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Resource Inventory

Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park General Plan and IS/MND

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT May 23, 2016

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This Document was prepared by:



In Association With:

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I. INTRODUCTION

Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park (Pigeon Point SHP) is a jewel along the central California coast with a rich cultural history in a dynamic natural setting. Serving approximately 150,000 visitors annually, Pigeon Point SHP is best known for the 115-foot lighthouse perched atop a long promontory extending dramatically into the Pacific Ocean near the southern end of the park. Still in use, though no longer open to the public, the Pigeon Point Lighthouse serves as a destination for many visitors and a visual landmark for those simply passing by. The Lighthouse is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a California Historic Landmark.

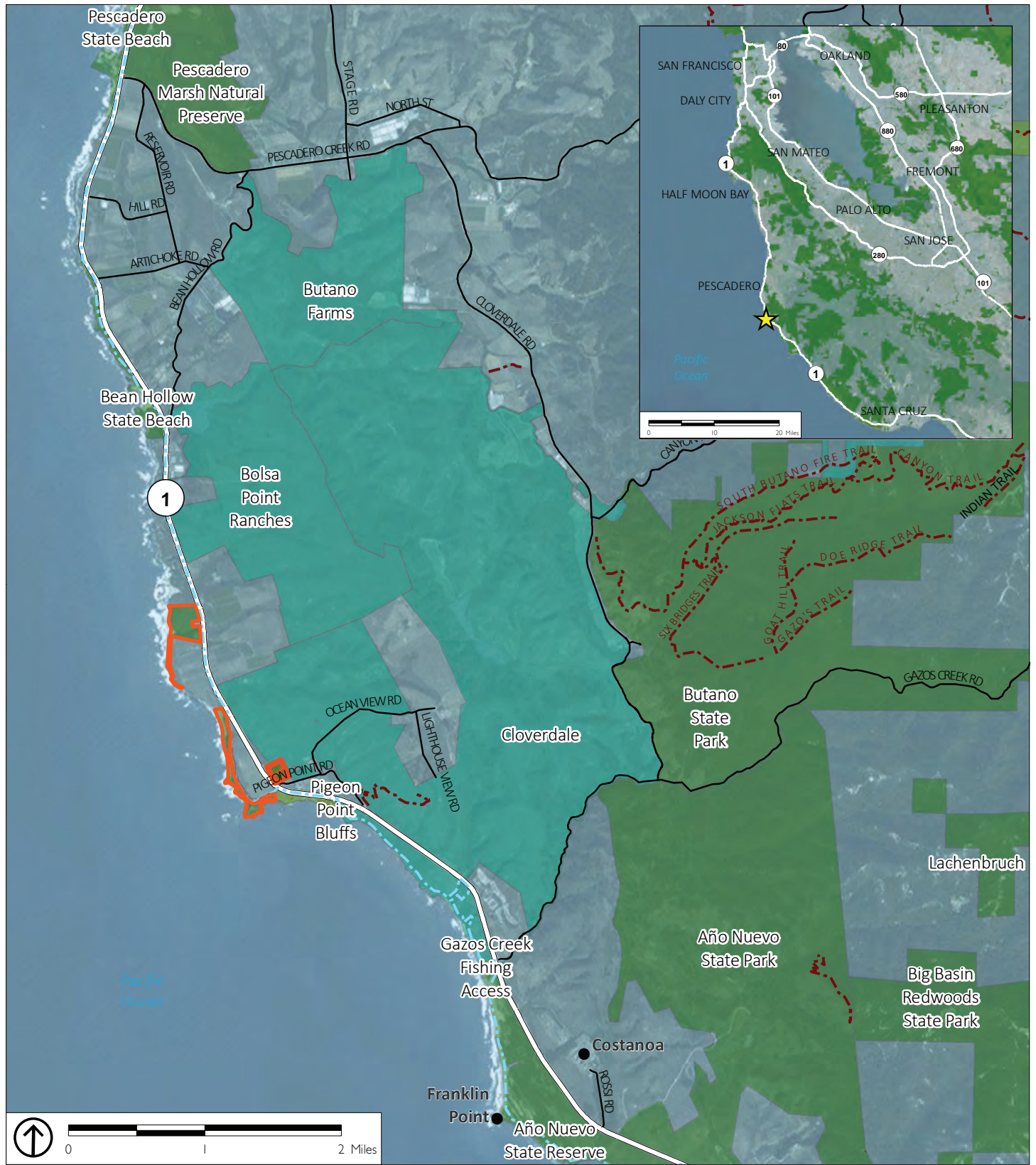
Throughout the park, visitors are provided breathtaking coastal views with opportunities to whale watch and observe other marine creatures and habitats. A limited trail network along the bluff and informal beach access points bring visitors into the park, and the on-site hostel, operating within the former Lighthouse Keepers' Dwellings, offers low-cost accommodations for people traveling along the coast. The park was recently expanded to include a new parcel north of the existing park and is undergoing a fundraising effort to renovate and reopen the Lighthouse to the public.

LOCATION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

As shown in Figure 1.1, Pigeon Point SHP is located in San Mateo County, approximately 50 miles south of San Francisco, California. The publicly accessible areas of the park sit between the Pacific Ocean and State Route 1, also called the Cabrillo Highway, (Highway 1). Highway 1 is a "Scenic Corridor," as discussed later in this document, and

is a popular driving and cycling route for local and regional visitors, as well as national and international tourists. As shown in Figure 1.2, Pigeon Point SHP is predominately surrounded by other open space and active agricultural land. The nearest population center is the town of Pescadero, located approximately 11 miles northeast of Pigeon Point SHP. Año Nuevo State Reserve is located approximately four-and-a-half miles south, and Bean Hollow and Pescadero State Beaches are located four and six miles north, respectively.

Figure 1.1: Local and Regional Context



- Pigeon Point Light Station SHP
- Existing Trails
- Existing or Proposed Coastal Trail Route
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Department
- Peninsula Open Space Trust

As shown in Figure 1.2, Pigeon Point SHP is composed of three unique parcels. The southern parcel, which contains the Lighthouse, is the only parcel that is currently open to the public. In this document, this parcel is referred to as the “Light Station Parcel,” because it includes the peninsula which contains the Lighthouse and adjacent buildings, including the hostel. In total, the Light Station Parcel is approximately 29 acres. In addition to the Lighthouse, the parcel includes the bluff and beach areas to the north and south of the peninsula, which feature both formal and informal trails and access points to sandy beach areas, rocky overlooks, and tide pools.

The northern parcel is approximately 37 acres and is located two miles north of the Light Station Parcel. In this document, this parcel is referred to as the “Bolsa Point Parcel,” because it is referred to locally by this name. It includes a coastal plateau between Highway 1 and the Pacific Ocean, the bluff, a sandy beach area, and a riparian drainage corridor. A section of the parcel extends to the south along the ocean, creating a thin offshoot between the bluff and the water. The Bolsa Point Parcel was acquired by California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) in 2015

from Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), a local open space advocacy organization. The parcel is currently not open to the public nor does it have any utilities connected to it.

The eastern parcel is approximately 9 acres and is located east of Highway 1 from the Light Station Parcel. Use of this parcel is through an easement agreement with the United States government. The intended use of this parcel is the development of a new well to provide water to the Light Station Parcel, which is described later in this document. There will not be public access to the eastern parcel.






Beach in Bolsa Point Parcel



View of Lighthouse and Carpenters Shop from Deck

Figure 1.2: Site Context



-  Pigeon Point Light Station SHP
-  Pigeon Point Light Station SHP - Easement
-  10 foot contour

BRIEF HISTORY

Rocky offshore conditions and the strong bedrock of the peninsula where the Lighthouse sits today have helped define the legacy of Pigeon Point SHP. The buildings and interpretive elements at Pigeon Point SHP tell the story of the park and the region.

Pre-European Period

Prior to European settlement along the California coast, the Pigeon Point area was inhabited by the Ohlone, a large interconnected network of smaller tribes that shared a primary language group, “Costanoan.”¹ Costanoan-speaking people once occupied a large territory from San Francisco Bay in the north to the Big Sur and Salinas Rivers in the south.² Some descendants still prefer the term “Costanoan,” while others prefer “Ohlone” or more readily identify with more specific tribelet names.

The area directly around Pigeon Point area was inhabited by an Ohlone tribelet, called the Quiroste, who inhabited the coastal and inland areas from Bean Hollow to Año Nuevo.³ The Quiroste hunted and fished the area and collected plant foods, such as grass seeds, acorns, bulbs and tubers. Additionally, the Quiroste controlled the local source of Monterey chert, the primary stone tool resource among coastal groups.

Today, the Muwekma Ohlone and Amah Mutsun Tribal Band incorporate descendants of the Quiroste people and they still have a strong presence in San Mateo County. The 220-acre Quiroste Valley Cultural Preserve, established in 2009 within Año Nuevo State Park, honors Quiroste identity and place.

1 Levy, Richard. (1978). Costanoan, in Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8 (California). William C. Sturtevant, and Robert F. Heizer, eds. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978.

2 Milliken, Randall, Richard T. Fitzgerald, Mark G. Hylkema, Randy Groza, Tom Origer, David G. Bieling, Alan Leventhal, Randy S. Wiberg, Andrew Gottfield, Donna Gillette, Vaviana Bellifemine, Eric Strother, Robert Cartier, and David A. Fredrickson. Punctuated Culture Change in the San Francisco Bay Area, In Prehistoric California: Colonization, Culture, and Complexity. Edited by T.L. Jones and K.A. Klar, pp. 99–124, AltaMira Press, 2007.

3 Milliken, et al., 2009.

Spanish and Mexican Periods

The first European expedition into the vicinity of Pigeon Point occurred on October 23, 1769 with the arrival of Spanish expeditionary forces. As was common throughout the Americas following the arrival of Europeans, population numbers of indigenous people decreased significantly due to the introduction of new diseases and food shortages. The Spanish established their presence in the greater region by founding missions and presidios. During the mission period, the Pigeon Point area was a cattle ranch station for Mission Santa Cruz.

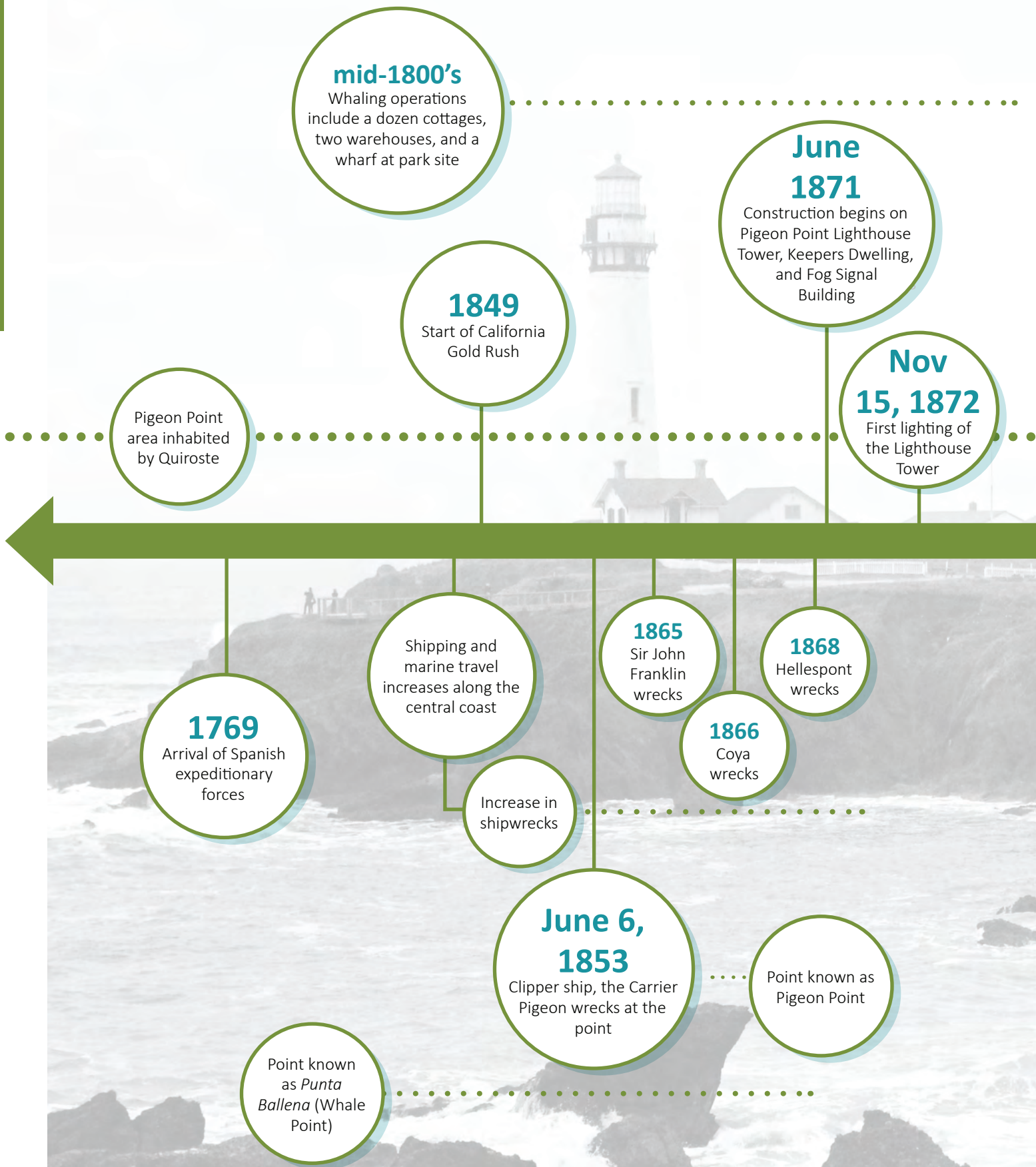
The missions waned in control during Mexican rule of California from the 1820’s to 1848. Settlement in the region began to expand at this time as the Mexican government awarded large grants of land to wealthy and politically influential individuals willing to settle the area. The Pigeon Point area was part of the Mexican land grant, Rancho Punta del Año Nuevo, in which the grantees used the lands for cattle pasture and agriculture.⁴

4 Clark, Matthew R., An Expanded and Revised Archaeological Reconnaissance of the Pigeon Point Public Access Improvement Project, San Mateo County, California. Holman & Associates, Archaeological Consultants, Report on file, Northwest Information Center, California Historical Resources Information System, Sonoma State University, July 2005.

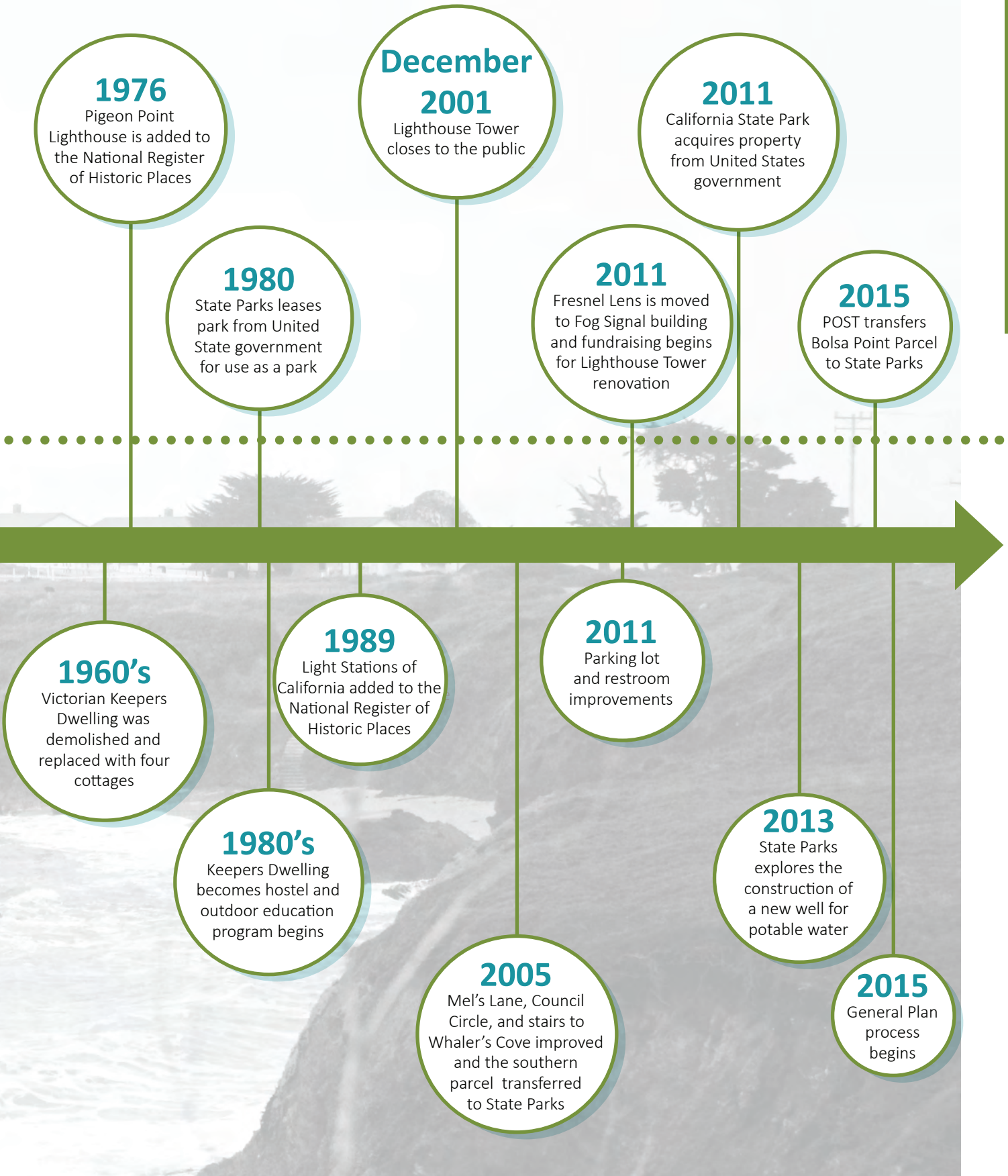


*Keepers House at Pigeon Point in 1873
(source: Ann Steel's Collection)*

A brief history of Pigeon Point



.....and the establishment of Pigeon Point State Historic Park





Pigeon Point Light Station circa 1950 (source: United States Coast Guard)

Early American Period

Originally called Punta Ballena (“Whale Point”), the park site was utilized as a whaling station from the mid-1800’s into the early twentieth century.⁵⁶ Increased maritime activity, as well as the arrival of new Californians during the Gold Rush, led to higher levels of ships passing along the central coast. The coast’s rocky shoreline coupled with limited visibility due to fog, proved dangerous for many ships that wrecked while navigating the area. During the 1850s and 1860s, at least four major shipwrecks created significant public outcry, including the 1853 wreck of a clipper ship, the “Carrier Pigeon,” for which the point was renamed.

Development of the Light Station

Determined to make this location safer for shipping, the United States government approved and appropriated funds for a lighthouse in the region. Although there were early debates over the location, the “Coast and Geodetic

Survey Report” dated June 9, 1855, concluded that Pigeon Point possessed many advantages over other locations due to greater visibility.⁷

Work on the Lighthouse Tower and the Fog Signal Building at Pigeon Point began in June 1871 and it was pronounced ready for its first light on November 1872. The Lighthouse was designed and built based on a standardized design adapted from ones employed on the eastern seaboard, making it unique because it is the only tower of this type constructed on the Pacific Coast. Additionally, it is unusually tall for the region.⁸ Upon completion, the foundation at the base of the tower was designed to be over 8-feet thick, and the completed structure was 115-feet high, making the entire structure 150 feet above the water. Pigeon Point and Point Arena in Mendocino County share the distinction of being the tallest towers on the west coast.⁹

5 San Mateo County Department of Environmental Planning, Planning Division, *Coastside Cultural Resources of San Mateo County*, California. Redwood City, CA, 1980. p.65.

