

2002 ANNUAL REPORT OF MAINTENANCE AND CONDITIONS OF DEL MONTE FOREST OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES

This report follows and updates in more limited scope the “Review of Maintenance Standards for Del Monte Forest Open Space Property” prepared last year by Mary Howden, Chairman of OSAC at that time, and signed by her and Hampton Stewart III, then President of the Del Monte Forest Foundation (DMFF) and Stephen Staub, Forest Manager for DMFF. Last year’s “Review” provided a succinct discussion of the historical background of OSAC’s development of Maintenance Standards for open space properties as set forth in the Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and how DMFF administers ongoing maintenance operations in order to comply with the Maintenance Standards for each open space property.

This report summarizes significant maintenance activities over the last year and offers the following observations, comments and recommendations:

SFB MORSE BOTANIC RESERVE

The site remains in compliance with its maintenance standards. Some channel and headward creep of recently downcut channels continues to occur. Some channel stabilization work has been done and more is planned for the coming year. Exotic plant control programs have been ongoing with principal focus on 3 kinds of acacias, pampas grass, genista, and gorse. Some of these areas have been associated with watercourse channels rather than trails or roads. Efforts have been coordinated with gorse control operations upstream in the Huckleberry Hill Natural Reserve. Fuelbreak treatments specified in the Fire Defense Improvement Plan (FDIP) were completed and approved by CDF through the combined work of CYA Gabilan Camp crews and Forestry and Ecology crews of the Pebble Beach Company. Three requests to conduct research have been received and reviewed but only one has begun activity so far.

Recommendations

Continue timely exotic plant control and regular trail maintenance work. Review potential for a prescribed burn in a selected area. Develop a plan to rejuvenate senescent forest areas using mechanical methods only if a combination of prescribed fire and mechanical methods is not practical. Continue to improve drainage on the FDIP fire roads.

CROCKER CYPRESS GROVE

The site is in basic compliance with the standards in the Management Plan. Drainage problems associated with Portola Road have been corrected at both the northwest and northeast sections of the Grove with the cooperation and efforts of the Pebble Beach Company. The ditch within the Grove associated with the old culvert has been recontoured and planted with natives while surrounding non-natives have been controlled by a series of hand-pulling and non-persistent herbicide applications. Some dead trees whose failure created small fuel jackpots or ongoing hazards for standing trees were removed or treated. A rootwad that had been illegally pushed into the Grove was removed. Pitch canker continues to cause significant symptoms and, in combination with bark beetles, mortality among Monterey pines in the Grove. Natural pine

regeneration is abundant in areas where understory cover is sparse. Native cypress regeneration occurs sporadically where there is sufficient light. Previous tree and understory plantings are growing well, but exotic plants, especially veldt and kikuyu grass, continue to be a problem in spite of ongoing control operations. The split-rail fence was installed to control vehicle intrusions into the north side of the Grove. DMFF received a donation to work with Cypress forest maintenance and restoration.

Recommendations

Continue and expand non-native plant control and understory restoration programs. Consider adding studies of long-term dynamics of the Grove to inform future management.

PESCADERO CANYON AND CARMEL WAY

The site is in basic compliance with its OSAC maintenance standards. As noted in the previous review, it is a constant challenge to meet fire safety compliance requirements, control invasive exotic plants and maintain the existing forest character. There is annual mortality of individual trees, but natural regeneration continues to occur at a roughly comparable rate. Two significant tree failures associated with road and residential drainage from Carmel Woods occurred near 17 Mile Drive during winter storms. Interim channel stabilization work with large woody debris at the top and willow wattles at the bottom was helpful in minimizing further erosion of this artificial channel. Such treatments should be expanded as feasible while a long-term solution is developed. Five hazardous trees had to be removed along the Carmel Way entrance to the Forest. Willow wattles, subsurface structures and sedge and rush plantings stabilized minor gullying at the top of Ford Meadow. Genista and cape ivy control operations were undertaken at hot spots in several different sections of the property at different times of the year. Non-native veldt grass has displaced natives in several sections of the forest and significant reduction of these areas appears to be infeasible with current methods. The common garden Monterey pine research plot continued to grow and its data compiled for another two years before it is removed.

