

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Parks Department



**DATE:** September 23, 2015

**COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** October 1, 2015

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Marlene Finley, Parks Director

**SUBJECT:** Parks Department Updates

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and accept report.

**BACKGROUND:**

This report covers Department activities since the Commission's August 6, 2015 meeting.

**UPDATES:**

**Staffing:** The Department is in the process of hiring two additional Park Ranger IVs. Once these positions are filled, the Department will recruit and fill behind with Park Ranger IIIs as well as fill a Natural Resource Park Ranger III. The Department will also fill a permanent Interpretive Park Ranger II position.

**Mini -Parks:** An application form has been developed for those groups interested in pursuing a mini-park. The Mini-Park policy and application can be found on the County Parks website.

**Visitor Survey:** The Department is working with San Francisco State University on a series of focus groups and onsite visitor surveys to better understand visitors and county residents' needs and preferences for County Parks in the areas of facilities and programs. We are also working to better understand how to reach people through communications and various media. The focus groups will take place this fall and are scheduled for areas of the County that typically have fewer people who use County Parks. This will help us better understand if there are any barriers to participating in park programs and using County Parks.

**Projects:** Three big project planning efforts are underway. The three major projects in planning stages are Coyote Point East Promenade, Green Valley Trail and Re-Imagine Flood Park. In all three cases, park staff are working with consultants to conduct robust community engagement.

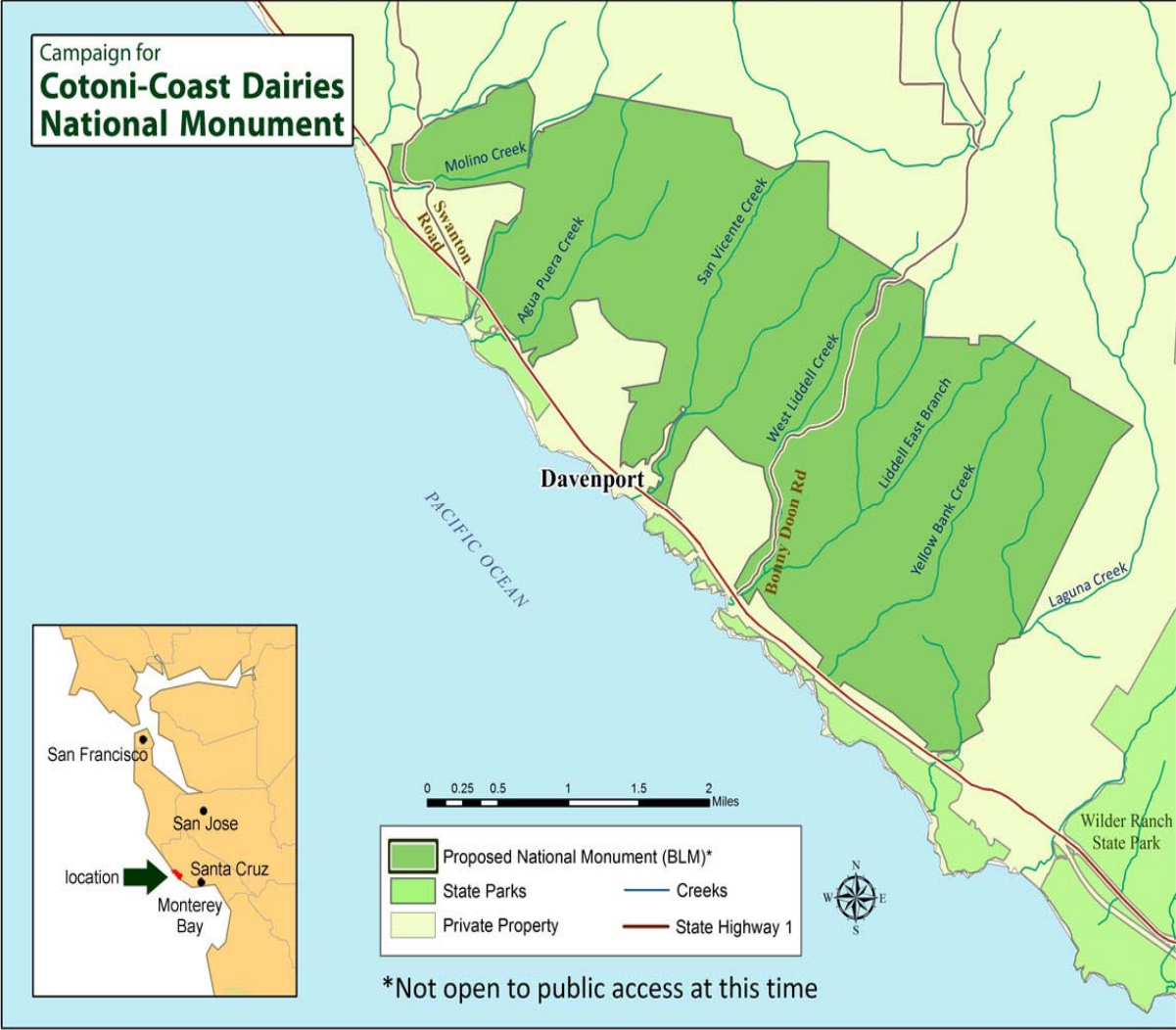
**Sam McDonald House:** Staff from two County Board of Supervisors and others have expressed interest in working on getting the Sam McDonald House on the National Register of Historic Places. San Mateo County Historical Association President, Mitch Postel, and others have also agreed to work with County Parks toward this goal. National Park Service historian, Elaine Jackson-Retondo has been identified as a key contact that can assist this effort.