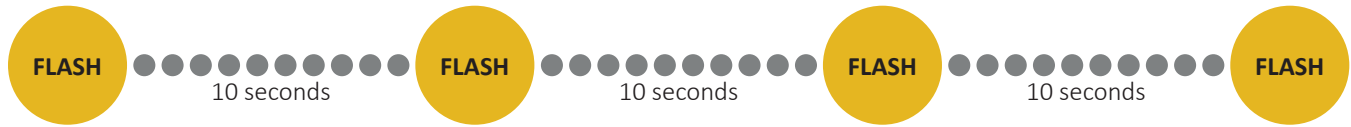
6 Hynding, Alan, *From Frontier to Suburb: The Story of the San Mateo Peninsula*. Star Publishing Company, Belmont, CA, 1982.

7 E.G. O’Keefe, LCDR, Chief, Marine Environmental Protection Branch. 12th US Coast Guard District. “National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form: Pigeon Point Lighthouse.” 10 November 1976.

8 Architectural Resources Group, Inc. (ARG), *Draft Historic Structures Report Pigeon Point Light Station, Pescadero, California*. Prepared for California State Parks Foundation and California State Parks. April 2013.

9 Regnery, Dorothy, *National Register of Historic Places—Nomination Form for CA-SMA-170H, the Pigeon Point Lighthouse*. On file, Northwest Information Center, California Historical Resources Information System, Sonoma State University, 1976.

Figure 1.3: Pigeon Point’s Lighthouse Flash Pattern



The other unique feature of the Pigeon Point Lighthouse was the Fresnel lens that was used as the light in the tower. Constructed in Paris, France, the lens was “first-order”, meaning it was the largest and most powerful lens used in lighthouses on the Pacific Coast at the time of construction. The lens is 7 feet- 10 inches high with an inside diameter of 6 feet- 1 inch.

The Light Station complex at Pigeon Point also included lighthouse keepers’ dwellings and accompanying outbuildings for keepers and their families to live at the point. Houses for keepers and assistant keepers were an essential component of light stations. At Pigeon Point, the Keepers’ Dwelling was constructed as a freestanding building, which was typical of larger light stations. The original Keepers’ Dwelling was a Victorian duplex and included a shed outbuilding. Around 1900, a rear addition was built, creating a fourplex.

Although the light sources have been upgraded over time, the Pigeon Point Lighthouse has been in continuous operation since its first lighting and has been using the same flash pattern to guide ships along the course for the entire time of its operation. Pigeon Point’s flash pattern is one flash every ten seconds.

Although no major structural changes have been made to the Lighthouse Tower, some of the other buildings have been remodeled since original construction. In 1899, the original Fog Signal Building was in poor condition and was replaced with the current structure. The Keepers’ Dwelling and outbuilding were demolished in 1960, and four new cottages were built to serve as the keepers’ residences.¹⁰

¹⁰ Regnery, 1976.

State Park Era

In 1980, State Parks leased Pigeon Point Light Station from the United States government for use as a public park. By 1986, the Keepers’ Dwellings were converted to a hostel offering overnight accommodations for up to 59 people. Environmental education programs for local school-aged youth in the area have been operating out of the site and utilizing the hostel for overnight stays since the mid-1980’s. Public access to the tower was stopped in December 2001, due to issues with structural integrity.

In the early 2000’s, the area to the east and south of the Lighthouse, today known as “Whaler’s Cove,” was owned by a private owner who constructed small cabins along the bluff with the intent of operating a bed-and-breakfast style hotel catering to dog owners. The property was later sold to POST and then transferred to State Parks for long term management. The cabins were demolished and POST worked with State Parks to develop the Council Circle and Mel’s Lane along the bluff in this area. Later, POST helped to develop the path and stairway to the beach at Whaler’s Cove.



Informational Signage at Park about Land Transfer

LIGHT STATIONS OF CALIFORNIA

In September 2011, the property containing the Lighthouse and the adjacent beach area were transferred from the United States government to State Parks at no cost. In November 2011, the Fresnel lens was removed from the Lighthouse Tower and put on exhibit in the Fog Signal Building.¹¹ The move was an initial step in drawing public support for renovating the tower, spearheaded by the California State Parks Foundation. Renovation documents and cost estimates have been completed and fundraising is underway. For purposes of the General Plan, it is expected that the Lighthouse will reopen to the public and serve as a major new visitor draw for the park.

In 2015, State Parks acquired the Bolsa Point Parcel from POST and expanded the overall size of Pigeon Point SHP from 29 to 66 acres. Although the two parcels are disconnected, they are still considered part of the same park unit. Additionally, in 2015, San Mateo County issued a violation for poor water quality in the existing well serving Pigeon Point SHP. State Parks gained an easement from the United States government for the 9.1 acre area east of Highway 1 to dig new wells for potable water.

¹¹ ARG, 2013.

The Pigeon Point Lighthouse was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 and is also registered as a California Historic Landmark. However, the light station as a whole also serves an important and unique destination. In 1989, the stations, as a group, were added as a multiple property listing to the National Register of Historic Places, as they serve as important landmarks of maritime transportation along the Pacific Coast. This document outlines the key elements that help to define the California light stations, which at a minimum included a light tower designed to hold a Fresnel lens, a keeper's dwelling, and a fog warning signal, as well as unique features that help to define the individual stations.

In addition to Pigeon Point Light Station, four of these light stations are protected as part of the California State Parks system:

Point Cabrillo State Historic Park. Located in Mendocino, this park includes the Lighthouse with a third order Fresnel lens, the Carpenter's Building, the Oil House, and three original Keepers' Dwellings and outbuildings. Restoration of the structures began in 1995 and continued until 2014. The



Lighthouse at Point Cabrillo State Historic Park

Lighthouse is 47 feet tall and is open to the public every day from 11am to 4pm. The Lighthouse includes a small exhibition space and gift shop on the ground floor. The Carpenter's Building currently houses a Marine Science Exhibit and Aquarium. The Keeper's Dwellings are used as vacation rentals and only available to guests staying at the park.

Point Sur State Historic Park. This park is located 19 miles south of Carmel. The Lighthouse contains a first order Fresnel lens which sits 361 feet above the ocean. The light station also includes the Carpenters' Building, the Barn, the Water Tower, and the Headkeeper's Quarters. All buildings have been restored through a partnership with the Central Coast Lighthouse Keepers and local volunteers.

Montara State Beach. This park, located 8 miles north of Half Moon Bay, includes the Point Montara Light Station. The Lighthouse is 30 feet tall and includes a fourth order Fresnel lens. Similar to Pigeon Point Light Station, the Keepers' Dwellings and Fog Signal Building are used as a hostel managed by Hosteling International.

GENERAL PLAN PROCESS

Pigeon Point SHP does not currently have a General Plan. According to the California State Parks Planning Handbook (April 2010):

The general plan is the primary management document for a unit, defining a framework for resource stewardship, interpretation, facilities, visitor use, and operations. General plans define an ultimate purpose, vision, and intent for unit management through goal statements, guidelines, and broad objectives, but stop short of defining specific objectives, methodologies designs, and timelines on how and when to accomplish these goals.

Importantly, General Plans must be in place before State Parks can dedicate resources to improvements of a park unit. The goal of a General Plan is not to suggest specific projects. Rather it provides a larger framework and it helps move the park forward towards implementing necessary and significant improvements.



Keeper's Dwelling at Point Cabrillo State Historic Park



Lighthouse at Point Cabrillo State Historic Park (source: wikimedia commons)

The General Plan process for Pigeon Point will entail a comprehensive site analysis and stakeholder outreach to aide in the development of conceptual General Plan visioning materials. A public meeting and online outreach component will engage the public to provide feedback on ideas and concepts for the plan.

Because General Plans are considered a "project" for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Pigeon Point SHP General Plan process will be accompanied by an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). Project-level environmental review may be needed as specific projects move forward at the park.

PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Each California State Park develops a “Declaration of Purpose” to define the purpose of the park and broad management goals for the park. The Declaration of Purpose for Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park, as stated in November 1998 Resource Summary for the park in November 1998, is as follows:

The purpose of Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park is to make available to people, forever, for their observation, enlightenment and enjoyment, the historic Pigeon Point Light Station with its outstanding cultural, natural and scenic values.

The department shall define and execute a program of management to perpetuate the unit’s declared values and provide interpretation that makes these values available in a manner consistent with their perpetuation through well-planned facilities, programs, visitor services, and maintenance.

With the expected renovation of the Lighthouse Tower and the recent expansion of the park to the north, Pigeon Point SHP is in a transitional phase. The General Plan is intended to serve as a guiding document that highlights the many assets of the park and provides guidance for the future improvements. Following are identified goals for the General Plan process. The goals will ensure that the plan is in line with State Parks’ mission and address the unique conditions of Pigeon Point SHP.

- 1. Develop a streamlined, implementation-focused approach to the General Plan process.** The project should build on key findings from previous studies and move the park closer to implementing improvements.
- 2. Plan a comprehensive site with enhanced visitor experience.** The site is an exciting visitor destination and the experience should be dynamic, with numerous recreational opportunities.
- 3. Highlight the California State Historic Park experience.** Pigeon Point Light House Station State Historic Park is a unique asset for California residents and should be featured as an important public resource.
- 4. Strengthen connectivity within site and access to the park.** Orientation within the site should be clear for all visitors and site amenities should be easy to access and enjoy. Wayfinding and signage should help orient users of the site.
- 5. Provide affordable coastal recreation amenities.** The Pacific coastline is a popular recreational destination; however, accommodations can be costly and access can be limited. In addition to services provided by the hostel, improved recreational amenities and camping at the Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park could provide low-cost amenities for residents and visitors from distant locations.
- 6. Increase habitat and ecological resource protection.** Coastal habitat is a valuable and endangered natural resource. The plan for the area should restore and enhance ecological conditions.



Visitors at Pigeon Point SHP

7. **Consider the long-term use of the park and create a document that takes the park into the future.** The General Plan will guide long-term improvements at Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park. The plan must provide a vision for the park that will last and continue to provide inspiration to park users for years to come.
8. **Provide operation and maintenance sufficient to support site improvements and programs.** The plan components must be realistic in terms of site amenities and availability of State Parks staffing. Future improvements must prioritize self-sustaining elements that benefit from increased operations but do not depend on them.

RESOURCE INVENTORY

This Resource Inventory is intended to provide a concise overview of the existing conditions and context of Pigeon Point Light Station, including local resources, the environmental setting, current facilities, modes of access, planning constraints, and valuable opportunities. The information presented here was developed through a combined effort of field research and site analysis, as well as feedback provided by community members and key stakeholders. The document will be used to inform the General Plan and serve as the framework for a strategy that maximizes potential at Pigeon Point Light Station while preserving the treasured quality of the site. The Resource Inventory is composed of the following chapters:

Chapter One: Introduction. This chapter presents an overview of Pigeon Point SHP in terms of its location and brief history and goals for the project.

Chapter Two: Site Context and Existing Resources. This chapter presents the site in geographical context as well as the environmental setting, provides an overview of access, describes biological resources, provides a brief historical overview of cultural resources of the site, and discusses relevant planning efforts, regulatory considerations, and recent projects.



California State Parks Signage

Chapter Three: Site Analysis: Circulation and Use Patterns. This chapter summarizes circulation, key uses/activity density, facilities, views, and beach assets.

Chapter Four: Opportunities and Considerations. This chapter highlights key opportunities for new facilities or restoration at Pigeon Point SHP, as well as potential limitations.

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II. SITE CONTEXT AND EXISTING RESOURCES

Point Light Station State Historic Park (Pigeon Point SHP) can offer site visitors a unique mix of interactive cultural history and memorable outdoor experiences. This chapter provides an introduction to the site through a discussion of environmental conditions of the region; an examination of site features and park layout; and a review of existing biological, cultural, and recreational resources. The chapter additionally provides a planning context for the General Plan through the examination of on-going efforts at the park and the region and regulatory considerations.

SITE TOUR

Figure 2.1 provides a snapshot tour of Pigeon Point SHP. The figure includes numbers that illustrate the approximate location of the corresponding image.

The purpose of Figure 2.1 is to provide context and serve as a general reference for the discussion of resources provided in this chapter. The photo montage includes images of both the Bolsa Point Parcel and Light Station Parcel, including the lighthouse and hostel area. The photos are intended to provide an overview of the full site while individual features are presented throughout this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Pigeon Point SHP is located in California's Central Coast region. The coastal conditions share more similarities than conditions further inland and can be distinctively different than areas just off the coast.

CLIMATE

The climate along California's Central Coast is characterized by cold, wet winters and drier, warmer summers. Rain may fall between November and March, and sometimes even summer can bring cold fog, especially in the mornings. Fog can block the lighthouse or other features of the site such

Figure 2.1: Photo Locations



--- Pigeon Point Light Station SHP

1

beach in Bolsa Point Parcel



2

dirt road to beach in Bolsa Point Parcel



3

view of lighthouse from Pigeon Point Bluffs (south of park)



4

entryway to Historic Core



5

deck on Fog Signal Building



6

overlook above Whaler's Cove



7

Pistachio Beach





Bluff

as the surrounding coastline, and people might have to wait to get better views of the site. Typically, wind blows in from the north down the Pacific Coastline. While average wind speeds are 9 miles per hour, wind speeds can be dramatically higher on the point at times, with a record high of 64 miles per hour during the winter months.¹

Average annual precipitation in the nearby community of San Gregorio, located approximately nine miles north of the Park, is 29.42 inches; annual temperatures average 55 degrees Fahrenheit, ranging from an average maximum temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit, to an average minimum temperature of 43 degrees Fahrenheit.²

TOPOGRAPHY

Elevation within the park ranges from sea level at the beach to between 20 and 35 feet along the bluff in both the Light Station and Bolsa Point Parcel. At most points along the bluff the elevation change is steep and sudden, although there are some moments along the shore where the slope is gradual enough to allow access. However, even at some of the steeper sections, there is evidence of site users scaling the bluff to access the beach. The area between the

bluff and Highway 1 in the Bolsa Point Parcel is relatively flat with approximately 40 feet of elevation change across this section of the site. The park easement east of Highway 1 slopes gently upward to about 80 feet in elevation.³

WATER RESOURCES

The entire Pigeon Point SHP occurs within the Coastal Zone for San Mateo County and is held to State and County regulations for this area. A willow riparian wetland community is present in the Bolsa Point Parcel, surrounding the mouth of Spring Bridge Gulch. Yankee Jim Gulch meets at the ocean just north of the Light Station Parcel, creating a sandy inland, called Pistachio Beach.

SOILS

The soils in the southern part of the Bolsa Point Parcel closest are Elkhorn sandy loam, which has a thick surface and is well drained. Erosion hazard is slight. Watsonville loam is located further north of the Elkhorn sandy loam. Watsonville loam's water capacity is low, runoff is slow to medium, and erosion hazard is moderate.⁴ Most of the

¹ Almanac: Historic Information, 30 March 2016. <<http://www.myforecast.com/bin/climate.m?city=K93Q&metric=false>>

² Pigeon Point Light Station Resource Summary, 1998.

³ Pigeon Point Light Station Resource Summary, 1998.

⁴ United States Department of Agriculture. "Web Soil Survey." Web Soil Survey. Web. 08 Feb. 2016. <<http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>>.

Figure 2.2: Adjacent Land Uses



Light Station Parcel, including the Historic Core is covered with Elkhorn sandy loam where the water holding capacity is good, rate of runoff is slow, and erosion hazard is slight.⁵

AESTHETICS RESOURCE

Pigeon Point SHP is a landmark and destination not just for Californians but for many visitors across the world. There are many opportunities to enjoy the site, including the views of the coast, the quaint elements of the historic light station and surrounding buildings, as well as the many recreation options that visitors can engage in.

SURROUNDING LAND USE

The central coast is characterized by agriculture, private residences and protected open space. Recent historic and current use of the flatlands within this section of the coast is primarily agricultural, and there is a strong agricultural community and support network within the region. A portion of the farmland adjacent to Pigeon Point SHP across Pigeon Point Road is classified as Farmland of Statewide Importance according to the California Department of Conservation. Other neighboring parcels are classified as Prime and Unique Farmland.

⁵ Pigeon Point Light Station Resource Summary. 1998.



Pigeon Point Bluffs (San Mateo County Property)

In order to be displayed on Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Important Farmland Maps as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance, land must meet both land use and soil criteria. For Land Use, it must have been used for irrigated agricultural production during the past four years. Irrigated land use is determined by analyzing current aerial photos, comment letters, and released GIS data with field verification. The soil must meet physical and chemical criteria for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance determined by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Some of these include flooding, erodibility, and soil temperature range. The term 'Prime' relating to rating agricultural use has two meanings in California. FMMP decides the location and extent of 'Prime Farmland' discussed above; and under the State's Williamson Act, land may be listed under the 'Prime Agricultural Land' designation if it meets certain economic or production criteria.⁶

There is also a significant amount of protected open space in the region. Pigeon Point Bluffs is located directly south of the Light Station Parcel and is owned by the San Mateo County Parks Department. This property includes the area between the beach and Highway 1. The Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) owns the property south of Pigeon Point Bluffs to Gazos Creek State Beach, which also includes the area from the beach to Highway 1.

POST also owns Cloverdale Coastal Ranches, a 6,391-acre open space property located to the east of Highway 1 across from Pigeon Point SHP. POST partners with local farmers and ranchers for management of the property. The site also includes some trail features, including Wilbur's Watch, which brings hikers up the hill to a viewpoint overlooking the ocean including views of Pigeon Point SHP.

Along the coast, San Gregorio State Beach is located ten miles to the north of Pigeon Point SHP and Año Nuevo State Reserve is located approximately four-and-a-half miles south. Nearby inland parks include Butano State Park, Big Basin Redwoods State Park, and West Waddell Creek State Wilderness.

⁶ Department of Conservation "Prime Farmland as Mapped by FMMP. Web. 30 Mar. 2016. <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/overview/Pages/prime_farmland_fmmp.aspx>.

An additional nearby destination is Costanoa, a resort consisting of a wooden main lodge, cabins, tent bungalows, RV sites and regular tent sites. Costanoa is located on the east side of Highway 1 approximately 4.4 miles south of Pigeon Point SHP. The resort has significantly more capacity for overnight guests than the Pigeon Point Hostel but lodging prices are higher.

REGIONAL OPEN SPACE CONNECTIONS

The California Coastal Trail is a network of public trails for walking, biking, and equestrian uses along the 1,100 mile California coastline. Although Mel's Lane, shown in Figure 2.2, is a segment of the Coastal Trail, there is no continuous connection to the California Coastal Trail from Pigeon Point traveling south. The closest connection is near Gazos Creek, about two and a half miles from Whaler's Cove.

ACCESS

Visitors to Pigeon Point SHP typically arrive by motor vehicle, including personal car or tour bus. Some school field trips will arrive in school buses and some travelers bring their recreation vehicle (RV) to the park. Although less common than motorized vehicles, some visitors arrive by bicycle or stop at the park as part of a longer journey.

