
R-22-90
Meeting SP 22-03
August 11, 2022

AGENDA ITEM #1

To: Board of Directors
Open Space Authority

From: Andrea Mackenzie
General Manager

SUBJECT

Tour of the Proposed Llagas Creek Bridge and Day Use Area Project Site at Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve

REVENUE/COST

The total project cost is estimated at \$1,300,000. The Authority received grant funding from the California State Department of Parks and Recreation for this project in the amount of \$1,120,020.

BACKGROUND

Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve (Preserve) was opened to the public in 2007. There are currently over 12 miles of trail open to the public, including the 0.5-mile Llagas Creek ADA Loop Trail which is paved for improved accessibility. Backcountry trails on the Preserve are open to hikers, bicyclists, and equestrian users. Recreation facilities include a staging area with parking for cars and horse trailers, accessible restrooms, and picnic tables.

Year-round public access is currently limited to the area of the Preserve north of Llagas Creek. In addition to the area of the Preserve open to public access, the Authority's Open Access Days program has provided interim special-event public access over the creek to the approximately 1,800-acre area southern portion of the Preserve known as Blair Ranch. Blair Ranch is accessed from the existing staging area via an unimproved ford originally constructed for ranching purposes. Due to seasonally high waters of Llagas Creek, operational and public event access is limited to dry periods of the year.

DISCUSSION

Staff will be taking the Board of Directors on a tour of the proposed Llagas Creek Bridge and Day Use Area site at Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve. The site location is shown in the attached Exhibit A -- *Location Map*. The proposed Llagas Creek Bridge and Day Use Area project (project) would construct a pedestrian / equestrian bridge to provide permanent, formalized operational and public access across Llagas Creek, connecting the existing loop trail and staging area to the southern Blair Ranch. The bridge would replace an existing vehicle ford crossing, reducing ecological disturbance caused by vehicle and cattle crossings through the creek bed. The proposed bridge would be accessible to hikers, bikers, equestrians, and light operational all-terrain vehicles. The bridge would connect to a proposed trail and day use area on the south side of the bridge. The new trail and day use area would include approximately 1,400 feet of loop trail encircling a natural grassland area adjacent to riparian woodlands found along Llagas Creek. The loop trail would include trailside amenities such as benches and interpretive features, creating several interpretive nodes highlighting the ecology of the riparian

habitat and the Preserve. The bridge and new trails would be constructed to meet accessibility guidelines for outdoor developed areas.

In addition to the bridge and loop trail with day use area, the project would establish a trail connecting Casa Loma Road to the existing Llagas Creek Loop Trail and proposed bridge. This connection would allow safe and efficient access for visitors parked in the existing overflow lot. Public access to the site will be accommodated by existing parking lots, including the main parking lot and overflow lot, both located off Casa Loma Road. The layout of the proposed new and existing features is shown in the attached Exhibit B -- *Llagas Creek Bridge and Day Use Area Site Plan*.

During the site tour, Staff will provide an overview of the following:

- Design status
- CEQA status
- Tribal engagement through AB 52
- Permitting status
- Blair Ranch backcountry access feasibility study update
- Project schedule

RECOMMENDATION

This item is informational only and no action is required.

Prepared by:

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Attachment(s): Exhibit A -- Location Map
Exhibit B -- Llagas Creek Bridge and Day Use Area Site Plan