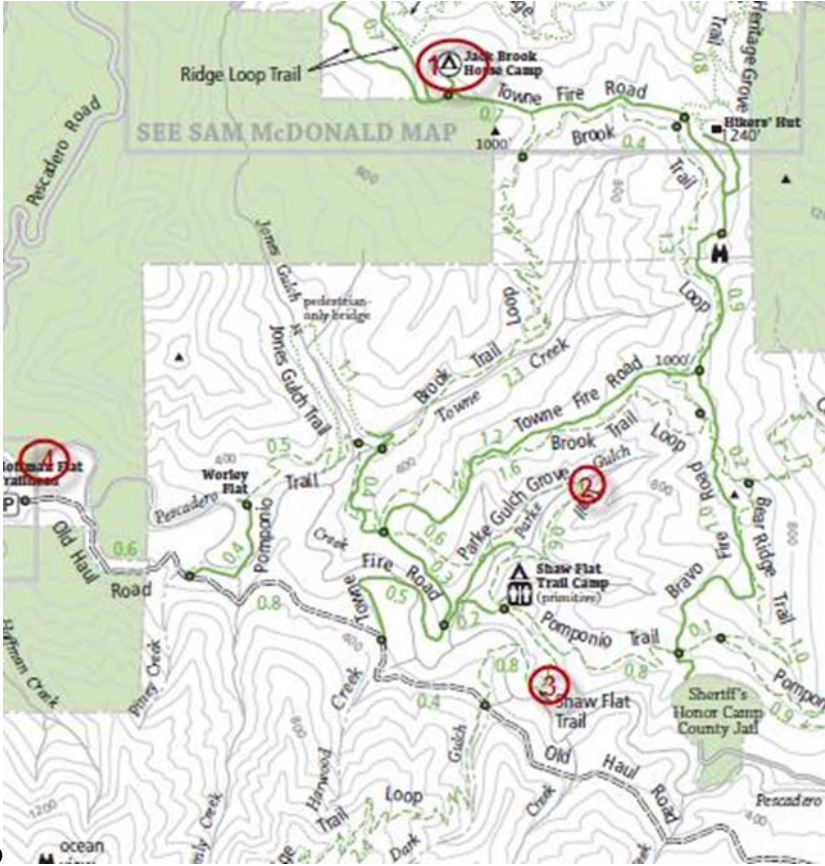
**Coast Dairies National Monument:** On August 5, 2015, US Senators Boxer and Feinstein introduced legislation that would expand the California Coastal Monument to include an additional 5,800 acres of the Coast Dairies properties, located within Santa Cruz County. The property lies just east of Highway 1, south of the San Mateo County border. Cotoni-Coast Dairies property is owned and managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The bill introduced to the Senate in August proposes to add an additional layer of federal protection to this iconic landscape. Currently, the California Coastal National Monument includes rocks and islands off the San Mateo County Coast, including San Pedro rock just north of Devil's Slide Trail. See attached map.

**Honor Camp Update:** The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office owns and maintains the former minimum security camp in the Pescadero Creek watershed, commonly known as the Honor Camp. In FY 2013-15, the Parks Department was funded to conduct a feasibility study of potential park-compatible uses for the shuttered camp. Instead of funding consultants, I invited experts in the field of private campground and resort management and non-profit and agency conservation youth camps to visit the site and provide their professional opinions. To date five different groups of experts have visited the site. The feedback is consistent: the site would be too costly and remote for park-compatible alternative uses.

**Horse Hitching Racks:** Over the last few months there has been growing interest from the equestrian community in horse hitching racks. Initially, the Department accepted a donation for a rack to be placed along the new Parke Gulch Trail. Park Rangers contacted the established horse groups and volunteers to determine the best material and design for a horse hitching rack. In the process, equestrians identified several additional locations and offered to raise donations to fund the racks which run about \$1,200 each, not including delivery. The Department approved a total of four horse hitching racks and locations. The racks feature a discrete inscription in the steel, in the corner braces of the rack recognizing the donor organization. We thank Don Pugh, Faye Brophy, and many others for identifying a need and working to find the funds to provide these amenities in our horse-friendly Parks. Please see the attached graphics.

End of report





Hitching Rails Location Map

Example – located at Alice’s Restaurant



Hoffman Fat Trailhead example

