



Point Pinos Trail Project

Coastal Trail Improvement Subcommittee of:
Recreation Board
Natural Resources Committee
Traffic Safety Commission



City of Pacific Grove, CA

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Project Summary

The proposed project is a formal pedestrian trail seaward of Ocean View Boulevard along Point Pinos. This project brings to fruition the vision of a safe, enjoyable pedestrian path along Pacific Grove's entire coastline.

The trail is approximately 1 mile in length and connects existing trails in Asilomar State Beach and Perkins Park. It lies within a narrow strip of coastal land that follows existing informal foot paths and gravel parking lots.

It is expected that the creation of a wide, level trail will encourage residents and visitors alike to walk along this spectacular coastline. In this manner it is hoped that they will enjoy the scenery and at the same time not stray off the path and degrade native vegetation. Landscape restoration with native vegetation is included in the project.

The location of the path, between water and vehicles should improve pedestrian safety. Trail design includes new disabled person parking with convenient trail access.

A recently completed coastal pedestrian trail, Rocky Shores Trail Link, provides a roadmap for the required regulatory approval and design processes. The Point Pinos Trail project is in alignment with Pacific Grove's Coastal Park Plan.

A ballpark estimate of project cost is in excess of \$0.6 MM. However, as experienced with the Pacific Grove Recreation Trail Bluff Repairs Project, there is the potential for several governmental agencies to provide financial support. The wide benefit to peninsula communities might also attract private or nonprofit funding.

Project Goals

The primary goal is to enhance public enjoyment of the Point Pinos coastline in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

A formal coastal trail would provide a wide, level surface making it easier and safer for people to walk along the coast. This formal trail would provide greater coastal access to those with limited mobility.

Placement of the trail between on the seaward side of the road and parking will create an unimpeded view of the sea with increased pedestrian safety. Hopefully this trail placement will encourage people to get out of their vehicles. People who currently walk along the coastal road (in the bike lane) may be encouraged to move to the trail.

A project goal is to reduce trampling of native vegetation and ensuing environmental damage. The Point Pinos coastline attracts a large number of visitors who easily stray over all the vegetation between road and water. A formal trail will encourage people to stay on the trail.

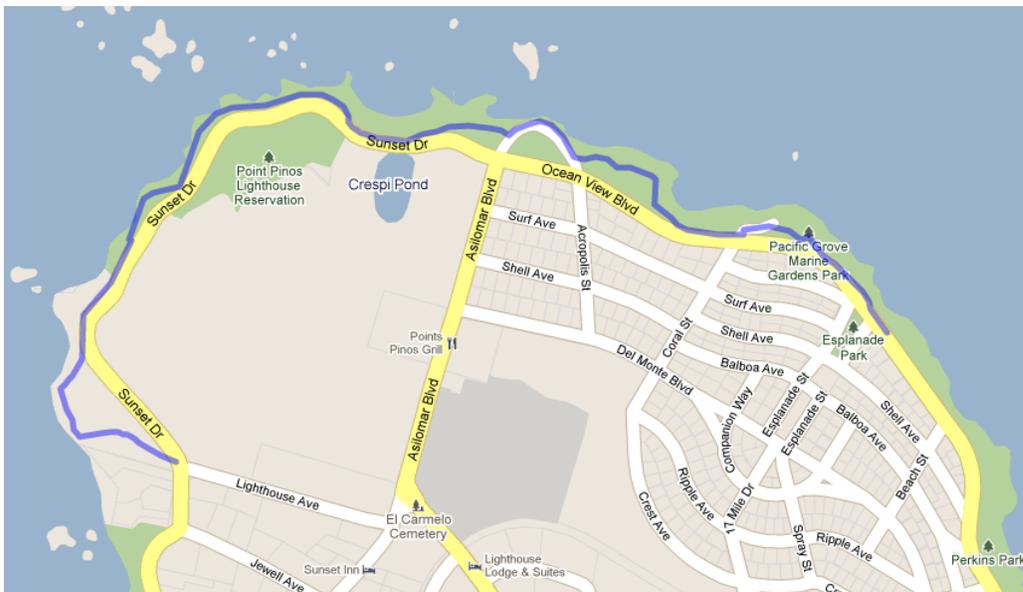
The project would complete a formal pedestrian trail along Pacific Grove's entire 4+ mile coastline. The completed sections are: Asilomar State Beach, Perkins Park (Magic Carpet) and the Monterey Bay Coastal Trail (aka Pacific Grove Recreational Trail).

