conditions of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy mature scenic trees. The proposed project involves community members using hand tools to remove invasive species, grow and plant native species, and enhance trails. The project will remove trees that may block trails or appear to be an imminent danger to trail users but will not remove healthy scenic trees nor will the project involve removal of species that would require permits from regulatory agencies.

Section 15301 exempts operation, repair, maintenance, and minor alteration of existing structures, facilities and topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond existing conditions. The trail improvements of this project will be done on existing trails to address erosion and will involve negligible expansion of use.

Upon Conservancy approval of the project, staff will file Notices of Exemption.