VEHICULAR

Pigeon Point SHP is located along Highway 1. The Light Station Parcel is accessed from Pigeon Point Road which intersects with Highway 1 at two places at either end of the parcel. The Bolsa Point Parcel is directly adjacent to Highway 1. As part of the California highway system, Highway 1 is managed by California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), while Pigeon Point Road is managed by San Mateo County. The road is approximately 25 feet wide; however the County owns a 50-foot right of way for the road. Historically, RVs parked along Pigeon Point Road; a berm was constructed along the road to prevent this use.



Parking along Pigeon Point Road

The existing parking lot is located off of Pigeon Point Road in the southern section of Pigeon Point SHP. The parking lot can accommodate 28 vehicles. Parking can be difficult, as the existing parking lot is often full. Additionally, there is no RV or bus parking and these larger vehicles tend to park along the road. Parking stalls are not delineated in the existing lot resulting in inefficient parking. When the parking lot is full, visitors tend to park along the shoulder of Pigeon Point Road both to the north and to the east.

BICYCLE

Many bicyclists travel to Pigeon Point along Highway 1. This section of the highway is part of the Pacific Coast Bike Route and may attract bicycle tourists on longer events or people making shorter trips down the coast. Many bikers will stop for water during their passage either north or south of the park.

PARK LAYOUT

Pigeon Point SHP is composed of three parcels. Two of these parcels, the Light Station Parcel and the Bolsa Point Parcel, are currently or planned to be open to the public, while the third, the easement across Highway 1, will be used to provide water for the park, and will not be open to the public.



View of Lighthouse and Historic Core from North



Lighthouse and Attached Oil House

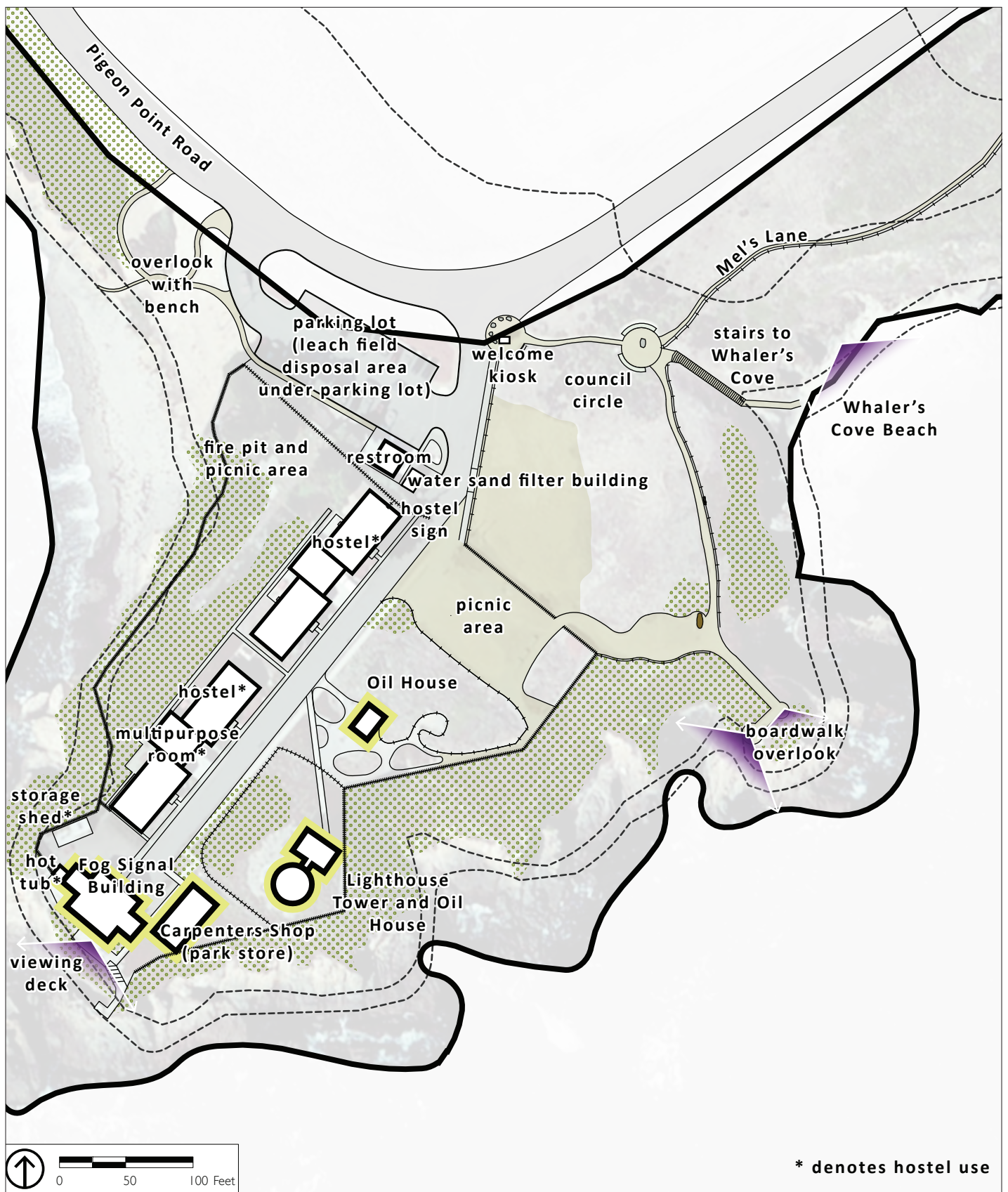
LIGHT STATION PARCEL

The Light Station Parcel contains the “Historic Core,” of the Pigeon Point SHP. While the area around the lighthouse is currently the most active part of the park, the parcel includes many additional assets, including beaches, bluffs, and trails. Figure 2.3 illustrates the elements within the Historic Core. Features from the greater Light Station Parcel will be discussed later within this section and are highlighted in Figure 2.4.

Lighthouse and Attached Oil House

The Lighthouse Tower and Attached Oil House are the most visually prominent structures within the Historic Core. Situated near the center of the point, the Lighthouse Tower and Attached Oil House sit slightly above the structures on a slight berm. As the tower is no longer open to the public, there is currently a chainlink fence surrounding the structures, which will be removed once the tower reopens.

Figure 2.3: Historic Core





Fog Signal Building (east facade)



Fog Signal Building (west facade and deck)

Fog Signal Building

The Fog Signal Building is located at the western most end of the point and currently houses the Fresnel lens and serves as museum space. Due to its location at the end of the main pathway and its function as a museum, the Fog Signal Building is the most visited attraction at the park. During operating hours, docents are stationed in the Fog Signal Building to answer questions from park visitors.

The building is made up of one large central room, approximately 50 feet by 20 feet in dimension, and two smaller north and south wings. The main room houses the lens and interpretive exhibits about the light station, including an architectural model of the light station. The southern wing is a private office for docents and the northern wing is a private office for the manager of the hostel. The wings have windows on the east and west sides of the building.

There is a viewing deck located on the western side of the Fog Signal Building. The fog signal horns are located on the exterior west façade above the viewing deck. To access the deck, visitors must leave through the east doorway and walk around the building. The eastern doorway is a double



Fresnel Lens in the Fog Signal Building

doorway. The exterior door is a wood rail-and-stile door while the interior is partially glass. This configuration allows for the wooden door to remain open, allowing visitors to see the Fresnel lens and interior of the building, while the closed glass door prevents cold air and wind from whipping into the building. There is no door along the western façade although the Historic Structure Report notes that, “the outline of a door is clearly visible, but the door opening itself has been fitted with horizontal wood siding.”⁷

Carpenters Shop

The Carpenters Shop is located directly adjacent to the Fog Signal Building to the south. Today, a portion of the Carpenters Shop is used as the park store which is managed by the Coastside State Parks Association (CSPA) and staffed by volunteer docents. The shop is located on the east side of the Carpenters Shop and sells historical material and souvenirs. There is additionally a donation box onsite that is also managed by CSPA. All donations contributed at Pigeon Point SHP go towards projects for the park and are not distributed to the other parks where CSPA works. There is a small restroom for docents and employees located in the center of the Carpenters Shop, which has running water. The residence for the hostel manager is located on the west side of the Carpenters Shop.

Oil House

The Detached Oil House is the smallest of the historic buildings and was historically used to hold kerosene for the tower and later paint storage. The small structure is located near the lighthouse, just outside of the chain link fence barrier. It was previously used as a gift shop, but now houses an interpretive display of historic photos and artifacts. Although the material is interesting for its historic value, the presentation seems out of date with other interpretive features and is not inviting for park visitors. Once the tower reopens the detached oil house could alternatively serve as ticket booth or staging area for people waiting for their tour, although there is currently no electricity in this structure and would require ADA reconfiguration.



Carpenters Shop



Detached Oil House



Exhibits in Detached Oil House

⁷ Architectural Resources Group, Inc. (ARG), Draft Historic Structures Report Pigeon Point Light Station, Pescadero, California. Prepared for California State Parks Foundation and California State Parks. April 2013.

Keepers' Residences/Hostel

The hostel is located in the four cottages that were built as keepers residences in the 1960s after the original Victorian structure was demolished. In the 1980s the cottages began to operate as a hostel that is managed by Hosteling International. The cottages are located linearly along the main access pathway with the main entryways facing the lighthouse. The cottages are only accessible through a keycode by hostel guests and staff, although they may interact with park users as they move between the hostel facilities.

The back of the cottages have a north-facing view overlooking the ocean and beach. There is a small concrete walkway and patio directly behind the cottages, which hostel guests use to sit and watch the ocean or eat meals. The area directly beyond the walkway slopes moderately down towards the bluff and then drops dramatically to the ocean below. There is a tall red wooden post fence separating guests from the steepest drop. The area between the walkway and fence is heavily dominated by non-native ice plant, although there is a stand of Monterey cypress trees located on the eastern end near the parking lot. Also in this area, there is a fire pit and picnic area. This area is open to the public but predominately used by hostel guests and is separated from the parking area with an additional shorter picket fence.

The cottage closest to the parking lot, "Pelican," is used for check-in and operational uses, and also has some guest facilities in addition to the office. The remaining cottages, "Dolphin," "Seal," and "Whale;" are used for guest facilities. In total the hostel contains 59 beds. They are split between male and female dorms with six beds per room, private double and triple rooms with shared bathroom, and private four-to-six person rooms with private bathrooms. Each cottage has a central living room or common space area and a communal kitchen. The hostel also has a hot tub which guests can reserve throughout the day, located adjacent to the Fog Signal Building. For operational needs, the hostel uses a modular storage shed located on the west side of the cottages. Also, there is one garage between the Pelican and Dolphin buildings.

Other Buildings

The other buildings in the Historic Core include the restroom and the Water Sand Filter Building. Both are located directly adjacent to the parking lot. The restroom is a prefabricated pit toilet structure that was added to the site in 2011. The restrooms do not have potable water or flush toilets and site users have complained of odors they encounter directly upon arrival. The Water Sand Filter Building was constructed to hold the water and sand filtration system; however, these features were removed in 1990.



Hostel



Picnic Area

Picnic Areas

Upon arrival from the parking lot, there is a large dirt lot on the east side of the main access area. This large space is a picnic area with four wooden picnic tables. Although the view is not as dramatic as the other areas of the point, it is protected by the harshest wind by the surrounding buildings and hill where the lighthouse is located.

Also, as noted above, there is a fire pit and picnic area behind the hostel. Since this area is separated from the main use area, it is commonly perceived to be for exclusive use by hostel guests.

Although not exclusively for picnicking or eating, the Council Circle is also a comfortable and well-designed resting place near the Historic Core. The Council Circle is located along the trail that departs from the parking lot and heads to Whaler's Cove. The Council Circle includes a round rock bench engraved with the names of donors who contributed to POST to purchase the land and help build the Whaler's Cove project. The circle is surrounded by native planting and protected from the harshest ocean winds. The space is accented with large boulders and paved with decomposed granite. The Council Circle also serves as an axis for the trail network along the southern bluff.

Views

In addition to the Historic Core, major attractions for the Light Station Parcel are the beach and coastal views. There are numerous sites within the parcel that offer excellent views of the ocean or the rocky coastline, many with the lighthouse in view as a beacon along the coast. These viewpoints are particularly popular during sunsets, during whale migration periods, and when sea life, such as seals and seabirds, are active during the day. As shown in Figure 2.4, these priority viewpoints include the deck from the Fog Signal Building, the bluff along Pigeon Point Road, and the overlook located on the south side of the Historic Core.

The viewing deck from the back of the Fog Signal Building in the Historic Core is the most popular ocean viewing venue because it hangs over rocks that are home to many sea animals and offers excellent uninterrupted views to the Pacific Ocean. There are plans to expand the deck and this popular experience at Pigeon Point SHP.

The viewing platform and bluff area to the south of the lighthouse is popular for photographers wanting to capture the lighthouse, particularly at sunset. This view can be especially dramatic on a cloudy day with dramatic or colorful lighting.

Benches are placed sporadically along the bluff adjacent to Pigeon Point Road to the north of the Historic Core. These provide resting places for those walking the social trails along the bluff. They also offer an opportunity for those who cannot access the beach from the bluff to watch the ocean. While the views from Pigeon Point Road and along the bluff can be spectacular, these views are negatively impacted by the overhead utility lines along the west side of the road.

One of the more popular seating areas from which to enjoy ocean views is located directly adjacent to the parking lot. There is a trail made of decomposed granite that leads from the parking lot to the bench and interpretive signage about the Coastal Trail and coastal California habitat types. These amenities help to formalize the space; however, bluff erosion has made the space difficult to maneuver.

For hostel guests, the view from the hot tub is considered a memorable experience. The hot tub is currently adjacent to the deck behind the Fog Signal Building. If the deck expands, the hot tub will likely be moved behind the hostel but will retain a view out to the ocean.

Beach

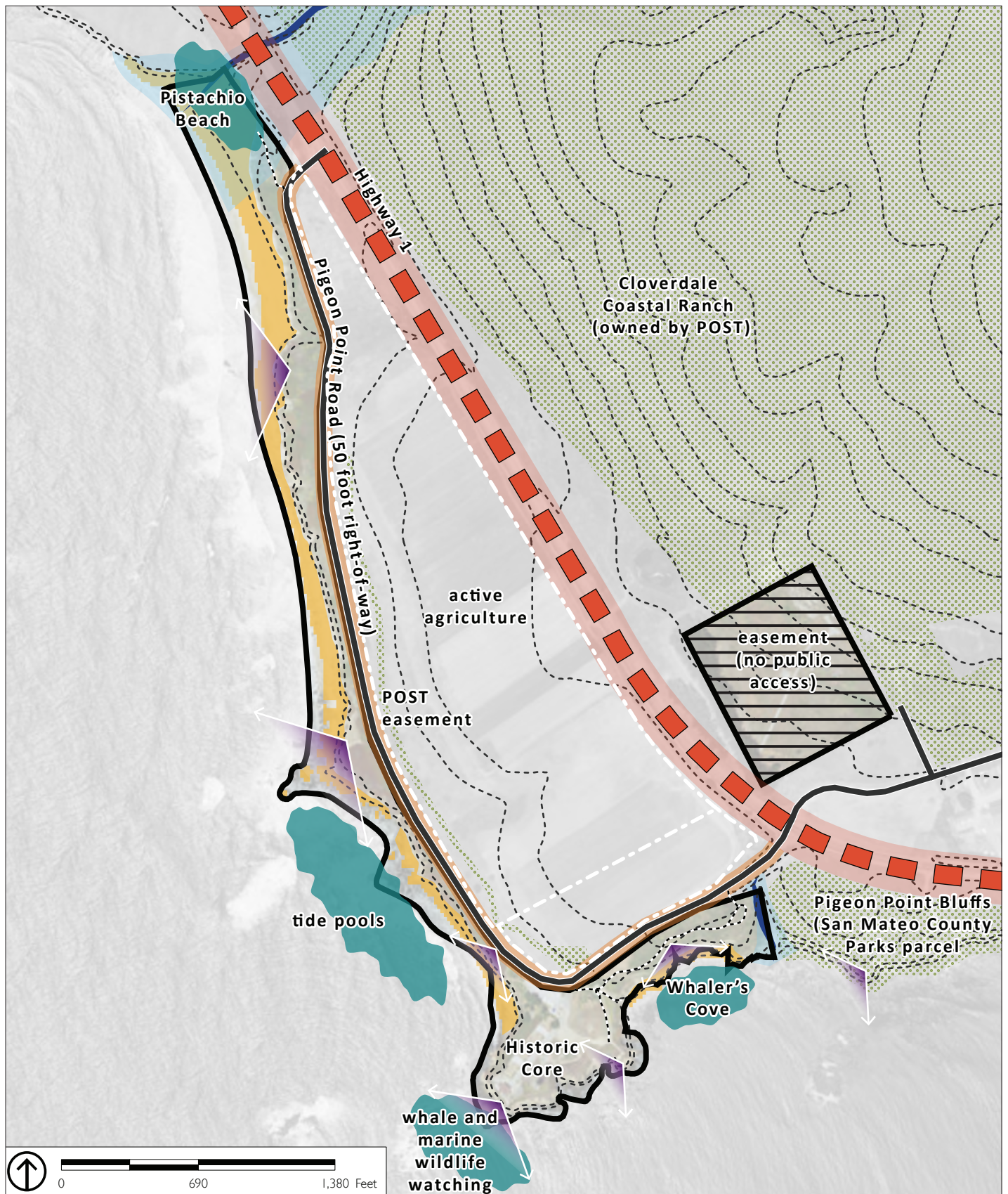
The bluff to the north along Pigeon Point Road sits above a rocky and sandy beach. At most points along Pigeon Point Road, the beach is between 10 and 25 feet below the bluff with a steep drop between the two areas; however, the grade change between the bluff and the beach is less severe at the northern end of Pigeon Point, making it a popular beach destination at the park. "Pistachio Beach," the beach area located in this area at the northern end of Pigeon Point, is the mouth of the Yankee Jim Gulch drainage and is set in from the tide line. Although only partially protected, this cove can be more pleasant than the open beach on windy days. Additionally, it is not entirely inundated at high tide and the beach and riparian areas can be explored at all times of day. There is no formal staging at Pistachio Beach; although, cars park along the road and there is a dirt trail to the beach with regulatory signage for beach use.

Another popular beach destination is Whaler's Cove, located closer to the Historic Core on the southern end of the park. Set in the historic location of the whaling operations at the point, the cove sits approximately 30 feet



Council Circle

Figure 2.4: Light Station Parcel



- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Pigeon Point SHP | beach | destination | Highway 1 Scenic Corridor |
| 10 foot contour | median high tide | existing trail | existing roadways |
| drainage | views | other open space | |



Boardwalk Overlook



Whaler's Cove

below the bluff. This location offers views of the coastline to the south, and of waves breaking over rocky offshore outcroppings. Whaler's Cove includes a sandy beach and large boulders used by visitors for sitting or climbing. The cove is approximately 130 feet long and is only accessible from a stairway from the bluff above. State Parks District staff also reports that visitors occasionally use the beach at Whaler's Cove to fish, as well as to launch small watercraft.

While the beach does provide a pleasant location for ocean viewing and water access, it cannot accommodate numerous beachgoers for long periods of time and offers more limited "exploration" options for young people.

Tide Pools

At low tide, tide pools become exposed along the beach directly north of the Historic Core. This area is particularly popular for the environmental education groups that use Pigeon Point SHP for an outdoor classroom, with many students indicating that visiting the tide pools was their favorite experience of their time at the park. The main access point to the tide pools is from an overlook and path directly to the north of the parking lot. The access is very informal and takes users directly over the bluff.

