



TUNITAS CREEK BEACH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

July 2020



CSW

ST2 LSA

CE&G



SITE CONTEXT





WELCOME



ABOUT THE PROJECT

Tunitas Creek Beach will become San Mateo County's newest park!

The site is 58 acres, with lots of interesting history, incredible views, and a huge beach. In order to ensure the property functions safely and is protected for future visitors, we are working with the community to create adequate parking facilities, provide comfort stations and trail access to the beach, build a ranger station and design an iconic overlook area.

FINDING THE BALANCE

This will be a recreational and cultural resource for everyone. The project team will share three alternatives that consider changes to the site at a minimal, moderate, and intense level.

The goal is to find the right balance between providing safe access and creating recreational opportunities, while restoring sensitive habitat and protecting the bluffs and beach from detrimental impacts and misuse.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



Image: SCU

The San Francisco peninsula was home to the Ohlone tribes for thousands of years.



Image: Past Lifeways

8 million acres of land distributed by the Mexican government via rancho conveyance.



Image: San Mateo County

The Gaspar de Portolá expedition travels along the California coast and camps at Tunitas Creek Beach.

The name "Tunitas" first appears, named after the Spanish name for the Nopales Cactus, or prickly pear (Tuñas).

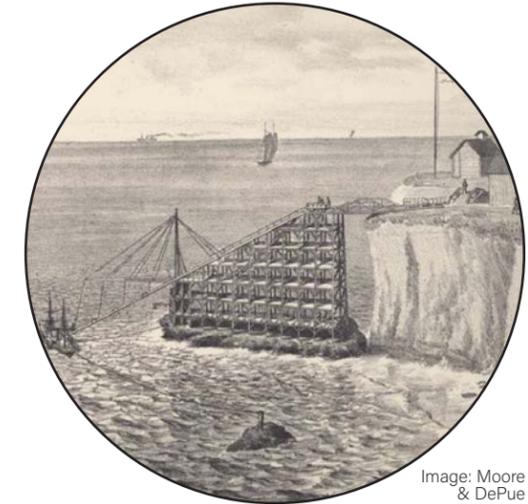


Image: Moore & DePue

Gordon's Chute constructed just north of Tunitas Creek to load freight ships directly from the coastal bluffs.

The gold rush and California statehood lead to a rush of new immigrants and subdivision of lands surrounding Tunitas Creek.





HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

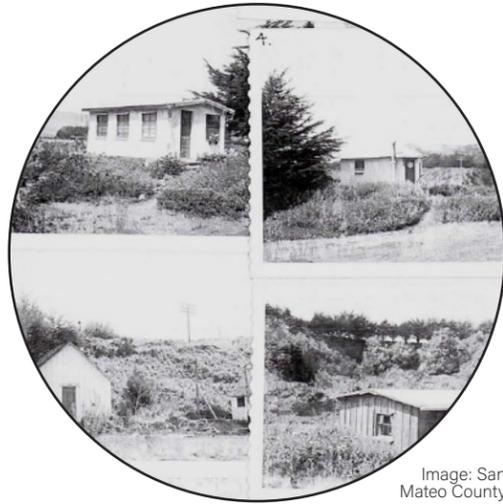


Image: San Mateo County

Several railroad worker's cottages continued to be used until the early 1980s.

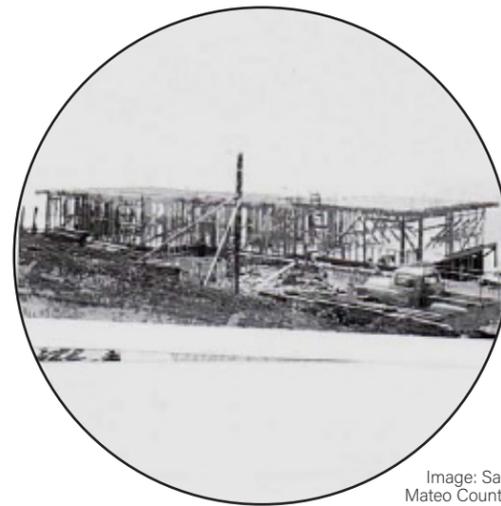


Image: San Mateo County

The residence on the project site is built. The structure still stands but was severely damaged in a 1998 fire and is not in use.



