

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
July 30, 2004

POINT CABRILLO RESTORATION

File No. 01-139
Project Manager: Sheila Semans

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$2,140,600 to the Point Cabrillo Light Keepers Association to complete the restoration of the Point Cabrillo Light Station, and for management of public use improvements onsite.

LOCATION: The Point Cabrillo Light Station, west of Point Cabrillo Drive, approximately two miles north of the town of Mendocino, Mendocino County (Exhibit 1).

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Coastal Restoration/Access

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: Project Location Map

Exhibit 2: Site Map

Exhibit 3: Department of Parks and Recreation approval letter

Exhibit 4: Letters of Support

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31200 and 31400 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed two million one hundred forty thousand six hundred dollars (\$2,140,600) to the Point Cabrillo Lightkeepers Association (PCLK) to complete the restoration of the Point Cabrillo Light Station, and for management of public use improvements onsite. Prior to the disbursement of any funds under this authorization, the PCLK shall submit for the approval of the Executive Officer a detailed work program and budget, approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation, for the activities being funded.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The Point Cabrillo Lightkeepers Association is a nonprofit organization existing under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code whose purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with and will help to carry out the Point Cabrillo Restoration Plan and the Property Disposition Implementation Plan adopted by the Conservancy in April, 2001, pursuant to Division 21 of the Public Resources Code.
3. The proposed project is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Section 31200 *et seq.* regarding coastal restoration, and Section 31400 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code regarding access to the coast.”

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends authorization to disburse up to \$2,140,600 to the Point Cabrillo Lightkeepers Association (PCLK) to complete the on-going preservation, reconstruction and restoration of the Point Cabrillo Light Station. This authorization would provide for restoration of the remaining structures at the Light Station and the ongoing management of the public use improvements onsite. All restoration and management activities included in this request have been approved by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) (Exhibit 3) as required by the Memorandum of Understanding for the Cooperative Management and Restoration of the Point Cabrillo Light Station (signed in 2001 by the Conservancy, DPR, and PCLK/NCIA), and will be carried out under the direction of DPR pursuant to an interpretive concession agreement between DPR and PCLK.

In October of last year, DPR approved PCLK’s *Historic Structures Report for the Point Cabrillo Light Station and Preserve; Three Lightkeeper’s Residences and Two Outbuilding* (HSR report). Intended to guide the remaining restoration at Point Cabrillo, this document contains detailed information about the condition and historic significance of every interior and exterior component of the structures at the Light Station. The HSR report also provides a site history and construction chronology, structural and hazardous materials evaluations, floor plans, site plans and historic photographs of the buildings, and pest control evaluations, and makes recommendations on the rehabilitation and maintenance of the structures. Rehabilitation of the Light Station will be done with the intent of preserving the historic significance of the buildings, while adapting them to provide for overnight accommodations, administrative offices, and visitor services. Rehabilitation will include modifications required to conform to Americans with Disability Act (ADA) regulations.

Although originally built in 1908, restoration efforts will strive to reestablish the appearance and ambiance of the Light Station prior to 1939, when the Coast Guard took over the property and electricity was installed onsite. Returning the buildings to their original primitive state is impractical given that the intended uses of the structures will require basic utilities. In December of last year, the Conservancy approved funding for the restoration of the eastern lightkeeper’s residence, which will be completed this winter. Restored intact, this building will become the Light Station’s museum and will be open to the public year round. Also completed this summer was the rehabilitation of the eastern out building, which is now an ADA-accessible restroom and storage facility.

This authorization would provide funding for the remaining restoration of the Light Station. The restoration tasks and their associated cost estimates are as follows:

- The western light lightkeeper's residence: This building will be restored intact and used as a caretaker's residence upstairs and a community meeting center on the lower floor. (\$540,000)
- The middle lightkeeper's residence: This building will be rehabilitated and adapted for re-use as a visitor-serving inn, accommodating 4 bedrooms upstairs. The redesign will include installing bathrooms in each bedroom. (\$750,000)
- The western and middle out buildings: These structures will be rehabilitated and adapted for re-use as ADA-accessible cottages as part of the inn facility. This will provide lodging for handicapped visitors, allowing the main lightkeeper's buildings to be rehabilitated with minimal alterations to its historic design. (\$240,000)
- Infrastructure projects: including Light Station site work and road repair, electrical distribution system, an upgrade to the septic system, sub-surface drainage system. (\$123,300)
- Building preservation: ongoing maintenance and preservation of all structures. (\$23,600)
- Design and permitting: including a coastal development permit, CEQA documentation, architectural designs, and as-built plans for all structures. (\$176,500)

The proposed authorization will also provide funding for the ongoing administrative support of PCLK. In accordance with Section 3 of the MOU, "...CSCC will provide funds to NCIA (PCLK) for restoration and management of the Light Station over a five-year period." The requested funds will provide the last two years of on-site management required under this agreement.