BOLSA POINT PARCEL

Unlike the Light Station Parcel, the Bolsa Point Parcel is not currently open to the public. The land was acquired by State Parks from POST and added to the Pigeon Point SHP park unit in 2015. As shown in Figure 2.5, the parcel is predominately made up of a coastal terrace that occupies the land between Highway 1 and the Pacific Ocean. There is a vegetated screen of trees along Highway 1, made up predominately of pittosporum species that are approximately 15 to 20 feet tall and 25 to 30 wide.

Across the coastal terrace the land slopes gently from Highway 1 to the bluff where it drops more steeply to the beach or steps down with large boulders. The distance between Highway 1 and the bluff is approximately 1,200 feet and takes approximately 6 minutes to walk if walked directly. There is a small spur that extends to the south but only includes the land between the bluff and ocean. Within the coastal terrace, there is a small block cut out from the parcel for an existing residence.

There is an existing dirt road extending from the existing residence across the Bolsa Point Parcel to the beach. Generally the grade between the bluff and the beach is severe, with a drop between 20 and 30 feet; however, at the point where the existing dirt road meets the beach, the bluff is relaxed and the access is more permissible than in other areas.

The beach is predominately sandy with some outcropping of large boulders. Spring Bridge Gulch drainage runs across the Bolsa Point Parcel and arrives at the Pacific Ocean near the place where the Bolsa Point Parcel narrows to become the small spur. Although the creek is intermittent, the drainage area is quite large, which makes crossing the bluff difficult.

There is no proposed use for the Bolsa Point Parcel at this time and POST did not have a proposal for the site when they owned the parcel. It is possible that the parcel was used for coastal agriculture at some point in its history; however, it has not been used for this purpose in recent history and



Trail to Pistachio Beach



Existing Dirt Road in Bolsa Point Parcel

provides some unique habitat value both within the coastal terrace area and along the riparian zone. In terms of park uses, the large, relatively flat area provides significant value for potential beach access or for the Coastal Trail, as well as for potential camping; protected picnic or family gathering areas.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

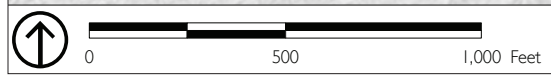
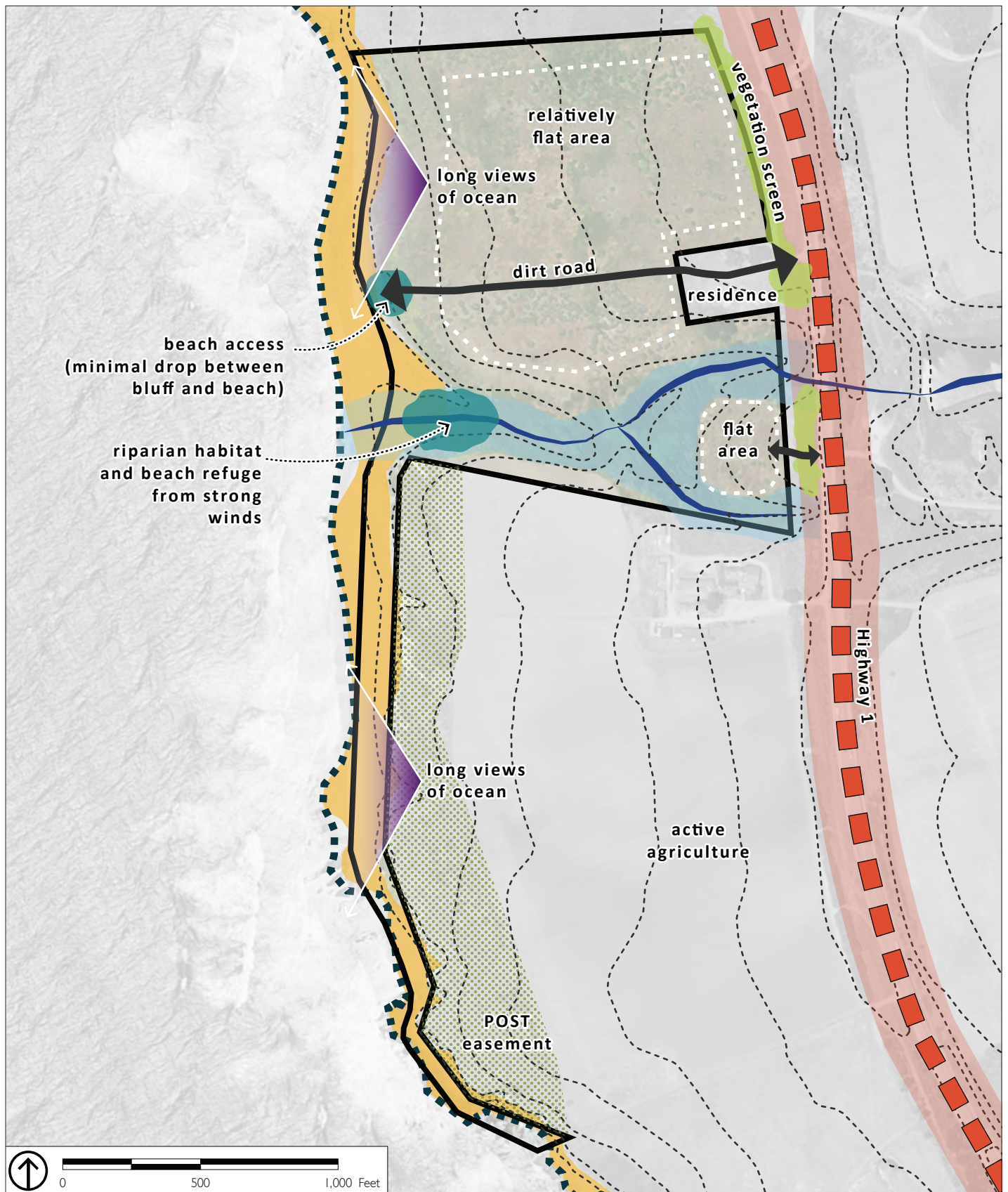
There are no utility connections to the Bolsa Point parcel. The residence that is surrounded by the Bolsa Point parcel on three sides has power, water, and sewage; however water is supplied from a well owned and managed by the agricultural landowner across Highway 1.

The Historic Core is supplied with electrical power from overhead utility lines that run along Pigeon Point Road. As noted above, the poles that support the lines limit views, and local State Parks District staff suggested undergrounding



Spring Bridge Gulch

Figure 2.5: Bolsa Point Parcel



- Pigeon Point SHP
- 10 foot contour
- beach
- median high tide
- views
- flat area
- destination
- existing dirt road
- POST easement
- Highway 1
- Scenic Corridor
- vegetation screen (approximately 8 feet tall)
- drainage

these lines to improve aesthetics along the road. There are propane tanks in the Historic Core that provide gas to the kitchens located in the hostel. The hostel also offers Wi-Fi to its guests but it is not available to all visitors to the park.

Until it was evaluated as unsafe for drinking in 2013, water was supplied to the buildings in the Historic Core from a 25-foot deep, hand-dug well. In September 2013, the California Department of Public Health issued a compliance order that the water supply for the Pigeon Point Lighthouse Hostel did not meet the California Health and Safety Code and could no longer be used for consumption. Currently, potable water is brought to the site, for both hostel and park use, in trucks and then pumped into the existing tank. Pigeon Point SHP brings in 3,800 gallons of water three times a month. The public restroom is a vault toilet and does not use water, although there is a staff restroom and hostel restrooms that use potable water to flush. The 2013 Concept Study included a Water System Improvements Schematic for Pigeon Point Light Station SHP that illustrates new wells, lines, and associated structures to be developed in the easement across Highway 1.

The 2013 Concept Study indicated that the existing sewer system is functioning as is. The system consists of gravity sewer lines that flow sewage to a lift station where it is then pumped to a leach field located under the parking lot. The Concept Study notes that locating a leach field under a parking lot is typically not allowed or permitted and that expanding or moving the leach field will require permits from San Mateo County.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section is divided into two parts. The first identifies cultural resources within the Pigeon Point SHP based on the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared by ESA, which can be found in Appendix B. The second part discusses the Historic Structures Report and the Historic District designation.



Historic Photo of Pigeon Point Light Station (source: United States Coast Guard)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Review of records indicates that there are no previously recorded prehistoric or historic archaeological sites in the Pigeon Point General Plan area or within a half-mile radius of the park. Furthermore, a general surface survey did not identify prehistoric archaeological materials, nor identify historic-era archaeological sites. Near the stairs to Whaler's Cove, numerous oyster shells were observed in the cut bank of the slope. These shells may represent the use of the cove during the historic era for whaling or other maritime activities. No evidence of structural remains have been identified to date, but archival research has revealed a long history of use of Pigeon Point SHP. Such uses would be expected to leave evidence detectable by archaeological methods.

Based on the prehistoric and ethno historic context, the previous cultural resources documentation, and the current survey effort, Pigeon Point SHP has a relatively low sensitivity for prehistoric archaeological sites. No prehistoric archaeological sites have been recorded within Pigeon Point SHP.

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

The Tribal Liaison for the Santa Cruz District is the primary point of contact between Native American Most Likely Descendants (MLD's) and State Parks. As the planning process began for this project, the Tribal Liaison notified MLD's of the General Plan and invited them to consult on the plan. As of the publication of this report, there was no response or request for further consultation.

NATIONAL REGISTER AND HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Pigeon Point lighthouse was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. It is also registered as a California Historic Landmark, a listing and guide used by State and local agencies in identifying existing historical resources of the State. The criteria for eligibility are based on National Register of Historic Places criteria. The Lighthouse Tower



This brick lighthouse was built to incorporate a French, first order Fresnel lens. Although no longer used, the lens is still operable in the lantern room. Previously the lens had been installed at Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. It first flashed over the Pacific in November, 1872 and the lighthouse has served continuously without structural modifications since that time.

California Register Historical Landmark No. 930

Plaque placed by the State Department of Parks and Recreation in cooperation with the United States Coast Guard October 3, 1980.

and the Carpenters' Shop were both formally recorded for the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1974.

As noted in Chapter One, in 1989, Light Stations of California were added to the National Registry of Historic Places via the Multiple Property Documentation Form. A 2013 Historic Structure Report (HSR) for Pigeon Point SHP described the features of the Pigeon Point Light Station that contribute to this designation: the Lighthouse Tower and Attached Oil House, the Fog Signal Building, the Carpenters' Shop, and the Detached Oil Building. When viewed as a Light Station District, the HSR found the period of significance to be 1871-1915.⁸ The HSR additionally indicates that the boundary for this district should include "the portion of the site that historically operated as a Light Station." The report suggests that the restroom, the water sand filter building, the Council Circle seating area, and the historic location of the loading chute are outside of the boundary.

In addition to the Historic District discussed above, there has been some interest in expanding the historic designation

⁸ ARG, 2013.

for Pigeon Point Light Station beyond the Historic Core to develop a multiple property Maritime Historic District that includes Pigeon Point Light Station, Año Nuevo Island Light Station, and Franklin Point Historic Shipwreck Cemetery. This is further discussed in Chapter 4, Opportunities and Constraints.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Below is a summary of the site's biological and habitat resources, based upon the site background information and site survey conducted by Environmental Science Associates (ESA). A full report of their methodology and findings and summaries of species found in the vegetation communities can be found in Appendix A.

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITATS

The seven vegetation communities and wildlife habitats are shown in Figure 2.6 at Pigeon Point SHP and include the following:

Central Dune Scrub. Central dune scrub is present within the Light Station Parcel, along the social trails to the north and along Mel's Lane. Within the Bolsa Point Parcel central dune scrub is found above the beach and atop the bluffs.

Central dune scrub vegetation is characterized by a mix of dune species with varying cover on sandy soils.

Disturbed Dune Scrub. Disturbed dune scrub occurs within the Light Station Parcel and Bolsa Point Parcel and includes a historic area of dune scrub vegetation that is now dominated by non-native species, particularly ice plant. This community by comparison provides marginal habitat value.

Northern Coastal Scrub. Northern coastal scrub is present in both parcels along formal and social trails and along Pigeon Point Road. Shrubs are dominant in this vegetation type. Coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), is the dominant shrub within the Pigeon Point SHP's coastal scrub community, though generally interspersed with other plant species. Coastal scrub is more prevalent on terraces with stabilized soils (compared to sandy soils that support central dune scrub), or on other soil types where it may have invaded previously disturbed coastal terrace prairie.

Coastal Terrace Prairie. Remnant coastal terrace prairie is present in the Bolsa Point Parcel where former agricultural fields were allowed to lie fallow and eventually return to grassland. This community within the park is highly disturbed and dominated by non-native grass species and non-native ferns.

Non-native Annual Grassland. Non-native annual grassland is present within the east parcel and the Light Station Parcel.



Coastal Scrub in Historic District

Figure 2.6: Biological Resources



- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Pigeon Point Light Station SHP | Central Dune Scrub | Coastal Terrace Prairie |
| Disturbed Dune Scrub | Central Coast Riparian Scrub | Non-Native Forest |
| Northern Coastal Scrub | Streams | |
| Annual Grassland | | |

Central Coast Riparian Scrub. Central Coast riparian scrub is present within a wet area surrounding Spring Bridge Gulch located in the Bolsa Point Parcel. Willows (*Salix* spp.) are the dominant trees within this community. Numerous shrubs, herbs, and vines also occur in the understory of this community.

Non-native Forest. Non-native forest consisting of dense stands of eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.) trees or occasional Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) occur along the western border of the east parcel and the east border of the Bolsa Point Parcel, respectively.

The other habitat community at Pigeon Point SHP, the Beach/Intertidal Zone, does not contain plant species; however, many species of water birds occur in the open water offshore of the park and on the beaches within the Light Station and Bolsa Point Parcel. The endangered marbled murrelet is regularly found along the shore of Pigeon Point SHP, especially in Whaler' Cove.

WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS

Wildlife movement corridors are considered an important ecological resource by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and under CEQA. Continuous swaths of undeveloped or unobtrusively developed land along the coast, such as is the case in the Pigeon Point SHP and vicinity, provide easy access for wildlife movement between different habitat types used for foraging or cover.



Central Dune Scrub in Bolsa Point Parcel

SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES

The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) reports several sensitive natural community occurrences near the park. Upon review of the CNDDDB data for the Pigeon Point SHP and considering site observations, none of these sensitive natural communities occurs within Pigeon Point SHP.

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

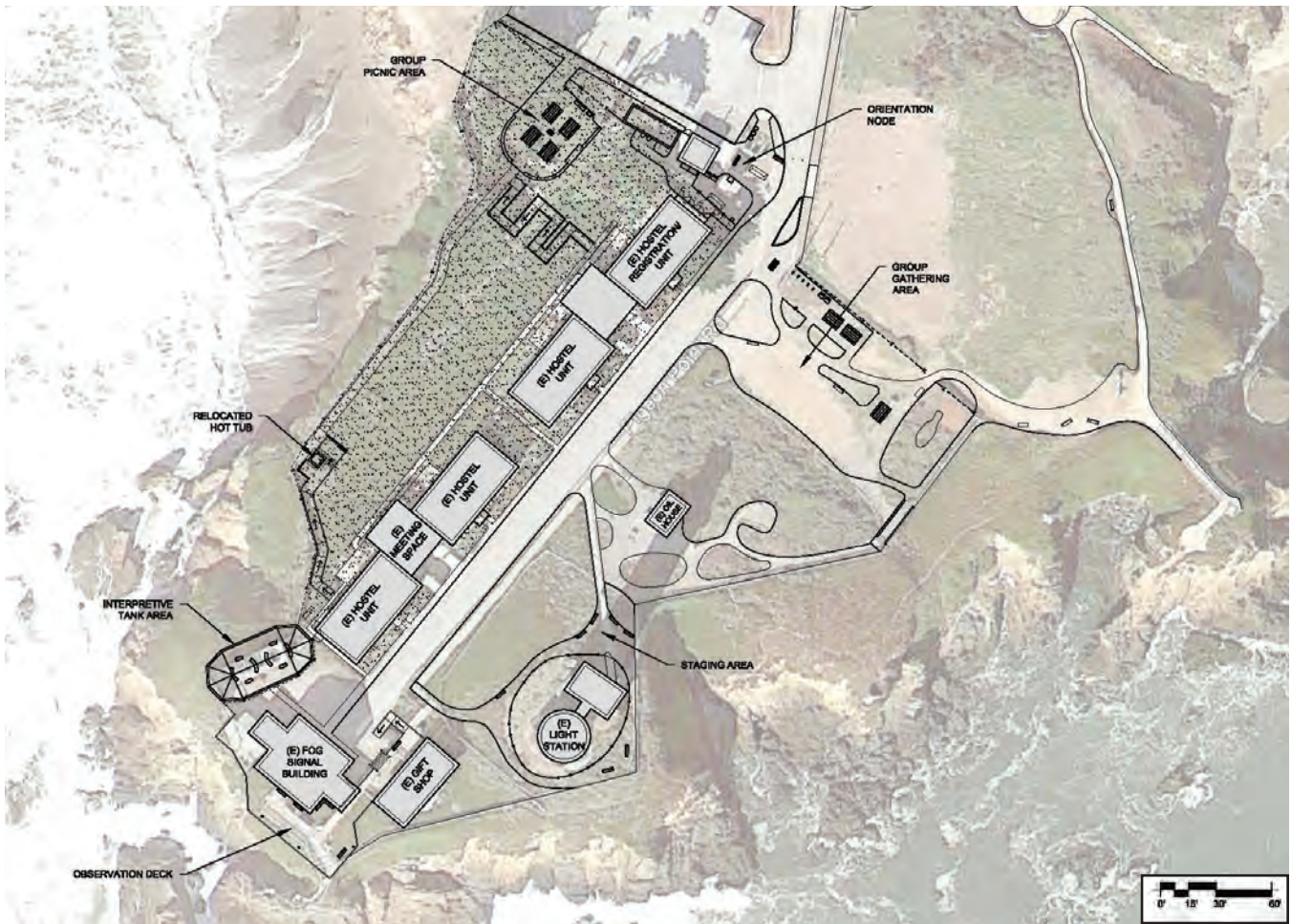
A number of species known to occur in the vicinity of the Park are protected pursuant to federal and/or State endangered species laws, or have been designated species of special concern by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). There are nine special-status plants which were determined to have at least a moderate potential to occur within Pigeon Point SHP or surrounding vicinity. There are five special-status animals that were determined to have at least a moderate potential to occur within the park or surrounding vicinity. Several special-status birds are likely to nest within the diverse habitats of Pigeon Point SHP.

CRITICAL HABITAT

The USFWS can designate critical habitat for species that have been listed by the federal government as threatened or endangered. A critical habitat unit for California red-legged frog is designated east of Highway 1 in the vicinity of Pigeon Point SHP.

PLANNING CONTEXT

A summary of key relevant plans and documents is provided below. Several other background documents inform the planning process, and are referenced within this report and associated Appendices. This section focuses on the key documents.



Preferred Concept for Historic Core from 2014 Concept Study

STATE PARK DOCUMENTS

Concept Study: Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park (2014)

The Concept Study provides an evaluation of existing site conditions in the Historic Core as well as recommendations for improvements.

The study was intended to serve as a guide to identify improvements that would best provide an enhanced visitor experience without impacting the Historic Core. Some of the key issues identified in the study include:

- » Facilities and parking that have not been expanded to accommodate an increase in visitation.
- » Key circulation connections are missing.
- » Fencing is in need of repair and a cohesive fencing style is needed.

- » Water system has failed creating a need for potable water to be delivered to site.
- » Low cost lodging opportunities are lacking along the coast.
- » Site elements do not have orientation maps and identification for self-guided tours.