Project Area

The proposed project is seaward of Ocean View Boulevard along the Point Pinos coastline. It is located on city property parcel APN 007-011-001 north of Rocky Shores and extends to city property parcel APN 006-021-99.

The west end is at the intersections of Sunset Drive, Ocean View Boulevard and Lighthouse Avenue (36.632008,-121.936871). The east end is at Ocean View Boulevard and Esplanade (36.633826,-121.924).

The approximate proposed trail location is shown below with a blue line (map incorrectly indicates Sunset Drive extends north of Lighthouse Avenue). Trail spurs including beach access are not shown.

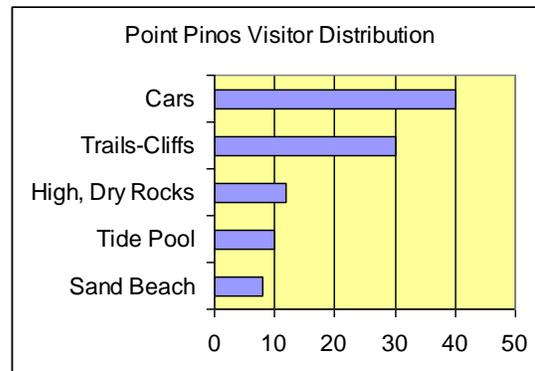


Current Uses

The dramatic coastal scenery of Point Pinos draws many visitors to its shores. Activities here are varied. Along the road are walkers, joggers, and bicyclists. On the side of the road people sit in vehicles or walk along informal trails and cliffs. Closer to the water people sit on sandy pocket beaches and explore tide pools. The pocket beach at Coral Street also attracts kayakers and SCUBA divers.

The appeal of Point Pinos as a tourist attraction is considerable. Many visitors are from outside the Monterey Peninsula, from the SF Bay Area and Salinas, Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys and out-of-state. This is borne out by visitor logs at the Point Pinos Lighthouse.

A 2003 survey estimated 200,000 to 333,000 people visit Point Pinos annually. The survey found that most visitors sat in vehicles and walked along the informal trails/cliffs. Graphed below is the frequency of activities in percent. The survey did not include visitors using the road, e.g. bicyclists.

