

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Parks Department



**DATE:** November 20, 2014

**COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** December 4, 2014

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Sam Herzberg, Senior Planner  
**SUBJECT:** Crystal Springs Trail South of Hwy. 92 Project

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and accept report.

**BACKGROUND:**

In 1994 the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors accepted trail easements to extend Sawyer Camp Trail three miles to the north and three miles to the south as part of completing gaps in the future 17.5 mile Crystal Springs Regional Trail. The following improvements have been made to date (north to south):

- 1) Three miles to the north, the "San Andreas Trail" segment, has been completed. This is a 10' wide paved multi-use trail with 2' graveled shoulders on each side of the trail.
- 2) The road over the Crystal Springs Dam is being improved by Public Works and will include a 14' wide multi-use trail on the west side of the bridge that will be separated from vehicular traffic.
- 3) There is a .1 mile long gap (no trail) between the Crystal Springs Dam and the trail section south of the Crystal Springs Dam
- 4) "Crystal Springs Trail South of Dam", a .9 mile segment, is nearing completion. This trail is 10' wide with no graveled shoulders due to adjacent steep slopes. (note: San Francisco Public Utilities Commission does not want County Parks to open this section to the public until the trail segment described above (#3) is completed.)
- 5) The Old State Hiking and Riding Trail is a .9 mile long 4' wide dirt and graveled pedestrian and equestrian trail that has been improved on the east side of Hwy. 35. It connects the southern exit of Crystal Springs South of Dam to Hwy. 92. It will be open to the public when the trail sections 3 and 4 described above are completed.
- 6) Funding has been secured for County Public Works to perform a Traffic Study of

the intersection of Hwy. 92 at Hwy. 35 and design multi-trail user crossing improvements.

- 7) Plans were developed and a Mitigated Negative Declaration was certified in 2010 for the Crystal Springs Trail South of Hwy. 92. Additional California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) work, a Mitigated Negative Declaration, was required because this trail section will go through Serpentine grasslands -potential habitat for federally listed endangered plants that were not listed when the 1994 Mitigated Negative Declaration was approved.

**DISCUSSION:**

The section of South of Hwy. 92 Trail will be a .9 miles long 10' wide multi-use asphalt paved trail with a 3' graveled shoulder to accommodate equestrians and runners.

Because some of the grant funds for this project involve Federal funding passed through CalTrans there are National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requirements. Studies on cultural resources, historic properties, and archaeology resources have been completed and are being reviewed by CalTrans staff. A Natural Environmental Study (NES) was required and triggered a requirement for a Biological Assessment (BA) in order to get a Biological Opinion from US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) because of the potential presence and impact of future trail use on federally listed Red legged frogs. The NES and BA are currently under review by USFWS. A Biological Opinion authorizing potential "take of animals or habitat" by USFWS as a result of trail construction is anticipated to be completed in January 2015. Following completion of the NEPA review process the Design Plans and Specifications will be updated to incorporate any required mitigations and any final design changes recommended by County Public Works staff and a new cost estimate will be provided for grant purposes as well as determine if additional funding may be required. The project would then be put out to bid so that it could be constructed in the summer of 2015.

Plans, environmental analyses and construction are still needed for the Hwy. 92 crossing and the .1 mile gap between the Crystal Springs Dam and Crystal Springs South of Dam trail segments.