

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
May 5, 2022

COYOTE HILLS RESTORATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS PROJECT

Project No. 22-010-01
Project Manager: Shalini Kannan

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$988,000 of grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to East Bay Regional Park District to restore wetland and riparian habitat and install interpretive panels on 159-acres of the Coyote Hills Regional Park in the City of Fremont, Alameda County, and adoption of findings under the California Environmental Quality Act.

LOCATION: Coyote Hills Regional Park, City of Fremont, Alameda County

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [Project Location & Site Map](#)
- Exhibit 2: [Project Designs & Photographs](#)
- Exhibit 3: [Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project Final Environmental Impact Report, July 2019](#)
- Exhibit 4: [Project Support Letters from the June 18, 2021 Staff Recommendation to the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Governing Board](#)

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 nine hundred eighty-eight thousand dollars (\$988,000) to East Bay Regional Park District (“the grantee”) to restore wetland, grassland, and riparian habitat and install interpretive signs on a 159-acre portion of Coyote Hills Regional Park in the City of Fremont in Alameda County.

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 all permits and approvals required to implement the project have been obtained.

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 and Guidelines.
3. The Conservancy has independently reviewed and considered the “Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project Final Environmental Impact Report,” July 2019 (“Final EIR”) certified by the East Bay Regional Park District on September 3, 2019 pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and attached to the accompanying staff recommendation as Exhibit 3.
4. The Final EIR identifies potentially significant effects of the Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project (“Project”) with respect to Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural and Tribal Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology, Noise, Utilities, and Transportation. With regard to these impacts, as modified by incorporation of the mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR, the Project has been changed to avoid, reduce or mitigate the possible significant environmental effects of the Project, except for the impact identified in finding 5, below.
5. The Final EIR identifies dismantling and removal of the Patterson Ranch Labor Contractors Residence as a significant and unavoidable effect in the area of Cultural and Tribal Resources. Project alternatives that would avoid this impact are infeasible because they would cause greater impacts, including impacts to tribal cultural resources, air quality, geology, soils, hydrology, and water quality, and more significant greenhouse gas emissions and noise. Removal of the residence will be mitigated by making professional documentation of the building publicly accessible and installing interpretive signage to teach the public about this historical resource, but nevertheless will create a significant and unavoidable impact. Specific environmental and social benefits of the Project described in the accompanying staff recommendation and detailed in the Final EIR outweigh and render acceptable this unavoidable adverse effect; these benefits include restored native habitat and enhanced public access opportunities in an ecologically significant area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize a \$988,000 grant of funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetland Conservation grant program to East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) for implementing wetland, grassland, and riparian habitat restoration on 159 acres of the eastern expansion of the Coyote Hills Regional Park in Fremont (the Project). The Project will transform existing ruderal weedy lands into diverse habitats that increase plant and animal diversity and provide enhanced areas for upland refugia, overwintering, and raptor forage. The Project also includes installation of educational interpretive panels.

The Project site's unique conditions and location make it a priority for funding and development. Although altered by past creek channelization and agricultural operations, Coyote Hills Regional Park is one of the few places left around the Bay with natural transitions between open water, salt marsh, brackish, fresh, and seasonal marshes, grasslands, and upland riparian, willow, and oak forests. This rare combination of habitats provides valuable wildlife habitat and unique recreational opportunities for Bay Area residents. Within the Project area, there are 40 Special Status wildlife species that were observed or have the potential to occur within, or in close proximity to, the project area. Twelve of these Special Status wildlife species are either State/Federally threatened/endangered or are of significant importance within the Project area. The new and enhanced habitats will provide nesting, cover, and food for a diverse assemblage of wintering and migrating shorebird and resident birds along the Pacific Flyway; as well as habitat for small mammals, like the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse, invertebrates like the Monarch Butterfly, and sensitive native plants.

The site is located along the margin of the San Francisco Bay and will add ecological connectivity by further enlarging the protected and diverse habitat immediately west at the existing part of Coyote Hills Regional Park, and to the north and south at Eden Landing Ecological Reserve and Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, which are both parts of the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project. Together, these lands in the South San Francisco Bay provide 35,000+ acres of habitat connectivity, as well as additional ecosystem functions and benefits, including sea-level rise buffering of urban areas, resilience to climate change, floodwater detention and storm-water quality treatment, as well as public education through educational displays.

