



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Point Reyes National Seashore
Point Reyes, California 94956

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7617

FEB 02 2018

Lagunitas Creek Floodplain and Riparian Restoration Project Environmental Assessment and Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (EA and IS/MND) Public Comment Period

Dear Interested Party:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Salmon Protection and Watershed Network (SPAWN) has prepared the Lagunitas Creek Floodplain and Riparian Restoration Project Environmental Assessment and Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (EA and IS/MND) in collaboration with the National Park Service (NPS) in order to evaluate the effects of the proposed actions on National Park Service lands within the Lagunitas Creek watershed.

As landowner, NPS has approval responsibility for the project and is the lead agency for NEPA compliance. The project sponsor, SPAWN, has collaborated with the NPS to prepare this joint EA and IS/MND in conformance with NEPA and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) is the lead agency under CEQA. The SCC has provided funding for project planning and will provide, along with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the State Water Resources Control Board, funding for project implementation.

The project consists of modifications to, and restoration of, the Lagunitas Creek floodplain to provide high value off-channel habitat for juvenile salmonids. In addition, modifications to and restoration of the floodplain can be expected to improve geomorphic function and channel form within the creek. The project is located on NPS lands within the north district of Golden Gate National Recreation Area but managed by Point Reyes National Seashore (PORE).

The purpose of the project is to restore floodplain processes and enhance riparian ecosystem function and habitat for Coho Salmon (*Onchorynchus kisutch*). The overall project goals are to:

- Enhance winter habitat for the rearing life stage of Coho Salmon
- Enhance habitat for the spawning life stage of Coho Salmon
- Protect and enhance habitat, to the extent feasible, for other non-salmonid species such as California freshwater shrimp (*Syncaris pacifica*), Northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*), California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), Pacific lamprey (*Entosphenus tridentatus*) and Western pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata*)
- Improve water quality conditions in Lagunitas Creek, implementing actions of the Lagunitas Creek sediment Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan

How to Comment

As part of this planning process, we welcome your comments on the EA and IS/MND. The preferred method for submitting comments is via the internet through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/pore>. From the main page, click on the Lagunitas Creek Floodplain and Riparian Restoration EA and IS/MND and then click the "Open for Comment" project link on the left column of the page to comment. You may also mail or hand deliver comments to the "Lagunitas Creek Floodplain and Riparian Restoration EA and IS/MND" c/o Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore, 1 Bear Valley Road, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956. The end of the comment period is March 5, 2018.

Comments will not be accepted by FAX, email, or in any other way than those specified above. Bulk comments in any format (hard copy or electronic) submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment including your personal identifying information- may be made publically available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Project Background and Proposed Action

The Lagunitas Creek floodplain at Tocaloma/Jewell has been impacted by historical residential development and other land uses. The project reach contains eight existing buildings and a native plant nursery that are currently authorized for use by SPAWN and Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN). Other hardscape features remaining from previously removed buildings include: old concrete walls and bulkheads, walkways, decks, and other associated hardscape areas. These features have increased and modified local runoff, reduced infiltration and disrupted natural hydrologic and geomorphic processes in the area. Over time, non-native vegetation has established throughout the parcels, compromising native vegetation and thereby degrading terrestrial and aquatic habitat values.

SPAWN conducted a site feasibility study in 2015 to characterize existing conditions and identify opportunities and constraints for site restoration and enhancement. A series of site assessments were conducted and the data was evaluated to identify six enhancement actions to be implemented on three restoration sites. The enhancement actions identified in the feasibility study were developed to meet enhancement actions identified in the Central California Coast Coho Recovery Plan.

To identify which enhancement actions to apply to the three restoration sites, an analysis of five project considerations was conducted: spatial benefit, sustainability, cost, permitting effort, and level of addressing limiting factors for Coho Salmon. The analysis results were incorporated into development of enhancement actions for the three sites under the project.

The Action Alternative would expand and restore the channel and floodplain geomorphic, hydrologic, and ecological function at two sites (Sites 1 and 2) and enhance native vegetation and remove non-native vegetation at all three sites along Lagunitas Creek. At Sites 1 and 2, the fill and remnants of structures built in the riparian corridor would be removed, creating floodplain and riparian habitat, while protecting stream banks below Sir Francis Drake. The proposed action would first remove residential structure remnants within the project boundary. Following removal of these hardscape features, the area in Sites 1 and 2 would be regraded to remove fill and create transitional slope, floodplain, backwater

alcove, and high-flow channel and perennial channel features. In-channel habitat structures would be installed to improve and enhance existing and proposed channel features in the project reach. The project site would also be enhanced by removal of invasive and non-native plant species at all three sites.

Proposed actions are expected to be implemented in the summer and fall of 2018. Construction of the proposed actions would occur in one phase (construction season) with actions at Sites 1, 2, and 3 occurring in the first year with additional construction done in a second year if necessary.

Ground-disturbing work would occur during the summer dry season, generally between June 15 and October 15. Site revegetation would occur in the fall.

Project construction methods and site mitigations are identified in the EA and Appendices. Upon completion of this project, all staging areas and access routes would be returned to its former condition.

If you have any questions, please contact John Dell'Osso, Chief of Interpretation and Education at 415-464-5135, or John_A_Dell'Osso@nps.gov. We appreciate your participation in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cicely Muldoon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Cicely Muldoon
Superintendent