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Commons Landscape Field Guide



Stengel Creek to the Hot Spot to Arch Rock Creek



March 2022
The Sea Ranch Association Commons Landscape Committee (CLC)

AREA 7: STENDEL CREEK TO THE HOT SPOT TO ARCH ROCK CREEK

Purpose of the Field Guide

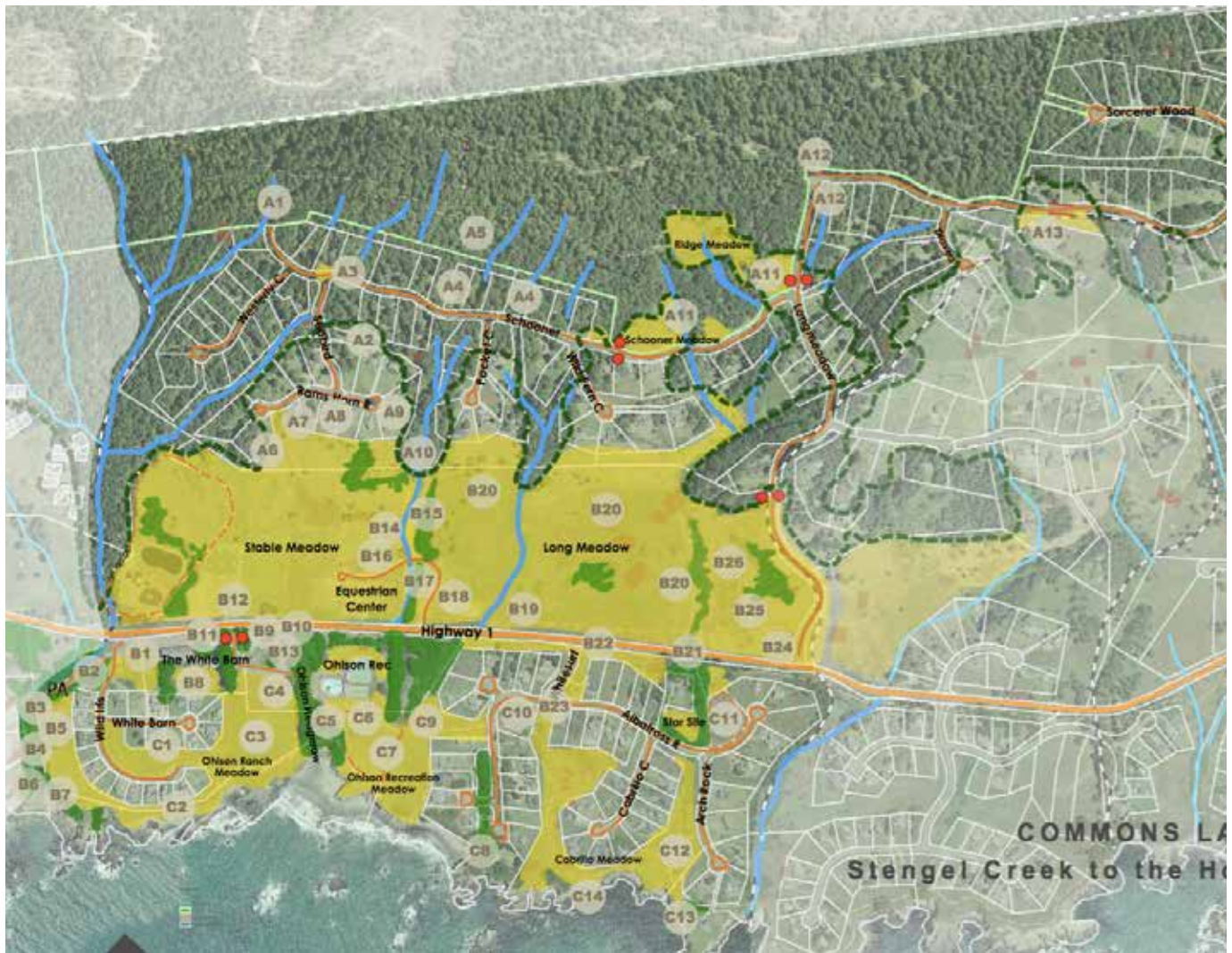
Because the landscape constantly changes, reviewing the Area Plans is necessary. These reviews can suggest revisions or additions to the Plan, and they can identify ongoing, regular management needs such as vegetation removal or replanting.

The Area Plans were developed with community participation and interaction, and member involvement remains key to the review process. Field Meetings – member walking tours, and workshops organized by the CLC – continue the participatory opportunities.

This Guide serves as an aid for observing and understanding current conditions in the Commons landscape and for evaluating conditions according to the Area Plan recommendations. The Guide highlights certain recommendations that have been acted on or that warrant special, on-going attention, and it clarifies and updates recommendations for the forest, based on findings found in the Forest Task Force Guidelines. A full listing of the original recommendations is in the Area 8 Plan.

Sea Ranch: A Cultural Landscape

The naturally evolving landscape has been shaped by generations of human effort intended to make the land productive and habitable. The prairies that first met the European settlers were grazed by deer and elk. The prairies were burned by Native Americans so that they would regenerate. Successive generations of settlement, farming, ranching, and lumbering transformed the





character of the land. Simple structures, houses, barns, stables, and sheep pens dotted the landscape; a number remain today, in active use. The Knipp-Stengel Barn (White Barn) once sheltered cattle, sheep, and horses.

The cultural significance of The Sea Ranch is based in the heritage values, principles, and intentions described in the early planning documents by the developer and by a team of architects, planners, landscape architects, and others, led by Larry Halprin. Cultural significance and values are examined in the context of centuries of human settlement on the coastal landscape. Elements of the heritage documents speak to the predominance of nature, maintaining the unique character of the coast, community-building, and architecture that is in harmony with the land and the forces of nature. As changes occur – demographics, technology, weather and climate, the interdependency of the greater coastal community, and an ever-closer build-out – revisiting the founding values is essential to understanding and adapting the commitment to stewardship of the land and to community building.

THE CENTRAL FOREST

The Central Forest, formerly the Central Timber Production Zone (CTPZ), extends south from Area 8 across much of the eastern segment of Area 7. The Central Forest serves as a background for pockets of development. It is threaded with recreational trails, and it is home to a variety of plants and animals.

In 2015 a Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP) for timber harvesting was submitted for the CTPZ, but it was later withdrawn by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors later appointed the Forest Task Force (FTF). After three years of study, the BOD approved Forest Task Force principles, objectives, and guidelines for The Sea Ranch forested commons. This Field Guide updates recommendations related to the Central Forest to align with goals and recommendations of the Forest Task Force. Highlights of Recommended Management Actions for the forests are in this Field Guide.