As shown in Exhibits 1 & 2, the 159-acre Project area includes the Western Wetlands and Patterson Slough Natural Units, which are subsets of a larger 306-acre expansion of the park. The 29-acre Western Wetlands area will be restored to seasonal wetlands, willow grove, and native grassland. Patterson Slough is 130 acres, and as noted in the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Science Update (2015), supports freshwater seasonal wetlands, grasslands, and the largest remaining willow groves in the Baylands ecosystem. When restored and enhanced, this area will allow for marsh migration upslope as sea level rise causes the water table to rise.

Restoration and enhancement will be based on the results of studies conducted in the planning phase around historical ecology, vegetation test plots, and soil and drainage conditions that currently occur and are expected to change with climate change and sea level rise. Restoration activities will include soil/ fill import, surface grading to create shallow depressions that will enhance and establish seasonal wetlands, several rounds of weed management, revegetation

via planting and seeding of native trees, shrubs, and grasses, and installation of irrigation, buffers, fencing, gates, and paths to secure habitat and facilitate maintenance and operations. The Project will also develop and install educational interpretive panels that feature the native habitat, cultural significance, and history of the site. Construction is planned to begin in the summer of 2022. Though not funded by this grant, post-construction, the grantee will also ensure the overall resilience of reestablished habitats by monitoring soils, hydrology, and surface and groundwater chemistry to adaptively manage the land.

Funding this Project will add features and amenities to a well-known and loved East Bay park. Project improvements are a component of the Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project, which addresses the larger, 306-acre Coyote Hills Regional Park expansion. Besides the proposed Project, the Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project includes additional habitat restoration, creation of a park entrance on Paseo Padre Parkway, and construction of a parking lot, restrooms, picnic area, interpretive exhibits, wildlife overlooks, and 4.5 miles of trail, including linkages to an existing reach of the San Francisco Bay Trail. The Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project has broad public support (see letters in Exhibit 4), and work is being done in partnership with Alameda County Flood Control District, the City of Fremont, San Francisco Estuary Institute, and Civicorps. Community and public meetings and workshops were held during the planning phase according to EBRPD's Public Outreach and Participation Plan for Coyote Hills Restoration & Public Access Project. Ongoing public outreach and engagement for the project will continue per this framework.

Site Description: The Project site is a 159-acre portion of the 306-acre expansion of the existing Coyote Hills Regional Park, east of the existing park to the new boundary along Paseo Padre Parkway. Coyote Hills Regional Park is in the northwest corner of the City of Fremont in Alameda County, east of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge, and north of State Route 84. Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel bounds the north end of the Project site, and Ardenwood Creek bounds the south. East of the new park boundary along Paseo Padre Parkway, this urban edge presents expanding business parks, which have increased visitor demand and usage at Coyote Hills Regional Park in recent years. Coyote Hills is also a valuable park for interpretive programming. The site is home to many naturalist-led programs, and is a hub for programming designed to connect visitors with the site's cultural history and its native Ohlone inhabitants. EBRPD acquired the project area as two parcels, in 2014 and 2016, and the area is now owned in fee by EBRPD for preservation in perpetuity.

Like many parts of the Bay shoreline, agriculture and urbanization have destroyed precious habitats at Coyote Hills. Land cover on the project site is predominantly open fields that were previously farmed and are now ruderal or weedy. To the south of Patterson Ranch Road and north of Ardenwood creek, the Western Wetlands Natural Unit is a low-lying depressional, seasonal wetland dominated by invasive weedy species. The Patterson Slough Natural Unit stretches from the Alameda Creek Regional Trail in the north to Patterson Ranch Road in the south and was historically used for agricultural production. The Patterson Slough drainage way runs through the center of this section, flowing slowly northeast to eventually drain to the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel. Lining the Slough is a sensitive habitat of willow-

dominated riparian forest containing many invasive weeds. This northern area contains culturally sensitive Ohlone resources that will be protected through mitigation measures described in the CEQA compliance section below.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: Created in 1934, the EBRPD has been constructing, monitoring, operating, and maintaining parks, trails, and open space in the East Bay for over 80 years. They have the expertise and track record to successfully deliver large, complex restoration and public access projects. Dotson Family (Breuner) Marsh Restoration and Public Access Project in Richmond serves as a recent example where EBRPD restored approximately 150 acres of mixed, high-quality habitat and constructed public access features including a 1.5-mile extension of the San Francisco Bay Trail, a new parking lot, restroom, picnic area, and a spur trail designed to withstand projected sea-level rise through 2080. The Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access project will be incorporated into EBRPD's well-maintained parks system comprising over 120,000 acres in 73 parks, including over 1,250 miles of trails. Long term operations and maintenance will be provided by EBRPD staff and funded from the EBRPD's General Fund.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on September 23, 2021, in the following respects:

Selection Criteria

1. Extent to which the project helps the Conservancy accomplish the objectives in the Strategic Plan.

See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Strategic Plan" section below.