Recommendations

Get a commitment from the County of Monterey to cooperate with and underwrite stabilization and restoration of the area eroded by Pescadero Road drainage from Carmel Woods. Develop and implement stabilization measures for the downcutting channel reach below the Carmel Hill Fire Station. Continue non-native plant control and required fire clearance operations.

COASTAL STRIP – DEDICATED SECTIONS FROM SPANISH BAY TO PESCADERO POINT

The Coastal Strip is in basic compliance with the standards set forth in the OSAC Management Plan. The Pebble Beach Company continues to maintain the required public access facilities. This included expanding the public restroom facilities at Bird Rock this year. Non-native plant control operations continued, focused especially on iceplant.

Recommendations

Regular control of exotic species should be continued. Maintenance of restored native plant areas should be coordinated as feasible with adjoining restoration work projected to occur on Monterey Peninsula Country Club.

INDIAN VILLAGE

Indian Village is in basic compliance with its maintenance standards. Unfortunately, however, approximately five plants comprising the southern group of the Indian Village population of Hickman's potentilla (*Potentilla hickmanii*) were extirpated as noted in OSAC comments to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's "Draft Recovery Plan for Five Plants from Monterey County". The excessive drainage water causing the problem has now been collected and piped well past the site of the native population as suggested in OSAC comments. Mowing and control of non-native grasses and other invasive plants in the immediate area of the Potentilla were also done in late spring and early summer.

Pine mortality continues to occur at the western edge of the Indian Village forest next to the dunes. Patches of natural pine regeneration are occurring in some areas and appears to be growing well. Seedlings grown from collected Indian Village pine seed were tested for resistance to pitch canker in a cooperative research and nursery training project with Asilomar State Park staff. Although the percentage of resistance was low, more than 120 resistant seedlings were identified and are being grown at the Asilomar facility for outplanting and propagation next year. Additional seed has been collected from new trees to expand this cooperative project over the next year. In addition, pitch canker resistant seedlings developed from local native pines by the Pebble Beach Company were planted in some of the hardest hit areas as part of an educational project with a local Cub Scout Troop. These seedlings are being monitored over time.

Control of non-native plants, principally thistles, velvet grass, kikuyu grass, and *Festuca arundinacea* have been undertaken regularly and have been most successful where excessive drainage has not been a problem.

Recommendations

Continue to monitor and control wetness and non-native vegetation at and near the Potentilla population. Late winter and early spring monitoring and control are particularly critical at known Potentilla plants. Continue cooperative seed collection and pitch canker resistance testing with Asilomar State Park while expanding outplanting and propagation program. Continue regular and consistent non-native plant control program in affected areas, expanding it to the Gingerbread House area.

NAVAJO AND AREA “B” (Navajo North)

These two parcels adjoin the Lynn “Rip” Van Winkle Park of Pacific Grove and are both in compliance with their OSAC maintenance standards. FDIP fire clearance requirements were met by pruning of live limbs and removal of dead trees and limbs plus very limited mowing. Genista control work occurred in a number of areas and was extended into portions of Van Winkle Park with the cooperation of Pacific Grove. Two previous erosion control projects associated with old roads/trails remain functional.

Recommendations

As recommended in the previous review, Area B will now be referred to as Navajo North, since it is only a portion of the LUP Area “B” and is complementary open space to the Navajo property. Maintenance standards for Navajo apply to Navajo North. Continue to monitor the area to prevent and correct over-use and abuse. As a highly used walking area, perform necessary measures to enhance human health and safety consistent with maintenance of a natural area.