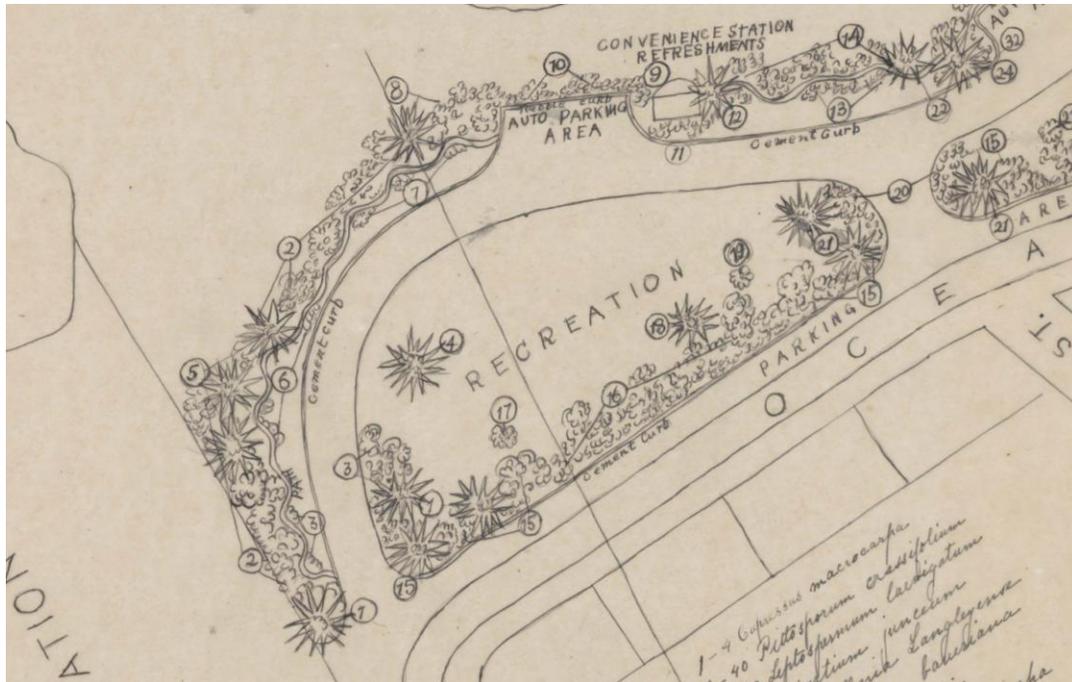


The 2003 study also noted significant bus visits. Most buses were from tour groups visiting the Monterey Bay Aquarium or Asilomar State Beach. It is assumed many of these are school groups.

Historical Context

Dr. Julia B. Platt (1857-1935) was Pacific Grove mayor and early crusader in environmental protection. She was instrumental in having the Pacific Grove coastline designated as a marine garden, long before such causes became popular. Her maps of the Pacific Grove coastline include a proposed pedestrian path very similar to the proposed project.

A partial map is shown below. Note the word "PATH" in small letters in the lower left. This map is at the intersection of Acropolis and Ocean View. At that time there was no coastal road to Point Pinos, which was part of the Point Pinos Lighthouse Reservation and federally administered.



Regulatory Context

The Pacific Grove Rocky Shores Trail Link Project provides a roadmap of the regulatory process and requirements for the proposed project. Although differences exist in trail construction and magnitude, it is anticipated that due to the similar nature and location of the projects, regulatory requirements will also be similar and include a Coastal Development Permit Waiver, Mitigated Negative Declaration and California Department of Fish and Game (CA DFG) approval.

Background: The California Coastal Commission certified Pacific Grove's Land Use Plan on January 10, 1991. The city's Implementation Plan has two components: Implementing Ordinance and Coastal Parks Plan. The purpose of the Coastal Parks Plan is to establish provisions to guide the design, management, restoration, and enhancement of the coastal parks planning area consistent with state and community objectives. Within the Coastal Zone, the Land Use Plan takes precedence over the city's General Plan. The Coastal Zone extends onshore from the mean high tide line as described in the Coastal Land Use Plan of the City of Pacific Grove.

As implied above, the proposed project must adhere to both state and local coastal development guidelines. The California Coastal Commission retains permitting authority. The proposed project is in compliance with the applicable Local Coastal Program LUP Policies. It is expected that a Coastal Development Permit Waiver could be obtained from the California Coastal Commission.

The Coastal Parks Plan identified the following goals and objectives for future protection and enhancement of the Pacific Grove Shoreline:

1. Retain and enhance the existing character of the coast
2. Protect coastal resources
3. Protect and enhance the visual quality and appearance of the coast
4. Establish a safe and continuous coastal pedestrian trail
5. Promote a barrier-free coast
6. Establish a safe and continuous coastal bikeway
7. Protect the coast from erosion

The proposed project addresses Coastal Parks Plan goal #4, while not compromising any other goals.

The proposed project is also subject to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970. This requires that, at a minimum, an Initial Study of project environmental effects. Any significant environmental impacts thus identified must be avoided or mitigated, if feasible. No further environmental project review or actions are required upon issuance of a 'Mitigated Negative Declaration'. It is expected that a Mitigated Negative Declaration could be obtained.

Project Cost and Funding

The Rocky Shores Trail Link Project provides a starting point for cost estimation. The average cost per lineal foot of the Rocky Shores Trail Link Project was approximately \$234. Trail construction was 62%. The remaining 38% was for trail design, environmental review, permitting, construction monitoring and landscape restoration.

