

NOTICE OF PREPARATION
REDWOOD CABIN REMOVAL PROJECT
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Date Published:	June 9, 2021
Project Title:	Redwood Cabin Removal Project
Project Location:	La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve, San Mateo County, CA
Lead Agency:	Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District 330 Distel Circle Los Altos, CA 94022
Contact:	Alex Casbara, Planner III acasbara@openspace.org
Review Period:	June 9, 2021 – July 9, 2021

INTRODUCTION

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) issues this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to announce preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Redwood Cabin Removal Project (Project). Midpen will prepare an EIR for the Project to satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and will serve as the lead agency for CEQA compliance. In accordance with CEQA Statute and Guidelines (Guidelines) Section 15082, the purpose of this NOP is to describe the Project, identify potential environmental effects, and invite interested parties to comment on the scope and content of the EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082[b]).

PROJECT LOCATION

The Redwood Cabin is situated within the upper portion of Midpen’s La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Preserve). The Preserve encompasses 6,142 acres in the Santa Cruz Mountains within unincorporated San Mateo County (Attachment 1) and is bounded by Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) to the north, Highway 84 (La Honda Road) to the east and south, and Bogess Creek to the west.

The Redwood Cabin occupies a portion of Assessor’s Parcel Number 075-330-260 and is located west of the community of Sky Londa, California. The Project site is designated for Forest/Timber Production land uses under the San Mateo County General Plan and is zoned as Timberland Preserve District under the San Mateo County Zoning Ordinance. Access to the Redwood Cabin is provided via an unpaved road accessible from Skyline Boulevard, which travels through two locked gates. The final segment of this unpaved road requires a four-wheel drive vehicle or access by foot.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Redwood Cabin is located in a heavily wooded area within a portion of the Preserve that is currently closed to the public. The building site is situated atop sloping terrain overlooking a circular dirt driveway and stone retaining walls that surround a small grove of redwood trees. Various remnants of the Redwood Cabin’s recreational history are scattered throughout the property, including horseshoe pits, a stone barbeque pit, and a brick planter.

The Redwood Cabin is approximately 66 feet long by 30 feet wide with an exterior consisting of redwood logs, timber roof framing, and hinged windows, skylights, and doors. The building interior

contains a large stone fireplace in the living room, two small bedrooms, a bathroom, and a kitchen. The structure appears to be in generally poor to fair condition with obvious structural damage and deterioration.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Midpen acquired the Redwood Cabin in 1998 and the building has been vacant since acquisition. In 2020, Page & Turnbull, Inc. prepared a Historic Resource Evaluation to assess the Redwood Cabin's eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). The Historic Resource Evaluation determined that the Redwood Cabin is an historic resource per CEQA because it appears to be eligible for individual listing in the California Register for the following reasons:

- The Redwood Cabin appears to be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
- The Redwood Cabin appears to embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.

On April 8, 2020, the Midpen Board of Directors directed the General Manager to evaluate the environmental effects that would result from removing the Redwood Cabin and implementing habitat enhancements to reflect native ecological conditions.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Project would achieve the following objectives, in alignment with Midpen's mission:

- Remove physical hazards to ensure public safety;
- Enhance habitat at the Redwood Cabin site and immediate surroundings;
- Provide focused interpretive and educational opportunities consistent with open space values;
- Improve natural visual character and scenic qualities; and
- Implement a fiscally sustainable Project.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Project would entail demolition of the Redwood Cabin and removal of associated features onsite, including retaining walls and barbeque pits. After demolition, the site would be left to return to its natural condition. Excavations that extend below finish grade would be backfilled, compacted, and would entail minor grading as necessary for drainage and erosion control. No public access facilities would be constructed as part of this Project.

POTENTIAL PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUIRED

- Midpen Board of Directors: Project approval
- Regional Water Quality Control Board: general construction permit
- County of Santa Mateo: demolition and grading permits
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD): register all portable equipment permits with BAAQMD; notify BAAQMD of all demolition activities 10 days prior to occurrence of activity.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR will describe direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with the Project and will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts. The EIR will focus on significant or potentially significant impacts to the following resources:

- Biological Resources: Impacts to sensitive species during construction activities.
- Cultural Resources: Impacts to a historic building that is eligible for listing on the California Register.

CEQA allows a lead agency to limit detailed discussion of environmental effects that would not be potentially significant (PRC Section 21100, CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126.2[a] and 15128). An Initial Study will accompany the EIR to discuss the following environmental topics that are unlikely to result in significant impacts and do not warrant detailed analysis in the EIR.