AREA 7

Area 7 is the largest of the areas defined by the CLC, and it is the most diverse. It includes the only significant part of the community east of the ridge and in the Gualala River watershed.

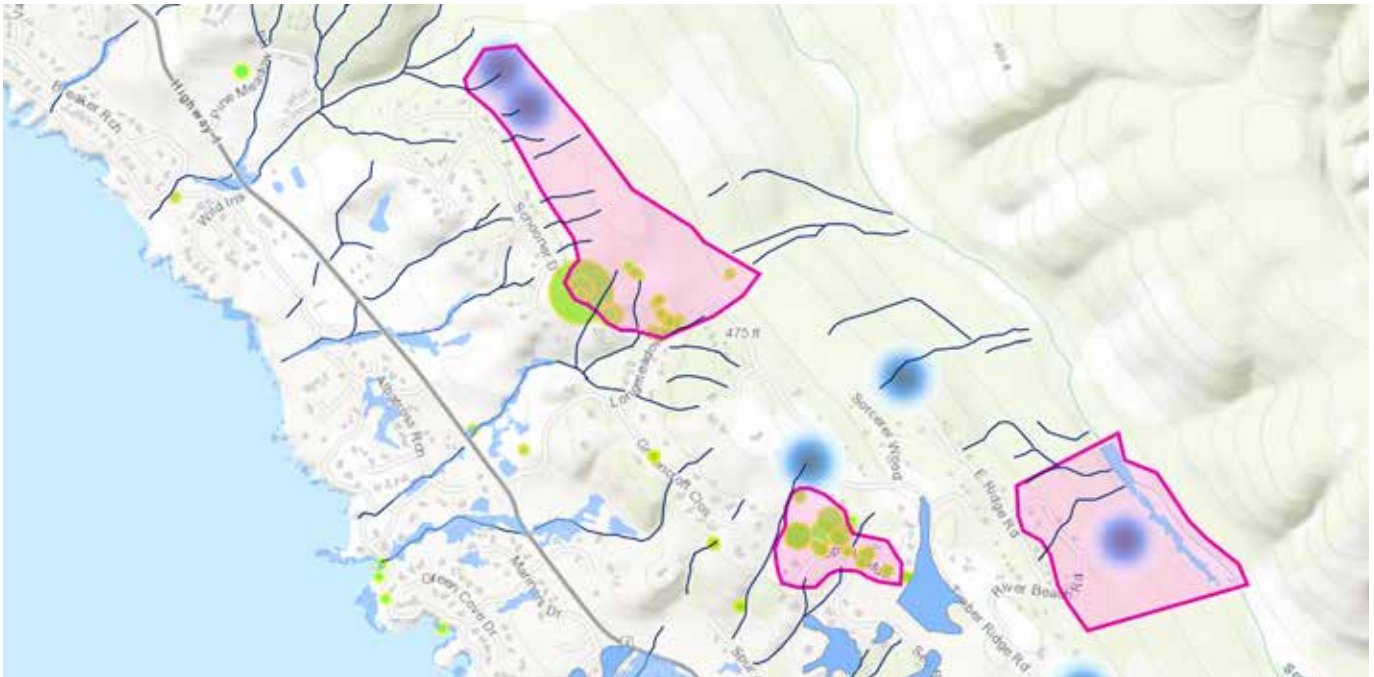
Area 7 has three main segments: A) the forested slopes and enclosed meadows descending from the ridge to the long meadows adjoining Highway 1, north of Longmeadow Road, and the slopes from Timber Ridge Road toward the Gualala River, reaching to the shore of the river at the Hot Spot, B) the segment immediately adjacent to Highway 1, including its adjoining meadows and landmark structures, and C) the meadows west of the Highway 1 segment, reaching to the bluffs, bounded to the north by Stengel Creek and to the south by Arch Rock Creek.

Area 7 offers Sea Ranchers a variety of living and recreational experiences. Many homes are deep in the forest, where owners enjoy filtered light, lofty trees, intricate vegetation, and relief from wind. Owners on the windswept western meadows experience proximity to the ocean, windy days, fog and sun, and brilliant starry nights. Homes in the cul-de-sacs descending from Schooner Drive along the Forest Front have views from hillsides over the west meadows to a broad stretch of ocean. The meadows are delineated by hedgerows and riparian passages, with houses settling into the lower meadows and along the drives. Unit 36, the last segment planned by the developers, is the only part of Area 7 on sewers. It has been guided by additional design controls specific to the site.

Area 7 holds important and widely-used community facilities such as the historic Knipp-Stengel Barn (generally known as the White Barn), the Ohlson Ranch House and Recreation Center, Equestrian Center and Stables, and the Hot Spot. It has significant landscape elements that serve as landmarks; the landmarks represent some of the defining characteristics of The Sea Ranch with particular clarity.

Participants in the first workshop noted the importance of the landmarks and the Signature Hedgerows that are dominant elements of The Sea Ranch landscape. Participants suggested that the CLC might identify "Signature Meadows" as well. They noted that views of the forest, meadows, and ocean help Sea Ranchers understand the landscape. They also placed great value on the abundant wildlife.

