

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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November 29, 2001

To: California Coastal Commissioners and Interested Persons

From: Peter M. Douglas, Executive Director
Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director
Jonathan Van Coops, GIS/Mapping Program Manager

Subject: Interagency Agreement with the State Coastal Conservancy to Create a Geographic Information System for implementation of the California Coastal Trail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to enter into an interagency agreement with the State Coastal Conservancy to support the implementation of the California Coastal Trail. The total amount of this Agreement is \$375,000, which represents the Conservancy's portion of the staffing, equipment, and data processing expenses over at least an eighteen-month period. The Coastal Commission will provide in-kind contributions to cover expenditures such as supervision, printing, and facilities.

Project Description and Summary

Staff from the State Coastal Conservancy, the Coastal Commission, and the Department of Parks and Recreation, have been working together for several months in anticipation of the passage of SB908, a bill (now signed into law) that directs the Conservancy to prepare a plan for the completion of the California Coastal Trail (see Exhibit 1). SB908 requires the submittal of this plan to the Governor and the Legislature in January 2003, providing a very short time period in which to complete a plan for more than 1000 miles of trail. To meet this deadline, the Conservancy is now leading an effort to gather existing sources of information relevant to the Coastal Trail System, to develop an digital geographic information system (GIS) for the purpose of trail alternative analysis and design, and to prepare maps and other graphic products that depict the trail alignment and relevant data.

Since the Coastal Commission already has the capability to create an digital geographic information system (GIS) for this purpose, and is cooperating in this effort, the staff recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the Conservancy for the development of a digital GIS as a principal tool in the design of the California Coastal Trail. Representation of this information in an digital format will enable analysis and manipulation of the information to assist in the determination of feasible trail alignments, potential for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, necessary right-of-way acquisitions, and cost estimates for all phases of completing the trail system. Working with Conservancy staff, Commission staff will create

a set of base maps on which all information developed regarding the Coastal Trail can then be displayed. Information regarding the Coastal Trail alignment will also be combined with data layers regarding existing vertical access accessways, existing recreational support facilities, existing offers to dedicate accessways, and environmentally sensitive lands, to enable the collaborating agencies to recommend priorities for future funding. Additionally, the digital GIS will significantly improve data transfer between the Commission, the Conservancy, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the many local partners concerned with the Coastal Trail project.

As proposed, the Coastal Commission would provide office space, equipment, software, and staff support from its existing GIS/Mapping unit. Conservancy funds would provide for added staff support to the project, for the acquisition of additional computer equipment and products, and for the acquisition and installation of relevant data layers that have already been produced by other agencies or private firms.

The project is planned for an eighteen-month period, although it is likely to continue beyond that time if additional funding becomes available. During this period, the Coastal Commission staff, with conservancy staff assistance, will complete the basic GIS framework and trail data layers, including geo-referenced topographic maps and scaled aerial photography. Additional data layers will include land ownership, offers-to-dedicate, sensitive plant and wildlife habitats, Local Coastal Program land use designations, and other relevant information needed to develop a reliable tool useful for both descriptive and analytic purposes. The development of the system will be coordinated with both the California Legacy Project and with the independent efforts of the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop an information system for management of the State Park system. The Conservancy is also seeking additional funding, which if approved, will enable the Conservancy and its partners to expand the proposed GIS system.

Senate Bill No. 908

CHAPTER 446

An act to add Sections 31408 and 31409 to the Public Resources Code, relating to coastal resources.

[Approved by Governor October 2, 2001. Filed with
Secretary of State October 3, 2001.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 908, Chesbro. State Coastal Conservancy: California Coastal Trail.

Existing law requires the State Coastal Conservancy to implement various coastal protection and preservation programs in coastal areas of the state.

This bill would require the conservancy, in consultation with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the California Coastal Commission, to coordinate the development of the California Coastal Trail, and would require each agency, board, department, or commission of the state with property interests or regulatory authority in coastal areas, to the extent feasible, and consistent with their individual mandate, to cooperate with the conservancy with respect to planning and making lands available for completion of the trail. The bill would authorize the conservancy to award grants and provide assistance to public agencies and nonprofit organizations to establish and expand inland trail systems that may be linked to the California Coastal Trail. The bill would require the California Coastal Trail to be developed in a manner that demonstrates respect for property rights and the proximity of the trail to residential uses, and that evidences consideration for the protection of the privacy of adjacent property owners.

The bill would also require the conservancy, not later than January 31, 2003, in consultation with the California Coastal Commission, the California Conservation Corps, and the Department of Parks and Recreation, to complete a plan for the development of the California Coastal Trail, and to submit to the Legislature a copy of the plan by that date. The provisions of the bill would be implemented only during those fiscal years for which funding is provided for the purposes of the bill in the annual Budget Act.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) The California Coastal Trail, which has been designated a Millennium Trail by the Governor of California, should be completed in a timely manner.

(2) The California Coastal Trail is a trail that, to the extent feasible, should be constructed along the state's coastline from the Oregon border to the border with Mexico.

(3) The California Coastal Trail should be constructed in a manner that is consistent with the protection of coastal resources.

(b) The California Coastal Trail shall be developed in a manner that demonstrates respect for property rights and the proximity of the trail to residential uses, and that evidences consideration for the protection of the privacy of adjacent property owners.

SEC. 2. Section 31408 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:

31408. (a) The conservancy shall, in consultation with the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the California Coastal Commission, coordinate the development of the California Coastal Trail.

(b) To the extent feasible, and consistent with their individual mandates, each agency, board, department, or commission of the state with property interests or regulatory authority in coastal areas shall cooperate with the conservancy with respect to planning and making lands available for completion of the trail, including constructing trail links, placing signs and managing the trail.

SEC. 3. Section 31409 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:

31409. Consistent with the conservancy's authority under this chapter to develop a system of public accessways to, and along, the state's coastline, the conservancy may award grants and provide assistance to public agencies and nonprofit organizations to establish and expand those inland trail systems that may be linked to the California Coastal Trail.

SEC. 4. (a) The conservancy shall, not later than January 31, 2003, in consultation with the California Coastal Commission, the California Conservation Corps, and the Department of Parks and Recreation, complete a plan for the development of the California Coastal Trail that includes all of the following elements:

(1) Determination of a primary hiking route for the trail, including interim and permanent trail alignments where possible.

(2) Description of lands now under public or conservation ownership on which the trail is, or may be, constructed.

(3) A designation of various alternative routes for the trail, where necessary, that would encourage broad support and use of the trail, while protecting coastal resources and reducing conflicts among various users.

(4) A logo and signing program for the trail.

(5) An estimate of the costs for acquisition and construction of missing trail segments.

(6) A description of areas where the trail should connect to inland trail routes, especially where those connections can be utilized by underserved communities as an alternative means of accessing the coast. The plan shall include an estimate of the support and capital outlay costs for completing the trail by January 31, 2008.

(b) Not later than January 31, 2003, the conservancy shall submit to the Legislature a copy of the plan required to be completed pursuant to subdivision (a).

SEC. 5. This act shall be implemented only during those fiscal years for which funding is provided for that purpose in the annual Budget Act.

