Biological Report & ESHA Assessment

Manchester State Park Accessibility Improvements Project

Assessor's parcel number(s) 13301003

Mendocino County, California

Prepared for
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On August 7, 2017 and April 16, 2019 California State Park (CSP) Senior Environmental Scientist Roy W. Martin conducted a botanical/biological survey at Manchester State Park (SP), Mendocino County, California. The biological study area for this report covers park campgrounds, campfire center, and a day use site.

Collectively, the proposed improvements are located on the following Assessors' Parcels Number (APN): 06045-13301003. The purpose of this study was to determine the presence and extent of sensitive coastal resources (natural communities, special-status plant and animals) that are subject to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat protections under Mendocino County Coastal Zoning Code.

This report addresses all natural features that are subject to Mendocino County's Costal Zoning Code, Chapter 20.946 Environmentally Sensitive Habitat and Other Resource Areas. Additionally, this report provides summaries and maps of documented and potential occurrences, analyzes the potential impacts of the project, and provides standard project requirements and ESHA enhancement measures.

California State Parks proposes to upgrade facilities within Manchester SP by providing accessibility improvements to campsites and associated facilities in the park's two campgrounds and the day use area and trailhead at the end of Kinney Road. Project implementation will meet accessibility requirements and guidelines as stated in "California State Parks Accessibility Guidelines" and the federal access board's outdoor recreation guidelines, and will assist in meeting the legal requirements as stated in the (*Tucker v. California Department of Parks and Recreation*) Consent Decree.

Our mission at CSP is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the State's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

After reviewing potential project impacts alongside Mendocino County's Coastal Zoning Code development criteria, CSP concludes the project will not have permanent impacts to ESHAs with the implementation of Standard Project Requirements and proposed ESHA enhancements.

1. Introduction and Background

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide accessibility improvements to existing day use and campground facilities at Manchester State Park.

1.2. Project Description

Manchester State Park Campground:

Campsites #7, #12, and #24 will be upgraded to accessibility standards, including installing paved parking spurs and timber-edged compacted aggregate for cooking and tent use areas. Other campground improvements include constructing accessible concrete paths of travel to the two existing restroom buildings and upgrading two water stations.

Campfire Center:

Upgrades to the campfire center include creating an accessible path of travel from the campground to the campfire center and providing one accessible seating area with bench and campanion seating space.

Group Camp:

Group Camp improvements consist of the following elements:

- A new accessible BBQ and fire pit will be installed.
- Existing picnic tables will be replaced with accessible models.
- A new concrete parking stall and path of travel to the restroom will be constructed.
- New animal proof trash receptacles and an accessible water station/drinking fountain will be installed.
- Three new camping tent pads will be constructed of compacted aggregate and timber edging.

Day-Use and Trailhead:

Accessibility improvements to the Kinney Road day use site include constructing a new concrete parking stall next to the existing CXT building, two (2) new picnic sites with concrete path of travel in the grassy area east of the CXT, and landings for information panels and interpretive signage.