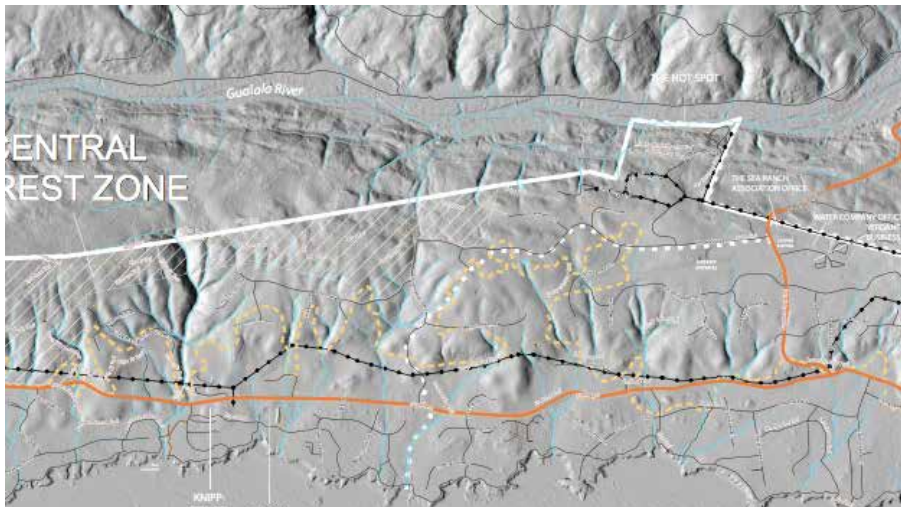




Looking at CLC Area 7 from different angles

A LIDAR map strips away all the vegetation to the bare bones of the land. Hugal Ravine is distinctly deep, with its creek dropping through the redwoods down to Highway 1. There is no other deep ravine along Sea Ranch until Sea Forest at the very south end. Up at the ridge by Hugal is a grove of eucalyptus that have harbored monarch butterflies in the past. The tall trees above provide good raptor perches and good hunting in the meadows below. In the eastern forest, a long narrow area along the ridge line offers biodiversity, with several flowers that are listed as rare. Two sag ponds provide water for wildlife and for plants. You will see many large leaves of Fringed Corn Lily. As the Biodiversity Area nears Longmeadow, some rare plants exist in these high open meadows. Timber Ridge Road abruptly turns onto Longmeadow. Light gets into the edge of the redwood forest, accommodating early Spring wildflowers of trillium, Calypso orchid, Hound’s Tongue and Milkmaids. Pink-flowering Currant blooms here, too.

Pink indicates high biodiversity of plants, native and some rare. One area is along the ridge and the other dips down to the Hot Spot, shown in the lower right. Blue fuzzy spots identify sag ponds.



Evident in the LIDAR map are stream channels and the deep Hugal Ravine across from the barn.



Barred Owl: Photo: Craig Toomey



American Kestrel: Photo Craig Tooley

The road opening lets us look into towering, straight, redwood trees with filtered light. The east side of the ridge provides another area of high biodiversity, as it drops down River Beach to the Hot Spot. Proximity to the river and variation in weather conditions east of the ridge-top influences the variety of wildflowers, shrubs, and birds. At least 147 species of birds have been identified here. This deeper forest has harbored Spotted Owl and now Barred Owl, as well as Great Horneds and small Western Screech Owls.

On the front or west side of the ridge, meadows dominate the slopes dropping down to the stables and pastures. Rocky, tree-covered mounds provide perches to survey the meadows. This is a good hunting spot for Barn Owls by night and for hawks by day, ranging from the small Kestrel, to the delicate White-tailed Kite and the robust Red-tail. The Equestrian Center Hedgerow has been successful due to its exposure to full sun and wind, the same conditions found when the original hedgerows were planted in the open landscape by the ranchers. The creeks running down these steeper meadows provide cover for wildlife passage, and they widen out west of Hwy 1.

Here Cabrillo Meadow wraps around Cabrillo Close. This is a very natural meadow with mounds of native blackberry, and good riparian cover provided by willows and coffeeberry shrubs. In contrast, the meadows to the north around Ohlson Rec Center and Ohlson Ranch are much more open and grassy. The parking area at Ohlson is ideal to survey varying habitats for birds in the meadow, hedgerow, and creek. The old trees around the house attract hummingbirds and sapsuckers, which have drilled horizontal lines of holes to get to the sap. Near Ohlson House, are displays of plantings for each of the different zones.

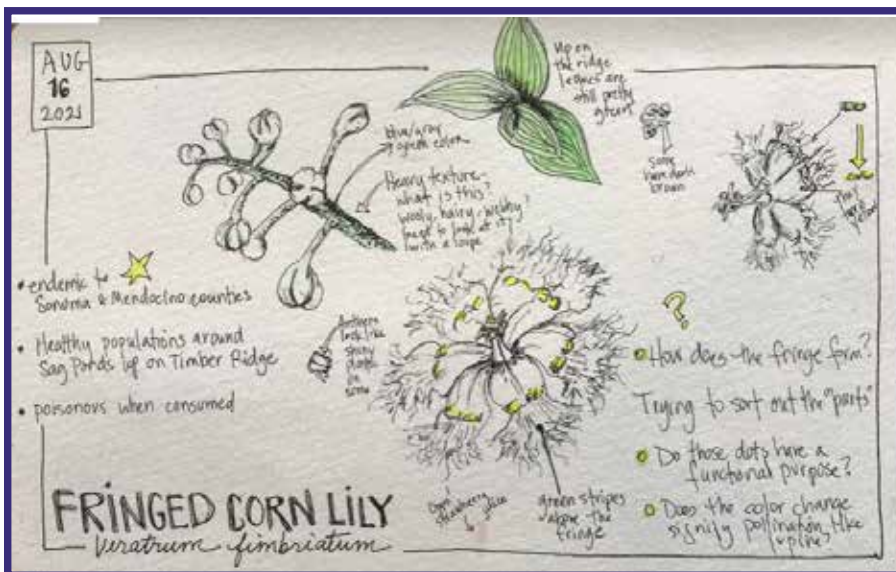
The White Barn offers nesting spots for our often-displaced Cliff Swallows. In summer they swoop out over the grasses, feeding on insects. Stengel Creek at the north edge of Area 7 has changed in character with the hedgerow work. Some unusual wildflowers are near the bridge, where you will find big hand-shaped leaves of Western Coltsfoot, green-flowering Mission Bells, and tiny California Bee Plant – so attractive to hummingbirds. Near Highway 1 the public parking area provides a wet, natural area where you see salmonberries, vining wild cucumber, and the mound nests of wood rats.



Red-breasted Sapsucker:
Photo Craig Tooley:



Barn Owl: Photo: Craig Toomey



Fringed Corn Lily: Journal sketch by
Karen Wilkerson

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR FORESTED COMMONS

Management of our forested commons incorporates three main areas of focus: Ecology and Forest Structure, Forest Edges (also known as ecotone), and Hazard Mitigation. These areas of focus are consistent throughout all forested commons, but the terms are applied in each Area individually. Key meadow openings are identified and are to be protected based on their value to landscape structure, the plants or animals present there, or the view corridors they provide. The following represent key concepts from the FTF Guidelines to be viewed as ongoing forest management actions in concert with CLC recommendations.

Ecology and Forest Structure

Protect, conserve, and enhance the forest ecosystem and its communities of native flora and fauna, soils, and hydrology.

- 1.0 Maintain sufficient structural complexity and habitat for species diversity in the greater forest.
- 1.1 Understand and preserve the unique qualities within each study area.
- 1.2 Identify and avoid impacting areas of exceptional diversity (see Maps, Areas of Note).
- 1.3 Consider establishing one or more expanded conservation areas similar to our designated marine reserves as part of a TSR sustainability program that would support and protect the plants, animals, soils, bryophytes, and microorganisms that we highly value.
- 1.4 Recognize that all native species have value in the ecosystem.
- 1.5 Preserve forest structure including wetlands, riparian areas, selected forest openings and meadows, otherwise maintaining a closed forest canopy.
- 1.6 Absent member safety concerns, FMP considerations, and DCEM approved vegetation removal, forest processes should generally be allowed to continue uninterrupted. Other than those priorities:
 - a. Leave riparian areas, understory, and forest floor alone.
 - b. Allow standing dead trees for habitat and downed trees to decay and return nutrients to the soil.
 - c. Following natural disturbances such as wind throw or insect/disease events, allow natural processes to unfold with minimal intervention. Manage only as needed for seedling/sapling density, promoting full canopy and species diversity, or when guidelines suggest replanting with different species.