2. Project is a good investment of state resources.

As one of EBRPD's most visited parks, Coyote Hills Regional Park serves Alameda and Contra Costa County residents, as well as the greater Bay Area. The Project is feasible with an experienced lead agency, completed regulatory and environmental review documents, and construction ready to begin in June 2022. The Project leverages two investments from the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA), which shares goals and staff with the Conservancy in the Bay Area. SFBRA provided \$1,000,000 for the planning phase (authorized in December 2019), and \$3,500,000 for construction (authorized in June 2021) of the entire Coyote Hills park expansion. The Project includes additional matching funds from the EBRPD and California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), and is part of a larger, 207-acre project that provides similar habitat and public access benefits in a larger area.

The Project restores and enhances significant natural resources, and is supported by several local and regional plans including:

- Coyote Hills Land Use Plan (2005) and Land Use Plan Amendment (2019)
- San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Implementation Strategy & Priority Project List
- East Bay Regional Park District Master Plan

- California State Wildlife Action Plan
- California Water Action Plan
- Safeguarding California
- USFWS Coastal Program Strategic Plan for 2017-2021
- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Coastal Management Program (BCDC)
- Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge Weed Management Plan and Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan
- CDFW Eden Landing Ecological Reserve Restoration and Management Plan.

3. Project includes a serious effort to engage tribes. Examples of tribal engagement include good faith, documented efforts to work with tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area.

The Project design reflects input from the implementation of a community outreach and participation plan during the planning and pre-design phase of the Project. Input from the Ohlone peoples was key to the planning process. The work area contains known sensitive cultural resources, detailed more in the CEQA section below. Therefore, during construction, in addition to the presence of a qualified monitor, representatives from the Ohlone tribe will help monitor these sensitive areas to make sure they are not disturbed.

Coyote Hills Regional Park is the ancestral homeland of the Ohlone people, and the existing park and its programming play an important role in preserving and elevating this cultural history through interpretive displays and educational programming. When complete, the Project will provide additional opportunities for collaboration with the Ohlone people, as the programming continues to evolve and tell the story of the land.

4. Project benefits will be sustainable or resilient over the project lifespan.

The Project's restoration plan includes adaptive management techniques, such as carefully aligning restoration plant communities to existing and anticipated future soils and drainage conditions (considering sea level rise and climate change). Regular maintenance of the restoration site will be managed by EBRPD's Operations Department and funded from the EBRPD's General Fund. Ongoing monitoring will utilize new technologies for efficient and effective documentation of changing site conditions over time. Aerial imagery will be captured from Unmanned Aircraft Systems prior to implementation of the Project and each year thereafter. Interpretation of these images will evaluate the results of weed abatement, invasive weed threat, rate of change within the restored area, and the effectiveness of restoration and management actions. Regarding the threat of weed invasions, EBRPD will use California Invasive Plant Council's California Invasive Plant Inventory annually to inform management actions to control weeds that threaten the biodiversity of the area.

In addition, special field sensors with wireless connectivity will be installed at appropriate locations on site to track changes in soil conditions over time associated with climate change and field management practices. The soil sensors would detect and record analog indicators of

carbon sequestration as well as soil moisture, pH, salinity, N, P, O₂ and CO₂ at 3 depths (6, 18, and 36 inches). This new technology wirelessly transmits data to a receiver, leading to efficient and effective documentation and analysis of changing site conditions over time. EBRPD will pilot the use of these sensors to evaluate their potential for widespread use in both wetland restoration and carbon sequestration farming.

5. Project delivers multiple benefits and significant positive impact.

The Project will enhance the natural resources of a park that is popular amongst the public, and provide educational opportunities by adding interpretive signage and more natural features for EBRPD staff interpretation and programming. Many residential neighborhoods surround the park, including one directly adjacent disadvantaged community (census tract 6001437101). Coyote Hills is also within a four-mile radius of four additional disadvantaged communities, and the park improvements would benefit visitors from these communities, in addition to the general public. Additionally, as described above in the Project Description section, the Project fits into an important, integrated ecosystem complex that includes Bay shoreline habitats at Coyote Hills Regional Park, Eden Landing Ecological Preserve, and the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Together these lands provide many benefits including wildlife habitat, sea level rise resilience, flood water detention, storm-water water quality treatment, public education, and access along an interconnected trail network.