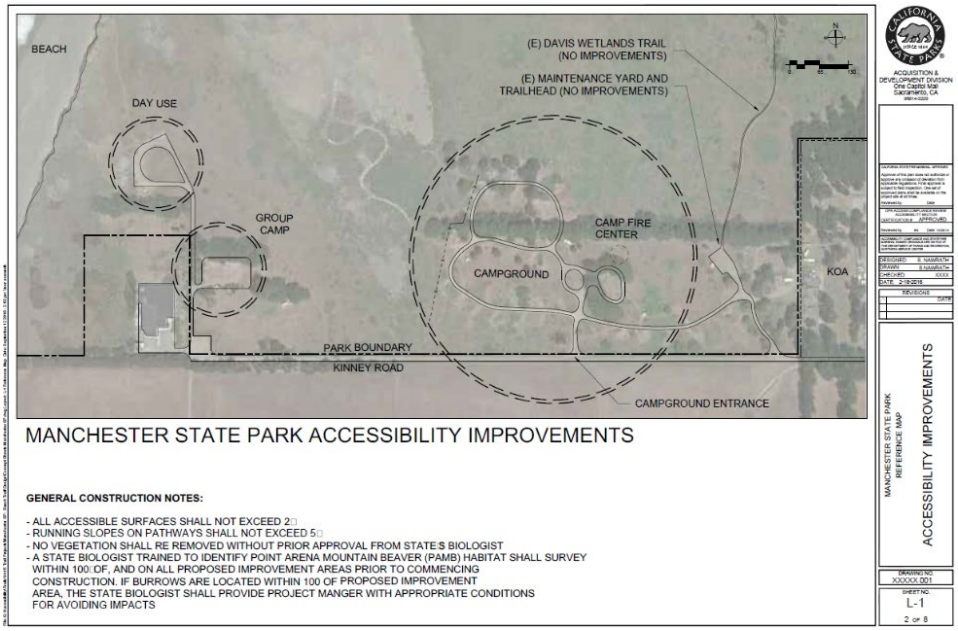


Figure 1 - Project Improvements

1.3. Location and Environmental Setting

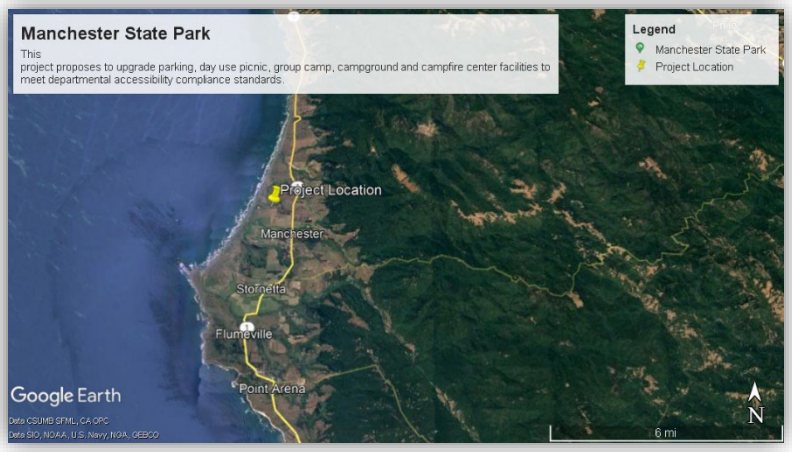


Figure 2 - Location Map

Project Location

Manchester SP is located a 1/2 mile north of the town of Manchester in southern Mendocino County, California. The park encompasses 1490 onshore acres of coastal habitat and a 3,782-acre underwater lease of the adjacent Pacific Ocean.

Environmental Setting

Manchester SP contains a mix of beaches, dunes, grasslands, scrub, wetlands, and lagoons. Vegetation types occurring in the state have been classified by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) into alliances (equivalent to plant communities) or associations, as defined by Sawyer et al (2009) and that conform to the U.S. National Vegetation Classification Standard adopted by the federal government (USNVC 2017). Several CDFW-identified sensitive natural plant communities occur in the park, including the *Danthonia californica* Herbaceous Alliance (California oat grass prairie) and *Alnus rubra*/*Salix lasiolepis* Association.

The project encompasses three sites located on coastal terrace habitat ranging from ¼ to ½ mile from the Pacific Ocean: the park's main campground/campfire center, the group campground, and the Kinney Road day use site. Vegetation at the two campground sites consists of coastal grasslands mostly dominated by non-native grass and forb species and a border of non-indigenous Monterey cypress and planted native beach pine. The day use site supports a mixture of coastal grasslands and coastal scrub.