Schooner forest



Chipmunk: Photo Craig Tooley



Forest creek: Photo Craig Tooley

d. In openings created by trails, leave the minimum clearances required for safe and comfortable passage. Promote closed canopy as part of maintenance practices, retaining a diversity of brush at trail edges as cover for wildlife.

2.0 Monitor, map, and protect rare and endangered species and integrate into landscape planning and management by Facilities and Resources (F&R), stewards, or outside contractors.

3.0 Monitor for, map, and remove invasive plants, particularly in wind throw and dying tree areas.

4.0 Follow guidelines to deal with emerging forest issues such as unusual episodes of dead and dying trees, wind throw, and climate change.

4.1 Consider whether natural seeding, re-planting, or other alternatives are appropriate when trees are removed.

4.2 Consider location, microclimate, and relationship to existing vegetation.

4.3 Consider adaptability to climate change.

4.4 Favor redwood trees when appropriate.

4.5 Consider native plants not exclusively from The Sea Ranch.

5.0 Support efforts to combat climate change. Maximize forested commons potential as carbon sinks by proforestation (growing existing forests intact to their ecological potential).

FOREST EDGE

Manage the western forest “front”, or edge, as well as openings within the forest, in order to protect the ecotone, or region of transition between biological communities. Protect our forests and ecosystems, soils, and hydrology from the effects of logging along TSR’s eastern border.

1.0 Develop guidelines for tree replacement on commons and private property where the forest front is affected by tree die off.

1.1 Consider the importance of a continuous forest front in maintaining forest health and the visual importance of integrating forest front with private structures for screening.

1.2 Consider the need for appropriate defensible space treatments.

2.0 Review location of the forest front to consider whether changes are needed, considering aspects of climate change, historical locations, relative health, and fire issues.

3.0 Maintain the visual and structural integrity of the forest front.

3.1 Understand and protect the plant and animal diversity of the ecotone, maintaining shelter for wildlife.

3.2 Allow for renewal of declining forest edge trees as needed.

3.3 Prevent forest edges from advancing through seedling and sapling removal and maintaining the grazing program at forest edges.

4.0 Negotiate with GRT to mitigate the negative effects of logging on our eastern border forest.

5. Maintain the eastern boundary to preserve forest health and promote fire resistance.

5.1 Maintain full canopy.

5.2 Plant redwood as appropriate.



Forest floor



Pileated Woodpecker at nest

HAZARD MITIGATION

Reduce the risk to TSR owners and visitors from fire and from the hazards of dead, dying, and falling trees.

1.0 Request review and potential update to the Fuels Management Plan (FMP) and the Community Wildfire Protection Plan to reflect current research and to address current conditions. Apply updated Plans in managing the forests and the meadows they contain.

1.1 Maintain full canopy, allowing cooling shade to help maintain surface fuel moisture into the fire season and reduce pyrogenic native shrubs due to insufficient sunlight reaching the understory.

1.2 Consider risk factors changing due to climate.

2. Continue to ensure that dead and dying trees do not create safety hazards.

Removal should prioritize trees on commons that:

2.1 Could create safety issues near homes or on roads or trails.

2.2 Could be ignited by downed or arcing power lines



Sorcerer Wood

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR AREA 7

FOREST SLOPES AND ENCLOSED MEADOWS

Key objectives for commons in this area include:

- Manage the Central Forests to sustain trails and wildlife habitats and passages.
- Support resiliency in the forests by maintaining a closed canopy, structural complexity, and habitat for species diversity.
- Continue with the community Fuels Management Plan in designated forest areas
- Preserve selected forest openings, especially along Schooner Drive. and Timber Ridge Rd., and the San Andreas Fault Trail and Hot Spot.
- Maintain the integrity of the Forest Front while opening outlooks to the west.

Schooner Drive and Entry to Trails in the Central Forest

The forest is entered on foot from a link to Sag Pond and Ridge trails at the north end of Schooner Road. There is no provision for car turnaround or parking at the trail entry.

A1 Study possibilities for parking at the entry to Sag Pond Trail, at the end of Schooner Drive.

A2 Deleted

A3 Protect and steward the clump of redwoods in Schooner Drive just south of Seabird Road.

A4 Deleted

A5 Deleted

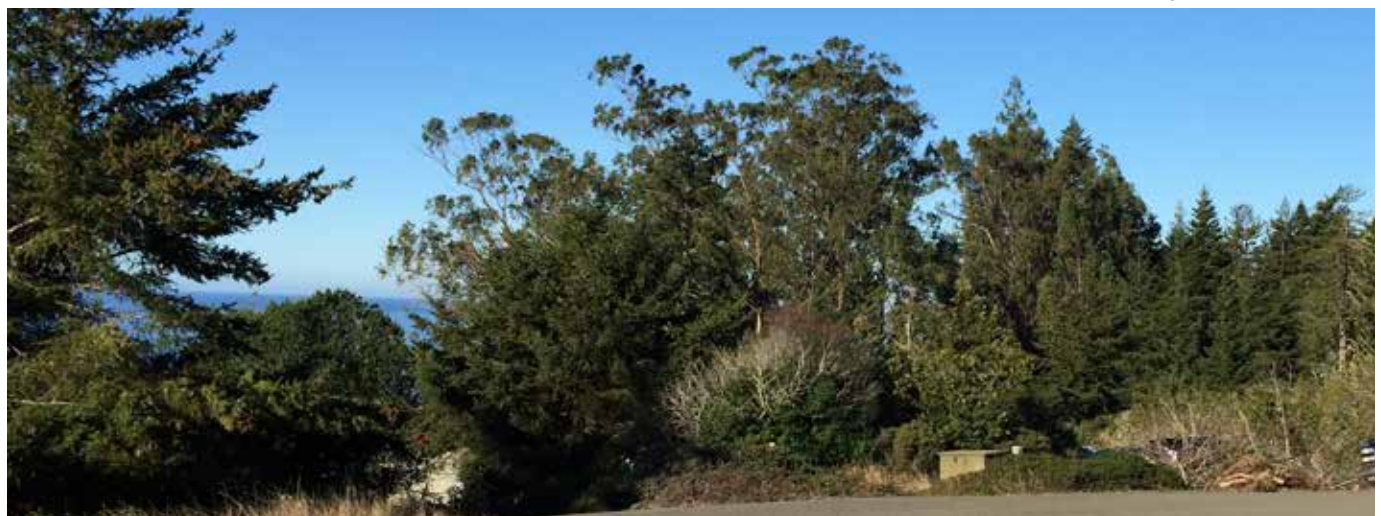
Eucalyptus Crown

The stand of tall eucalyptus trees near the north end of Rams Horn Reach is an historic planting, one of the two stands on The Sea Ranch (See Area 11). Many trees are on private property but some growth, especially more recent growth, is on commons. As a valuable trace of previous settlement plantings, the crown should be carefully tended.