Today, Tunitas Creek Beach represents many things to many different people - a place for stunning natural beauty, unique habitat assemblages for rare and sensitive species, and a place for recreation and relaxation.

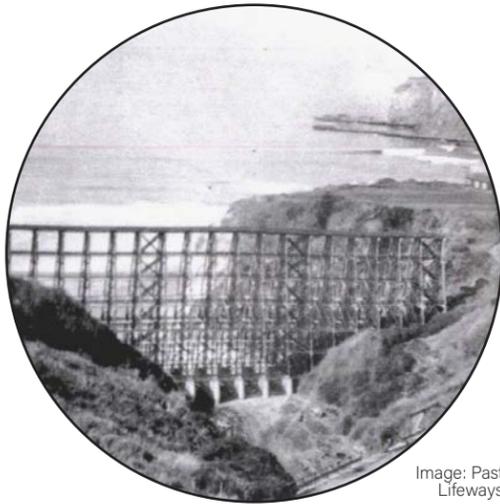
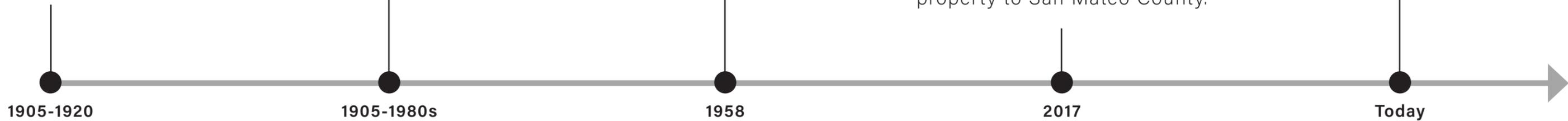


Image: Past Lifeways

The Ocean Shore Railroad operates for 15 years, but the tracks were never finished. The trestle spanning Tunitas Creek was the southern terminus of the railroad; remnants of it can still be seen today.





CORE VALUES

Tunitas Creek Beach presents many wonderful possibilities and opportunities, and shared values can begin to provide direction and structure. Through various exercises - personal reflection, group discussion, and anonymous ranking - volunteer Community Advisory Committee members expressed the values that reflect their most deeply held beliefs. The San Mateo County community will play a critical role in the development of the design, and existing outreach efforts have centered the project around **four core values**:



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The project improves the environment and leads to enhanced stewardship.



EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Diverse and non-traditional communities are involved during project development.



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

History and nature knowledge are made accessible through meaningful interpretation.



OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

A variety of recreational experiences are available, from vista point to extended stays.

CHALLENGES TO PROTECTING CORE VALUES



CHALLENGES TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Harming sensitive vegetation	Erosion of steep slopes	Threatened wildlife habitat and nesting areas
Waste management	Invasive species and poison oak	Pollution of Tunitas Creek
Overuse of the beach	Costs of ongoing management and maintenance	Other



CHALLENGES TO EQUITY AND INCLUSION

ADA* accessibility	Barriers to public transportation to the site	Adequate comfort facilities
Enough space for community gatherings	Physically challenging access to the beach	Other
Culturally relevant amenities and signage	Providing adequate event programming for local communities	



CHALLENGES TO EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Losing sense "hidden gem"	Generating a sense of stewardship among youth	Lack of public information about historic significance
Preservation of site heritage	Vandalism of educational features	Other



CHALLENGES TO OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

Removal of sensitive species to create trails	Telephone poles and utility lines obstructing views	Unsafe conditions of steep footpaths
Costs associated with trail and park maintenance	Site degradation from large gatherings	Other
Difficulty biking or walking to the beach	Parking lots are barriers to viewpoints from highway	

Let's hear from you! What challenges are you most concerned about? Take the Follow-up Survey!

*ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act. We will use this term to refer to features which meet the accessibility requirements for those with disabilities.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCING CORE VALUES



OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Restoration of sensitive vegetation | Erosion control | Fenced-off wildlife habitat protection zones |
| Proper waste disposal | Invasive species removal | Other |
| Protection of Monterey cypress and pine trees | Replanting the road edge between Highway 1 and the parking lot | |



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ADA parking spaces and access to overlook points | Visitor center with culturally relevant exhibits | Multiple language translations for signage |
| ADA accessible trails to mid-bluff features | Event spaces and programming for local communities | Other |
| Preservation of cultural resources | Play spaces | |



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Opportunities for donor recognition | Educational signage throughout the park | Interpretive sites and experiences |
| Community events and gatherings on site | Signage to enforce park rules and discourage misuse | Ranger-hosted field trips and kid-friendly events |
| Online updates about the beach | Design features showcasing site history | Other |



OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

- | | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| 2-mile hiking loop trail around the entire site | Family picnic areas | Group event rental sites |
| Going to the beach | Connections to regional biking and walking trails | Additional paved parking |
| Bike parking and repair station | Creation of group campground and visitor center | Overlook points with seating |



Let's hear from you! What opportunities are you most excited about? Take the Follow-up Survey!



WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN INTERESTS?



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- Erosion control
- Vegetation restoration
- Wildlife habitat protection
- Tunitas Creek protection
- Protection of the beach
- Other



EQUITY AND INCLUSION

- ADA Accessibility
- Outreach and education
- Diversity
- Safety
- Sense of community
- Signage translations
- Play spaces
- Other



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- Donor Recognition
- Historical interpretation
- Cultural interpretive sites
- Online resources
- Enforcement of park rules
- Field trips
- Signage
- Environmental education
- Other



OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

- Hiking/walking
- Biking
- Driving/parking
- Surfing
- Camping
- Overlook points
- Relaxing on the beach
- Spending time with family
- Other

Let's hear from you! What are your main interests? Take the Follow-up Survey!