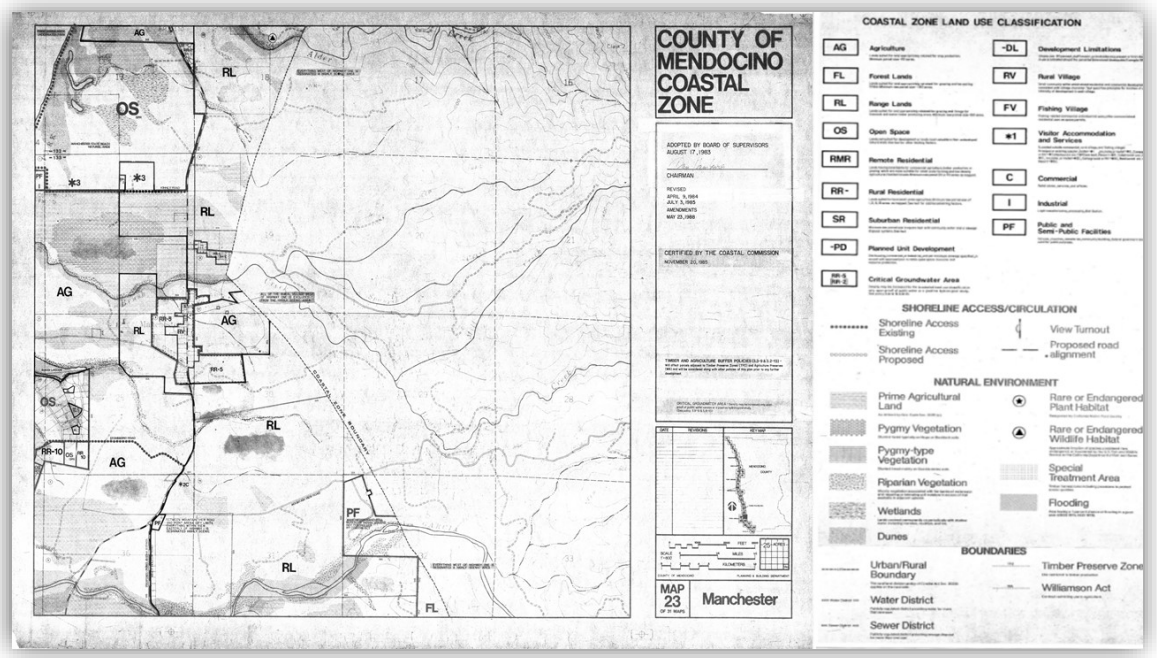
Figure 3 - Project Area Map

1.4. Land Use

County of Mendocino Coastal Zone – Land Use Classification

Manchester SP is zoned as Open Space (OS) within Mendocino County. An open space land classification is defined as land to remain in its natural condition or to include the amount of development necessary to support active or passive recreational uses.

The Pacific Ocean and a small area zoned Public Facility (PF) borders the park on the west; Agricultural (AG) zoned lands partially border the park on the south.



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CSP - State Park Classification

Manchester State Park was classified as a State Beach in 1963 and reclassified as a State Park in 1991. "State parks [California Public Resources Code Section 5019.53] consist of relatively spacious areas of outstanding scenic or natural character, oftentimes also containing significant historical, archaeological, ecological, geological, or other similar values. The purpose of state parks shall be to preserve outstanding natural, scenic, and cultural values, indigenous aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora, and the most significant examples of ecological regions of California".

The CSP Department Operations Manual (DOM) states improvements undertaken at a SP shall be for the purpose of making the areas available for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of natural, scenic, cultural, and ecological values for present and future generations. Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities including, but not limited to, camping, picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, hiking, and horseback riding, so long as those improvements involve no major modification of lands, forests, or waters. Improvements that do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of the natural, scenic, cultural, or ecological values of the resource, which are attractions in themselves, or which are otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park, shall not be undertaken within state parks. (DOM Section 0304.2.3).

2. Methods

2.1. Watershed

Manchester SP is within the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's (NCRWQCB) Mendocino Coast Unit, Hydrologic Unit 113 (HU-113**)** and part of the Mallo Pass Creek-Frontal Pacific Ocean local sub-watershed.

The project is located on a coastal terrace approximately a ½ mile north of the Brush Creek drainage and just west of the small community of Manchester.

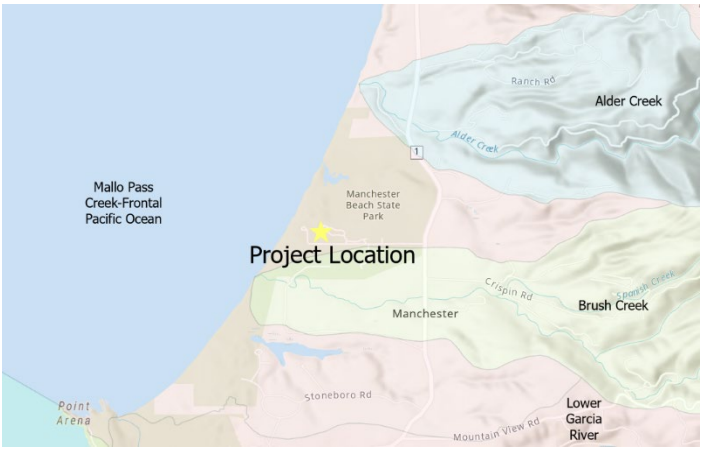

Figure 5 - Regional Watershed Map

2.2. Wetlands

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has jurisdictional and permitting authority over federally defined wetlands under provisions in Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Typically, USACE-jurisdictional wetlands fulfill three criteria: presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. In the coastal zone (as defined in the California Coastal Act), the California Coastal Commission (CCC) only requires a single wetland parameter to assume jurisdictional authority.