A6 Remove seedlings and saplings that are spreading on the slope below the stand.



Redwoods in Schooner Drive



The stand of tall eucalyptus trees near the north end of Rams Horn Reach.

Rams Horn Reach

Rams Horn Reach is entered via Seabird Road and it runs parallel to the slope. Houses line both sides of the road that terminates in cul-de-sacs at both ends. Near the southern cul-de-sac, the road circles a tall stand of redwoods. This stand plays an important role in continuing the sense of this area as a place on the edge of the forest.

A7 Clear brush from the northern end of Rams Horn Reach, close to the eucalyptus. This would open outlooks from the turnaround to the area below while preserving riparian habitat.

A8 Remove brush that grows in the right-of-way at the intersection of Rams Horn Reach and Seabird Road.

A9 Protect and care for the cluster of redwoods at the south end of Rams Horn Reach, keeping new growth from becoming too thick at its base.

Riparian Passage between Rams Horn Reach and Packet Close

This rather sharp ravine has abundant growth. In places the ravine may become clogged if it is not periodically tended. Some vegetation is advancing into the meadows in ways that affect views.

A10 Consider removal of trees that are advancing into the meadow.

Forest Meadows above Schooner and at Longmeadow Intersection

To keep small meadows from being overcome by growth of vegetation requires vigilance. "Adopt a meadow" was suggested as a theme for member stewardship projects. Once restored, a meadow needs continuing maintenance. Active stewardship to pull saplings can keep the forest from creeping forward. Protect rare plants.

A11 Continue the stewardship project already begun through meadow maintenance.

North End of Timber Ridge Road

The north end of Timber Ridge Road at Longmeadow Drive has a trailhead, with parking, into the Central Forest. The passage leading to the intersection from the south is the only through road on The Sea Ranch where you can look west uphill through a segment of forest. This stretch of the road has fine outlook uphill across a segment of commons that reaches up to the Spring Meadow Summit.

A12 Remove brush near the roadside, being careful not to disturb the wildflowers and currant, so that the slopes of the land and outlooks into the forest and meadow remain part of the experience of this area.

A13 Remove brush, firs, and pines on commons to keep outlook up the meadow.

Timber Ridge and Sorcerer's Wood; Starred Site and Trail heads

In this vicinity there are several outlooks into small meadows that give special interest to the area. One of these meadows is a "Starred" site capable of being developed for community benefit. A group in the neighborhood would be interested in taking on stewardship of the area.



Redwood Cluster in south end of Rams Horn Reach.



Forest Meadow above Schooner.

A1 Remove pine and baccharus to keep meadow open at Timber Ridge Road and Sorcerer's Wood while preserving vegetation that provides habitat or shade for resting spaces.

A15 Deleted

Timber Ridge and Spring Meadow Drive

The CLC Area 4 plan calls for keeping the existing commons meadow west of Timber Ridge as an open coastal prairie landscape without trees.

Gualala River Slope and the Hot Spot

The Gualala River Slope is primarily forest, with steep slopes to the river. East Ridge Road and Deep Woods Drive run parallel across the downward slope to provide access to private lots. They are reached from River Beach Road, which continues all the way down to the river's edge and the Hot Spot recreational area. This is the only place on The Sea Ranch that is on the Gualala River. The slope contains fine stands of redwood and the San Andreas Fault Interpretive Trail.

A16 Remove young firs and saplings from the patch of commons that surrounds the intersection of River Beach and Timber Ridge roads.



Keep meadow open at Timber Ridge Road and Sorcerer's Wood, preserving vegetation that provides habitat.

A17 Clear places where drainages cross roads; this will expose waterways and expand the sense of commons.

A18 Keep forest clearings on the Gualala River Slope, allowing plant diversity while complying with any Fuels Management Plans Guidelines.

A19 Delete

A20 Remove firs at the intersection of River Beach road and Hot Spot Loop Trail. Keep the biodiverse meadow open.

A21 Maintain car access to the Hot Spot for as long each year as safety allows.

A22 Maintain the open meadow at River Beach Road, and maintain access to the forested Sag Pond east of Timber Ridge Road opposite the airport.

Commons at the intersection of River Beach and Timber Ridge roads.



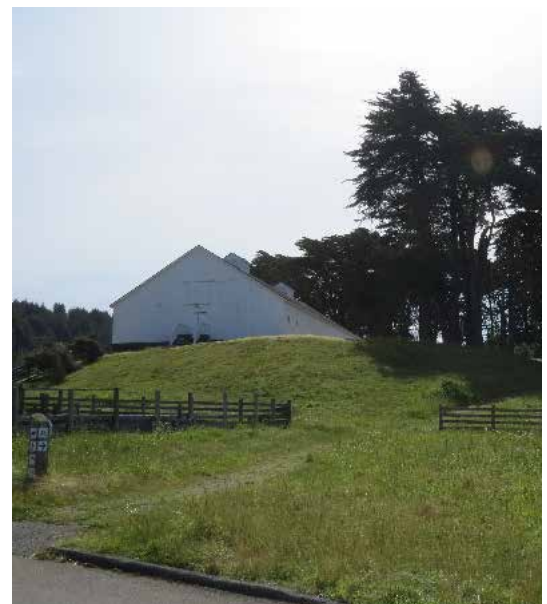
B. HIGHWAY 1 CORRIDOR



Running the length of The Sea Ranch, the Highway 1 corridor is a major source of orientation for the community. The highway provides much of the experience of The Sea Ranch for visitors, those passing through and members who move north and south in their daily ventures. In Area 7, the corridor contains many notable elements. These include the White (Knipp-Stengel) Barn, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and used for community gatherings, the Ohlson Ranch House, the Native Plants Demonstration Garden, the swimming pool and tennis courts of the Ohlson Recreation Center, and on the eastern side of the road, the Equestrian Center and Stables with their barns and fenced corrals. This cluster of buildings and landscape elements, including and the path through cypress to the Ohlson Beach stairs support community activities. They are vital components of the social life of The Sea Ranch.