CONTEXT MAP



LEGEND

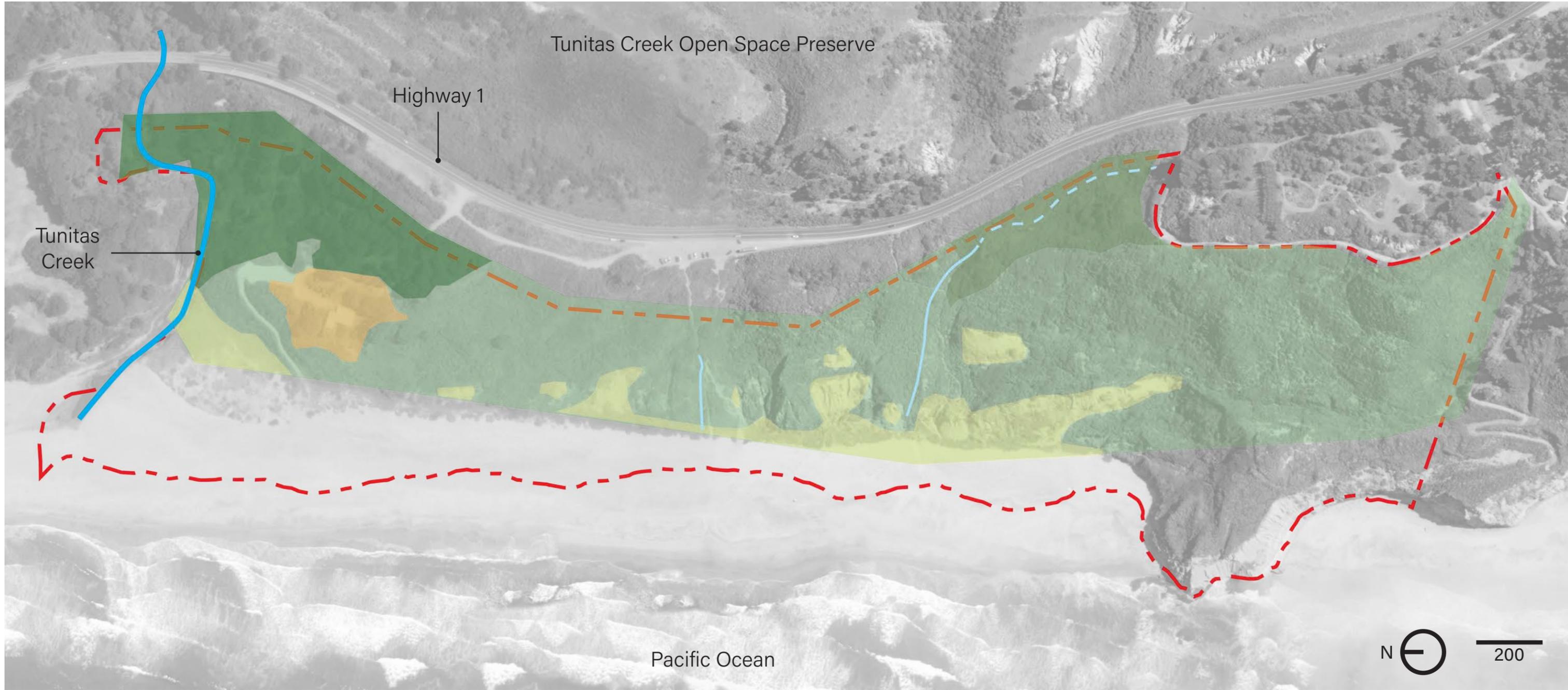
 Property Line
 5' Contour

 Existing Residence
 (no longer in use)

*Throughout the presentation, we will be using the term "mid-bluff" to refer to the relatively flat area near the existing residence



EXISTING HABITATS



LEGEND

- - - - - Property Line
- Dense Forest
- Coastal Strand/Dunes
- Coastal Scrub
- Riparian Scrub
- Ornamental Planting
- Perennial Stream
- · · · · Ephemeral Stream
- - - - - Intermittent Stream

HABITAT TYPES



COASTAL SCRUB

Northern coast scrub comprises 34.6 acres of the 52 acre project site. Some areas are barren and devoid of vegetation, whereas others are densely vegetated with low-lying shrubs that range from 1 to 4 ft in height.



DENSE FOREST

Monterey pine forest habitat is confined to the northeastern section of the Project site, east of the existing residence. It is dominated by Monterey pines and Monterey cypresses that reach up to 60 ft in height.



ORNAMENTAL PLANTING

Existing ornamental planting surrounds the existing house on the Project site. This habitat is primarily ornamental shrubs, herbs, and forbs.



COASTAL DUNES

The dune habitat includes all northern foredunes and active coastal dunes located on the Project site. Dune habitat contains barren mobile sand accumulations and sparse and scattered patches of perennial grasses.



COASTAL STRAND

The coastal strand habitat comprises a narrow band of densely-growing sea fig that extends from the high tide line landward to the base of the coastal dunes (left).



PERENNIAL STREAM HABITAT

Tunitas Creek is a 6.6-mile fast-flowing perennial stream that runs from King's Mountain to Tunitas Beach. The active wetted channel is approximately 20 ft wide and ranges from several inches to several feet deep.

VEGETATION



IMAGE FROM WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

MONTEREY CYPRESS

Monterey cypress, along with Monterey pine, is the dominant species in the dense forest located near the existing residence to the north of the site.



IMAGE FROM CA COASTAL COMMISSION

CALIFORNIA SAGEBRUSH

California sagebrush is one of the dominant species of the northern coastal scrub habitat.



IMAGE FROM MONTEREY WILDFLOWERS

COASTAL MARSH MILK-VETCH

Coastal marsh milk-vetch is listed as a special-status plant by the California Native Plant Society and may still occur on the Project site.



IMAGE FROM CALSCAPE

COYOTE BRUSH

Coyote brush is one of the dominant species of the northern coastal scrub habitat.