Recommendations are given for key study components: circulation, trail and beach access, trail delineation, open space, circulation and parking, aesthetics, accessibility, and interpretation.

Some of the recommended actions that are particularly relevant to the Pigeon Point General Plan included:

- » Remove boardwalk and allow road to function as the main path for travel.
- » Provide accessible ramp to beach.
- » Use post and cable fencing for minimal visual intrusion.

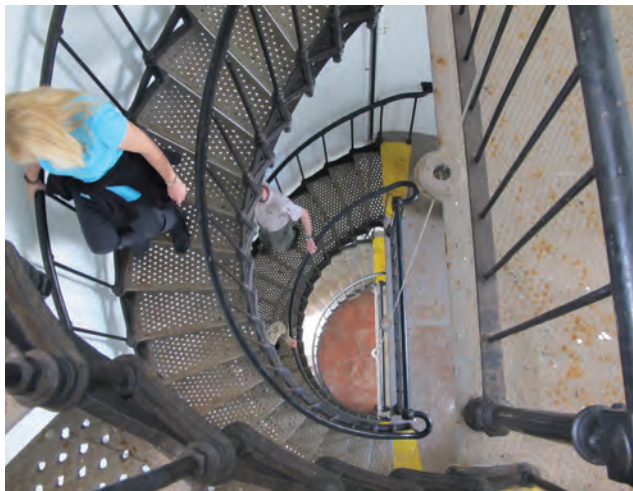
- » Maintain large amount of open space for larger group activities.
- » Add bicycle parking.
- » Formalize and expand parking on shoulder of Pigeon Point Road.
- » Investigate leasing or purchasing neighboring agricultural property for parking.
- » Expand decking and open up views.
- » Provide an interpretative master plan to guide development of interpretive programs, services and exhibits.
- » Investigate expansion of the existing hostel units.
- » Investigate permanent lodging expansion.

Since the completion of the Concept Study the boardwalk and fence along the main pathway have been removed.

The 2014 Concept Plan additionally recommended additional studies or reports for Pigeon Point SHP. These include a General Plan, a topographic survey and a geotechnical study or report. While the General Plan has been initiated, neither a topographic survey nor a geotechnical study has been completed.

Pigeon Point Light Station Resources Summary (1998)

The purpose of the Pigeon Point Light Station Resources Summary is to enable the State Park and Recreation Commission to classify the project as is required by the Public Resources Code Section 5002.1. This report



Staircase in Lighthouse Tower

establishes the values of the area as well as presents information on resources. This summary provides a cultural resource history including historic structures; provides an archaeology and ethnographic summary; describes the primary historic zone; describes natural resources including topography, meteorology, hydrology, geology, soils, plants and animal life, and ecology; and describes aesthetic resources.

CA State Parks Strategic Action Plan “Brilliance in the Basics” 2013-2014

The State Parks Strategic Action Plan’s purpose is to lay the foundation for a long-term vision and plan that will help to ensure a vibrant and sustainable State Parks System. In order to accomplish this purpose, the Strategic Action Plan identifies five main goals:

1. Restore public trust and accountability.
2. Protect and preserve resources as well as facilities in the existing park system.
3. Maintain the cleanest park facilities and restrooms in the country.
4. Connect people to the California’s State Park System.
5. Build the foundation for a sustainable future.

Within the vision of the California State Parks is a future where Californians are healthier through learning about parklands. In addition there is a focus on diverse heritages as well as the opportunities for visiting these treasured natural and cultural resources and wide ranging recreational opportunities available to all.

Parks Forward—A New Vision for California State Parks: Recommendations of the Parks Forward Initiative (February 2015)

The vision of this policy document is a system of parks that protects the state’s iconic landscapes, natural resources, cultural resources and cultural heritage and is accessible to all Californians’ and engages younger generations and promotes the healthy lifestyles and communities that are uniquely California. The Parks Forward Initiative has four main themes:

1. Transform the Department.
2. Work more collaboratively with new and existing partners.
3. Expand park access for all Californians.
4. Ensure stable funding for parks.

REGULATORY CONTEXT

Highway 1 is a designated State Scenic Highway and a Scenic Corridor as established in the San Mateo County General Plan Open Space Element, and runs the length of San Mateo County along the Pacific Coast. Highway 1 follows the shore, and provides sea and coastal views as well as provides access to State and County beaches. There are many ecological systems, geological features, and a wide range of marine life and historical and architectural landmarks that are visible from the roadway.

The entire region is within a California Coastal Zone, meaning that all State or Local Government agencies wishing to develop must obtain a Coastal Development Permit. A Coastal Development Permit will require a biological study, as well as an archaeological evaluation.

According to the San Mateo County 2012 Zoning Map, all parcel areas, including the Bolsa Point Parcel, Light Station Parcel, and Easement Parcel within Pigeon Point SHP, are zoned Planned Agricultural Development/Coastal Development (PAD/CD).⁹ Within the PAD, public recreation and shoreline trail uses are permitted with a PAD permit.

The Bolsa Point Parcel includes a riparian wetland. Under jurisdiction of the U.S Army Corps of Engineers, any new design must include delineation of these areas as well as avoidance of them or mitigation of any impacts and obtain a permit through the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

⁹ County of San Mateo Planning and Building. "Find My Zoning, Parcel Map, and Other Property Info." Find My Zoning, Parcel Map, and Other Property Info. Web. 08 Feb. 2016. <<http://planning.smcgov.org/find-my-zoning-parcel-map-and-other-property-info>>.

COASTAL ACT AND SAN MATEO COUNTY LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM

Within the California Coastal Zone, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) also has authority to regulate development that would conflict with the provisions of the California Coastal Act. In order to carry out the policies of the Coastal Act, each of the 73 cities and counties in the coastal zone are required to prepare a Local Coastal Program (LCP) for the portion of its jurisdiction within the coastal zone and to submit the program to the Commission for certification. This site is located in San Mateo County and is under a certified LCP.

The CCC manages protection of biological resources through a permitting process for all projects in the coastal zone. Once the CCC certifies a LCP, the local government gains authority to issue most coastal development permits (CDP). The CCC generally retains permit authority over certain specified lands (such as public trust lands or tidelands). Only the CCC can grant a coastal development permit for development in areas of its retained jurisdiction. The CCC has unusually broad authority to regulate development in the coastal zone, and a permit is required for any project that might change the intensity of land use in the coastal zone. Other projects, such as major vegetation clearing or subdividing, may also require a CDP. The local government or the CCC reviews applications before it to determine whether the proposed development would substantially change any existing biological resources, including wetlands, and to consider the net effects of the project on rare and endangered species.

The San Mateo County's Local Coastal Program defines several environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA) that are afforded special protection. These ESHAs are defined in the Local Coastal Program as "...any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable and any area."

These sensitive habitat areas include, but are not limited to, riparian corridors, wetlands, marine habitats, sand dunes, sea cliffs, and habitats supporting rare, endangered, and unique species. Many of these resources occur within Pigeon Point SHP; however, the designation of these habitats

as ESHA are made by County staff on a case-by-case basis at the time a project is proposed. The Local Coastal Program limits development in ESHAs to resource dependent uses and prescribes minimum set-back, or buffer distances, from ESHAs for other development.

The Visual Resources Component of the LCP prohibits permanent structures on open sandy beaches and prohibits development that would occur on sand dunes. Rural lands larger than 20,000 square feet require that new development visible from State and County Scenic Roads does not significantly impact views from public viewpoints, including coastal roads, roadside rests, recreation areas, coastal accessways and beaches, and is consistent with all other LCP requirement.¹⁰

The Local Coastal Program for San Mateo County Policy 9.8, lists regulations for development on Coastal Bluff Tops, are listed below.

- » Permit bluff and cliff top development only if set back and design provisions would ensure stability and structural integrity for at least 50 years and if the

development, which includes storm runoff, foot traffic, grading, irrigation, and septic tanks, will not contribute to erosion.

- » Require a site stability evaluation report prepared for by a soils engineer or an engineering geologist based on a site evaluation. The site should consider historic, current, and future cliff erosion, cliff geometry and site topography, geologic conditions, wave and tidal action, ground and surface water conditions and variations, effects of development on the stability of the site and adjacent area, and any other factors that may affect stability.
- » The area of demonstration of stability includes the base, face and top of all the bluffs as well as cliffs. If a proposed development is within 50 feet from the edge of a bluff it requires a site stability evaluation report.
- » Prohibit land divisions that would require the need for bluff protection.

The Local Coastal Program for San Mateo County released in 2013 lists site specific recommendations for shoreline destinations. Table 2.1 describes recommendations for Pigeon Point.

¹⁰ County of San Mateo, Local Coastal Program Policies, 2013.

Table 2.1. Site Specific Recommendations for Shoreline Destinations from San Mateo County LCP

Destination Name	Application of Policies to Site/Specific Recommendations	Special Considerations
Beaches along Pigeon Point Road	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consolidate bluff trails. 2. Develop interpretive educational displays discussing the fragile nature of the tide pools at Pigeon Point and prohibiting removal of species. 3. Construct short stairways to beaches. 4. Landscape parking area at Yankee Jim Gulch. 5. Include public access in all plans for the development of Pigeon Point Lighthouse. 	Close Pigeon Point Road to vehicular traffic and retain existing right-of way for use by bicycles, hikers and limited traffic to the lighthouse
Beaches and Bluffs South of Pigeon Point Road	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close access to the beach .1 mile south of Pigeon Point Road and restore and replant vegetation or crops. 2. Eliminate roads on the bluff above the beach .4 mile south of Pigeon Point Road. 3. Re-landscape eroded areas. 4. Post signs discussing the fragile nature of tide pool environments. 5. Post signs warning of dangers of climbing on cliffs. 6. Build stairway to beach at southeastern end of shoreline destination. 7. Build fences along the trails where they are adjacent to agriculture land 	

PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 5024

The PRC Code 5024 states that each state agency shall create policies to preserve and maintain all state-owned historic resources listed, or are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, or eligible for registration as a state historic landmark. Each state agency shall submit all state-owned structures over 50 years of age. Each state agency shall submit to the State Historic Preservation Officer documentation for any project that has the potential to affect historic resources. A State agency is any agency, department, division, commission, board, bureau, officer or other authority in California.¹¹

RECENT PROJECTS

A summary of recent projects at Pigeon Point Light Station SHP is provided below.

WHALER'S COVE

Whaler's Cove includes Mel's Lane, the quarter mile section of the California Coastal Trail; Council Circle; and stairs that lead down to the beach and is located east of the parking lot. POST purchased Whaler's Cove and gave the property to State Parks in 2005 to protect the views as well as to protect historic values from development. POST raised funds to pay for improvements to the area.

PARKING LOT

A Pigeon Point Alternative Parking Study was completed in July 2003 to evaluate new parking to replace the previous lot that blocked views to the lighthouse. The study identified six alternative sites. In 2011, the selected parking design was implemented in the area between Pigeon Point Road and the Historic Core. There are currently 28 parking spaces, including two accessible spaces, which does not accommodate tour buses or RV's due to the relatively small size of the lot. The parking lot is gravel, and includes native planting and vegetation along the perimeter.

¹¹ California State Parks, Office of Historic Preservation, "PRC 50255 and 5024.5-State Agency Compliance." Web. 30 Mar .2016. <<http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1071/files/public%20resources%20code%205024.pdf>>



Stairs up from Whaler's Cove



Native Planting in Parking Lot

NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION

Some native plant restoration has occurred in the Historic Core around the detached Oil House and adjacent to the parking lot, as well as near the restrooms. There is an interest by State Parks and others to increase native plant restoration at the Park, particularly in the numerous areas currently covered by ice plant. There is an active volunteer program to remove non-native species from Pigeon Point SHP.

BOLSA POINT FARMS

In 2007, POST sold a nearby property to local agricultural owners. In the sale, POST retained the rights for a trail and conservation easement on two properties: one to the east of Pigeon Point Road and one adjacent to the Bolsa Point Parcel, shown in Figures 2.4 and 2.5 respectively. POST's trail easement allows for the construction and installation of footbridges, stairs, fences, landscaping, and other facilities for the use of the public, although there are currently no plans to develop trails along either easement. The agricultural owners are allowed to close the trail 15 times a year.

PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

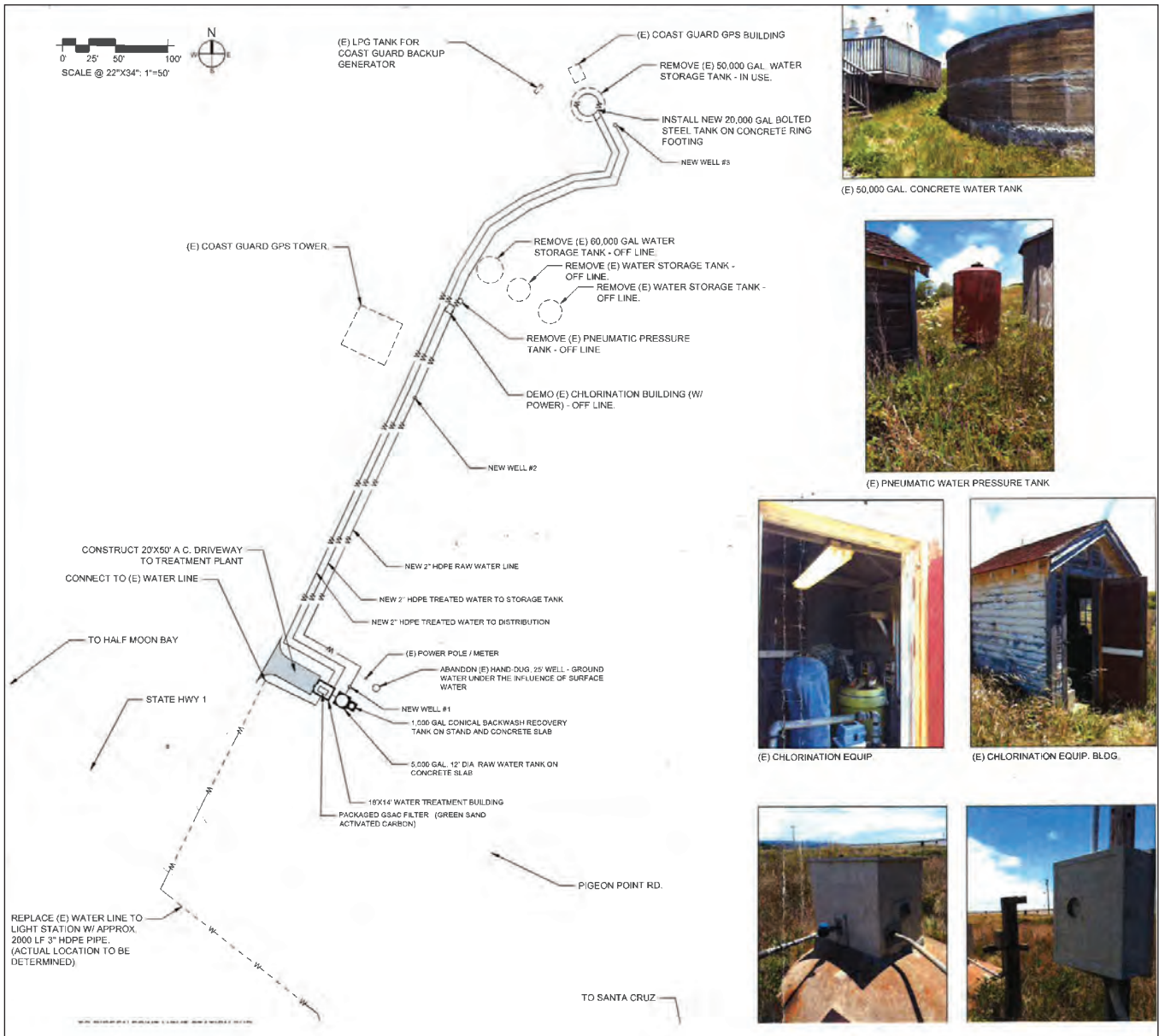
WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

As noted above, the existing well at Pigeon Point SHP is out of compliance to provide consistently safe drinking water for the park. The 2013 Concept Study included schematic drawings for three new wells, one new storage tank, new supply lines, and associated infrastructure located on the easement across Highway 1.

LIGHT STATION REHABILITATION

ARG has developed a Rehabilitation Plan for the Pigeon Point Lighthouse and Oil House. The top levels of the Lighthouse Tower are in poor condition due to corrosion of the cast iron structural elements and pose a risk to human safety.

The proposed summary budget for the project to be completed is approximately \$11M. A fundraising campaign is underway by the California State Parks Foundation to raise the funds needed for the lighthouse repair and



Water System Improvement Schematic from Concept Study



Fundraising Signs for the Lighthouse Renovation

rehabilitation. The elements of the proposed rehabilitation are listed below. Stage 1 has already been completed, and fundraising for stages 2 through 4 is underway.

1. Removal of Fresnel Lens and Interim Stabilization
2. Rehabilitation of the Upper Lighthouse Tower
3. Rehabilitation of the Lower Lighthouse Tower
4. Rehabilitation of the Oil House

COMPLETING THE COASTAL TRAIL

The Coastal Commission has been working since 1972 to increase access to the shoreline. The 1,100 mile California Coastal Trail is currently more than half complete. The goals and objectives of the trail are to provide a continuous walking and hiking trail close to the ocean; provide access of non-motorized uses; connect to existing and proposed local trail systems; ensure that the trail has connections to trailheads parking, and transit; maximize ocean views, and

provide an educational experience through interpretive programs. An approach for planning, implementation and operation of the trail has been developed that includes the California Coastal Commission and partners, such as Department of Parks and Recreation, federal agencies (National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Fish and Wildlife Service), U.S. military bases, State Agencies (Caltrans and Wildlife Conservation Board), local governments, and many non-profits and some private landowners.

DRAFT



Wreck Ashore

The *Thetis* was the first lighthouse to be built in California. It was built in 1825 and was the first to be built on a rocky shore. The lighthouse was built on a rocky shore and was the first to be built on a rocky shore.

The *Franklin* was the first lighthouse to be built in California. It was built in 1825 and was the first to be built on a rocky shore. The lighthouse was built on a rocky shore and was the first to be built on a rocky shore.

Will This Light Shine Again?

Restoration and the related fundraising activities are being coordinated by the California State Parks Foundation's charitable independent non-profit organization, *Shedding California State Parks*.

The removal and display of the lens completed the first step of the restoration effort. Work will continue in several phases including the reconstruction and restoration of the upper third of the tower and lantern room, the lower portion of the tower and base, and finally the work rooms at the tower's base.

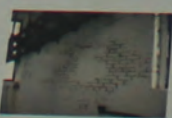
Once the tower construction is completed, the lens will undergo repair and refurbishment. It will then be returned to the lantern room to once again stand as an enduring sentinel on the California coast.



Original Fresnel lens shines brightly during the moonlight celebration.



Large piece of wood is used to support the lens.



Marine and lens are lowered into the lantern room.



III. SITE ANALYSIS: CIRCULATION AND USE PATTERNS

Approximately 150,000 people visit Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park (Pigeon Point SHP) annually either as the destination of their journey or as a stop along their route down the coast. Visitors range from international visitors aboard a tour bus to fifth grade students on a science field trip. With the planned renovation of the lighthouse, attendance will likely increase and interest in the site will likely grow. The General Plan will ensure that the park's assets are well utilized and site visitors are well accommodated.

CIRCULATION

As the Bolsa Point Parcel is not currently open to the public, this analysis of circulation will focus exclusively on the Light Station Parcel. However, for the General Plan, circulation through the Bolsa Point Parcel will take into account access from Highway 1, beach access points, potential trail alignments, and circulation between proposed uses.