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| • Aesthetics | • Mineral Resources |
| • Agriculture & Forestry Resources | • Noise |
| • Air Quality | • Population & Housing |
| • Energy | • Public Services & Recreation |
| • Geology & Soils | • Transportation |
| • Greenhouse Gas Emissions | • Tribal Cultural Resources |
| • Hazards & Hazardous Materials | • Utilities & Service Systems |
| • Hydrology & Water Quality | • Wildfire |
| • Land Use & Planning | • Mandatory Findings of Significance |

ALTERNATIVES TO BE EVALUATED IN THE EIR

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the EIR will describe a reasonable range of alternatives capable of meeting most of the Project objectives that would avoid or substantially lessen significant effects resulting from the Project. The EIR will also evaluate a No Project Alternative and will discuss alternatives that were considered but rejected as infeasible by Midpen.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

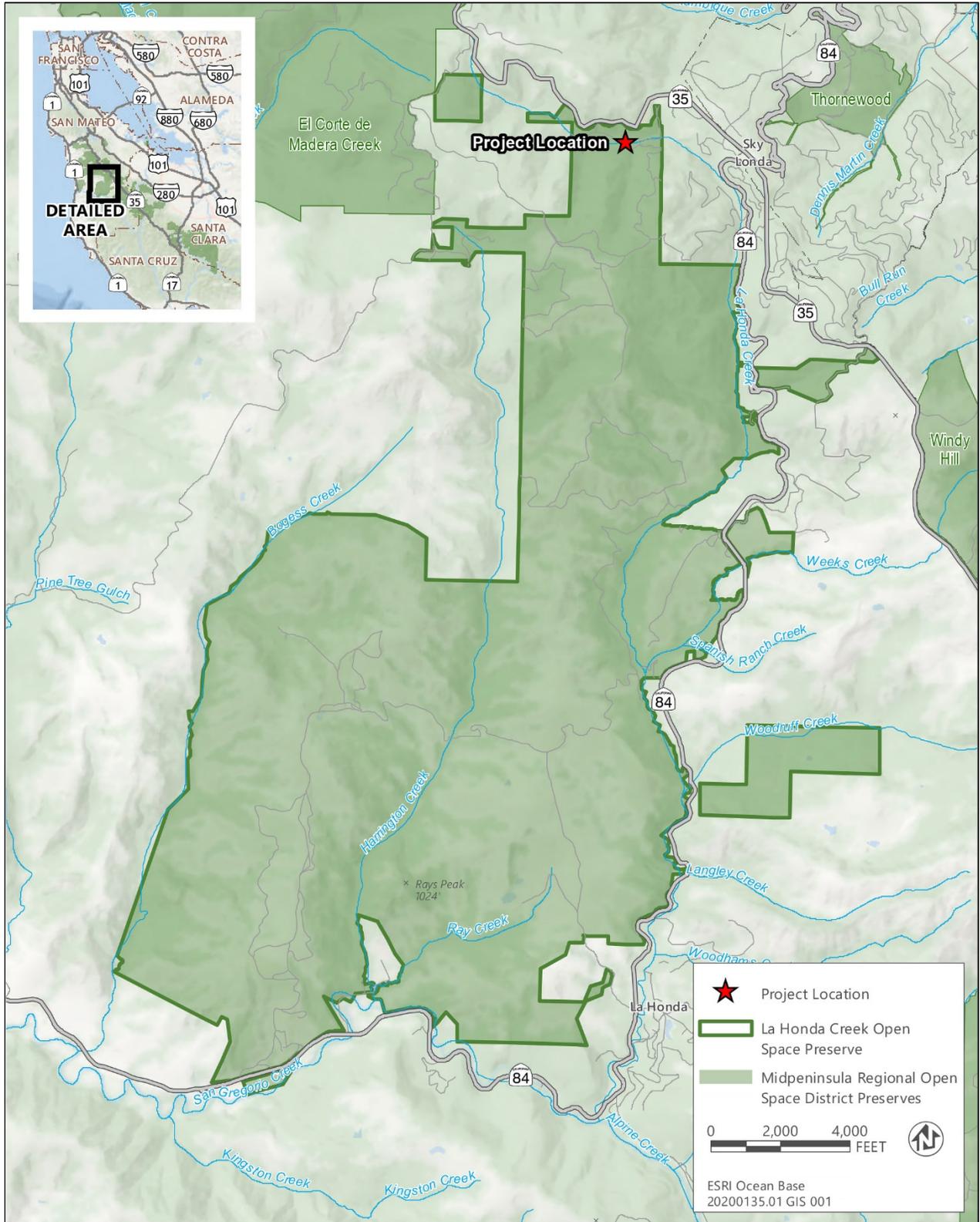
All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the EIR. Midpen will accept written or emailed comments submitted by July 9, 2021 to the following address:

Alex Casbara, Planner III
 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
 330 Distel Circle
 Los Altos, CA 94022
 Via email: acasbara@openspace.org

Comments provided via email should include *Redwood Cabin Removal Project NOP Scoping Comment* in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter in the body of the email. Other inquiries related to the Project may be directed to Alex Casbara via email at acasbara@openspace.org.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Midpen will host a public scoping meeting to inform stakeholders about the Project and solicit input regarding environmental topics and alternatives to be evaluated in the EIR. The scoping meeting will occur during the Midpen Board of Directors meeting scheduled for June 23, 2021. In accordance with public health orders, all Midpen board meetings are held via teleconference only. The meeting may be viewed online and links to the meetings will be posted with each agenda at the following website: <https://www.openspace.org/about-us/board-meetings>.



Source: Adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2021

Attachment 1 Redwood Cabin Removal Project Location