A survey was conducted on August 7, 2017 by a CSP wetland specialist to determine presence/absence of USACE-jurisdictional wetlands or California Coastal Commission wetlands (aka coastal wetlands) in or directly adjacent to the project area. No State or federal wetlands were identified within project boundaries.

2.3. Watercourses

No watercourses flow in or adjacent to the project areas. The closest watercourse to the project area is Brush Creek, a small perennial stream that empties into the Pacific Ocean approximately a ½ mile south of the closest project area.

2.4. Natural Communities

The project sites are located in a mixture of coastal grasslands (both native and non-native species) and coastal scrub habitats that are common in coastal northern California. Non-native species such as slender wild oats (*Avena barbata*) sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), hairy cat's ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), common sheep sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), field madder (*Sherardia arvensis*) dominate the coastal grasslands at both campground sites. Non-indigenous Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) and planted native shore pine (*Pinus contorta* ssp. *contorta*) partially encloses the group campground and provides a windbreak on the north side of the main campground. Native coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis* ssp. *consanguinea*) and California wax myrtle (*Myrica californica*) occur as scattered individual shrubs in the main campground.

A mix of coastal grasslands and coastal scrub comprise the vegetation at the Kinney Road day use site. Grassland species include non-native velvet grass and hairy cat's ear and native western bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum* var. *pubescens*) and common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). Non-native jointed charlock (*Raphanus raphanistrum*) dominated coastal scrub partially surrounds the trailhead information panel at this project site. Common native species at this location include seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus*), coastal bush lupine (*Lupinus arboreus*), and gumplant (*Grindelia stricta* var. *platyphylla*).

2.5. Special Status Species

Sensitive biological resources that occur or potentially occur in or near the proposed project site are discussed in this section. Special-status species (sensitive species) are defined as plants and animals that are legally protected or that are considered sensitive by federal, state, or local resource conservation agencies and organizations. Specifically, this includes species listed as State or federally Threatened or Endangered, those considered as candidates for listing as Threatened or Endangered, species identified by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as Species of Special Concern (SSC), animals identified by CDFG as Fully Protected or Protected (FP, P), and plants considered by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) to be rare, threatened, or endangered. Also included are habitats that are considered critical for the survival of a listed species or have special value for wildlife species and plant communities that are unique or of limited distribution.

2.5.1 Botanical Resources

The CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFW 2019), CNPS[1] (CNPS 2018), California Endangered Species Act (CESA), and the USFWS (USFWS 2019) have identified 35 special status plant species as occurring or having a potential to occur within the Point Arena 7½ -minute USGS quadrangle map. Suitable habitat is available within or adjacent to project areas for eight of these species. These are:

Table 1 - Special Status Plant Species

Special Status Plant Species						
Common Name	Scientific Name	CNPS Rank	FESA	CESA	State Rank	Blooming Period
American glehnia	*Glehnia littoralis* ssp. *leiocarpa*	4.2	None	None	S2S3	May-Aug
Blasdale's bent grass	*Agrostis blasdalei*	1B.2	None	None	S2	May-Jul
Bodega morning glory	*Calystegia purpurata* ssp. *saxicola*	1B.2	None	None	S2S3	Feb-Jul
coast lily	*Lilium maritimum*	1B.1	None	None	S2	May-Aug
coastal bluff morning-glory	*Calystegia purpurata* ssp. *saxicola*	1B.2	None	None	S2S3	(Mar)Apr-Sep
harlequin lotus	*Hosackia gracilis*	4.2	None	None	S3	Mar-Jul
maple-leaved checkerbloom	*Sidalcea malachroides*	4.2	None	None	S3	(Mar)Apr-Aug
short-leaved evax	*Hesperevax sparsiflora* var. *brevifolia*	1B.2	None	None	S2	Mar-Jun

[1]California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Rare Plant Ranks: 1A = presumed extinct in California; 1B = rare or endangered in California and elsewhere; 2 = rare or endangered in California, more common elsewhere; 3 = need more information; 4 = plants of limited distribution. Threat code extensions are: .1 = seriously endangered in California; .2 = fairly endangered in California; and .3 not very endangered in California.[1]

Surveys for special status plant species with a potential to occur in or adjacent to the project area, as identified above, were conducted on August 7, 2017 and April 16, 2019.