IMAGE FROM OUR CITY FOREST

MONKEY BUSH

Monkey bush is one of the dominant species of the northern coastal scrub habitat.



IMAGE FROM WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

CALIFORNIA COFFEEBERRY

California coffeeberry is one of the dominant species of the northern coastal scrub habitat.



IMAGE FROM WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER

Critical habitat for the western snowy plover, federally listed as threatened, is located ~8 miles north of the Project site. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is present on the sandy beach and dunes.



IMAGE BY TOM GREY

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT

The San Francisco common yellowthroat, a California species of special concern, is likely to breed on site.



IMAGE BY SEBASTIAN KENNERKNECHT

SAN FRANCISCO GARTER SNAKE

The garter snake, a federal and state listed species, is well documented in the Project region and could occur along Tunitas Creek.



IMAGE FROM NPS

CALIFORNIA RED-LEGGED FROG

The California red-legged frog, a federally listed threatened species and California species of special concern, uses Tunitas Creek as nonbreeding aquatic habitat and is likely to disperse across the entire site.



IMAGE BY KEVIN LAFFERTY

TIDEWATER GOBY

The tidewater goby, a federally listed as threatened and a California species of special concern, has been observed in similar habitats as Tunitas Creek.



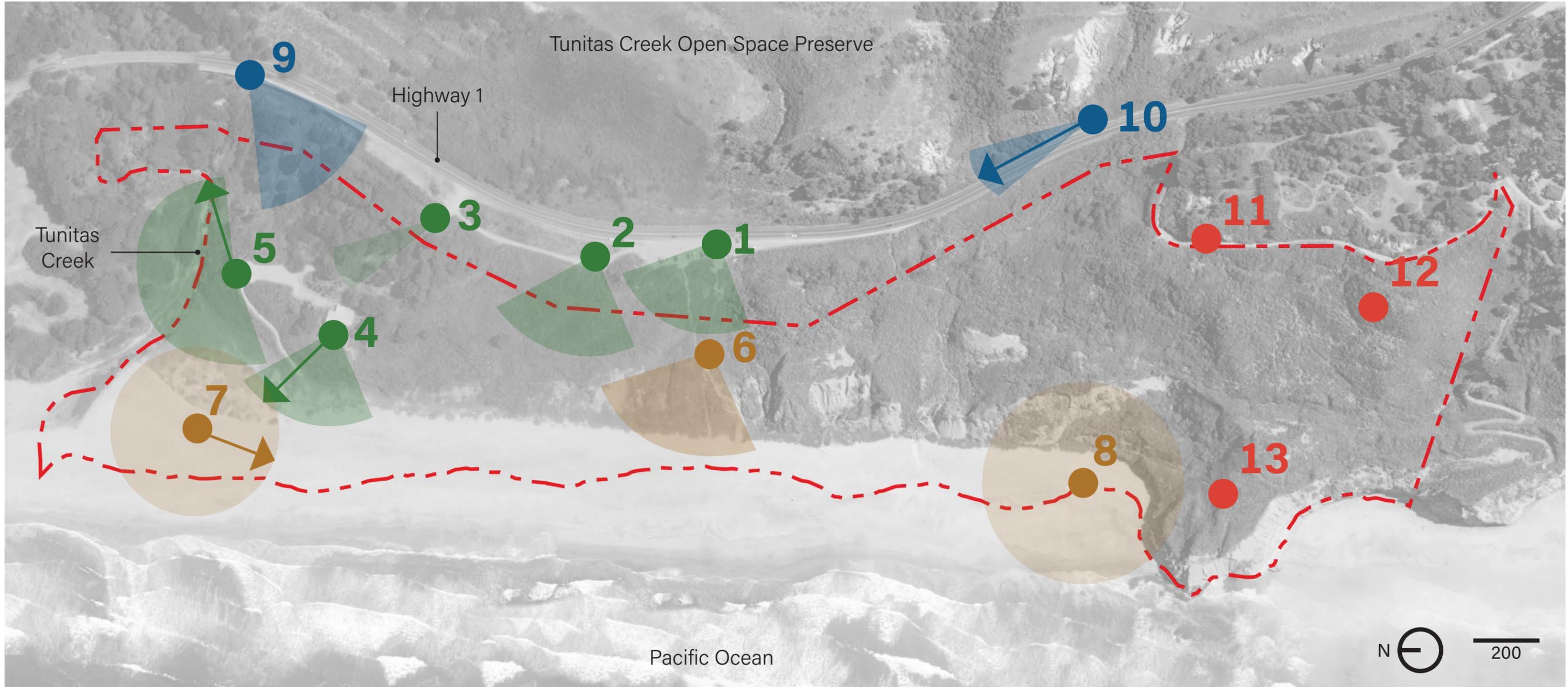
IMAGE FROM WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