Towards the south, Highway 1 parallels Long Meadow and a segment of the Forest Front. These are large elements of the Sea Ranch landscape that contribute to its overall character. Large coastal prairies are disappearing; therefore, it is important to maintain and restore Long Meadow. Landscape management objectives for the Highway 1 corridor are: Preserving the landmark status of the White Barn and the character of the buildings at the Ohlson Ranch House, the Recreation Center, and the Stables.

- Retaining the scope of Long Meadow, with its long views and the Forest Front backing it, including the managed Eucalyptus Crown.
- Making clear, but containing the vegetation along the riparian passages crossing from the forest across Long Meadow towards the ocean.
- Removing random large trees in the Long Meadow that obscure or limit understanding of its scope and reveal the rock/landform alongside Long-meadow Road.



White Barn

Northern Boundary of Area 7 and Public Access Area

Coming from the north, the White Barn is prominent, sitting atop a small fenced meadow. The view to the Barn opens as the road widens at the intersection with Wild Iris, the road to houses on the west and to the Public Access Parking.

B1 *Keep the White Barn meadow grazed and in grasses. Maintain the fences.*

B2 *Manage vegetation near the Public Access Parking area to retain screening from neighbors and to reveal the presence of a creek and riparian passage. Maintain the clarity of the hedgerow that has been replanted.*

Wild Iris Hedgerow

This Signature Hedgerow originally planted nearly a hundred years ago, runs along the south side of Stengel Creek. A portion of the original hedgerow was replanted in 2005 and the replanted cypresses have reached 25 to 30 feet tall. Certain clearing activities in this area served to emphasize the importance of planning, ecological impact assessment, and clear direction prior to, and during, such significant work. While clearing secondary cypress and alders along Stengel Creek, important habitat for river otter, deer, fox, and many bird species was disturbed. Attempts at mitigation were unsuccessful. Nature is restoring the habitat, but the experience needs to remain a constant reminder of the complexity of the TSR ecosystems.

B3 *Delete*

B4 *Consider opportunities to reveal the waterway, while giving special attention to protecting this rich habitat area.*

B5 *Trim and/or remove secondary growth in the form of both saplings and full-sized decadent trees that line the public access and TSR bluff trail.*

B6 *Coordinate with the bluff cypress program to manage aging cypress at the entrance to Stengel Beach.*

B7 *Consider preserving a current break in the hedgerow, which offers a view to the ocean by adding a resting log and keeping the native ground covers that are filling in the opening.*

White Barn Hedgerows.



Highway 1 Intersection

Access to the community facilities is at the top of a rise in the highway, just beyond the Barn and its clustered outbuildings. The sloping highway makes visibility of oncoming traffic challenging. Landscape management here should take into account both traffic safety and the value of clear recognition for the entry drive and the iconic White Barn. The Barn is one of the two Sea Ranch buildings that have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The access drive parallels a stretch of the very fine White Barn Hedgerow, which pairs with a shorter row to the north terminating at the far end of the barn. These hedgerows bracket the White Barn. The original cypresses have been maintained by trimming when storm damage occurs or aging branches break.

B8 Maintain the force and clarity of the hedgerows, which define and give character to this historic area and community gathering place.

B9 Modify or remove low vegetation that blocks visibility of oncoming highway traffic.

B10 Remove any overhanging and hazardous trees along the highway in coordination with Caltrans.

B11 Remove the pair of wax myrtles planted north of the access drive, which interfere with views to the highway and to the Barn.

B12 Remove brush along east side of the highway that blocks outlook across to the Stables Meadow.

B13 Trim trees along the west side of the highway and surrounding the Ohlson House to give greater and earlier visibility to the White Barn from cars traveling north on the highway.

Equestrian Center Hedgerow

The Equestrian Center Hedgerow consists of two segments. The upper segment extends eastward from the Stables' eastern fence line. The lower segment is between this fence line and Highway 1. Trees in the upper segment are diseased; this segment will need to be removed and replanted in the near future. The lower segment was the first Sea Ranch hedgerow to be replanted. The original was removed in 1999 due to disease. The new hedgerow is a tribute to the principle that Monterey cypress trees thrive when they have sunlight, adequate space, and are hardened off by some exposure to wind. Having achieved healthy growth and height, consideration is being given to pruning the interior of this hedgerow to accommodate the Stables Meadow Trail.

Members have raised concerns regarding the parking of horse trailers visible from the highway and properties above the Stables. Although the need for trailer parking close to the Stables is obvious, their visibility is contrary to the Restrictions, which require screening of vehicles on private lots.

B14 Consider linking a trail relocated through the hedgerow to the possible extension of a trail that descends between Rams Horn Reach and Packet Close, as called for in item A2.

B15 Remove and replant the upper segment of the Equestrian Center Hedgerow.

B16 Work with the Equestrian Center to devise a suitable means of screening or relocating the horse trailers.

B17 Manage the Equestrian Center Hedgerow. Take into account its role in defining the area and anticipate the need to limit its height. Maintain wind-protective density, as necessary.

B18 Limit the growth of vegetation outside the line of the hedgerow and up the slope behind the Stables. **B20** Remove the largest firs in clusters in Long Meadow.

B21 Remove cypresses from the drainage way leading to Arch Rock Road.



Equestrian Center

Entry at Whitesurf Road

The area immediately adjacent to Whitesurf Road could be an overlook for viewing the meadows below Albatross Reach to the north and the ocean in the distance.

B22 Remove trees and brush along the highway south of Whitesurf Road to open views from the highway.

B23 Remove brush in the ROW along Albatross Reach facing Whitesurf Road.

Highway 1 Intersection with Longmeadow Road

This is a key intersection, and it should be carefully managed. The intersection is the access from Highway 1 to properties in the Timber Ridge Forest and to the north end of Timber Ridge Road. It gives the best view of Long Meadow and a rock mound just to its north, where Longmeadow Road turns to head uphill.



Long Meadow.

B24 Keep grasses mown near the intersection to provide clear visibility.

B25 Manage the windswept growth on the Long Meadow outcropping to keep it from being obscured.

B26 Remove trees to the east and north of the mound that diminish the perceived scope of the meadow and the view to the forest front.



Remove trees that diminish the perceived scope of the meadow and the view to the forest front.