Site Description: The 300-acre project area is located on the coastal terraces and bluffs west of Point Cabrillo Drive, approximately two miles north of the town of Mendocino. The site includes ocean shoreline, windswept grasslands, perennial streams, wetlands and riparian habitat, seventeen catalogued archaeological sites, and substantial and rare historic resources. Central to the property is the historic Point Cabrillo Light Station, built in 1908, which includes the Lighthouse, three Craftsman-style keepers' homes, and associated outbuildings. The Point Cabrillo Light Station is on the National and State Registers of Historic Places, and it is the most complete example of an old-time light station remaining in California. Its original Fresnel lens, a priceless historic artifact in itself, is one of only four Chance Brothers manufactured lenses in the United States, and its reinstatement to use as the primary aid to navigation is unique.

Project History: From 1988 to 1992, the Conservancy successfully pursued a program of phased acquisition of the 270 acres of private property surrounding the Point Cabrillo Light Station. The Conservancy acquired the 30.5-acre Light Station property in 1992 through a complex and innovative property exchange transaction with the U.S. Coast Guard. The Conservancy expended approximately \$7.2 million dollars to acquire the property.

The Point Cabrillo project was planned with the expectation that the entire property would be transferred to the DPR for creation of a new State Park, with a complete reimbursement of the Conservancy's capital investment. The state's financial circumstances in the 1990's, especially

cutbacks in DPR operating funds, precluded the expected property transfer. In June of 1992, the nonprofit California State Coastal Conservancy North Coast Interpretive Association (NCIA) was created to assist the Conservancy in managing Point Cabrillo. Since that time, community members under the auspices of NCIA (and now PCLK) have carried out extensive restoration of the lighthouse and historic lens and have established education and interpretive programs on the property using Conservancy funds, other grants, and donations.

In late 1999, DPR expressed the desire to work with the community, NCIA and the Conservancy to obtain the funding needed to accept and manage the Point Cabrillo Light Station and Preserve. Negotiations began the following year between DPR, NCIA, and Conservancy staff to develop a disposition plan for the property. By April 2001, the Conservancy adopted a Property Disposition Implementation Plan to transfer the Light Station and Preserve to DPR in two phases: in phase one, the Conservancy agreed to transfer the Preserve, the 270 acres surrounding the Light Station, to DPR at no cost, and in the second phase, the Conservancy would transfer the Light Station to DPR for a one-time payment of \$4,000,000. At the same time, the Conservancy also authorized execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with NCIA and DPR that described shared management of various programs at the Light Station and Preserve by DPR and NCIA. PCLK was formed to succeed NCIA and carry on its activities at Point Cabrillo. In the MOU, the Conservancy agreed to expend up to \$4,000,000 during a five-year period for the restoration of the historic buildings at the Light Station, and for the PCLK's ongoing management, interpretive and educational programs consistent with the concession agreement between PCLK and DPR. DPR and NCIA/PCLK also entered into a concession agreement providing for management of the Light Station and surrounding Preserve. In October of last year, DPR approved PCLK's *Historic Structures Report for the Point Cabrillo Light Station and Preserve; Three Lightkeeper's Residences and Two Outbuilding*, which will guide the ongoing restoration. In January of this year, DPR also accepted PCLK's Adaptive Reuse Study, which describes the intended modifications to the buildings and planned re-use.

Restoration has proceeded at Point Cabrillo under this unique management structure for more three years. Most recently, the Kearns Farmhouse at the entrance to the property was reconstructed and now serves as a visitor center and DPR offices; the eastern outbuilding has been rehabilitated as an ADA-accessible restroom; and restoration on the eastern lightkeeper's building is underway and will be completed this winter.

PROJECT FINANCING:

Coastal Conservancy	\$2,140,600
PCLK (January 2004-June 2004 projections)	
<u>Programs</u>	\$85,100
Retail (net), Interpretive/Public Access, Education, Fundraising, Special Events, Archives, Volunteer Coordination, Marine Science Exhibits/Displays, cash contributions, grants	
<u>In-kind</u>	\$138,496
• PCLK Volunteer Service Hours (7,200 hours @ \$12.00/hr.)	