2.5.2 Wildlife Resources

Twenty-four special-status wildlife species have been identified by the CDFW CNDDB (2019) and USFWS (USFWS 2019) as occurring or having a potential to occur within the Point Arena 7½ -minute USGS quadrangle map.

Table 2 - Special Status Wildlife Species

Special Status Wildlife Species				
Common Name	Scientific Name	FESA	CESA	State Rank
INVERTEBRATES				
Behren's silverspot butterfly	*Speyeria zerene behrensii*	Endangered	None	S1
California freshwater shrimp	*Syncaris pacifica*	Endangered	Endangered	S2
Conservancy fairy shrimp	*Branchinecta conservatio*	Endangered	None	S2
lotis blue butterfly	*Plebejus idas lotis*	Endangered	None	SH
obscure bumble bee	*Bombus caliginosus*	None	None	S1S2
western bumble bee	*Bombus occidentalis*	None	None	S1
FISH				
pink salmon	*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*	None	None	S1
Steelhead – northern California DPS	*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* pop. 16	Threatened	None	S2S3
tidewater goby	*Eucyclogobius newberryi*	Endangered	None	S3
AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES				
foothill yellow-legged frog	*Rana boylii*	None	Candidate Threatened	S3
California red-legged frog	*Rana draytonii*	Threatened	None	S3
green sea turtle	*Chelonia mydas*	Threatened	None	S1
Pacific tailed frog	*Ascaphus truei*	None	None	S3S4
southern torrent salamander	*Rhyacotriton variegatus*	None	None	S2S3
northwestern pond turtle	*Actinemys marmorata*	None	None	S3
BIRDS				
marbled murrelet	*Brachyramphus marmoratus*	Threatened	Endangered	S1
northern spotted owl	*Strix occidentalis caurina*	Threatened	Threatened	S2S3
short-tailed albatross	*Phoebastria (=Diomedea) albatrus*	Endangered	None	S1
tufted puffin	*Fratercula cirrhata*	None	None	S1S2
western snowy plover	*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*	Threatened	None	S2S3
western yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*	Threatened	Endangered	S1
MAMMALS				
fisher	*Pekania pennanti*	Proposed Threatened	None	S2S3
Point Arena mountain beaver	*Aplodontia rufa nigra*	Endangered	None	S1
Sonoma tree vole	*Arborimus pomo*	None	None	S3

DPS = Distinct Population Segment
FESA = Federal Endangered Species Act
CESA = California Endangered Species Act
STATE RANKING
- SH = All California sites are historical
- S1 = Critically Imperiled
- S2 = Imperiled
- S3 = Vulnerable
- S4 = Apparently Secure
- S5 = Secure

3. Results

3.1. Wetlands and Aquatic Features

A survey to determine the presence of wetlands or other aquatic features within or adjacent to the project areas was conducted on August 7, 2017 and April 16, 2019. No State or federal wetlands or other aquatic features such as Waters of the U.S. were identified within or adjacent to project boundaries.

3.2. Natural Communities

The campground project sites are located in coastal grasslands mostly dominated by non-native grass and forb species. Non-indigenous Monterey cypress and planted native beach pines border portions of these campgrounds. The day use site supports a mixture of coastal grasslands and coastal scrub habitats described above in section 2.4.

