



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: September 26, 2018

MEMO TO: MROSD Board of Directors

THROUGH: Ana Ruiz, General Manager 

FROM: Melissa Borgesi, Planner I

SUBJECT: Dog On-Leash Access at Upper La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

SUMMARY

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) is preparing to include on-leash dog access to the existing public trails in northern La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Preserve), as approved in the La Honda Creek Master Plan (Master Plan). As specified in the Master Plan, the District consulted with the appropriate Resource Agencies who concurred with the planned addition of on-leash dog access in the northern portion of the preserve. On-leash dog access will begin in Fall 2018.

DISCUSSION

The Board of Directors (Board) approved the Preserve Master Plan in August 2012. A priority action item in the Master Plan is opening the northern portion of the Preserve to dogs on-leash. Vehicular access to this area is via Allen Road, which is a private road. In order to limit the impact on the private road, the District will continue to limit access to 10 public vehicles per day. Parking permits to this area are therefore limited to 10 per day.

The northern portion of the Preserve is well suited for dog use based on the Dog Access Site Evaluation Criteria that the Board adopted in 1995. The dog suitability criteria include visibility/good line-of-sight, access to road-width trails, lack of connecting trails (where connecting trails are closed to dogs), and low visitor use. Prior to opening the area to dogs, the Master Plan calls for the reintroduction of cattle grazing and approval from the Resource Agencies.

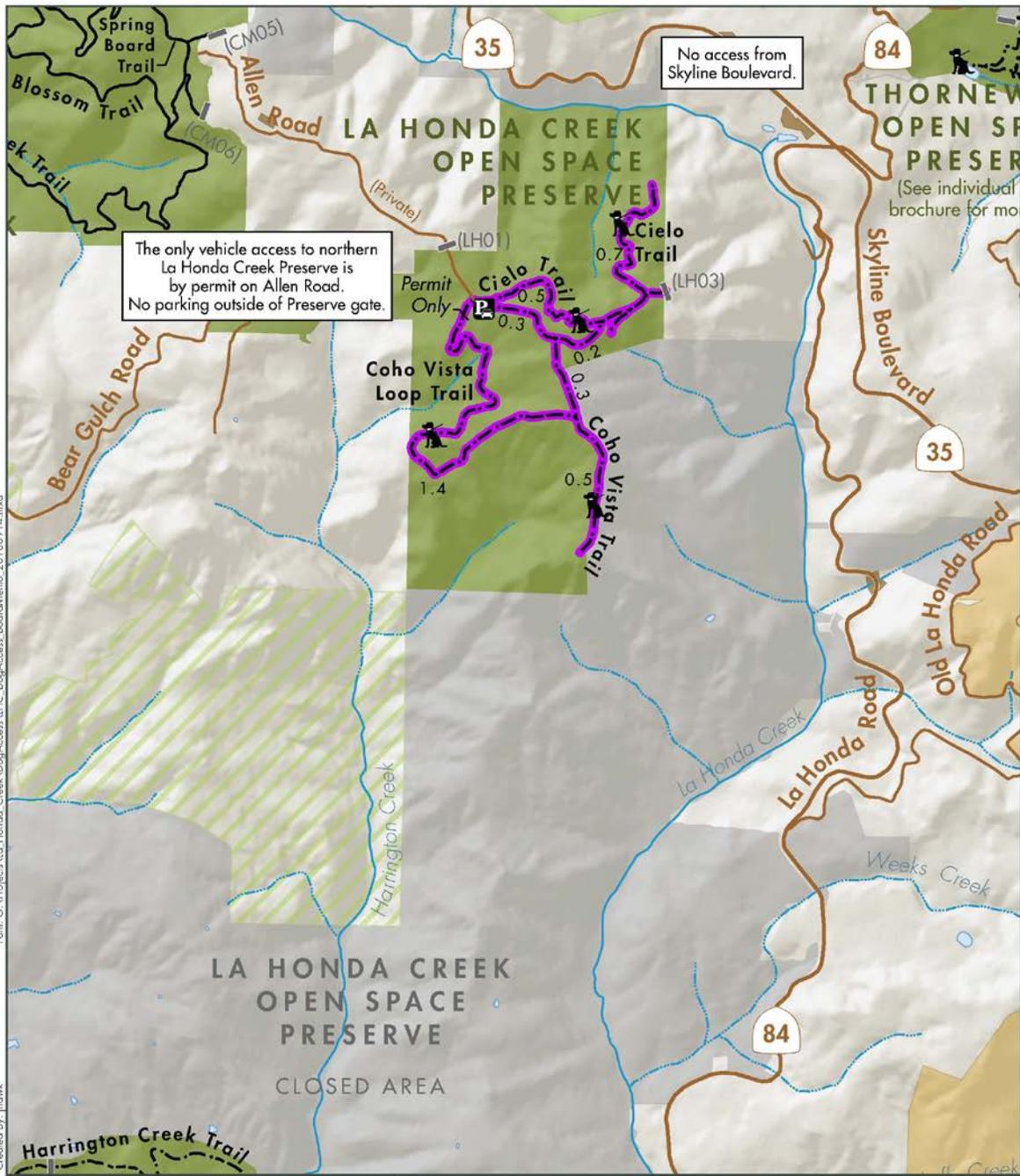
While the Preserve's 2007 Rangeland Management Plan (RMP) recommends grazing the northern portion of the Preserve, grazing management staff have since reevaluated the recommendation. Given the steep, windy, and narrow access roads (Bear Gulch Road and Allen Road), absence of grazing infrastructure, limited amount of grassland (approximately 100 acres), and lack of interest from the adjacent grazing tenant to expand into the area, grazing management staff no longer deem this upper area of the Preserve as viable for grazing. Grazing is an effective tool for fuels management. In lieu of grazing, staff will continue to manage this

area for fire risk similarly to other grassland areas by maintaining access roads and clearing around structures. The La Honda Creek Preserve Wildland Fire Response Plan was completed last fiscal year and identifies access routes and resources for responding fire units.

In accordance with the Master Plan, the District reached out to the Resource Agencies (California Department of Fish and Wildlife and US Fish and Wildlife Service) in January 2017 to review the planned on-leash dog access for the northern portion of the Preserve. District staff contacted the Resource Agencies again in August 2018. After reviewing District ordinances and rules regarding use, patrol, and enforcement, as well as District wildlife response protocols, the Resource Agencies confirmed that they have no concerns about providing dog access in the area.

Since cattle grazing is no longer deemed viable for the northern area of the Preserve and following confirmation from the Resource Agencies, **staff is proceeding with final actions to open this area of the Preserve to dogs on-leash effective Fall 2018.**

Staff reached out to the District grazing tenants to identify any concerns regarding the use change in the Preserve and no concerns were raised. The San Mateo Farm Bureau will be notified at the October 1, 2018 meeting. Adjoining owners, District tenants, residents of local neighborhoods, and interested parties to the Preserve will be notified of the use change via mail. A flyer will be posted onsite to notify Preserve users. Information will also be posted on the District website and the dog access brochure packet will now include information about northern La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. District rangers will actively enforce dog regulations during their patrol. Finally, staff will replace all maps and signs to show the use change.



Path: G:\Projects\La Honda_Creek\DogAccess_BoardMemo_20180914.mxd

Created By: jhawk

Dog Access, Upper La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

- | | |
|--|---|
|  MROSD Preserve (Open/Permit) |  Road |
|  Land Trust |  Trail |
|  Non-MROSD Easement |  Proposed Dog Access |
|  Private Property | |

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(MROSD)
September 2018



Miles 0 0.25 0.5



While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.