

MONTEREY COUNTY

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY



PLANNING DEPARTMENT, Mike Novo, Director

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November 3, 2009

Assemblymember William W. Monning, 27th Assembly District
Attn: Ms. Noelle White
99 Pacific Street, Suite 555D
Monterey, CA 93940

SUBJECT: PD080511/Big Sur Coastal Trail Master Plan

Dear Ms. White,

The County of Monterey RMA - Planning Department submits the following general comments regarding the proposed development of a Big Sur Coastal Trail Master Plan:

1. The County supports the concept of a Big Sur Coastal Trail that is accessible to as many residents and visitors as feasible, and consistent with the policies of the Local Coastal Programs for the affected areas (e.g., the Big Sur Coast and Carmel Area Land Use Plans).
2. The County supports development of the trail alignment using existing public lands and existing easements to the maximum extent possible. Use of existing trails and roads would minimize potential impacts to existing resources, while still accomplishing the goal of providing access.
3. The County supports an open and transparent process for development of the trail alignment. We also endorse the participation of community working groups in the process of developing the trail alignments. Also, greater participation of public agencies as part of those groups will help to avoid procedural complications with future public agency actions.

Regarding the draft process guidelines developed by the Big Sur community, we submit the following comments:

1. The purpose is not clearly defined. We recommend the initial focus be on identifying proposed trail alignments. Development of a Trail Management Plan would be beyond the scope of this initial effort.
2. Public agency involvement is limited to a non-voting position on a local working group. Since most of the trail segments would be located on public lands, the affected public agencies (County, Caltrans, Coastal Commission, Department of Fish and Game, State Parks, etc.) need to be included as part of the consensus-building team. This is not adequately reflected in the proposed language.

We look forward to working with all stakeholders. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any further questions regarding PD080511, please contact me by phone at (831) 755-5262 or by email at sidorj@co.monterey.ca.us.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Sidor
Associate Planner

cc: File PD080511