

# Update on Assessment of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan (2004)

Mid Coast Community Council Meeting

August 23, 2017

San Mateo County Parks Department



# Facility Accomplishments

- Seal Cove Stairway improvements.
- Acquisition of Pillar Point Bluff with trail improvements.
- Parking lot improvements for reduced storm water pollution impacts and improved ADA access.
- ADA improvements to pathways.
- California Coastal Trail improvements.
- Bluff fencing near main entrance.
- Pillar Point Marsh parking lot improvements.

# Visitor Services Accomplishments

- Interpretive and regulatory signage throughout Preserve.
- Docent led tours for 10 or more.
- Friends of FMR and Parks funded Park Aide dedicated to FMR.
- Cordoning off areas to protect seals.
- Visitor Center improvements.
- Development of educational materials and award-winning video.
- Increased naturalist activities (i.e. nighttime tide pooling and Bio Blitzes).

# Natural Resource Accomplishments

- 2010 designation of the Montara State Marine Reserve with the highest level of protection.
- Vegetation Management Guidelines for FMR.
- First phase of Monterey Cypress management.
- First phase of San Vicente Creek restoration.
- Storm water improvements (i.e. green infrastructure) by Public Works and Parks.
- Mapping of rare and endangered plants.

# Other Progress to Date

- Connecting the Marine Reserve to Pillar Point Marsh through Pillar Point Bluff land acquisitions.
- MPA Collaborative to work through issues and develop educational resources across agencies.
- Big Wave development to restore perimeter of Pillar Point Marsh degraded by prior agricultural use.
- Fitzgerald Marine Reserve ASBS Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.
- Delisting of FMR by RWQCB and Co. Env. Health for fecal coliform bacteria levels in San Vicente Creek, but still monitored.

# Looking Ahead to the Next 5 Years

Our overarching goal is the protection of the outstanding natural resources of FMR. This is accomplished by:

- Emphasizing the sensitivity of the resource
- Enhancing the educational value of the Reserve
- Managing visitation

# Near-term Actions

- Revision of website to put group reservation requirements up front and to identify appropriate activities at the Reserve.
- Contact organizations who promote FMR to inform them of the group reservation requirement and purpose of the Reserve.
- Contact schools to ensure they follow reservation requirements.
- New signage emphasizing resource protection.
- Apply for MPA grant to develop educational videos for social media re: how to visit an MPA.
- Evaluate visitor fees for access, visitor services, and/or parking.
- Continue enforcement training and workshops with CDFW.

# Potential Future Efforts

- Develop long-term visitor management strategy based on analysis of visitor use and best management practices.
- Seek a full-time staff position dedicated to visitor education and management at FMR.
- Acquire adjacent lands to Pillar Point Marsh as they become available.
- Seek funding for Pillar Point Marsh Restoration Plan and engage stakeholders.
- Conduct evaluation of health and vigor of plant community around historic Smith-Dolger site.
- Develop long-term vegetation management plan for Cypress forest.