C. MEADOWS, HEDGEROWS AND RIPARIAN PASSAGES WEST OF HIGHWAY 1



The area west of Highway 1 is bounded on its north by the Wild Iris Hedgerow and related clusters of cypress and pine and by the vegetation spawned by Stengel Creek. Ohlson Meadow, partially developed with houses, extends to the Ohlson Hedgerow and beyond to Ohlson Recreation Meadow. This is a large meadow extending from the recreation center to the ocean bluff and south to Albatross Reach and Hedgerow Close. A trail follows the hedgerow to stairs that descend to Ohlson Beach. All the lots south of Ohlson Recreation Center are accessed from Whitesurf Road. On its north end, Albatross Reach ends at the ocean bluff and, with Cabrillo Reach, frames a large meadow. Longmeadow Creek and its band of riparian vegetation, form the southern boundary of Area 7.

Landscape management objectives for commons west of Highway 1 are:

- Continuing to maintain, nurture, and replace, when needed, the signature hedgerows in the area. Pruning where necessary to keep the clarity of their rows and manage secondary growth.
- Maintaining the meadows as open grasslands, removing voluntary trees where necessary and removing brush along the roads so that the meadows can be easily seen.
- Managing riparian passages to highlight their function and relationship to other landscape elements. Allowing growth to vary with the conditions of climate and soil, but controlling height and spread where the vegetation obstructs views or impedes enjoyment of the overall landscape.

Wild Iris and White Barn

The meadow to the south of the Wild Iris Hedgerow, once pasture for the barn and an oval horse track, is now Unit 36, the last residential subdivision laid out by the developer. The area was the subject of a Design Committee workshop with new owners. The workshop set some special guidelines for the placement and design of houses to protect views to the ocean from houses on White Barn Road and the upper part of Wild Iris. The guidelines called for architectural design compatible with the landmark White Barn. These provisions are recorded in the Unit 36 Plan accepted by the Design Committee in 1988.

C1 Implement the Unit 36 plan provisions. Prevent planting between houses that blocks views.

C2 Keep the bluff trail area clear of brush.



Ohlson Ranch Meadow.

Ohlson Ranch Meadow

Approximately half of the former pasture and track has been retained as open meadow, spreading to the ocean from the parking area in front of the Ohlson Ranch House. This meadow provides a splendid common overlook across grasses to the bluffs and to the ocean. It is viewed by many members from the parking area, and it merits recognition as one of the more prominent and visible meadows on The Sea Ranch.

C3 Keep Ohlson Ranch Meadow in grasses, removing seedlings and brush. Follow-up as necessary if grazing is ineffective. Control wild radish and mustard.

Ohlson Ranch Complex

This area includes special commons facilities, including the historic White Barn, the Ohlson Ranch House and Library, the Native Plants Demonstration Garden, and the Ohlson Recreation Center. The Recreation Center, like Moonraker Recreation Center, has been internationally recognized as an embodiment of the distinctive architecture of The Sea Ranch. Parking areas regularly serve the meeting and recreation facilities and are occasionally used by the White Barn for large special meetings and performances. There is minimal attention, however, to providing space or facilities for informal uses or for gatherings before or after performances.

C4 Make some simple, appropriately scaled and well-designed provisions for outdoor seating near the White Barn or other locations in the complex.

Ohlson Hedgerows

One Ohlson Hedgerow is between the ranch house and the Recreation Center. It consists of two segments: from Highway 1 to the Ohlson complex driveway and from the driveway to the bluff. This hedgerow forms the south boundary for the Ohlson Ranch House Meadow and it acts as a windbreak for the Ohlson Recreation Center. The second Ohlson Hedgerow is a thick stand of Monterey cypress south of the Recreation Center, planted by the developer, and it shelters the tennis courts. Because it is younger than the signature hedgerows, no actions other than routine maintenance are now needed.

Ohlson Creek runs through the upper segment of the first hedgerow south of the Native Plant Demonstration Garden and Ohlson Ranch House. The creek is overgrown with willow, blackberry, and broken-down cypress. One tall, healthy, original cypress stands at the Highway 1 end of hedgerow; it should be left as a visual reminder of the original hedgerow.



Ohlson Hedgerow.



Lower segment of the Ohlson Hedgerow.

Restoration of this upper segment as part of the whole is a difficult, but important, priority because of its historical role in planning for the area. The entire Ohlson complex was planned and designed around the hedgerows, which dominated the landscape of the area at the time. The upper and lower segments, when paired, create a visual gateway for entry to the Recreation Center and pool.

Ohlson Recreation Center and Starred Site

The Ohlson Recreation Center, the Starred site to its west, and the hedgerows are integrally connected. The buildings of the Center, the pool, and the tennis courts are an outstanding example of relating architecture and landscape in one configuration, using the aspects of each to reinforce the other. The Ohlson Recreation Meadow to the west provides outlook from the pool. The grounds around the center are now used for volley ball and picnicking. However, these areas are without the level of design care that the original complex exhibits.

The Starred site offers, within the context of long-term planning for The Sea Ranch, the opportunity to meet new needs, changing interests and activities, if related successfully to the existing hedgerow and structures. The Starred site has been neglected, with random growth of secondary cypress, scattered placement of utility structures, and awkward grading of the intersection of the trails and the walk to the beach.

C6 Initiate a professional integrative design study of improvements to both landscape and facilities in and near the Ohlson Recreation Center. The study should address management of Monterey cypress in and out of hedgerows, the trail to Ohlson Beach, creative ideas for use of the Starred site, and renovation of the buildings. This central gathering spot should be designed to exemplify the enduring values of The Sea Ranch.



*Ohlson Recreation Center,
Ohlson Recreation Meadow,
and Ohlson Hedgerow.*

Ohlson Ranch Meadow

The Recreation Center is fronted on the west by a large meadow reaching to the ocean bluff. The meadow is between a stand of tall bluff cypress and the properties along Albatross Reach where there is another short hedgerow that gives form to the spaces.

C7 Keep this meadow open. Eliminate any further encroachment by trees and brush.

Albatross Hedgerow and Hedgerow Close

The hedgerow here was replanted in 2013, and has struggled with cypress canker disease since. Most every tree in this hedgerow has been replaced once or as many as three times, as is illustrated by the varying sizes still seen there in 2022. The canker disease is still present in the hedgerow, though at this writing its color has improved and new growth is evident. This hedgerow represents an issue of growing concern as we evaluate the wisdom and effectiveness of planting a monocultural hedgerow prone to disease without a cure in an ever changing climate.



Commons at Albatross Reach and Whitesurf Road

C8 Retain some of the wind-distorted older cypresses, which illustrate how wind shapes vegetation along the bluff.

C9 Consider a Stewardship project to clear thistle that will otherwise spread to other properties and neighboring areas.

Wildberry Close

Tucked into the south of the vegetation band extending from the second Ohlson Recreation Center Hedgerow, a large outbreak of thistle has become problematic.

C9 Consider a Stewardship project to clear thistle that will otherwise spread to other properties and neighboring areas.

