

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

To: Notice of Availability Recipients

Subject: **Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Lead Agency:

Agency Name: East Bay Regional Park District
Street Address: 2950 Peralta Oaks Court
City/State/Zip: Oakland, California 94605-0381
Contact: Sean Dougan, Resource Analyst

Consulting Firm:

Firm Name: LSA Associates, Inc.
Street Address: 157 Park Place
City/State/Zip: Point Richmond, California 94801
Contact: Laura Lafler, Principal

Project Title: San Francisco Bay Trail: Pinole Shores to Bay Front Park

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) has been completed for the project identified below and is on file with the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District), 2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, California and is available for public review during regular business hours at 2950 Peralta Oaks Court and on the Park District's website: <http://www.ebparks.org>. The Draft EIR is also available for public review at the City of Pinole, 2131 Pear Street, Pinole, California Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on the City's website: <http://www.ci.pinole.ca.us>.

Project Location: The project area is located along the San Pablo Bay shoreline in the City of Pinole in west Contra Costa County. The trail alignment would extend approximately 0.5 mile from Pinole Shores to Bayfront Park.

Surrounding land uses consist primarily of open space associated with the San Pablo Bay shoreline and Bayfront Park, residential development, Pinole/Hercules Water Pollution Control Plant and the UPRR and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) railroad corridors.

Project Description: The project under consideration is the San Francisco Bay Trail: Pinole Shores to Bayfront Park Project (project). The San Francisco Bay Trail is a non-motorized recreational corridor proposed to encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays with a continuous 500-mile network of bicycling and hiking trails. The corridor will connect the shoreline of all nine bay area counties, link 47 cities and eventually cross all the major toll bridges in the region. Approximately 290 miles of the alignment have been completed. A key segment of the Bay Trail exists along the San Pablo Bay Shoreline within the City of Pinole between Pinole Shores and Bayfront Park.

The Park District would construct a section of the San Francisco Bay Trail in Pinole between Pinole Shores and Bayfront Park, a distance of approximately 0.5 mile. The proposed project would extend an existing Class I non-motorized, paved trail from a hillside bluff across from Hazel Lane in Pinole Shores to the east, traverse down the bluff face, then cross over the UPRR tracks to connect to an existing path in Bayfront Park. The alignment would travel between the UPRR and BNSF railroad tracks for approximately 1,500 feet, then sweep downhill to the north and east on a 140-foot radius curve with an elevated structure of approximately 1,100-feet in length to cross over the UPRR tracks. The last segment of the trail would consist of a 72-foot radius curve, traversing wetlands and marsh lands of San Pablo Bay, to connect with the existing path in Bayfront Park. Construction of the proposed trail alignment would require earthwork, retaining walls, and installation of a grade-separated bridge over the railroad tracks. The proposed trail alignment is located along the San Pablo Bay shoreline in Pinole.

Environmental Effects: As discussed in Chapter 4.0 of the Draft EIR, the proposed project would not result in any significant unavoidable impacts. Potentially significant impacts have been identified in: biological resources; cultural resources; geology and soils; hydrology and water quality; hazards and hazardous materials; noise; air quality; and

global climate change. However, these impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in this EIR. Impacts associated with Land Use, Aesthetics, and Traffic and Circulation would be considered less than significant and would not require any mitigation measures based on the identified criteria of significance.

Potential Areas of Controversy. The potential areas of controversy surrounding the proposed project identified as part of the EIR scoping and Notice of Preparation (NOP) processes are evaluated in Chapter 4.0 of the Draft EIR and are listed below. As part of the environmental review process, Park District decision makers will need to weigh these issues and concerns in reaching a final decision on the project.

- changes to viewsheds and the visual character of the project area
- impacts related to rail corridor safety
- effects on protected plant, animal, and aquatic species
- removal of wetlands
- storm water runoff and treatment
- construction traffic
- nighttime security
- stability of hillsides/landslide potential

Public Hearings: The Park District will hold a public hearing on the Draft EIR at a public meeting on **August 23, 2011** at the Pinole City Hall Council Chambers located at 2131 Pear Avenue, Pinole, California, 94564. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. The public is invited to attend the meeting to offer oral comments on the Draft EIR. No legal challenge to the Draft EIR is allowed in court unless alleged grounds for such challenge have been raised prior to the close of the public hearing on the proposed project. (Government Code Section 21177.) At least one future hearing will occur with the Park District prior to action on the project. All persons who received this notice via US mail, will receive a notice of the hearing at which the Park District will consider this project for approval. If you did not receive a direct notice of this public meeting and would like to receive a notice of future hearings, please contact Sean Dougan, Resources Analyst at 510-544-2611, or by email at sdougan@ebparks.org, or by US mail at the address at the bottom of this notice.

Public Review Period: This Notice of Availability of the Draft EIR commences a 45-day public review period starting on **Tuesday, July 19, 2011**. Interested persons are invited to review and comment on the Draft EIR. Due to time limits mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), responses must be received within the designated 45-day comment period and must be submitted **no later than Thursday, September 1, 2011**. Written comments (via email or mail) on the Draft EIR must be submitted to:

Sean Dougan, Resource Analyst
East Bay Regional Park District
2950 Peralta Oaks Court
Oakland, California 94605-0381
sdougan@ebparks.org

Please include the name, phone number, and address of a contact person in your response. Emailed comments will also be accepted at the email address indicated above.

Date July 18, 2011

Signature 

Title Jim Townsend, Program Manager

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