PIGEON POINT ROAD

As noted, the Light Station Parcel is located along Pigeon Point Road, which connects at two points to Highway 1. The main parking lot is located off Pigeon Point Road, which serves as the arrival point for most visitors to Pigeon Point.

Some people will continue driving along Pigeon Point Road and park along the side in order to access the beach or walk along the bluff.

As noted in Chapter Two, Highway 1 is a popular scenic roadway for both vehicles and cyclists. Some cyclists will utilize Pigeon Point Road as a short respite from Highway 1 as cars travel slower along the smaller road. Some cyclists may also stop at Pigeon Point SHP.

TRAILS

There is a small network of trails along the bluff overlooking Whaler's Cove. These trails were developed by POST. There is a kiosk across from the parking lot that serves as a



Mel's Lane



Coastal Trail along Parking Lot



Social Trails along Bluff

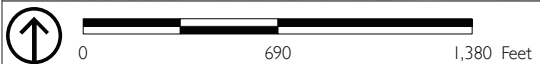
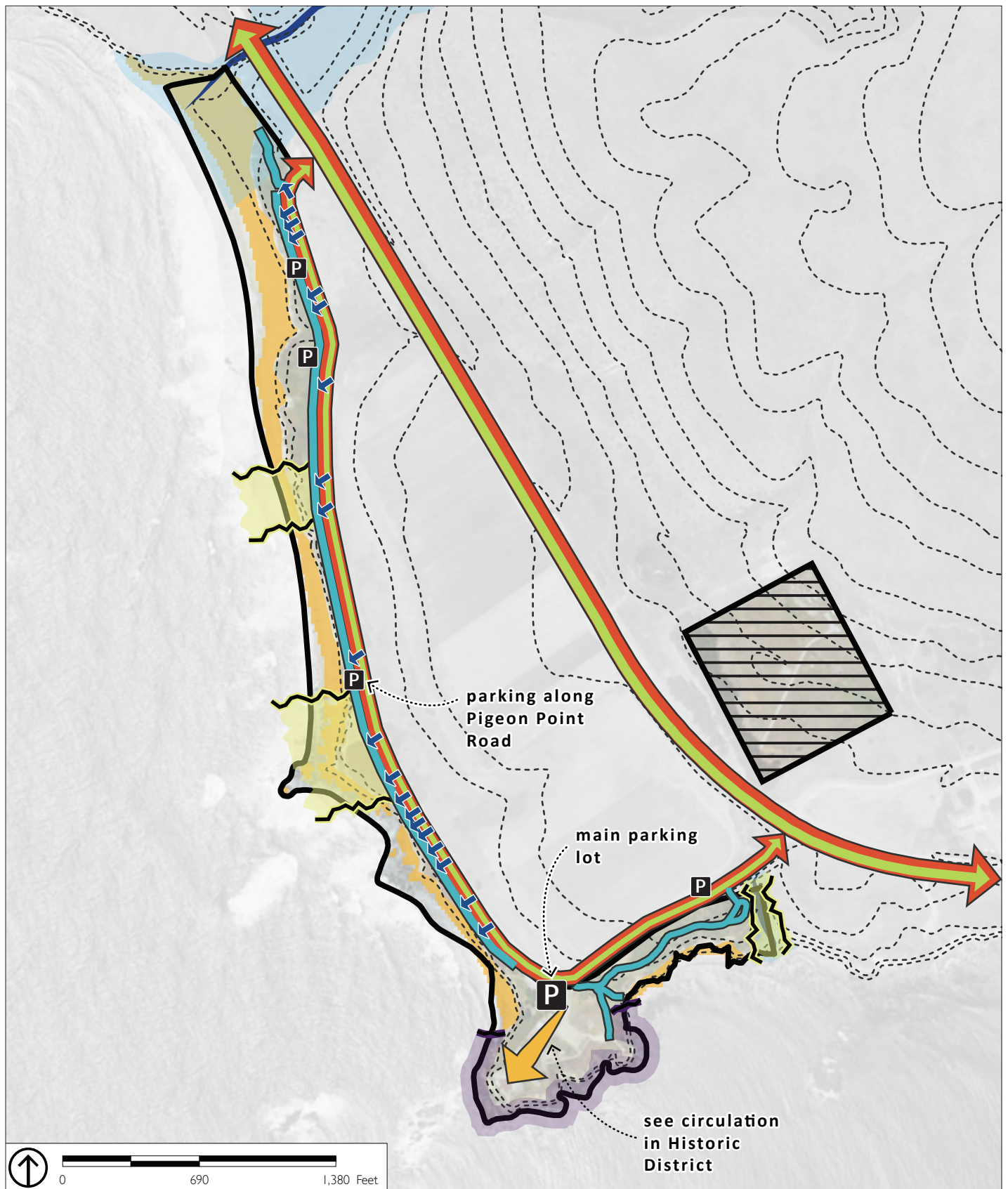
gateway to the trails and highlights the natural and cultural history of the site. From this entrance, the trail passes to Council Circle, where three trails intersect. Stairs to the south lead down to the beach at Whaler's Cove. The trail to the east then leads out along the bluff. The trail to the west leads to the Lighthouse Tower. The east-west trail, Mel's Lane, continues to the east until it reaches the end of the Pigeon Point SHP property and the drainage channel that separates the park from Pigeon Point Bluffs, the parcel to the south of the park owned by San Mateo County. From this point, hikers can circle back along the bluff or connect to Pigeon Point Road. In this location, the trail is dirt and is separated from the bluff with a post-and-cable fence. Most of the area surrounding the trail has been planted with native vegetation, in contrast to other bluff areas, which are dominated by non-native ice plant. Although the trail is pleasant and the view is interesting, the trail is short and offers minimal challenge to the trail user.

Mel's Lane is part of the Coastal Trail. Connecting it further along the coast could potentially expand its use and improve the experience for the trail user. The trail is multipurpose, although it is predominately used for hiking. As part of extending the trail, additional improvements could be made to better accommodate bicycling.

The Coast Trail continues to the north from the POST kiosk around the parking lot area to a small overlook with a bench and interpretive signage about the Coastal Trail. The trail is made of decomposed granite and includes curb ramps to make the trail accessible. A non-accessible path connects the parking lot more directly with the overlook. Many users, including students in the Exploring New Horizons environmental education class, access the beach from this point by scrambling down the eroded bluff below the overlook.

The Pigeon Point SHP segment of the Coastal Trail ends at this overlook point. However, there are numerous "social trails," or trails created by frequent use rather than a planned installation, along the northern bluff area beside Pigeon Point Road. Many of these trails take walkers to the bluff's edge, to a bench, or to a beach access point. These trails appear to have been created at points where the beach becomes impassable at high tide and users walking along the beach need to retreat to higher ground.

Figure 3.1: Circulation within Light Station Parcel



- Pigeon Point SHP
- 10 foot contour
- drainage
- beach
- impassable at high tide
- impassable at all times
- parking
- vehicle route
- bicycle route
- primary walking
- secondary walking
- beach access point



Informal Beach Access Point



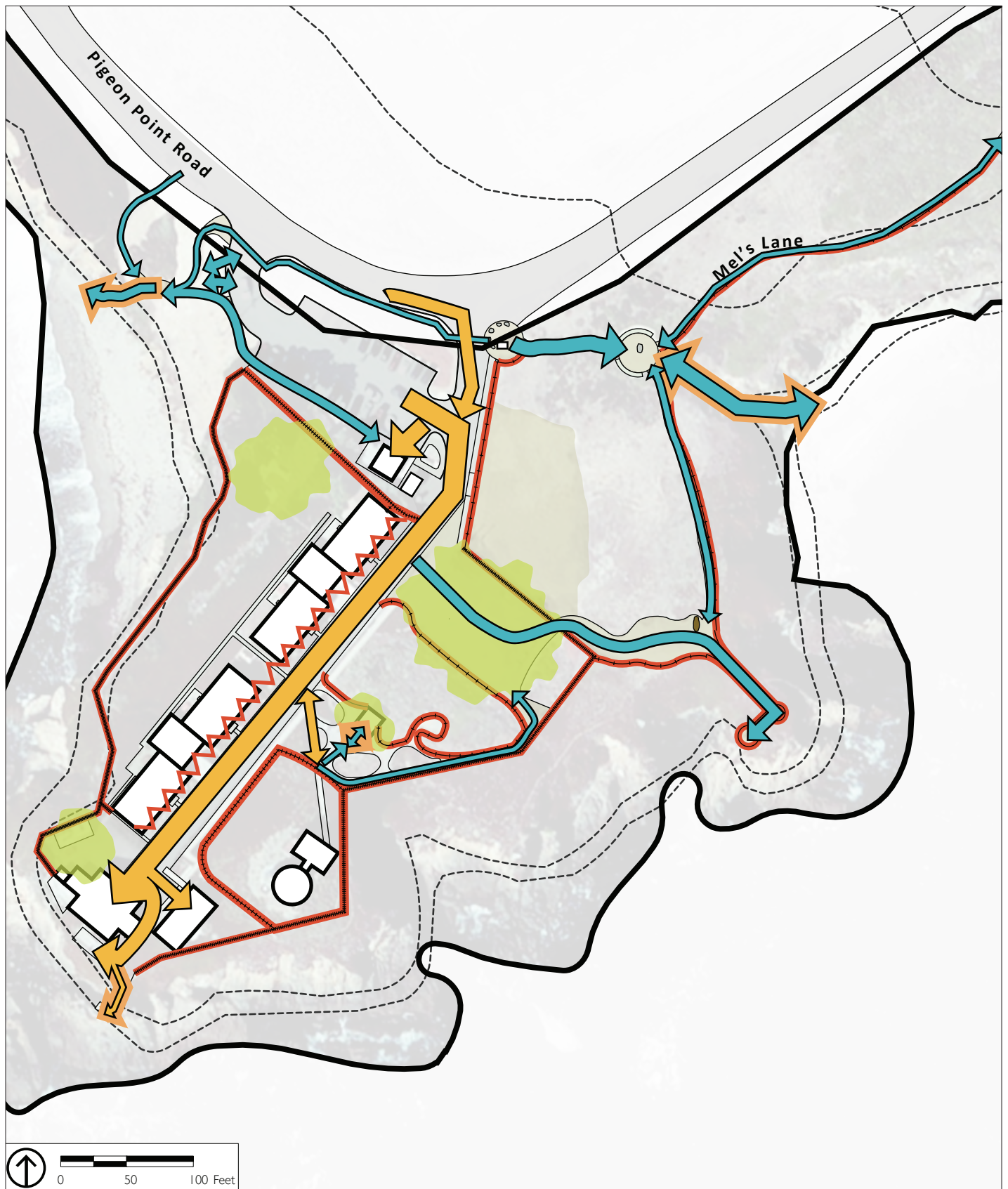
Coastal Trail Signage

There is a formal dirt trail connecting Pigeon Point Road to Pistachio Beach near the northern end of the Light Station Parcel. There is no trail signage, although there is park signage along the trail. The dirt trail is not accessible for wheelchairs.

HISTORIC CORE

Entrance into the Historic Core is through an asphalt roadway to the south of the parking lot, referred to here as the “main pathway.” As noted in Chapter Two, the parking lot was relocated in 2011 to improve the view to the lighthouse upon arrival. Although the new parking lot is not directly obscuring the view of the lighthouse, it creates some confusion about how to enter the Historic Core as the main pathway seems to be designed for cars. As the restroom is directly adjacent to the parking lot, many people who are simply stopping along their drive down Highway 1 do not make it farther than the restroom. Many tour bus groups spend time in this area without moving fully into the site.

Figure 3.2: Circulation within Historic Core



- Pigeon Point SHP
- 10 foot contour
- primary movement
- secondary movement
- not accessible (stairs or bluff)
- visitor restriction (fencing)
- visitor restriction (other)
- underutilized areas

Within the Historic Core, most movement is focused along the linear main pathway that leads to the Fog Signal Building. This asphalt path is wide but enclosed by the cottages to the north and the hill where the lighthouse sits to the south. This enclosure limits views to the ocean and tends to direct traffic through the space quickly. The Fog Signal Building and the Fresnel lens create a strong visual draw on the western end, suggesting that site visitors should walk to the end of the point. Students use the main pathway to move between activities, but they do not use it for longer sessions or lessons. The chainlink fence that surrounds the lighthouse is a major impediment to the viewshed along the main pathway, although it is understood that this will be removed once access to the Lighthouse Tower is restored.

Once visitors reach the Fog Signal Building, some will continue into the park store and many will go around to the viewing deck on the west side. Most days, this viewing platform is very popular for watching seals, whales and

other marine life, although it is not visible upon arrival or from many points within the Historic Core.

Aside from the main access way, site visitors use secondary routes, such as the pathway around the detached Oil House, to the lookout points south of the Lighthouse Tower. Many of these visitors are looking for good vantage points for photographs of the lighthouse or ocean.

Circulation and access in the Historic Core can be confusing for the day-use visitor, due to numerous activities by different groups. In particular, activities related to the hostel complex can create confusion because some spaces are off-limits for the general public, including the cottages and hot tub, while some are open to the public, including the northern patio, picnic area, and fire pit. While the public may not be aware of which areas are publicly accessible, staff at the hostel did not indicate that there are any issues between day use visitors and hostel guests.



Main Access Way in Historic Core

The large picnic area between the parking lot and the Lighthouse Tower is large and open, and may therefore be uninviting for park visitors. The 2014 Concept Study proposed creating a more intimate and inviting space within the larger area, which would be a significant improvement.

Circulation Issues

In evaluating the site, various stakeholders suggested areas for potential short-term enhancements to improve circulation and access within the Historic Core.

Entryway and Restroom Access

The accessible path of travel from the parking lot is along a decomposed granite pathway connected by curb cuts and ramps. This path of travel appears to be rarely used and difficult to navigate, particularly to the restroom building where the path of travel is circuitous. Additionally, the terrace board used to hold the decomposed granite pathway in place is failing in some areas and plants are encroaching on the pathway.

Paving

The paving in the main pathway directly in front of the hostel check-in is uneven and significantly degraded. This is unsightly upon arrival and creates a tripping hazard.

Accessible Pathway and Drainage Ditch

Between the hostel cottages and the main pathway, there is a drought-tolerant garden bed, a 4-foot-wide accessible pathway, and a drainage ditch. The garden space is maintained by the hostel to keep it from encroaching on the main pathway. The accessible pathway is very narrow and unusable for patrons in wheelchairs. Additionally, the drainage ditch along the edge of the pathway impedes its use by wheelchairs and creates a tripping hazard for other patrons. The drainage ditch could potentially be covered with a grate, extending the accessible pathway and reducing tripping risk.



Decomposed Granite in front of Restroom



Uneven Paving



Pathway and Ditch in front of Cottages



Kiosk at Entrance to Mel's Trail

WAYFINDING AND INTERPRETATION

Most of the wayfinding and interpretive features within Pigeon Point SHP are found in or near the Historic Core. Although, there are some regulatory signs along Pigeon Point Road that indicate that motor vehicles, camping, and fires are not permitted, and that dogs must be on leashes. There are some additional “No Parking 7pm to 7am” signs along Pigeon Point Road to prevent overnight use. No park sign currently exists at either entrance to Pigeon Point Road from Highway 1, although the Lighthouse is visible from both points. There is a sign for the hostel on Highway 1 visible to passengers traveling north. The first park sign with State Parks branding is located on the east side of the parking lot, visible to visitors who entered the park through the southern segment of Pigeon Point Road.

In addition to the structures themselves, interpretive features throughout the Historic Core include educational signage, historic or natural objects, and docent discussions. Much of the interpretation for the historic use of the light station is found within the Fog Signal Building, including the Fresnel lens, photographs of the site in the past, and exhibits of how lighthouses and fog signals help ships navigate dangerous coastlines. As noted previously, there are some additional images and artifacts in the detached Oil House, although the display here seems less curated than the exhibits in the Fog Signal Building.

Docents are an important part of the cultural history interpretation at Pigeon Point SHP as they interact with park visitors, answer questions about the site, and lead guided tours. They also staff the park store. However, as volunteer staff is limited, these services are only available when docents are at the park, which is currently Thursday-Monday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Outside of the Fog Signal Building, there are some weather-proof signs that highlight the lighthouse and the fundraising campaign to restore the tower. Although these signs display information about the tower’s construction, they are intended to help raise funds for the renovation. Once the tower is restored, a new approach to educational signage regarding the tower will be needed.

The other exterior signage throughout the Historic Core is predominately dedicated to the natural history of the site and efforts to make the coast accessible to the public. There are signs near the viewing deck off the Fog Signal Building to educate visitors about the habits of marine animals that they might see in the water below. Additionally, in the native plant restoration area adjacent to the deck, many of the plants have identification markers to illustrate the native species in the area. Along the walkway to the deck, there are some large whale bones. These bones, as well as the large jaw bone that hangs from the fence adjacent to the hot tub, call the public’s attention to the site’s previous uses for whaling operations, as well as the site’s prime location for migratory whale watching.

Additional educational signage about the Central Coast ecology is located along Mel’s Lane and at the central kiosk marking the entrance to the trail network along the

southern bluff. These signs have a strong emphasis on the coastal conservation and tell the story of how POST and State Parks are working to protect the area. The kiosk sign and the plaques in Council Circle identify donors that helped to fund the project.

The Coastal Trail is also highlighted in the interpretive signage as this segment is part of the large network of protected coastline set aside for public access.

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES AT PIGEON POINT SHP

BEACH

Although much of the Central California Coast is characterized by rocky terrain, a significant amount of Pigeon Point SHP, particularly the Bolsa Point Parcel, has sandy beaches. Whaler's Cove and Pistachio Beach are two popular beach destinations in the Light Station Parcel.

WILDLIFE VIEWING

Visitors to Pigeon Point SHP can also partake in wildlife viewing. Whales and seals are often seen from the deck behind the Fog Signal Building. In addition, many visitors visit the tide pools located just north of the hostel which contains a diverse variety of plants and animal life.

HOSTEL

Spending the night at the Pigeon Point Hostel is a memorable experience for many guests as it is unusual to be able to be at such a remote and dramatic location for such a reasonable price. In addition to providing rooms, guests have access to lounges, kitchens, and an outdoor hot tub. Events at the hostel have included stargazing, concerts, and holiday events.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOOL

Exploring New Horizons, an environmental education nonprofit, has run the outdoor educational program at Pigeon Point since 1983. The program runs from August to November and from January to June, Mondays to Fridays, except Federal holidays. A typical group consists of 30 fifth or sixth grade students, although classes can include students from kindergarten to 8th grade, with between 15 and 50 students at a time. Groups are also accompanied by parent/teacher chaperones. Staff from the program teach marine and cultural history.

Other major use areas for student groups include the main pathway in front of the hostel, the deck behind the Fog Signal Building, Council Circle, the large picnic area in front of the Lighthouse, and the tide pools north of the Historic Core. Exploring New Horizons uses the Fog Signal Building at night for storytelling and other interpretive programs. The group also uses one of the multi-purpose rooms in the hostel as an indoor classroom, as well as a place to gather for meals or movie watching.



Park Visitors Exploring Tidepools



Whaler's Cove



Visitors Examining Site Model in Fog Signal Building

OPERATIONAL NEEDS

In general, State Parks staff, docents, and hostel staff indicate that Pigeon Point State Park SHP operates effectively with limited issues. The few suggested considerations are outlined below.

SAFETY

In recent years, car break-ins have increased in the parking lot at Pigeon Point SHP. The break-ins are not limited to night time as thieves are operating quickly and moving in and out of the parking lot with relative ease. Although more serious crime at the park has not been a problem, theft has significantly impacted site visitors.

