



**Date:** November [2], 2009

**To:** Assemblymember Bill Monning for distribution to Big Sur Coastal Trail master plan stakeholders.

**From:** Trish Chapman

**Re:** **Conservancy Goals/Needs/Priorities for Big Sur Coastal Trail**

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- **State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) Goals/Needs/Priorities for BSCT**
  - Consistency with SCC 2007 Strategic Plan and 2003 *Completing the California Coastal Trail* report (see excerpts below)
  - Develop master plan and CT projects through an open, collaborative process that attempts to address concerns of stakeholders and balance needs/interests of various user groups.
  - Connect places of interest along the coast
  - Be an amenity for the community and for visitors
  - Reduce automobile use of Highway 1.
  - Make improved use of existing public lands
  - Provide a variety of trail experiences over the region (for hiking, biking, equestrian use, ranges of physical ability, etc.)
  - Develop a plan that leads to feasible projects
    - Ensure that plan is consistent with policies, priorities, and constraints of public land owners and regulators.
    - Identify community concerns with BSCT generally, and with specific segments. Develop recommendations to ensure community concerns are addressed during development of specific projects.
    - Consider construction costs in order to develop realistic options for the trail.
  - Prioritize implementation of feasible projects over planning of difficult stretches of the trail.
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- **Related ideas of interest to SCC**
  - Develop an inn to inn, or inn to hut to inn, etc option for hiking the BSCT.
  - Consider incorporating plan into TAMC regional transportation plan.
  - Consider incorporating plan into LCP.

## Excerpts from Coastal Conservancy 2007 Strategic Plan

**Goal 1:** Develop the Coastal Trail as a major new recreational amenity, tourist attraction, and alternative transportation system, especially in urban areas, and develop networks of inland trails that connect to the coast and parks and provide other recreational opportunities.

### STRATEGIES

1. In cooperation with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the Coastal Commission, local government and affected landowners, determine which alignments of existing trail should be identified as the Coastal Trail.
2. Identify gaps between existing trails and develop specific alignments for those areas. Where gaps are caused by river mouths or harbor entrances, identify feasible methods to close gaps, such as pedestrian and bicycle bridges or ferries.
3. Identify sections of the Coastal Trail that should be wheelchair accessible.
4. Take sea-level rise into consideration when planning alignment.

### *Completing the California Coastal Trail*

The legislature and the Governor directed the Coastal Conservancy, through SB908 of 2001, to report on a proposed trail that would stretch 1,300 miles along the entire California coast, across dozens of political jurisdictions, and to develop that report within a thirteen-month period (by January 31, 2003). *Completing the California Coastal Trail* is the report that was presented to the legislature. It can be found online at: [http://www.scc.ca.gov/disp\\_gen.file?cct](http://www.scc.ca.gov/disp_gen.file?cct). Below are excerpts from the report regarding goals, principles and priorities relevant to the Big Sur Coastal Trail planning process.

### *Definition of the California Coastal Trail*

A continuous public right-of-way along the California coastline; a trail designed to foster appreciation and stewardship of the scenic and natural resources of the coast through hiking and other complementary modes of non-motorized transportation.

### *Objectives in Completing the California Coastal Trail (p. 8-9)*

1. Provide a continuous trail as close to the ocean as possible, with connections to the shoreline (“vertical access”) at appropriate intervals and sufficient transportation access to encourage public use.

2. Foster cooperation between State, local, and federal public agencies in the planning, design, signing, and implementation of the Coastal Trail.
3. Increase public awareness of the costs and benefits associated with completion of the Coastal Trail.
4. Assure that the location and design of the Coastal Trail is consistent with the policies of the California Coastal Act and local coastal programs, and is respectful of the rights of private landowners.
5. Design the California Coastal Trail to provide a valuable experience for the user by protecting the natural environment and cultural resources while providing public access to beaches, scenic vistas, wildlife viewing areas, recreational or interpretive facilities, and other points of interest.
6. Create linkages to other trail systems and to units of the State Park system, and use the Coastal Trail system to increase accessibility to coastal resources from urban population centers.

### *Principles for Designing the Coastal Trail (p. 14-16)*

**Proximity:** Wherever feasible, the Coastal Trail should be within sight, sound, or at least the scent of the sea. The traveler should have a persisting awareness of the Pacific Ocean. It is the presence of the ocean that distinguishes the seaside trail from other visitor destinations.

**Connectivity:** The trail should effectively link starting points to destinations. Like pearls on a string, our parks, ports, communities, schools, trailheads, bus stops, visitor attractions, inns, campgrounds, restaurants, and other recreational assets are strung along the edge of our coast. They are already connected by roads, streets, and highways. Our challenge is to create alternative nonautomotive connections that are sufficiently appealing to draw travelers out of their automobiles.

**Integrity:** The Coastal Trail should be continuous and separated from motor traffic. Continuity is vitally important: if a chain is missing a link, it is useless. Where such separation is absent, the safety, pleasure, and character of the trail are impaired. Appropriate separation can take many forms. Substantial horizontal distance is generally the most desirable, thus avoiding the sight, sound, and scent of the internal combustion engine. Separation is also possible through vertical displacements of gradient, underpasses, vegetative buffer strips, barrier rails, and other means.

**Respect:** The trail must be located and designed with a healthy regard for the protection of natural habitats, cultural and archaeological features, private property rights, neighborhoods, and agricultural operations along the way. Manmade features such as boardwalks, guidewires, and fencing can be used to protect wetlands, dunes, archaeological sites, and agricultural fields.

Screening fences and vegetative barriers not only protect residential privacy but may also minimize disturbance of sensitive bird habitats.

Respect also requires understanding that this trail will exist in a context of other trail designations, including the Pacific Coast Bike Route, Humboldt Bay Trail, Lost Coast Trail, San Mateo Coastside Trail, Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail, Los Angeles South Bay Bicycle Trail, etc. Providing a clear identity for the Coastal Trail on maps, signs, and brochures should not compete with or displace these existing trail identities. Where the Coastal Trail alignment incorporates or is a component of these other trails, the Coastal Trail should be no more than a concurrent designation.

**Feasibility:** To achieve timely, tangible results with the resources that are available, both interim and long-term alignments of the Coastal Trail will need to be identified.

### **Specific Goals identified for Big Sur region of Monterey County (p. 49-50)**

- Encourage Caltrans to complete the Coast Highway Management Plan and improve pedestrian and cycling safety along State Highway 1 in Big Sur.
- Encourage the development of a trail network through Palo Corona Ranch that will provide connections to the coast.
- Provide a public trail connection from Andrew Molera State Park across Deer Ridge to Pfeiffer Beach.
- Assist State Parks to reestablish the Coastal Trail through Garrapata State Park.
- Encourage the U. S. Forest Service to develop a trail through the forest and along the seaward slope between State Highway 1 and the Coast Ridge Trail.