

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation

October 1, 2015

TWIN LAKES BEACHFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

Project No. 14-033-01

Project Manager: Tom Gandesbery

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$200,000 to the County of Santa Cruz to augment a \$250,000 Conservancy grant authorized on October 2, 2014 for construction of public access improvements at Twin Lakes State Beach, Santa Cruz County.

LOCATION: Twin Lakes State Beach, Santa Cruz (Exhibit 1)

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Public Access

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Staff Recommendation, October 2, 2014](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31400 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby augments its October 2, 2014 authorization by authorizing the disbursement of up to an additional two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to the County of Santa Cruz (County) to construct improvements to the California Coastal Trail and other access features at Twin Lakes State Beach, subject to the condition that, prior to the disbursement of these additional funds, the County shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy a revised work program, including scope of work, budget and schedule.”

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 proposed authorization remains consistent with Chapter 9, Sections 31400-31410 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding coastal access.
2. The proposed project remains consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.”

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends augmenting a grant to the County of Santa Cruz, previously authorized by the Coastal Conservancy at its October 1, 2014 meeting, for implementation of improvements at Twin Lakes State Beach. Since the date of the original \$250,000 authorization, the County undertook additional soil engineering studies and finalized the construction drawings which in turn resulted in an increase in the estimated cost of the project. Public access improvements, as summarized below and described in greater detail in Exhibit 2, rose in cost by \$307,000.

The additional funding is needed for refinements incorporated into the construction plans based on the findings of the additional engineering studies. The refinements include: extending the length of the accessible pathway and stairway to Twin Lakes State Beach; constructing a thicker pavement section than previously planned for bike lanes, visitor parking, passenger loading areas and travel lanes; increasing the size of the storm water system to capture, filter and infiltrate water from the existing watershed in addition to on-site generated run-off from expanded coastal access improvements; adding a construction phasing allowance for costs associated with maintaining coastal access during construction; and general market rate increases in the cost of construction.

Visitors to Twin Lakes Beach exceed one-half million a year. However, the state beach does not offer separate parking or access facilities. Visitors park along East Cliff Drive, other streets and in the Santa Cruz Harbor. There are no pedestrian or bicycle facilities or organized parking along this segment of East Cliff Drive. Pedestrians and bicyclists share the travel lanes with vehicles. Parked cars straddle the road shoulder and sandy beach. The project approved under the prior authorization and this proposed augmentation are intended to correct these deficiencies. See the October 2014 Staff Recommendation (Exhibit 2) for additional information.

Site Description: See Exhibit 2.

Project History: See Exhibit 2.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy

Proposed Conservancy Augmentation:	\$200,000
Previous Conservancy Authorization:	\$250,000
Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission	\$200,000
Monterey Bay Air Quality Control District (Pending)	\$200,000
County of Santa Cruz	\$5,144,108

Project Total **\$5,994,108**

The anticipated source for the Conservancy funds for the proposed augmentation is an appropriation from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, Public Resources Code section 75001 *et seq.* (Proposition 84). Proposition 84 authorizes the Conservancy's use of these funds for the purposes of promoting access to and enjoyment of coastal resources through projects undertaken pursuant to the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Division 21 of the Public Resources Code). Section 75060(e) of the Public Resources Code specifically allocates Proposition 84 funding to the Conservancy for Monterey Bay and its watersheds. Consistency of the project with the Conservancy's statutory mission is discussed below in "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation." The proposed project will improve the California Coastal Trail and access facilities at Twin Lakes Beach, which is located on Monterey Bay.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project remains consistent with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation as described in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S 2013 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S), AS REVISED JUNE 25, 2015:

The proposed project remains consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives as described in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2). Although the Conservancy's Strategic Plan underwent revision, the Goals and Objectives identified in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation remain unchanged under the Strategic Plan as revised June 25, 2015.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed project remains consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines as described in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2). The Conservancy revised the Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines on October 2, 2014 to include one additional criterion: Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies. The proposed project is consistent with this additional criterion in that helps implement Articles 2 and 3 of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act, which promote public access and recreation for all Californians.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

The proposed project remains consistent with the Local Coastal Program Policies as described in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ACCESS PROGRAM STANDARDS:

The proposed project remains consistent with the Conservancy's Access Program Standards as described in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed authorization seeks an augmentation of funding only and involves only minor or technical changes to the project as it was described in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation. Under Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs. §15612), changes to a project

that occur after approval of a negative declaration must be subjected to additional CEQA review and assessment if those changes involve new significant environmental effects, not previously considered, or if they involve a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. As detailed below, none of the changes to the project here involve new significant environmental effects and none involve a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.

The augmentation under the proposed authorization is needed, in part, to cover the additional cost of three physical project changes: extending the length of the accessible pathway and stairway to Twin Lakes State Beach; constructing a thicker pavement section than previously planned for bike lanes, visitor parking, passenger loading areas and travel lanes; and increasing the size of the storm water system to capture, filter and infiltrate water from the existing watershed in addition to on-site generated run-off from expanded coastal access improvements. (The augmentation is also needed, in part, to cover construction phasing allowance for costs associated with maintaining coastal access during construction and general market rate increases in the cost of construction, but these are not physical changes in the project and, thus, would not involve physical environmental changes and would not invoke additional environmental assessment under CEQA). None of the three physical changes involve any new environmental effects and none involve more severe environmental effects for the following reasons:

1. The revised design proposes a pathway or ramp onto the beach that is 1.5 times as long as proposed originally. However because the path runs parallel to the beach and is much shorter than the total length of the project site and is sited on an area of the project that is otherwise being developed, there is no increase in project footprint and hence the change from an environmental impact perspective is not significant. Furthermore, most of the path is designed to be buried under sand nearly all the time with the lowest portion only exposed after major storm events.
2. The revised design includes a slightly thicker pavement section. The impacts of installing a thicker section of pavement are not significantly different from the original project as described in the mitigated negative declaration.
3. The stormwater collection system design was modified during the detailed design phase with the result being a slightly larger system. However the stormwater collection system is intended to mitigate the environmental impacts to the beach and ocean from street surface runoff, including capture of trash and pollutants. Therefore the revised design offers a larger measure of protection to the environment and reduces such impacts, while occupying only a marginally bigger footprint.

Thus, no additional CEQA assessment is needed for the three physical project changes and the proposed augmentation of funding remains consistent with the environmental analysis discussion of the project under the CEQA section in the October 2, 2014 staff recommendation (Exhibit 2).