Commons Northwest of Intersection of Albatross Reach and Whitesurf Road

This patch of commons offers outlook to the northwest over houses to the ocean and southwest to the point at Arch Rock Road.

C10 Remove pine, firs and saplings to keep open. Retain a windswept cluster of shrubs at the bend to the west along the northern section of Albatross. Manage so that it is subdued by the wind, and prevent the shrubs from rising up to obscure outlook from the area.

Starred Site at Intersection of Albatross Reach and Arch Rock Road

This site is a key to understanding the larger landscape. Arch Rock Riparian starts as a steep canyon high above, near the intersection of Longmeadow Road with Schooner Drive. It descends to cross Long Meadow and the highway, entering a stand of vegetation associated with a Binker Barn house near the highway. It continues along the Starred site and through the commons towards the ocean along the north side of Arch Rock Road. Here, it joins the trail leading to the Bluff Trail and to a cypress-covered point that has a house shaped to join the land and vegetation.

C11 Leave the Starred site undeveloped, and manage it to allow the connection of these landscape elements to be perceived easily.

Arch Rock Road

The commons on the north side of Arch Rock Road visually expands the meadow between the Arch Rock Riparian and the houses on Cabrillo Close.

C12 Keep the commons meadow north of Arch Rock Road clear of brush, except where it is closely allied with the creek.

C13 Reduce the mass of cypresses on the point without losing its characteristic windswept, tapered shape.

C14 Manage the bluff cypress cluster at the end of Cabrillo Close per Bluff Cypress Management Program. Keep the rest log and the outlook from it.

LANDSCAPE PRINCIPLES

The CLC accepts the following principles for managing The Sea Ranch landscape. The committee expects the list will be refined or modified on the basis of experience.

Recognize that our landscape is defined by the ocean, by hedgerows and open meadows spaced along the length of the coast, and by a continuous band of forest and internal meadows descending its slopes.

Retain the sense of large landforms and special features that create differing places within The Sea Ranch.

Reinforce the awareness of streams and drainage paths that help shape the land and that sustain wildlife and plants.

Design and manage commons in accordance with the founding concept of clustered houses and vegetation.

Nurture strong neighborhood identities to aid in understanding and finding distinct locations within the community.

Understand that our landscape allows multiple layers of experience, from horizons and slopes to butterflies and mollusks.

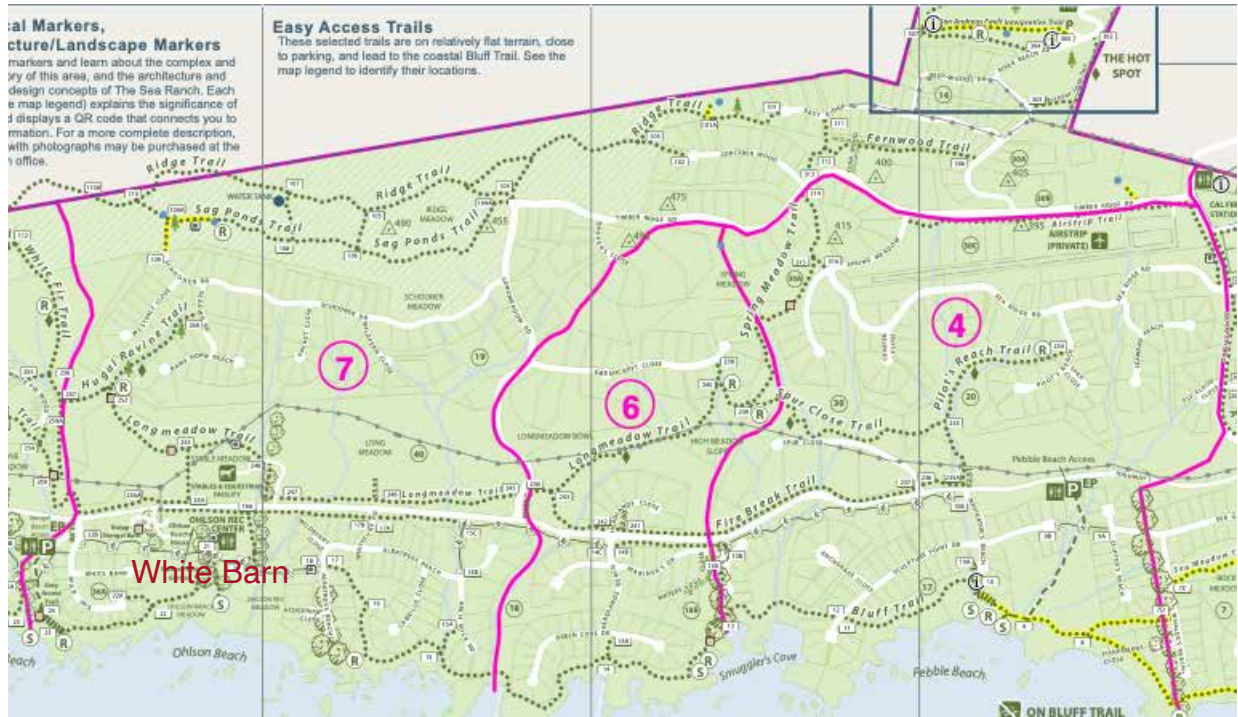
Manage vegetation to ensure abundant wildlife habitat and to provide for the safety and well-being of the community.

Organize the landscape to provide environmental benefits: wind shelter, solar access, and appropriate water flows and retention.

Recognize that landscape is always dynamic, and that it requires management in order to fulfill these guiding principles.



Aerial Photos: Kenneth and Gabrielle Adelman, California Coastal Records Project, www.californiacoastline.org.



Area 7 portion of the TSRA Trails Map

RESOURCES

- CLC Area Plan Reports for Commons Landscape Management. (CLC web page)
- CLC Area 6 and Area 8 Field Guides (CLC web page)
- THE SEA RANCH COMMONS LANDSCAPE: Commons Landscape Planning and Management 2010–2016.* (CLC web page.)
- TSR Forests – Sea Ranch Values and 21st Century Science:* (https://www.tsra.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FTF_Guidelines_Final_May2020b.pdf.)
- TSR Landscape Management Programs* slide show by Bill Wiemeyer. (CLC web page)
- Various TSR Fire Safety and Fuel Management Plans. (TSR Fire Safety Task Force (TSRA web site))
- Condition and Management of the Vegetation at The Sea Ranch.* Joe McBride, 2012-13. (Forest Task Force web site.)
- TSR Hedgerow Rehabilitation Plan* (CLC web page.)
- Protocols for CLC Neighbor Group Stewardship.* (CLC web page and DCEM)

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