Table 3 - Non-native Coastal Grassland Species

Non-native coastal grassland species at Manchester SP within or adjacent to project areas	
Common Name	*Scientific Name*
sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*
slender wild oat	*Avena barbata*
brome fescue	*Festuca bromoides*
rattlesnake grass	*Briza maxima*
sheep sorrel	*Rumex acetosella*
hairy cat's ear	*Hypochaeris radicata*
sub clover	*Trifolium subterraneum*
silver hairgrass	*Aira caryophyllea*
field madder	*Sherardia arvensis*
sticky mouse ear chickweed	*Cerastium glomeratum*
English daisy	*Bellis perennis*
California burclover	*Medicago polymorpha*

Table 4 - Native Coastal Grassland Species

Native Coastal Grassland Species, including scattered shrubs, at Manchester SP within or adjacent to project areas	
Common Name	*Scientific Name*
common selfheal	*Prunella vulgaris*
California poppy	*Eschscholzia californica*
coyote brush	*Baccharis pilularis*
bracken fern	*Pteridium aquilinum*
California wax myrtle	*Morella californica*

Table 5 - Non-native Coastal Scrub Species

Non-native coastal scrub species at Manchester SP within or adjacent to project areas	
jointed charlock	*Raphanus raphanistrum*
slender wild oat	*Avena barbata*
sheep sorrel	*Rumex acetosella*
bull thistle	*Cirsium vulgare*

Table 6 - Native Coastal Scrub Species

Native coastal scrub species at Manchester SP within or adjacent to project areas	
Common Name	*Scientific Name*
coyote brush	*Baccharis pilularis*
poison oak	*Toxicodendron diversilobum*
Bracken fern	*Pteridium aquilinum* var. *pubescens*
California blackberry	*Rubus ursinus*
blueblossom	*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*
coastal bush lupine	*Lupinus arboreus*
Douglas iris	*Iris douglasiana*
common yarrow	*Achillea millefolium*
seaside daisy	*Erigeron glaucus*

3.3. Botanical Resources

3.3.4. Documented Occurrences

Surveys for habitat capable of supporting special status plant species was conducted at project sites on April 16, 2019. Marginally suitable habitat exists at the Kinney Road day use project site for species identified above in Section 2.5.1. No special status plants were observed during this field visit.

3.4. Wildlife Resources

3.4.1. Documented Occurrences

Single occurrences of the federally Endangered Behren's silverspot butterfly have been detected at Manchester during surveys conducted in 2007, 2011, and 2017 (Fuller 2018). Known locations for the butterflies' host plant, western dog violet (*Viola adunca*), are approximately 0.4 mile from the closest project site.

Occupied Point Arena Mountain Beaver (federal Endangered species) habitat has been documented on the north side of the Kinney Road day use site and adjacent to the northern and western boundaries of the main campground.

3.4.1. Potential Occurrences

Based on habitat requirements, only four of the twenty-four special-status wildlife species identified by the CNDDB and USFWS (Section 2.5.2) have a potential to occur within or immediately adjacent to project boundaries. In addition to the aforementioned Behren's silverspot butterfly and Point Arena Mountain Beaver, suitable habitat exists within or adjacent to project areas for obscure bumble bee (*Bombus caliginosus*) and western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*). Project activities will not significantly affect any food plants or nesting areas utilized by these species.

Suitable nesting and foraging/roosting habitat (herbaceous vegetation, shrubs, and trees) is available in or near the project area for raptors and migratory bird species. Construction activities, including but not limited to noise generation, have the potential to impact special status avian species. However, implementation of the Standard Project Requirements described in chapter 4 of this document will minimize project impacts.

4. ESHA Impact Analysis

A special status plant habitat survey was conducted on April 16, 2019 and marginally suitable habitat was identified at the Kinney Road day use project site. Potential impacts to special status plants are addressed below in Section 5.

In 2005 California State Parks prepared a Point Arena Mountain Beaver (PAMB) Habitat Protection Plan for Manchester State Park (CDPR 2005). This plan implemented a project to relocate a portion of the main campground and improve certain park trails in order to reduce impacts to occupied PAMB habitat that was identified and mapped as part of this project. Applicable standard protective measures described in the Habitat Protection Plan will be incorporated into the current project, as identified below in Section 5.

5. Standard Project Requirements and Enhancement Measures

5.1. Standard Project Requirements

Standard Project Requirements for Botanical Resources:

Special Status Plants

Surveys for special status plant species with a potential to occur in project areas of impact will be conducted during the appropriate blooming periods or when identity can be confirmed. All occurrences of special status plant species within the project areas will be recorded on project maps, flagged or otherwise identified on the ground. Where possible, occurrences of all special status plants will be avoided and protected from construction activities. Those locations where special status plants cannot be avoided will be subject to the following conditions:

Perennial species

• Prior to project activities plants will be carefully excavated and transplanted nearby in suitable habitat. All transplant work will be conducted under the direction of a DPR Environmental Scientist or DPR-approved biologist.