6. Project planned with meaningful community engagement and broad community support.

In the project planning phase, EBRPD produced and followed a thorough, 30-month (January 2017 – July 2019) Public Outreach and Participation Plan involving approximately 9 public meetings and 2 formal written comment/review periods. This outreach was intended to provide local communities, residents, stakeholders, interested parties, and other affected agencies and/or individuals with opportunities to participate in planning and development of the Project and the evaluation of associated environmental issues. The proposed Project underwent a significant public vetting process to establish its goals and objectives, including target native plant communities, the balance of compatible public access with habitat restoration, and a park development plan.

PROJECT FINANCING

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (via a grant to the Conservancy)	\$988,000
California Natural Resources Agency	\$50,000
East Bay Regional Park District	\$550,000
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority	\$1,117,000
Project Total	\$2,705,000

The source of funding for the proposed authorization is a U.S. FWS National Coastal Wetlands Conservation (NCWC) Grant awarded to the Conservancy. The USFWS has awarded \$1,000,000 to the Conservancy to support the Project. Approximately \$988,000 of the NCWC grant will

support project implementation directly, while the remaining \$12,000 will pay for Conservancy staff costs. NCWC grants require a non-federal match of at least 25% of the total project cost, i.e. \$679,250. EBRPD will derive the \$679,250 in required match partly from grants from SFBRA's Measure AA Grant Program and CNRA's River Parkways Grant Program, and partly from Park District General Funds.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

This Project will be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 4.5 of the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Public Resources Code Sections 31160-31165, to address resource goals in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Pursuant to Section 31162(b) of the Public Resources Code, the Conservancy may award grants for projects in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area that restore and enhance natural habitats and watersheds. Coyote Hills Regional Park is located within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Restoring the Patterson Slough and Western Wetlands areas will restore and enhance the habitat of Coyote Hills Creek, thereby enhancing habitat for a variety of listed species in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Under Section 31162(d), the Conservancy may act to promote, assist, and enhance projects that provide open space and natural areas that are accessible to urban populations for recreational and educational purposes. Once constructed, the Project will expand a widely visited East Bay park and provide diverse habitats for public observation and enjoyment. The Project's habitat restoration will enhance parallel efforts by EBRPD to construct trails and amenities throughout the Coyote Hills Regional Park expansion.

Consistent with Section 31163(c), the proposed Project is a priority for funding because it: (1) is supported by multiple adopted local and regional plans, mentioned above in the Conservancy Selection Criteria #2 section; (2) is multijurisdictional/serves a regional constituency by enhancing a park that is a resource of regional significance and connects to regional trail networks; (3) can be implemented in a timely way; (4) provides opportunities for benefits that could be lost if project planning does not continue; and (5) includes matching funds from multiple sources.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S [2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN](#) GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 8, Objective C** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed Project will increase the resilience of natural habitats to sea level rise and flooding using a nature-based approach.

Consistent with **Goal 12, Objective D** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed Project will enhance tidal wetlands, managed wetlands, seasonal wetlands, and upland habitat.

Consistent with **Goal 13, Objective B** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, this Project will help implement a project that provides interpretive signs.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

To comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), in July 2019, EBRPD prepared the "Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project Final Environmental Impact Report" (Final EIR), to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project (CHRP). The Final EIR included a Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP). EBRPD certified the Final EIR, adopted the MMRP, and approved the CHRP (the version identified in the Final EIR as the Preferred Alternative) on September 3, 2019. The Project improvements are included in the CHRP as described in the Final EIR. EBRPD adopted findings and included a statement of overriding consideration for the one impact that could not be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Potentially significant effects of the CHRP were identified in the areas of air quality, hydrology, noise, utilities, biological resources, cultural and tribal resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, and transportation.