The monarch butterfly, a US Fish & Wildlife Service listed sensitive species, has potential to form winter roosts on the Project site in the Monterey pine forest.



EXISTING VIEWS



LEGEND

- - - - - Property Line
- Primary Pedestrian Viewpoints
- Secondary Pedestrian Viewpoints
- Vehicular Viewpoints
- Potential Viewpoints



EXISTING VIEWS



VIEWPOINT #2: PANORAMIC VIEW FROM DIRT PATH NEXT TO PARKING AREA



EXISTING VIEWS



VIEWPOINT #5: VIEW FROM THE GRAVEL ROAD LOOKING TOWARD HIGHWAY 1 BRIDGE OVER TUNITAS CREEK CORRIDOR



EXISTING VIEWS



VIEWPOINT #7: VIEW FROM THE BEACH LOOKING SOUTH TOWARD MUSSEL ROCK



EXISTING VIEWS

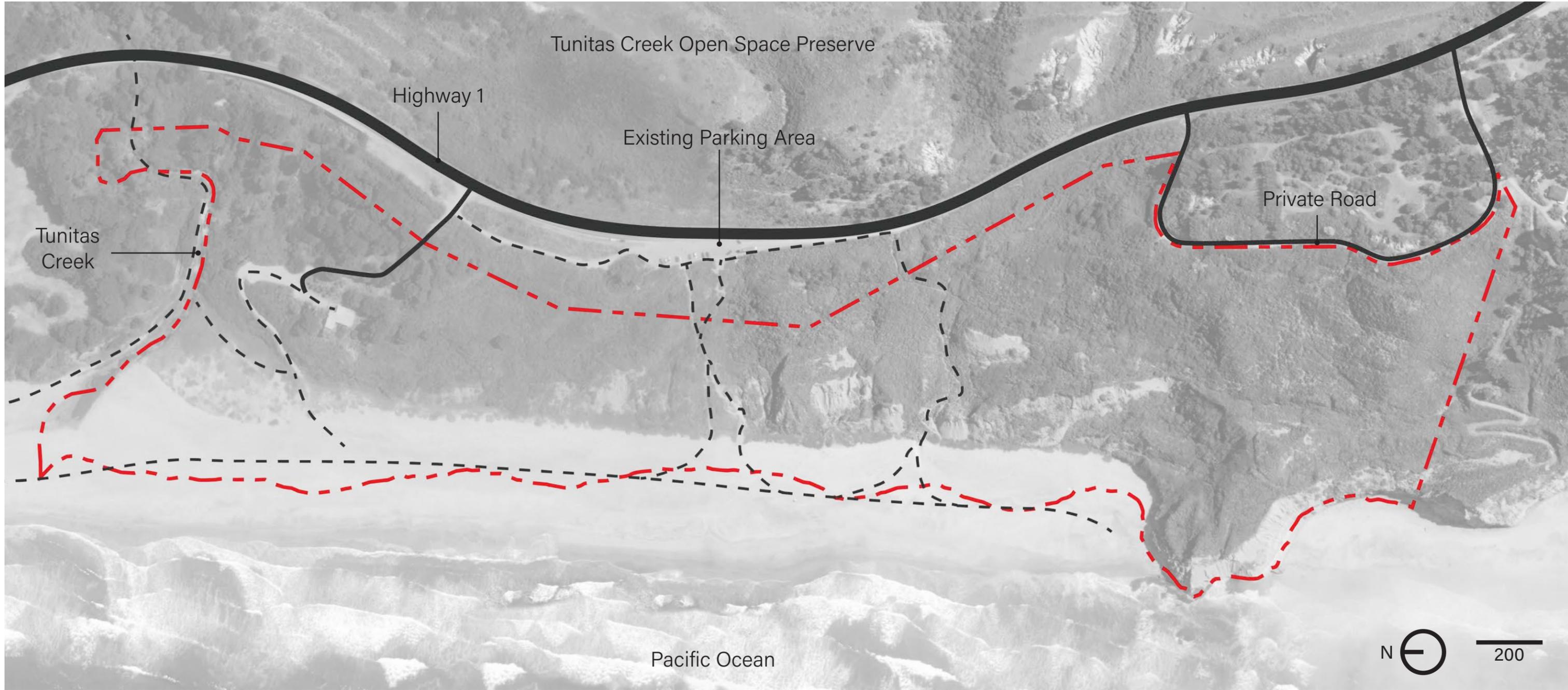


VIEWPOINT #9: VIEW FROM HIGHWAY 1 DRIVING NORTH

IMAGE FROM GOOGLE STREET VIEW



EXISTING TRAILS AND ROADS



LEGEND

- Property Line
- Existing Access Road
- - - Informal Trails

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION



EXISTING INFORMAL DIRT PARKING

Currently, most cars park in the informal roadside dirt lot at the top of the bluff. Up to 60 cars park here at a time on the busiest days of the week.



EXISTING ACCESS ROAD

An existing closed-off access road currently allows rangers and emergency vehicles to get down to the site of the existing residence and the beach.



OTHER INFORMAL PARKING AREAS

Some cars will park on the dirt trail leading from the access road to the informal dirt parking area and pull close to the edge of the bluff.