• Transplanting will occur during the dormant growing season (i.e. late fall) when the plants are least disturbed and when they can be watered by winter precipitation.

Annual species

Seeds from annual special status plant species will be collected during the appropriate season and properly stored prior to ground disturbing activities. Seeds will be sown during the appropriate season in suitable locations identified by a DPR Environmental Scientist.

Standard Project Requirements for Sudden Oak Death

Sudden Oak Death (SOD) is caused by the pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*, which has infected and killed thousands of tanoak, coast live oak, Shreve oak, and California black oak trees in coastal forests from Humboldt County to Monterey County. SOD is transported to new areas when infected plants or infested soil is moved. *Phytophthora ramorum* thrives in wet or moist climates with cool temperatures; these organisms and their spores can be found in soil and water as well as plant material.

This water mold also infects many other species, including California bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*), Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), coast redwood, Douglas-fir, big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), California honeysuckle

(*Lonicera hispidula*), California coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), rhododendron (*Rhododendron* spp.), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* spp.) and huckleberry (*Vaccinium* spp.).

SOD may be spread when host plants, wood chips, burls, other host plant products or soils contaminated with the pathogen's spores are moved to previously uninfected areas. SOD thrives in cool, wet to moist climates, and living plants and its spores can be found in soil and water as well as plant material. The risk of SOD spread is greatest in muddy areas and during rainy weather where spore-harboring hosts are present. Detached plant leaves, organic material, and soil, which may harbor spores of the pathogen, are more likely to stick to vehicles, equipment, and humans when they are wet.

Mendocino County is one of 14 California counties to have confirmed SOD findings and is under state and federal quarantine regulations governing the movement of affected plants or plant material out of the quarantined area. All on site construction personnel will use the following Best Management Practices (BMPs) to limit transmission of Sudden Oak Death (SOD) outside of the work area.

- Unauthorized movement of plant material is prohibited.
- Utilize paved and graveled roads to the fullest extent possible.
- All construction tools and equipment, including vehicles, will be clean prior to arrival at the project site.
- Before leaving the project area, remove or wash-off accumulations of plant debris, soil, and mud from shoes, boots, vehicles, and heavy equipment, etc.

<u>Standard Project Requirements for Wildlife Species:</u>

Raptors and Migratory Birds:
To the extent possible, project activities should occur during the non-breeding season, September 1 – January 31. If initiation of activities which could potentially cause take of nesting migratory birds or raptors (as determined by a CSP Environmental Scientist or CSP–approved biologist) are necessary during the breeding season of February 1 to August 31, then surveys by the CSP Environmental Scientist or CSP–approved biologist will be required.

Raptors:
Surveys for active raptor nests will be conducted within a 250-foot radius of the nesting location no more than 7 days prior to the beginning of construction. If nesting raptors are found, no construction activities will occur within a 250-foot radius of the nest until the young have fledged and the young will no longer be impacted by project activities, as determined by the CSP Environmental Scientist or CSP-approved biologist.

Migratory birds:
Surveys for active migratory bird nests will be conducted within a 150-foot radius of the nest location no more than 7 days prior to the beginning of construction. If active nests are located, no construction activities will occur within a 150-foot radius of the nest until the young have fledged and the young will no longer be impacted by project activities, as determined by the CSP Environmental Scientist or CSP-approved biologist.

Point Arena Mountain Beaver (PAMB)

- Prior to the start of construction, a CSP Environmental Scientist or CSP-approved biologist will conduct a training session for all construction personnel involved with the project. At a minimum, the training will include a description of PAMB and its' habitat and the measures that will be implemented to protect this species. Handouts with photos of this species will be provided to construction personnel.
- All noise related construction and ground disturbing activities (including manipulation of vegetation, construction of fences, digging, and excavation) within 25 feet of occupied habitat, as determined by the CSP Environmental Scientist or CSP-approved biologist, will occur between July 1 and December 14 to avoid the PAMB breeding season.
- All vehicles and equipment will avoid PAMB habitat.

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