

Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: _____

Project Title: Buck Gulch Falls Creek Restoration and Trail Improvement Project

Lead Agency: Marin County Open Space

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Project Location: Novato, Marin

City

County

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

The proposed project would install two bridges and two drainage crossings , and realign segments of the existing trails away from the eroding streambanks, improving the trail tread by removing impediments, improving trail drainage, hardening the trail surface, and decommissioning and restoring segments of trail segments. It would also upgrade the waterfall viewing area, implement a change in use on Buck Gulch Falls Trail, and restore sections of eroding streambank and riparian area along Arroyo de San Jose Creek. These actions would meet the project purpose and objectives by reducing the environmental impacts of current visitor access, improving the user experience, safety, and accessibility for all trail users, and enhancing the sustainability of the trail, consistent with the RTMP policies, applicable BMPs, and trail design standards. Implementation of the proposed project would substantially reduce the potential for accelerated erosion and sedimentation into the Arroyo de San Jose Creek that could adversely impact water quality and listed aquatic species and their habitats. The proposed project would also incorporate erosion control techniques.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

Implementation of the proposed project has the potential to result in impacts on special-status plants, special-status birds and other nesting birds, special-status and common bats, and overall tree health. To reduce potential impacts on special-status plants, the project would require a qualified MCOSD staff member or consultant to conduct a pre-construction botanical survey in April or June prior to any ground disturbance. The survey would focus on detecting *Elymus californicus* and *Micropus amphibolus* within the project footprint. If any special-status plants are identified, MCOSD would implement protective measures to avoid impacts. These measures may include placing rocks or logs to shield the plants while still allowing trail use.

To reduce potential impacts on nesting birds and bats, the project would incorporate seasonal restrictions and would require pre-construction nesting surveys. The nesting bird season for this project extends from January 1 through July 31, and nesting surveys would be completed within seven days before any ground-disturbing activity begins. Appropriate buffers would be applied if active nests are detected.

To avoid impacts on bats, MCOSD would implement a two-step tree removal process that provides bats the opportunity to leave potential roost sites. In addition, MCOSD would limit tree pruning and removal to the minimum necessary for project implementation.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

Some neighbors immediately adjacent to the Ignacio Valley Open Space Preserve where the proposed project is located have expressed concerns about the potential of being impacted by increased visitor parking. In addition, some neighbors have also expressed concerns about potential increased wildfire risks from increased visitor use, including electric wheelchairs and mobility devices. No areas of controversy were raised by agencies.

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

The proposed project requires the following permits and approvals, which would be obtained prior to construction:

San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, and the State of California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Fish and Game Code Sections 1062 – 1603: Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement

US Army Corps of Engineers, Clean Water Act Section 404

City of Novato Encroachment Permit