GRAVEL PARKING AT MID-BLUFF

The existing closed-off access road leads to an informal gravel parking area near the site of the existing residence.



BIKE CIRCULATION



IMAGE FROM GOOGLE STREET VIEW

BIKING AT TUNITAS CREEK BEACH

No formal biking trails exist at Tunitas Creek Beach today. Some bikers bike alongside Highway 1 down the peninsula and pass by Tunitas Creek Beach.



IMAGE FROM WEEKEND SHERPA



IMAGE FROM WEEKEND SHERPA

REGIONAL COASTAL TRAILS

While no bike trail exists at Tunitas Creek Beach, there are several nearby bike-friendly trails, such as the Cowell-Purisima Coastal Trail (left) and the Half Moon Bay Coastal Trail (right). Some of these trails have the potential to be connected to Tunitas as part of the Ohlone-Portola heritage trail.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION



IMAGE FROM CALIFORNIA BEACHES

EXISTING PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO THE BEACH

Currently, the only paths to Tunitas Creek Beach from the parking area at the top of the bluff are unsanctioned, eroding, and unsafe footpaths.



ACCESS ROAD TO THE BEACH

While not open to the public, an access road created for emergency vehicles to get to the beach currently exists and will become a pedestrian trail when the park opens.



PEDESTRIAN ACCESS ALONG THE BEACH

There are currently no formal access paths along the beach, but people often walk along the beach to get to the southern bluffs.