- PCLK Board of Directors (1,600 hours @ \$25.00/hr.)
- U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary (672 hours @ \$18.00/hr.)

Total Project Cost

\$2,364,196

The anticipated primary source of Conservancy funds for this project is the FY 02/03 appropriation to the Conservancy from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40). These funds may be used, in accordance with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, for improvement, rehabilitation, restoration, and preservation purposes. The grantee is providing matching funds and in-kind services, consistent with Proposition 40 policies.

Another anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this project is the FY '02 appropriation to the Coastal Access Account. The Coastal Access Account is funded from coastal development permit application fees collected by the Coastal Commission. These funds are appropriated to the Conservancy annually for grants to public agencies and private nonprofit entities for the development, maintenance, and operation of new or existing facilities that provide public access to the shoreline of the sea. (Pub. Res. Code §30620(c)(1)). By maintaining the public use improvements at Point Cabrillo, the proposed project is consistent with this funding source.

ORIGINAL ALLOCATION	\$4,000,000
Previously Authorized	\$1,859,400
Proposed Authorization	<u>\$2,140,600</u>
TOTAL REMAINING	\$0

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The Conservancy is authorized under Public Resources Code Section 31200 to make grants to nonprofit organizations for the purpose of coastal restoration. Pursuant to this authority, the Conservancy adopted the Point Cabrillo Restoration Plan in 1985, amended the Plan in 1990 and 2001 to incorporate the Public Use Guidelines for the site, and in April 2001, approved the Property Disposition Plan and implementing actions. Sections 31400.1 and 31400.3 authorize the Conservancy to make grants and provide assistance to nonprofit organizations in carrying out its mandate to implement a system of coastal public accessways and related functions under Division 21, including the enhancement of coastal resources that have suffered a loss of scenic value. The recommended action will allow the Conservancy and the PCLK to provide improved access to and along the coast, and further implement the Point Cabrillo Restoration Plan, Public Use Guidelines, and the Property Disposition Implementation Plan, all of which have been previously found to be consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 2 Objective D**, the proposed project will increase coastal recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, and provide for the protection and restoration of cultural and historic resources at Point Cabrillo.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S
PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:**

The proposed project remains consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted January 24, 2001, as determined by the Conservancy in its April, 2001 action.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

The proposed project is consistent with the Mendocino County Local Coastal Plan in the following respects:

Policy 3.6-1 states: "The Coastal Conservancy, State Parks & Recreation, and other appropriate agencies shall be requested to initiate...a public relations program for the protection and enhancement of coastal resources, particularly coastal access." Working with PCLK, the Conservancy and DPR will assure the successful restoration of Point Cabrillo, with enhance access and recreational opportunities for the local community and out of town tourists.

Policy 3.6-22 states: "In carrying out the access policies of this Coastal Element, the county or other appropriate designated management agencies shall consider and encourage the utilization of innovative access management techniques, including, but not limited to, agreements with private organizations which would minimize management costs and encourage the use of volunteer programs." The 3-way partnership between the Conservancy, DPR and PCLK has proven to be very innovative, and has capitalized on the strengths of each organization to fund and manage the restoration. PCLK has a large and very active volunteer program that helps provide access to the Light Station and engages the local community in future of Point Cabrillo.

Policy 3.6-24 states: "The coastal access program shall be implemented in a manner that ensures coordination among and the most efficient use of limited fiscal resources by federal, state, county agencies, and private organizations responsible for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of public coastal accessways." Once again, the unique relationship between the Conservancy, DPR and PCLK has been set up to efficiently utilize limited resources.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The Department of Parks and Recreation, lead agency for the restoration at Point Cabrillo Light Station and Preserve under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), adopted an Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the restoration at the Point Cabrillo Light Station and Preserve on December 1, 2003. As part of the December 2003 authorization for continued funding at the Point Cabrillo Light Station, the Conservancy also reviewed the MND and adopted its own findings that the project would not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. This environmental analysis was conducted for the complete restoration of Point Cabrillo, including the portion of it contained in this authorization.

Management of the public use improvements as recommended in the proposed authorization is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15301, pertaining to operation, repair, and maintenance of existing structures and facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use.