The average cost per lineal foot of the proposed project is expected to be lower due to:

- Utilizing existing permitting process and trail designs from Rocky Shores and Asilomar State Beach
- Economy of scale
- On average less landscape restoration required per lineal foot of trail
- Sections of a formal trail already exist; across parking areas (~30% of total) and between Coral Street and Esplanade (~20% of total)

Native habitat restoration was a significant component of the Rocky Shores Trail Link cost. However, in contrast to the Rocky Shores Trail, landscape restoration is not expected to be a requirement for those parts of the trail lying within existing parking areas. Where the proposed trail would lie within existing ice plant *carpobrotus edulis* (5+% of total), the amount of landscape restoration required is unclear.

Taking the above into consideration, \$650,000 is a ballpark estimate of the proposed project cost. This estimate does not include trail improvement across from the Esplanade, i.e. a seawall or other form of coastal armoring, which is a future opportunity for further trail improvement.

Significant grants have been obtained in the past for coastal trail projects. The Pacific Grove Recreation Trail Bluff Repairs Project was completed in 2009 at a cost of approximately \$2MM. Project funding was obtained from:

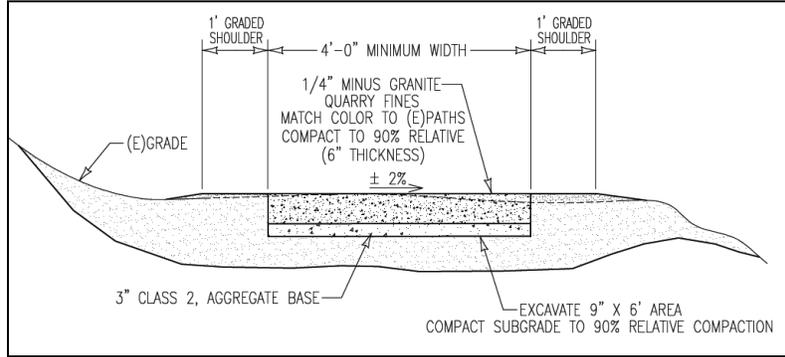
- Pacific Grove city general funds
- Public donations
- Pebble Beach Foundation
- Transportation Agency for Monterey County
- California Department of Boating and Waterways
- Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District
- Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District

In addition to the above potential funding sources, other governmental agencies and non-profit organizations could possibly provide funding.

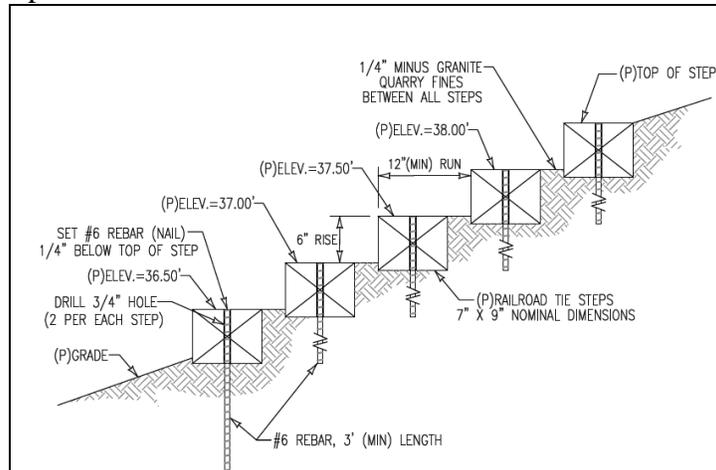
Trail Design

Rocky Shores Trail Link design can also be used for the Point Pinos Trail design. Key elements are illustrated below.