PESCADERO POINT

Pescadero Point is in basic compliance with its OSAC maintenance standards. Recent parking, drainage, and native plant restoration projects continue to function well considering the level of visitor use the site receives.

Recommendations

Continue regular monitoring of the site for public safety and natural resource protection. Re-establish some native cypress in the western corner of the parcel and control iceplant regrowth.

SFB MORSE MEMORIAL LOT

The parcel is in compliance with the general standards set forth in the OSAC management plan. Several native cypress trees planted in the early 1980s slumped over and were removed along with accumulations of dead woody material. Perimeter maintenance issues were addressed.

Recommendations

Continue regular annual maintenance operations.

HERMANN PROPERTY

The parcel is in compliance with the general standards set forth in the OSAC management plan. Eucalyptus and vinca control measures on the northern edge of the parcel have been largely successful. Genista control measures were implemented on a hot spot basis throughout the parcel. Fuel jackpots from fallen trees were treated or removed.

Recommendations

Continue regular annual maintenance operations. Consider selective efforts to expand native grasses already occupying the site.

HUCKLEBERRY HILL NATURAL RESERVE

The Huckleberry Hill parcel is in basic compliance with its OSAC maintenance standards. Non-native plant control efforts by the Pebble Beach Company were extensive, but infestations are expected to persist and require annual control measures. Gorse and genista control operations occurred in the watercourse area above the Botanic Reserve. Goat grazing significantly reduced shrub overgrowth and excessive fuel loading in the northwest corner of the Reserve next to the Austin Avenue area of Pacific Grove. Non-native infestations of pampas grass and genista within the Highway 68 corridor are a growing problem. Several unauthorized bicycle trails, especially in the upper portion of the Reserve in the dense stands of pine regeneration from the fire, continue to cause erosion and disturbance impacts.

Recommendations

Continue and expand the exotic plant control program. Investigate a cooperative weed abatement project with Caltrans, PBC, the City of Monterey, DMFF and the Presidio as members. Continue to make improvements to minimize erosion from fire roads and trails.

COURTLANDT HILL PRESERVE

The parcel is in basic compliance with the natural open space management standards. Cutting and removal of dead and weedy materials along 17 Mile Drive was done to meet CDF fire clearance requirements. Proposals for iceplant and other non-native control measures are being solicited.

Recommendations

Continue monitoring of the parcel and limit access to maintenance activities only. Maintain habitat conditions suitable for continued existence of valuable native plants by selectively controlling non-natives.

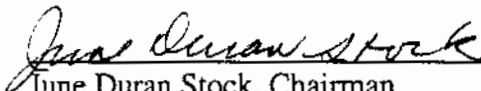
SCENIC EASEMENTS

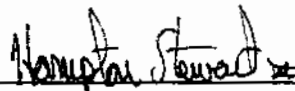
In general, the easements are in compliance with the Management Plan and the terms and conditions of the individual Easement Agreements. A few property owners have been advised of the need to refrain from or to revise maintenance activities to stay in compliance with the terms of their easement. These issues will receive ongoing monitoring and contacts. A number of property owners were able to meet with DMFF representatives to review the easement and a number provided interesting historical information. Most were interested to learn more about what plants were native to their immediate site and information on that topic was provided to several of the owners who requested it.

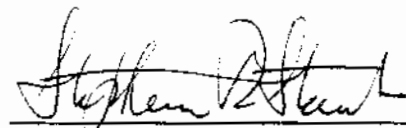
Recommendations

Continue annual inspections of existing scenic easements by the Forest Manager. Continue efforts to have the Pebble Beach Company Architectural Review Board and/or the County of Monterey (which so far has been unresponsive to numerous contacts) provide automatic notification to the DMFF of any pending construction on property that has, or should have, a scenic easement according to the terms of the LUP.

This Annual Report of the Maintenance and Conditions of Del Monte Forest Open Space Properties is hereby respectfully submitted.


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