



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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TOM BURNS, PLANNING DIRECTOR

May 8, 2006

SUBJECT: REVISED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND REVISED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIS/EIR) FOR THE EAST CLIFF DRIVE BLUFF PROTECTION AND PARKWAY PROJECT

A Draft EIS/EIR for the proposed East Cliff Drive Bluff Protection and Parkway Project was released in March 2004 and a Final EIS/EIR was completed in October 2003. However, in November 2003, the California Coastal Commission determined that the project was not fully consistent with the California Coastal Management Program (CCMP). In an attempt to achieve maximum consistency with the CCMP, additional information was gathered and the enclosed Revised Draft EIS/EIR was prepared. The Revised Draft EIS/EIR analyzes the potential environmental effects of three inter-related projects, which are outlined below.

Project 1 (Main Bluff Protection Structure)

- Construction of an engineered bluff protection structure (soil nail wall) within the East Cliff Drive right-of-way from 33rd Avenue to 36th Avenue;
- Construction of both new and replacement beach access stairways (one at Pleasure Point Park and one near 36th Avenue); and
- Demolition of an abandoned restroom near 35th Avenue, and removal of concrete rubble and relocation of rock riprap on the beach between 33rd Avenue and 36th Avenue.

Project 2 (Parkway)

- Construction of road improvements (new curb along southern edge), installation of drainage structures, pedestrian and multi-use path improvements from 32nd Avenue to Larch Lane, and landscape improvements and installation of railings and other site furnishings;
- Construction of a retaining wall near 38th Avenue; and
- Construction of a new restroom, paving, and landscaping and drainage improvements at a park site (referred to as Pleasure Point Park).

Project 3 (The Hook Bluff Protection Structure)

- Construction of a second engineered bluff protection structure near the end of 41st Avenue at "The Hook" and existing public parking and access point;
- Removal, repair and replacement of a wooden stairway near 41st Avenue; and
- Construction of road and path improvements similar to those in Project 2.

The Revised Draft EIS/EIR identifies five alternatives (including a “no action” alternative) and evaluates potential project impacts on: land use, recreation, visual resources, geological resources, water resources, biological resources, transportation, emergency services, cultural and paleontological resources, and utilities.

The main differences between the 2003 Final EIS/EIR and the Revised Draft EIS/EIR are outlined on the attached summary sheet.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this document is available for a 50-day public review and comment period, which ends on June 26, 2006. All written comments received during the comment period will be responded to in the Revised Final EIS/EIR. Everyone that submits written comments will receive notification of the availability of the Revised Final EIS/EIR when it is released. Written comments must be submitted no later than 5:00 P.M. on June 26, 2006 to:

Claudia Slater
Santa Cruz County
Planning Department
701 Ocean Street, Room 400
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-5175

Comment letters received before the deadline date are appreciated. Copies of this Revised Draft EIS/EIR have also been placed on reserve for public review at the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department on Ocean Street, the County Aptos Permit Center on Soquel Drive, the main branch of the Santa Cruz Library system in downtown Santa Cruz, and the Live Oak Branch on Portola Drive. The report can also be viewed on the Internet at the County of Santa Cruz website (www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us). A public open house will be held on June 8, 2006 from 6:00 to 9:00 P.M. at the Live Oak Community Center/Simpkins Family Swim Center, located at 979 17th Avenue in Live Oak. Additionally, the County Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on the project after the Revised Final EIS/EIR is released. This hearing will be noticed in local newspapers. If you have any questions about the environmental review process, please contact me at the phone number noted above between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. weekdays.

Sincerely,

Claudia Slater
Environmental Planner

Enclosure