

A. Executive Summary

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Purpose of Report: Over the last 20 years erosion has affected the public access easement along the Bluff Top Trail at Sea Ranch. In the summer of 2003, due to catastrophic erosion, the public trail to Walk On Beach at The Sea Ranch was closed to the public in front of Lots 23–25. The closure of this trail puts off-limit a quarter of a mile long public beach.

The County operates five public access easements from Highway 1 to the public beach areas at Sea Ranch. It is estimated by the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department that these five public access easements are used by 154,000 visitors annually. These numbers include Sea Ranch residents, guests, and the general public.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Supervisors with background and outline potential options for restoring public access to Walk On Beach Trail. Specifically the report addresses the following short and long term issues:

- Propose and evaluate alternatives for restoring public access to Walk On Beach from the existing Walk On Beach trailhead.
- Review the larger issue of maintaining continued public access along the Bluff Top Trail from Gualala Point Park to Walk On Beach.
- Propose a regular monitoring program for erosion along the Bluff Top Trail and other public access easements.

Summary of Proposed Options: The Department has prepared six (6) options for the Board's consideration, including a no-action option. The remaining five options would restore some level of public access to Walk On Beach. A brief description of these options is provided below:

Option A - Realign the public trail to the east in front of lot 24 within The Sea Ranch Commons

Option B – Split the Walk On Beach public trail into a north and south section at Leeward Road. Use existing TSRA roads and trails to access Walk On Beach.

Option C – Construct a new stairway to the north of lots 23-25 and use the beach as the access route to south Walk On Beach.

Option D – This is a combination of Options B & C. Construct new stairs north of lots 23-25 for beach access, provide alternate route on existing TSRA trails for high tide conditions.

Option E - Construct a bridge and/or sea wall across eroded section of the bluff top in front of lot 24.

Option F – No action.

Summary of Options: The six (6) options identified in this report have been analyzed based on the following criteria;

1. Requires additional permanent easement from TSRA. An allowance for acquisition costs has been included subject to appraisal.
2. Impact on aesthetic and visual resources
3. Additional impact on private property owners
4. Public accessibility (Convenience and usability)
5. Long-term sustainability
6. Costs

Summary of Options Evaluated by Criteria

	Will the Option involve the acquisition of additional permanent easement from TSRA?	Will the Option negatively Impact aesthetics or visual resources?	Will the Option place additional impacts on private property owners?	Will the Option reduce public accessibility?	Is the Option a viable long-term solution?	Estimated range of costs
A	Yes	No	No	No	No	\$51K to \$65K
B	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	\$26.75K to \$28.3K
C	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	\$42.5K to 72.5K
D	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	\$75K to 104.5K
E	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	\$264K to \$361K
F	No	No	No	Yes	No	No Cost