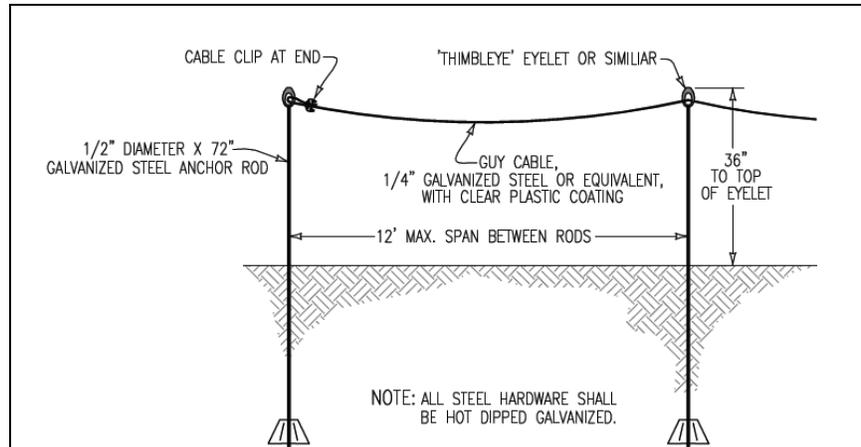
➤ Path



➤ Timber steps



➤ Fence



The Asilomar State Beach Trail also provides a design model for the Point Pinos Trail. In particular, a wood boardwalk across the dunes in Trail Segment 1 (described in the Appendix) can be copied from Asilomar boardwalk design.



Demarcation of the trail edge is critical for safety and to encourage pedestrians to stay off vegetation and preserve native plants. As seen at Rocky Shores and Asilomar State Beach a variety of edging can be employed including:

- Cable fencing
- Split rail fencing
- Boulders
- Shrubs
- Cement curbs

Signs should also be included to encourage pedestrians to stay on the path.

Additional signage could indicate linkage to southern trails in Pebble Beach (Green Trail) and to the north, i.e. the Monterey Bay Recreational Trail beginning at Lovers Point Park.

Beach, street and parking access are also part of trail design. For descriptive purposes the proposed trail is divided into 14 segments. See the Appendix for details.

Mitigation Measures

Twelve mitigation measures needed for a Mitigated Negative Declaration are described below. They are copied from the Rocky Shores Trail Link Project Report, with the omission of items specific only to Rocky Shores Trail Link. Some measures are not applicable to all parts of the proposed trail.

Substantial amounts of the proposed project trail would require little or no landscape restoration. They are where a trail already exists (20% of trail) and across existing parking areas (30% of trail). Where the proposed trail would lie within the succulent ice plant *carpobrotus edulis* [a South African native] (5+% of trail) it is unclear if restoration is required.

The above totals 50+% of the proposed total trail length. The Rocky Shores Trail Link average landscape restoration ratio was 18.7 ft²/ft (area restored divided by trail length). Assuming 50% of the proposed trail requires landscape restoration, the total restoration area is estimated to be less than 1 ½ acre.

Bio-1 Protective fence – Sensitive dune areas and occurrences of special status plants shall be protected from impacts during construction by a temporary fence. The fence should be constructed of t-posts and rope. The fence shall be installed under the supervision of the biologist and must be placed so that workers do not inadvertently enter the sensitive area. Temporary signage shall be placed on the fence that forbids entry.

Bio-2 Legless lizard pre-construction survey and construction monitoring – If a preferred legless lizard habitat is present (likely in trail segment 1), a preconstruction survey and monitoring shall be performed in accordance with the CDFG Draft Protocol for Black Legless Lizards (*Anniella pulchra nigra*) during salvage and relocation activities prior to and during construction.

Bio-3 Nesting Birds – Grubbing and grading activities should occur after August 15 in order to avoid nesting birds that could potentially be utilizing the dune scrub habitat.

Bio-4 Worker orientation – On the first day of construction activities, the biologist shall conduct a tailgate meeting with the contractor to explain the sensitive resources and the exclusion areas.

Bio-5 Staging of equipment and materials – Equipment and materials shall not be operated or stored on any natural or existing restoration areas that do not lie within the footprint of the proposed trail. No native vegetation shall be disturbed due to the operation or storage of equipment and materials outside of the area required for construction of the trail (the work area). The work area may extend for a maximum of 5 feet on either side of the 5-foot-wide proposed trail, but should be minimized when possible.

Bio-6 Landscape Restoration – The Landscape Restoration Plan specifies accepted dune restoration methods and materials appropriate for the Asilomar Dune System that will restore any native habitat that is disturbed by trail construction activities. The Landscape Restoration Plan addresses import of sand, specify protective measures for restoration areas, and provide procedures and timing for maintenance and monitoring activities.

Bio-7 Signage and Fencing – A post and cable fence shall be installed along the length of the trail. Signage shall be installed instructing pedestrians to stay on the trail. Trail signage might also indicate the location of the Great Tidepool and restrictions on gathering plants and animals from tidepools.