Significant Impacts Reduced to Less than Significant Levels by Mitigation

With grading and earthmoving comprising a significant part of the CHRP, implementation could significantly impact air quality by emitting construction dust, hydrology by introducing eroded sediments to waterways, and noise via construction equipment. Air quality impacts will be mitigated by following Best Management Practices (BMPs) from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's May 2017 CEQA Guidelines. Development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and a Spill Control and Countermeasures Plan will include BMPs to prevent or minimize stormwater pollution during construction and will reduce hydrologic impacts. Abandoned wells, septic tanks, and leachfield systems associated with historic buildings on the CHRP site will be located and destroyed. To reduce construction noise, equipment will be selected for quietness, and practices will be adopted that reduce noise disturbance to the public. In the area of utilities, construction and demolition debris might affect Fremont's ability to meet Alameda County requirements related to reduction of solid waste disposal, and create a potentially significant impact on landfill capacity. However, the CHRP provides for the creation of a solid waste recovery plan in compliance with EBRPD's sustainability policy that should mitigate impacts.

With regard to Biological Resources, the CHRP could have adverse effects on species identified as candidate, sensitive, or Special Status, either directly or through habitat modifications and disturbance. However, EBRPD and its construction contractors will implement measures to avoid and minimize these effects. A qualified biologist will be present to observe work, stop work as necessary if permit conditions are being violated, and train the construction team and Park personnel. In addition, several BMPs will be implemented that will reduce disruptions to species of concern from construction activities, such as the installation of temporary wildlife exclusion fencing and storage of construction materials in a way that won't entrap small animals. A Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will be developed and implemented to

compensate for any impacts to habitat that fosters Special Status species and sensitive natural communities including riparian habitat and federally protected wetlands. Mitigation measures will be implemented to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts to Special Status plant species and birds, including pre-construction surveys, implementation of buffer areas to protect species, and other measures. Specific conservation measures have also been established for specific species including the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse, California Black Rail, Burrowing Owl, Western Pond Turtle, and bats.

With historic buildings on the CHRPA site, significant impacts to Cultural Resources could occur, though potential construction disturbances of the Arden Dairy Milk House are reduced to less-than-significant by EBRPD's decision to retain the building in its current location. Annual inspections will ensure maintenance of the structure, and any restoration or adaptive reuse of the building will follow guidance from the Secretary of the Interior. Significant impacts in the area of Tribal Cultural Resources arise as the CHRPA site holds two shell midden deposits of significance to local Native American tribes that may contain human remains and cultural objects. To mitigate potential adverse impacts to Native American cultural objects discovered during construction, work shall be halted within 100 feet of the discovery until the objects have been inspected and evaluated by a qualified Archaeologist. The preferred mitigation is avoidance, but if this isn't possible, the evaluating Archeologist will make recommendations and EBRPD will mitigate impacts. If human remains are encountered, the Contra Costa County coroner will evaluate the remains; if they are determined to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission will be contacted and EBRPD will confer with the most likely descendants regarding their recommendations. If fossil-containing rock units are found, they will be assessed by a qualified Geologist or Paleontologist to develop recommendations for mitigation. Mitigation actions would follow EBRPD's Guidelines for Protecting Parkland Archaeological Sites and would reduce impacts associated with accidental damage to unknown archaeological resources to a less-than-significant level by requiring the incorporation of professionally accepted and legally-compliant procedures for the discovery of previously undocumented significant archaeological resources.

Significant impacts in the area of Hazards and Hazardous Materials may arise if contaminated soils disturbed during construction cause ecological damage. To mitigate this potential impact to a less-than-significant level, EBRPD will sample and test soils in the central wetlands area of the CHRPA against Los Alamos National Laboratory standards; if needed, further measures will be taken including conducting an ecological risk assessment, creating a site-specific health and safety plan and air quality monitoring plan, and soil remediation actions. In the area of Geology and Soils, impacts may occur from soil erosion, liquefaction and expansive soils, and potential seismic ground shaking that could damage improperly designed structures and cause ground failure. Implementation of the SWPPP and compliance with applicable geotechnical and building standards for design and construction will reduce this impact to less-than-significant.

Once implemented, the CHRAP would increase vehicle traffic as well as pedestrian and bicyclist traffic adjacent to the project area, including at the Commerce Drive/ Paseo Padre Parkway/ Patterson Ranch Road intersection. EBRPD will contribute its fair share (one percent) of the cost of intersection and signage improvements that the City of Fremont could implement.

