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CHAPTER 1. PURPOSE AND NEED

1.1 Introduction

The National Park Service (NPS), in coordination with the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (GGNPC), is considering a management strategy for Mori Point, which is located in Pacifica, San Mateo County, on land owned and managed by the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) (Figure 1). Mori Point is rich in natural resources, adjacent to open space, and ideally situated to provide key links to NPS lands at Sweeney and Milagra Ridges and other recreational opportunities along the San Mateo Coast.

Because the NPS recently acquired the land, Mori Point is not specifically included in any NPS or GGNRA general planning documents. A plan is needed to ensure that all uses at Mori Point are compatible and enhance both natural and visitor resources at the site. The GGNRA is proposing to improve visitor access at the 110-acre Mori Point property by implementing restoration actions including a trail system that minimizes impacts to NPS resources and enhances recreational experiences.

This environmental assessment (EA) evaluates a No Action Alternative and three Action Alternatives and analyzes the impacts of each on the environment. The Action Alternatives analyzed are: Alternative 1, Preferred Alternative; Alternative 2, Limited Multiple-use; and Alternative 3, All Multiple-use. This document also includes discussions of alternatives that have been dismissed and the rationale for their elimination. The EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.9), and the NPS Director's Order (DO) 12, Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision Making, and the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (NHPA).

1.2 Background

Mori Point was originally part of the San Pedro Spanish Land Grant and has been the site of many enterprises over the past 120 years. The Mori family, for whom the land is now named, settled in Pacifica in the 1890's and developed a farm on Mori Point. The Mori family business included the Mori Point Tavern, which operated on the site from the 1920's to 1966 when it burned to the ground in a fire. Part of Mori Point was also used as a rock quarry and the remains of sand dredging operations are still visible.

For the past 30 years, the property at Mori Point has been threatened with development. The local community, local government, and other organizations fought to protect the area and in 2002, the Trust for Public Land outbid developers at a public auction and purchased the property. Despite being privately owned, Mori Point has historically been used by the community as an urban park for hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, and dog walking. Historic land uses such as quarrying operations, in combination with other uses related to motorbike and off-road vehicles, have resulted in an altered and eroded landscape with a large network of non-designated trails. Soon after, the NPS used funds from the California Coastal Conservancy and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund to add the 110-acre property to the GGNRA.

FIGURE 1. MORI POINT PROJECT REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