Cultural-1 Prior to the start of construction, the City shall retain an archaeologist with local expertise and qualified by the City of Pacific Grove, to act as the Project Archaeological Monitor. The Project Archaeological Monitor shall be present during any construction activities that involve ground disturbance. Should archaeological resources be discovered at the project site during any phase of construction, construction of the trail shall stop until a mitigation plan, prepared by a qualified professional archaeologist in coordination with interested Native Americans, is completed and implemented.

Prior to implementation, the mitigation plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the State Historic Preservation Office and the City of Pacific Grove Chief Planner. The plan shall provide for reasonable mitigation of the archaeological impacts resulting from the development of the site, and shall be fully implemented. A report verifying compliance with this condition shall be submitted to the Chief Planner for review and approval, upon completion of the approved mitigation.”

Cultural-2 The city will ensure that this language is included in all construction documents in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(e), in the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery:

“If human remains are found during construction there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the coroner of Monterey County is contacted to determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours.

The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descendent (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD may then make recommendations to the City of Pacific Grove or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

The City of Pacific Grove or its authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance if: a) the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a MLD or the MLD failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission; b) the descendent identified fails to make a recommendation; or c) the City of Pacific Grove or its authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.”

MM X.1 Days and hours of demolition and construction activities shall be limited to 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

MM X.2 All power equipment shall be in good operating condition and properly maintained.

MM X.3 All equipment and tools powered by internal combustion engines shall have mufflers that meet or exceed manufacturer specifications.

Parking

There is substantial amount of free parking at Point Pinos. Seaward of the road parking is on the shoulder and in 5 unpaved parking areas (decomposed granite surface). In addition, landward of the road there is parking on the shoulder and in a small paved parking area at Crespi Pond. Shoulder parking is both unpaved and towards Esplanade paved. While parking availability varies along Ocean View Boulevard, it exists everywhere within a few hundred feet of the waterline, and usually much less.

Seaward parking areas are heavily used during good weather on weekends and holidays in spring and summer. In the absence of coastal fog many people park along the road to view the sunset. Landward parking is seldom used except at Crespi Pond.

The proposed project would impact parking. The most significant impact would be the elimination of parking along Trail Segment 2. Minor impacts would occur in Trail Segments 3,5,7,9, and 11 and consists of utilizing a fraction of the existing parking areas for the trail. It is estimated from areal images that the proposed project would reduce seaward parking approximately 15%. However, the reduction is only 10% including parking on the landward side of Ocean View Boulevard. There is no trail impact on landward parking.

Currently the only disabled person parking at Point Pinos is in the paved parking lot at Crespi Pond. It is proposed to add disabled person parking at two locations: (1) the north end of Trail Segment 1 (shown below with arrow north of Rocky Shores) and



(2) at the east end of Trail Segment 9 (shown below with arrow near intersection of Acropolis Street and Ocean View Boulevard).



New disabled person parking spaces would conform to state regulations, be located along the road and allow wheelchair access to the trail. Disabled person parking design should be identical to that at Asilomar State Beach, for example, near the intersection of Sunset Drive and Arena Avenue.

Future Opportunity

The proposed trail project omits improvement at Esplanade due to the cost and complexity of trail repair at this location. Here coastal erosion has forced closure of the trail at 2 closely spaced locations. At one spot the coast has eroded to within 18 inches of Ocean View Boulevard.

But given the availability of resources, this presents itself as a future opportunity. A new seawall could protect the road and provide for a pedestrian path. The seawall immediately west of Lovers Point is an example.