Unavoidable Significant Impacts

The Final EIR found only one impact that cannot be reduced to less-than-significant for the CHRPA. Dismantling and removal of the Patterson Ranch Labor Contractors Residence will destroy this historic building. The structure is in fair to poor condition, and its removal is proposed because it is located immediately adjacent to willow-lined upper Patterson Slough in an area of high biological and cultural resources sensitivity. Mitigation measures include professional documentation of the building made publicly accessible, and installation of interpretive signage to teach the public about this historical resource. Even with these mitigation measures, this impact was determined by EBRPD's Board to be significant and unavoidable. The building will be carefully dismantled, and its materials salvaged for re-use in a display that reflects the structure's historic context. See Statement of Overriding Considerations, below.

Project Benefits

The CHRPA will provide the following benefits:

- New and expanded Regional Park facilities for more members of the public to use, including additional trails, restrooms, parking, wildlife viewing areas, environmental education opportunities.
- Protection of known tribal cultural resources, as well as interpretation of Native American culture and history.
- Protection and enhancement of sensitive biological habitats and resources in the Patterson Slough area as well as other wetland areas.
- Improved connectivity through Coyote Hills Regional Park.
- Preservation of historic agricultural uses on the site, opportunity for contemporary Climate Smart agriculture, and interpretive signs on the site's agricultural history.
- Potential rehabilitation of the Patterson Ranch Milk House building for agricultural related uses as park amenities (i.e., farm stand).
- Improvements related to flood control, storm water management, and groundwater protection.
- Implementation of sea level rise adaption strategies to ensure the Park's resiliency with anticipated climate change.

Statement of Overriding Considerations

In the event a project has unavoidable significant effects, the CEQA Guidelines require the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project (14 Cal. Code of Regulations, Section 15093). If the specific project benefits outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects of the project, a Statement of Overriding Considerations may be adopted and the project approved, despite its adverse environmental effects.

The CHRPA will have significant and unavoidable impacts on historic architectural resources due to the disassembly of the Patterson Ranch Labor Contractors' Residence. As required under CEQA, EBRPD analyzed several project alternatives, along with a no project alternative: 1) restoring the contractors' residence in place; 2) relocating and restoring the contractor's residence; 3) and hand disassembling, relocating, and restoring the contractors' residence. EBRPD rejected the no project alternative as undesirable and infeasible because it would not provide any of the CHRPA's benefits, including habitat restoration and recreation improvements. EBRPD found alternative 1 infeasible and less desirable than the CHRPA because the equipment and construction traffic required to restore the contractors' residence in place would damage sub-surface cultural resources and sensitive biological habitat and would also result in worse impacts in the areas of tribal cultural resources, air quality, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emission, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and noise. Similarly, EBRPD found alternative 2 more harmful than removing the structure because the heavy machinery required to lift the contractors' residence and relocate it in one piece would damage sub-surface cultural resources and sensitive biological habitat and would also result in worse impacts in the areas of tribal cultural resources, aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emission, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and noise. EBRPD found that Alternative 3—under which the structure would be disassembled using hand tools only, then relocated—would mitigate some of the negative impacts of Alternatives 1 and 2; however, it would still result in worse impacts than the proposed CHRPA in the areas of aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emission, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and noise. In addition, Alternative 3 would not meet the CHRPA objective of removing the contractors' residence in a way that balances resource protection with a wise use of public resources in a timely manner nor would it meet the CHRPA objective of implementing improvements that are durable and that lower the Park District's operating costs. Therefore, Alternative 3 was found to be less desirable and infeasible.

Although the impacts to historic architectural resources could not be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, EBRPD adopted the following mitigation measure to lessen the impact:

Prior to disassembling the contractors' residence, EBRPD will document the structure. This documentation shall be performed by a Secretary of Interior-qualified professional (in history or architectural history) using professional standards such as the National Parks Service Historic American Building Survey /Historic American Landscape Survey Level I report, or as required by the City of Fremont Historic Architectural Review Board. The documentation materials will be placed on file with the City of Fremont, the Washington Township Museum of Local History, and the Fremont Main Library.

Removal of the Patterson Ranch Labor Contractors' Residence will allow EBRPD to complete the CHRPA and provide the benefits described in the Project Benefits section above, including restored native habitat and enhanced public access opportunities in an ecologically significant area. Staff therefore recommend that the Coastal Conservancy find that the specific environmental and public access enhancement benefits of the CHRPA outweigh the unmitigated and unavoidable significant environmental effects it has.

Upon State Coastal Conservancy board approval of the proposed Project, staff will file a Notice of Determination.