STORAGE

There are three main storage needs at Pigeon Point SHP. The hostel uses the modular shed between the Fog Signal Building and the cottages to store tools for maintenance around the property. State Parks uses the Water Sand Filter Building for equipment storage, although they bring most

tools for larger work from the Pescadero, Half Moon Bay, or Santa Cruz District Office as the building is limited in size and cannot be used for large machine storage. Docents store some park store supplies in the Carpenters Shop or in the docent office in Fog Signal Building; however, due to limited space, most of the surplus park store material are stored at the Año Nuevo State Park store.

The modular shed and the Water Sand Filter Building do not contribute to the historic nature of the Historic Core. However, if any of these spaces are modified or removed, it might be difficult to find additional storage space.

KEY USERS

To evaluate site users, three key users of Pigeon Point SHP were identified: Recreational Tourist/Naturalist, Historic Tourist, and Outdoor Education Student. Figure 3.3 illustrates the key considerations for major user groups considering how the user group currently uses the site, how they could potentially use the site in the future, and what needs that they currently or could have in the future. A site visitor may fall into multiple user group categories; however, this analysis focuses on the unique experience of each category.

RECREATIONAL TOURIST/ NATURALIST

This user group would potentially use all areas of Pigeon Point Light Station SHP. Potential activities could include whale watching, hiking, camping, or beach picnicking. Major priorities in this category could include trail expansion, wayfinding, camping, cyclist amenities, and beach access improvements.

HISTORIC TOURIST

This user group would potentially stay predominately in the historic area around the lighthouse. Potential activities could include going on a lighthouse tower tour, interpretive walk through historic structures, and visiting the museum. Major priorities in this category could include restoration of the lighthouse, expansion of museum capacity, framed views of the lighthouse, and concessions near the tower.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION STUDENT

This user group would potentially spend the night in the Historic Core at the hostel and spend the day throughout the site. Potential activities could include visiting the tide pools, beach, and other natural habitat; attending outdoor education workshops; and hiking along park trails. Major priorities in this category could include gathering places away from crowds, access points to the beach, and trails.

POTENTIAL CONFLICT AREAS

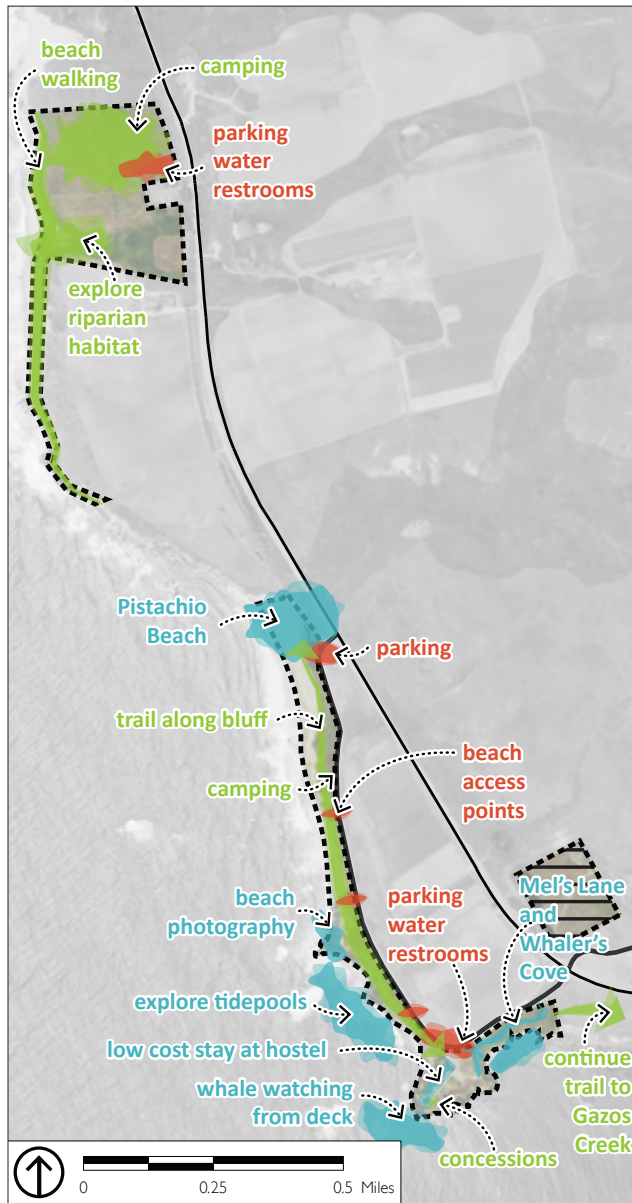
Figure 3.3 additionally illustrates areas where there may be conflict between key user groups, as well as with other groups, such as adjacent land users. The discussion below the diagram presents potential resolution concepts to manage the conflict issues.

These user groups can easily coexist at Pigeon Point SHP, although there is the potential for park visitors with different use patterns to interfere with the patterns of another group. Furthermore, all use patterns at the park may potentially conflict with outside groups, such as neighboring agricultural landowners. Understanding these potential conflicts could potentially help anticipate issues and design for resolution.

In general, conflict areas tend to be connected to areas of overuse. As shown in the diagram, potential conflict zones include the Historic Core, Pigeon Point Road, and the bluff area. It was noted by some park stakeholders that Pigeon Point SHP is currently at a very desirable level of public attendance where visitors are still able to have a personal experience with the park. If attendance grows, there is some worry that this will diminish the experience or even potentially damage the resources of the site. Expanding park uses outside of the potential conflict areas might help to mitigate potential conflict and improve visitor experience.

Figure 3.3: User Groups and Potential Conflict Areas

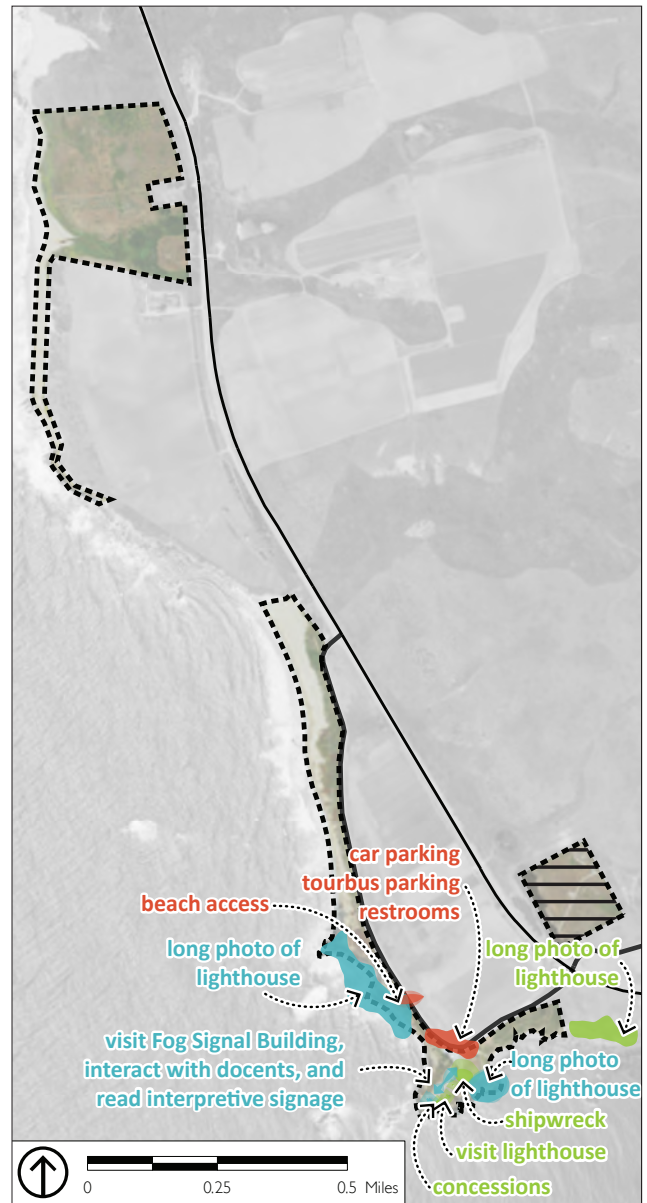
RECREATIONAL TOURIST



■ existing use
 ■ potential use
 ■ needs

The "Recreational Tourist" currently has limited options at Pigeon Point SHP due to the limited trail network and limited amenities outside of the Historic Core. Expanding recreational options, such as adding new multi-modal trails, interpreting ecological features, and adding camping could appeal to this user.

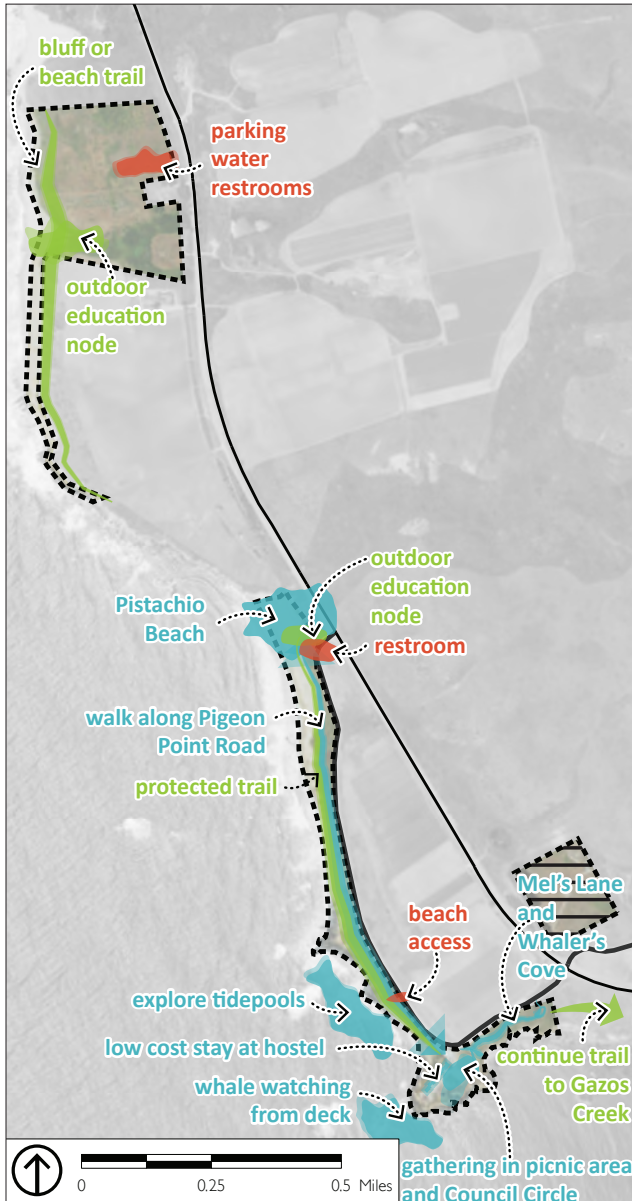
HISTORIC TOURIST



■ existing use
 ■ potential use
 ■ needs

The "Historic Tourist" likely enjoys visiting the historic light station in its current state; however, the added benefit of being able to tour the tower would likely be a great addition to the trip. Potentially expanding the interpretive story within the Historic Zone to tell a more dynamic and complete story of the site and historic uses would potentially appeal to this user.

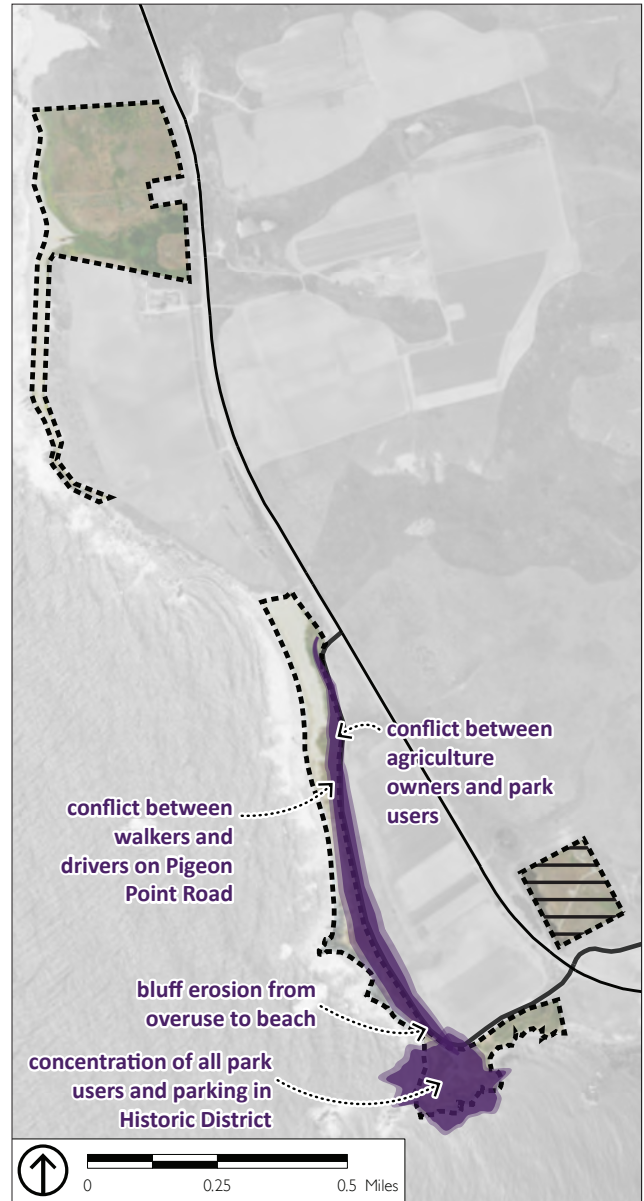
OUTDOOR EDUCATION STUDENT



■ existing use ■ potential use ■ needs

The "Outdoor Education Student" likely visits the site as part of a class field trip and moves through the site as part of a large group. Currently these students enjoy the experience of being away at Pigeon Point SHP and interacting with the coastal environment. In the future, it will be important to allow for outdoor learning that is equally memorable.

POTENTIAL CONFLICT AREAS



■ existing/potential conflict area

The major areas for potential conflict include the Historic Core and Pigeon Point Road. Following are some potential action for resolving conflict:

- » Utilize underused areas to disperse crowds.
- » Encourage day users to do longer hikes outside of Historic Core.
- » Create protected trail along Pigeon Point Road and throughout park.
- » Create park features in Bolsa Point Parcel and develop interpretive outposts throughout park.
- » Close or regulate Pigeon Point Road to cars.

DRAFT



IV. KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The overarching goals for the General Plan for Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park (Pigeon Point SHP) are presented in Chapter One. The existing resources, facilities, and use patterns, as well as the larger planning context, and recent and on-going projects described in the previous chapter, points to several key opportunities for reaching these goals as well as constraints that may potentially limit park use. This chapter begins with an overarching vision for the future of Pigeon Point SHP as an iconic coast side attraction. The key opportunities and considerations support this vision and will help to guide further exploration in future phases of the General Plan process.

VISION

The vision for Pigeon Point SHP is composed of three elements that highlight the park's potential for the future and its capacity to become:

- » **A Beacon on the Central Coast**
- » **Critical Linkage for Regional Open Space**
- » **More than just a “Kodak Moment”**

A BEACON ON THE CENTRAL COAST

With renewed attention on the Lighthouse through the campaign to renovate the tower, there is increased potential to highlight the importance of this site as a whole. This will solidify the site as a landmark and destination not just for Californians, but for visitors from all over the world. Pigeon Point SHP currently has a number of attractive components, but through a cohesive approach to site planning, the park could be elevated to become a jewel within the California State Park system. There are many opportunities to enjoy the site, from the gorgeous views of the coast and the rustic history of the Light Station to the many recreational options visitors can engage in.

CRITICAL LINK FOR REGIONAL OPEN SPACE

Pigeon Point SHP is located along a coastline that is rich in protected open space. Although the central coast is not entirely in public ownership, there are many areas to the north and south of the park that are protected for recreational and ecological uses. This is a unique commitment among the many public agencies and non-profit groups working on coastal protection in California. While building this network takes time and long-term vision, Pigeon Point SHP presents the opportunity to enhance existing open space and close gaps in the network. The Coastal Trail links these protected open spaces along the coast and creates a recreational corridor for cyclists, hikers, and equestrians. Expanding and improving the Coastal Trail at Pigeon Point SHP not only strengthens the corridor but also sets the stage for future improvements in the areas adjacent to the park.

MORE THAN JUST A “KODAK MOMENT”

Pigeon Point SHP has dramatic vistas and captivating historic structures that are a strong draw for professional and amateur photographers alike. However, once the initial photograph is captured, it is important that the visitors want to stay beyond a click of the camera. This could potentially be accomplished by expanding recreational options at the park. These could include walking or biking on an expanded trail network, accessing beaches and marine habitat, taking part in a historical or cultural tour, exploring interpretive zones within the Historic District, eating or drinking at a concessions station, building a campfire in the fire pit, or spending the night in the hostel or at a campsite. This



View from Whaler's Cove

could also potentially involve design improvements that “slow down” and enrich visits within the Historic District through smaller spaces and less direct movement along the main pathway. Pigeon Point SHP already offers unique opportunities to engage users with the site’s rich cultural history and coastal environment, but by creating subtle changes, this can be further heightened.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

The key opportunities for achieving this vision are presented below as thematic action items. This list builds on discussion with staff and docents at Pigeon Point SHP, and other key stakeholders, about various new uses or improvements, as well as the site analysis presented earlier in this report.