References

1. 'A Comparative Intertidal Study and User Survey, Point Pinos, California', Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Report, July 31, 2003
2. Julia Platt, Pacific Grove Coastal Maps I – IV, circa 1930
3. Point Pinos Lighthouse Visitor Logs
4. Pacific Grove Coastal Parks Plan, Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan, Major Amendment #1-97, City of Pacific Grove, August 1998
5. 'Local Coastal Planning Program Detailed LCP Status and History as of June 30, 2011', California Coastal Commission Report, November 22, 2011
6. 'Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for: Pacific Grove Rocky Shores Trail Link Project', City of Pacific Grove Community Development Department Report, June 20, 2011
7. 'Biotic Report City of Pacific Grove Rocky Shores Trail Link Project Pacific Grove, CA', Rana Creek Inc. Report, June 14, 2011
8. 'Landscape Restoration Plan City of Pacific Grove Rocky Shores Trail Link Project Pacific Grove, CA', Rana Creek Inc. Report, July 8, 2011
9. 'Coastal Development Permit Application for Pacific Grove Rocky Shores Trail Link Project', City of Pacific Grove, July 20, 2011
10. 'Notice of Proposed Permit Waiver', Pacific Grove Rocky Shores Trail Link Project, California Coastal Commission, July 28, 2011
11. 'Notice of Permit Waiver Effectiveness', Pacific Grove Rocky Shores Trail Link Project, California Coastal Commission, August 17, 2011
12. 'Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Enter Into an Agreement with Monterey Peninsula Engineering, the Lowest Responsible Bidder, for Construction of the Rocky Shores Trail Extension, and Resolution to Amend an Existing Contract with Rana Creek to Provide Construction Monitoring and Landscape Restoration Services for that Trail Extension Project', City of Pacific Grove City Council Agenda Report, September 7, 2011
13. 'Final Report on the Pacific Grove Recreation Trail Bluff Repairs Project', City Council Report, City of Pacific Grove, April 15, 2009

Appendix

The proposed trail location is described below in 14 segments (see map). It is intended to illustrate what improvements might be made and where. It should be considered preliminary.



Segment 1 connects to the Rocky Shores Trail Link and follows existing informal paths. A boardwalk across dunes is envisioned. Two beach access points are shown.



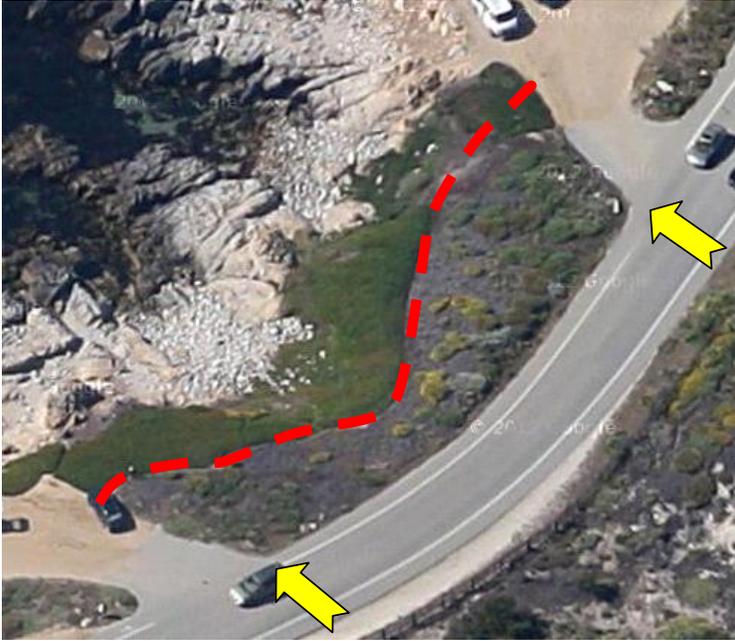
Segment 2 occupies what is now off-road parking due to the short distance between the high tide line and road. Three beach access points are shown.



Segment 3 occupies part of existing parking area.



Segment 4 follows an informal path. A small amount of rip-rap would help slow erosion in the V of the path.



Segment 5 occupies part of existing parking area.



Segment 6 mostly follows the bicycle lane; a small dune protects road at high tide.



Segment 7 occupies part of existing parking area.



Segment 8 follows an existing informal trail.



Segment 9 occupies part of existing parking area.



Segment 10 creates a new tail closer to the small coastal bluff, including one beach access.



Segment 11 occupies part of existing parking area.



Segment 12 follows the existing DG sidewalk except at west end.



Segment 13 creates a new tail closer to the water on western half and in eastern half utilizes the existing DG sidewalk.



Segment 14 follows the existing path without improvements.