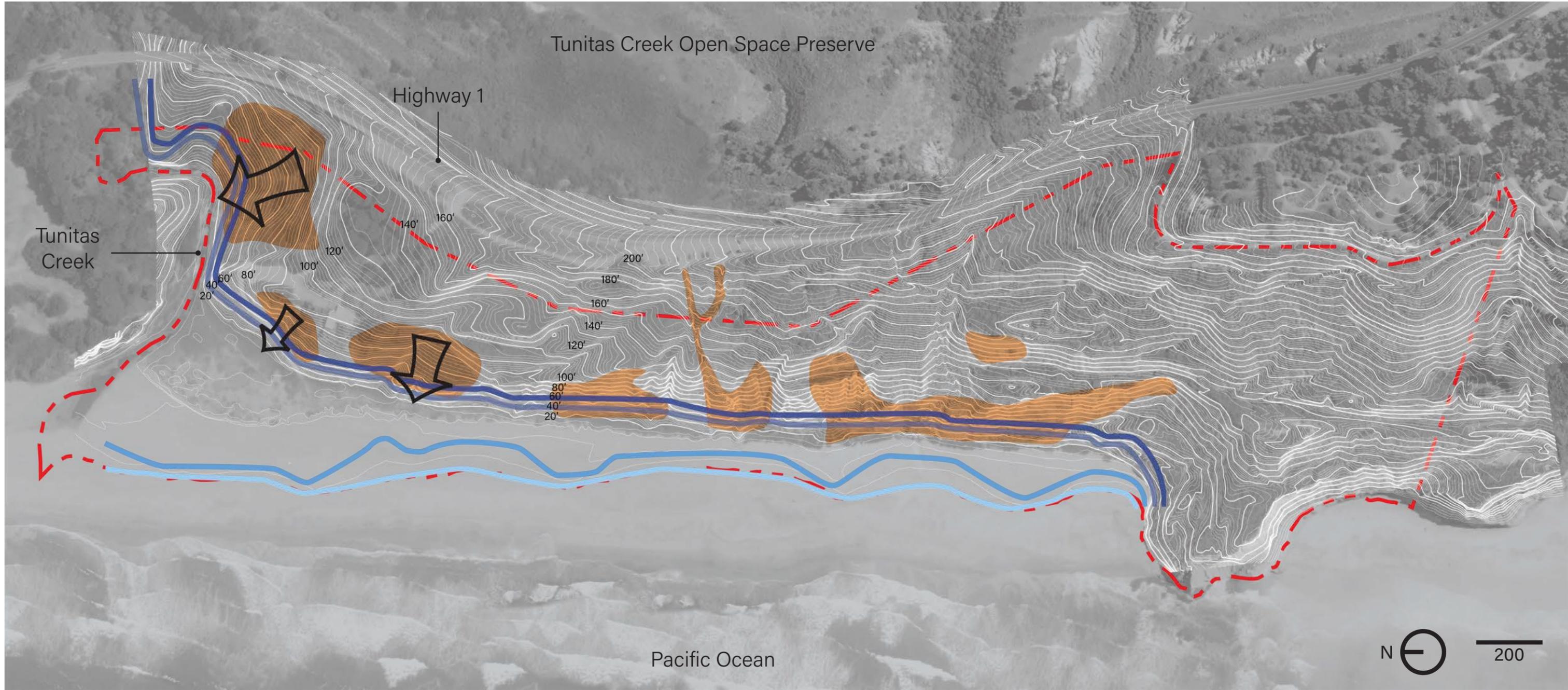
IMAGE FROM POST

REGIONAL COASTAL TRAILS

The nearby Cowell-Purisima coastal trail features walking and biking paths and may potentially be connected to a pedestrian trail at Tunitas Creek Beach.



EXISTING TOPOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS



LEGEND

- - - - - Property Line
- Landslide
- Eroded slopes
- — — — — Mean High Water (8.57')
- — — — — Mean High Water + Sea Level Rise (13.17')
- — — — — Base Flood Elevation (36.0')
- — — — — Base Flood Elevation + Sea Level Rise (40.6')

EXISTING TOPOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS



ERODING COASTAL DUNES



STEEP SLOPE TO BEACH



ACTIVE LANDSLIDE IN NORTHEAST AREA OF SITE



ERODED FOOTPATH TO BEACH



ERODED FOOTPATH TO BEACH



EROSION NEAR TUNITAS CREEK



END OF PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Click on "Design Phases" to move to the next module.