SUPPORT LOW COST ACCOMMODATIONS ALONG THE CENTRAL COAST

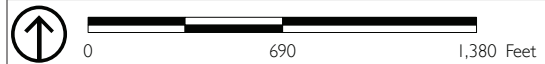
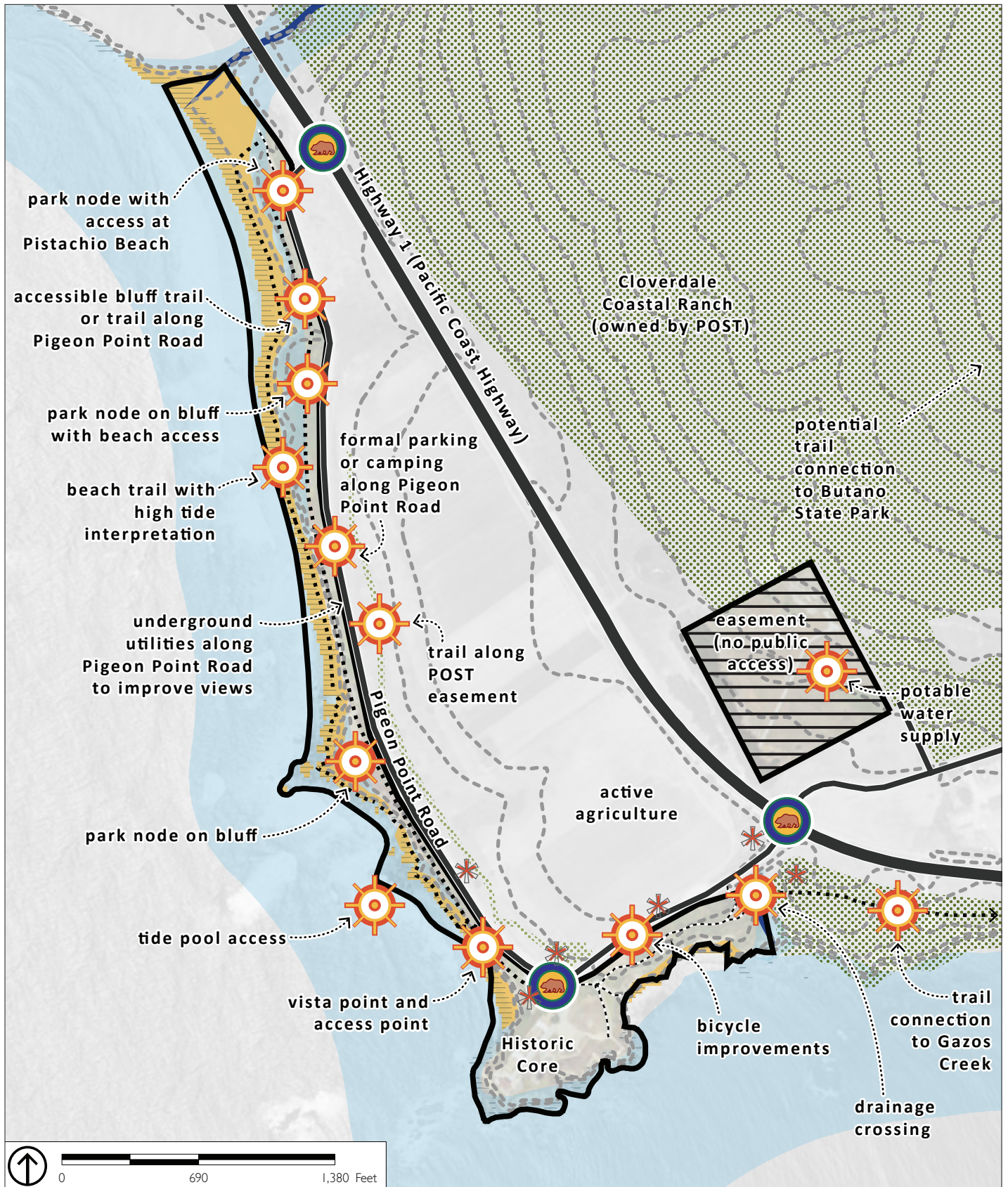
The hostel at Pigeon Point SHP is a unique low-cost option for travelers along California’s Central Coast. By potentially developing camping on the site or expanding the hostel, there could be more opportunities for visitors to stay overnight at the park.

Camping

Low-cost accommodations along the coast are extremely limited. Camping could potentially be an alternative solution for some travelers. Campsites typically require fewer resources to establish and could have a potentially lower ecological impact. The closest coastal campsite to Pigeon Point SHP is located 23 miles north along Highway 1 at Half Moon Bay State Beach. There is an additional inland campsite at Butano State Park, located approximately 7 miles inland from Pigeon Point SHP, as well as at Coastanoa, located 5 miles to southeast from Pigeon Point SHP along Highway 1. Coastanoa offers camping, as well as tent bungalows and hotel accommodations.

Considerations for a campsite at Pigeon Point SHP would include protection from the wind and coastal conditions, potential impacts on the visual quality of the Highway

Figure 4.1: Potential Opportunities Light Station Parcel



- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Pigeon Point SHP | beach | key opportunity | existing roadways |
| other open space | potential 6-ft sea level rise | proposed parking in 2003 parking study | existing trail |
| 10 foot contour | drainage | opportunity for State Parks Branding | potential trail |
| FEMA 100-year or coastal flood zone | | | |

1 Scenic Corridor, and providing a consistent water and electrical supply.

Some potential locations for camping could include the Bolsa Point Parcel or right-of-way space along Pigeon Point Road. Both of these areas have potential benefits and considerations unique to the site that could be explored in the General Plan.

Hostel Expansion

The hostel at Pigeon Point is a unique experience along the Central Coast that is both affordable and memorable. The hostel currently averages 60 to 65 percent occupancy, with a greater occupancy level on weekends and in the summer. It is likely that an expansion of the hostel or additional lodging could be successful at Pigeon Point SHP.

Considerations for expansion would include site selection and examination of the potential impacts of the expansion on bluff erosion and historic character of the Historic District. Expanding the hostel presents a possibility to develop a structure that more directly reflects the historic style of the Keeper's Dwelling and bring the cottages more in line with the period of significance for the Historic District.

FULLY UTILIZE PARK SPACE AND IMPROVE CIRCULATION AND WAYFINDING

Although the Lighthouse is visible from a great distance along Highway 1, arrival at Pigeon Point SHP is somewhat less inspiring: a modular restroom and large asphalt area is the entryway into the Historic District. Although there are various signs announcing arrival, there is limited directional information. A stronger wayfinding initiative could help users navigate the site more effectively and help visitors disperse through the site, rather than quickly towards the Fog Signal Building. Additionally, a cohesive approach to park signage and interpretation would help to brand the park and ensure site legibility.

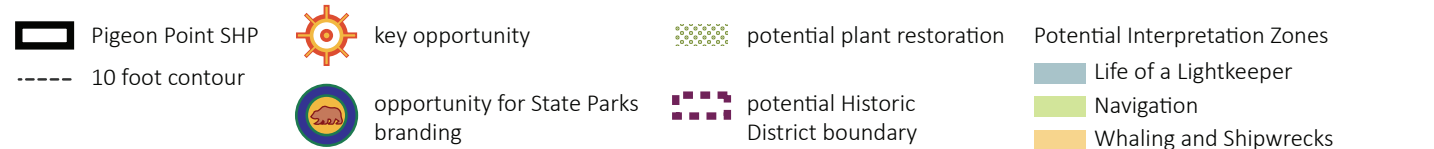
Picnic and Gathering

There are various areas within the Historic District that could be used more effectively. The picnic area adjacent to the main pathway is largely open with limited user potential. Through redesign, similar to the ideas presented in the 2013 Concept Study, the space could become more appealing to site visitors.



Hostel Sign

Figure 4.2: Potential Opportunities Historic Core



The detached Oil House is underutilized for interpretation and the area adjacent to the Fog Signal Building is used for a modular storage shed rather than public use. Additionally, the deck adjacent to the Fog Signal Building is currently very popular; although it is out of public view. The Fog Signal Building operates as an anchor at the end of the main access way. While the glass doors help visitors to see the Fresnel lens inside, opening the building on the western side would extend visitors' views to the deck and ocean beyond. There is currently a plan to expand the deck, which will improve use and safety. Potential considerations for visual cues for reaching the deck could additionally be explored.

Internal Trails

New trails within Pigeon Point SHP and trail connections to nearby open spaces are popular ideas. Some potential internal trail improvements in the Light Station Parcel could include an alignment along Pigeon Point Road and formalizing the trail from Pigeon Point Road to Pistachio Beach. The trail along the road could potentially utilize the bluff area on the west side of the road or the POST easement along the east side.

Additionally, formalizing access to the northern bluff and beach in the Light Station Parcel could not only expand recreational potential, but could reduce habitat disturbance and bluff erosion. The current network of social trails encourages visitors to make their own path across this area. Selecting an alignment with intentional beach access points could help sustain the bluff as a resource into the future.

Trails within the Bolsa Point Parcel could include a connection to the beach as well as a potential bluff trail.



Stairs to Whaler's Cove

The spur to the south along the beach could potentially be utilized for a beach trail, although partnership with POST to utilize the easement along the bluff in the area would likely be a more pleasant trail experience. Crossing the riparian area would be a major consideration for trail development in the Bolsa Point Parcel.

Trail Connections

Trail connections outside of the Pigeon Point SHP parcels could include connecting the Bolsa Point Parcel and the Light Station Parcel. Currently, the land between the parcels is actively used for agriculture and an alignment has not been pursued to connect the two areas. Potential connections could be developed through easements along the agriculture land or through a separated pathway along Highway 1.

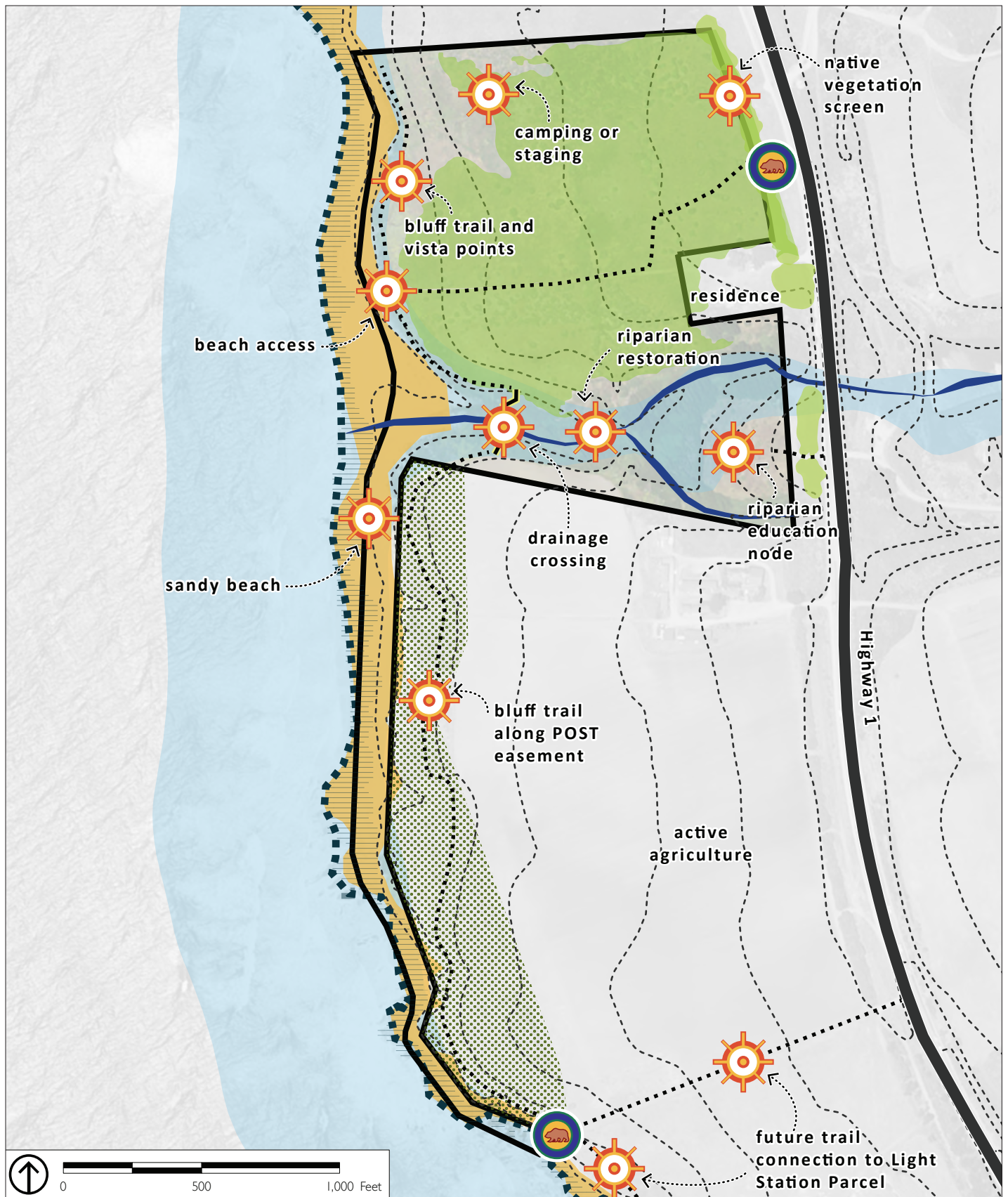
Other regional trail connections could include extending the Coastal Trail south to connect Pigeon Point SHP to Gazos Creek and Año Nuevo State Park. Extending the trail would require partnership with San Mateo County Parks and POST, who own the coastal parcels along this route.

POST is currently exploring a trail connection east from Pigeon Point SHP to Butano State Park, approximately 7 miles to the east, through their Cloverdale property. Developing a staging area and trailhead at Pigeon Point SHP could help create a new hiking destination. This trail may eventually connect to Sweeney Ridge in northern San Mateo County to form a segment of the Portola Historic Trail, which follows the route of Captail Gaspar de Portola's 1769 exhibition through California.

Trail Access and Wayfinding

Beyond alignment and ownership issues, important considerations for internal trails and regional connections are access and use type. Providing accessible trail access to the beach could be an important priority for Pigeon Point SHP. Additionally, the Coastal Trail ideally accommodates multiple uses, such as walking and biking. While multi use trails are beneficial because they to serve a broader population, it will be important to balance user groups and ensure sufficient space for the various modes of travel.

Figure 4.3: Potential Opportunities Bolsa Point Parcel



- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pigeon Point SHP | beach | key opportunity | existing roadways |
| POST easement | median high tide | opportunity for State Parks Branding | potential trail |
| 10 foot contour | potential 6-ft sea level rise | coastal terrace prairie restoration | |
| drainage | FEMA 100-year or coastal flood zone | | |

Although there is a gateway kiosk to Mel’s Lane and the trail system on the southern bluff, it is easy to miss when visitors are moving directly into the main historic area. Directing people to the trails from the historic area could be an important opportunity to access to the trails, Whaler’s Cove, and the Council Circle.

Beach Access

Beyond the stairs to Whaler’s Cove there are no formal beach access points at Pigeon Point SHP. However, many users create their own routes down to the beach. In addition to being somewhat difficult to access, these “social” access points could potentially increase erosion along the bluff. Concentrating beach access to certain areas and mitigating impacts could potentially improve these conditions.

Concessions

Pigeon Point SHP can be a windy, foggy, and cold stopping point along the coast. Park visitors commonly ask where they can purchase hot food and drinks. There are some limited options, such as the Highway One Brewery, Cascade Grill at Costanoa Lodge, and various “pick-your own” farms/ farmstands in the area, but most travelers continue along Pescadero, 8 miles to the north, or Davenport, 17 miles to the south, for provisions.

Concessions could potentially be in the form of small scale items, such as coffee, tea, and premade baked goods, or sold in new facilities where goods could be more substantial with made-to-order food and beverages. In addition to size and capacity for the concessions spaces, a consideration for this use includes management of the facility.

ENHANCE NATURAL RESOURCES

While there has been an active volunteer program to revegetate the park with native plants, there continues to be a significant problem with non-native species, specifically ice plant. Additionally, plants have been damaged from lack of protection and from lack of awareness regarding the long lasting damage that occurs from walking across sensitive plant habitats.

Native Plant Restoration and Protection

In order to ensure the survival of native plants, exclusion methods could include protective fencing around restored habitats to prevent foot traffic and unintended dispersal of non-native seeds into native plant areas. Additionally, as noted above, formal trails are better at communicating to users that veering from the path is not encouraged so improving circulation within the park could have benefits for plant and wildlife communities.



Ice Plant along Bluff

In order to enhance existing native plants areas, the volunteer efforts could be expanded to incorporate focused attention on non-native species removal and erosion control. In particular, sensitive habitats, such as riparian areas, could include a focused protection within the General Plan. In addition to providing ecological benefits, these could potentially be important outdoor education opportunities, creating new destinations within the park for naturalists and students on field trips.

Dark Skies Initiative

Although Pigeon Point SHP is known for its Lighthouse Tower, the park is actually extremely dark at night and well-suited for viewing the night sky. Many parks located in isolated places across the county are developing “dark sky” programs to limit light pollution and enhance the experience of seeing the sky at night. Previously the hostel held night-time hikes with astronomers to see various celestial events. Nightly observations could be further improved by further limiting ambient light at Pigeon Point SHP and reducing light pollution overall, with the important exception of the Lighthouse beam.



Tide Pool

EXPAND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING

In addition to potentially increasing visitor numbers, the reopening of the Lighthouse Tower will likely have a dramatic impact on interpretation at Pigeon Point SHP. The site will need to accommodate Lighthouse Tower tours and will likely need an update to the existing interpretive features. Potential improvements to the existing interpretive elements, as well as potential needs for the future reopening, have been considered by docents, State Parks staff, and key stakeholders.

Current interpretive programming emphasizes cultural history and some natural history, yet the site lacks a unifying story, design, or theme. The development of the General Plan presents a significant opportunity to develop a thematic program that informs the style and design of all site features to unify the site, to provide a clear interpretive message, and to emphasize what is unique at Pigeon Point SHP.



Sign in Lighthouse Tower

Opportunities to highlight the site’s cultural and biological resources include making sure that the story is broad and encompasses not only the historic background of the 1850s going forward, but also highlights pre-historic times. Ohlone history and the story of indigenous people should also be included as part of interpretive panels and on tours.



Guided Tours in Lighthouse Tower

Lighthouse Tower Reopening

After the financial hurdle of fundraising for renovation is overcome, the major operational challenges to offering public access to the tower will include creating a ticket office, providing an interesting space for visitors to wait for tours, and growing the docent pool to serve as tour guides to the tower. One of the windows in the Fog Signal Building could potentially be modified to serve as a ticket window for the Lighthouse once it reopens. It would have to be determined if this type of change would be allowed while maintaining the historic quality of the structure.

Tower tours are expected to be approximately 45 minutes in length with a maximum of 15 people per tour. Ticket prices are expected to be approximately \$10 per person. To accommodate demand, docents expect that the docent pool will need to grow to approximately 165 docents, which will allow for tours seven days a week and an extension of summer hours to 5:00pm. Currently, docents are working

on a strategy to bring in new docents and increase the commitment of docents to two days per month. It has also been recommended that State Parks expand their interpretive staff.

Suggested future programming associated with the Lighthouse renovation includes a sunset photography tour and a Fresnel lens navigational demonstration.

Interpretive Features

In addition to the Lighthouse, the other interpretive elements at the park include other structures, historic artifacts, ecological objects, educational panels, and informational signage. These are commonly used to help weave an interpretive program for a site. Some other features that have been suggested to enhance interpretation of the site include an expanded museum space, binoculars for viewing the ocean and coast, new historical artifacts, and outdoor classrooms.

Museum

The Fog Signal Building currently serves as a museum space and while it is able to accommodate the existing visitor levels, it is a small space that might become crowded if visitor levels rise with the reopening of the tower. Some potential opportunities for additional museum space could include repurposing the detached Oil House or replacing the modular storage shed adjacent to the Fog Signal Building with a new facility. The 2013 Concept Study suggests repurposing this space for exhibits; however, it was acknowledged that it should not limit views out the ocean.

Currently, the Fresnel lens is located within the Fog Signal Building and it is expected that it will be returned to the tower after renovation. However, this is a very popular attraction and keeping a replica of the lens in the Fog Signal Building might be an excellent alternative experience for people who are unable to climb the tower or wait for a tour. Utilizing the space for this large replica would mean that space would remain limited in the Fog Signal Building.

Shipwreck Relic

Año Nuevo State Park currently has a remnant section of a ship that crashed at Pigeon Point. The piece, which is a side of the bow that is approximately 20 feet long by 10

feet high, is not currently being used for interpretive purposes. It has been recommended that this relic would be more fitting at Pigeon Point SHP to help narrate the story of maritime navigation. The 2013 Concept Study recommended relocating the ship section to the large picnic area. It was suggested that it be placed near the hill leading to the Lighthouse so as not to block views to the ocean and serve as a large visual marker within the picnic area.

Educational Tools

Currently, the outdoor education program and school field trips utilize the same spaces as day-use visitors to Pigeon Point. Creating some special outdoor education-focused spaces could potentially provide expanded opportunity for outdoor learning.

Outdoor learning could also benefit from binoculars or other tactile outdoor exhibits. Binoculars would help students and visitors view the ocean and the coast, and the animals described below. Visiting the tide pools is a popular activity for students; however, navigating the bluff can be difficult. Creating an alternative experience along the bluff might enhance the experience for people who cannot travel down to the beach.

Alternative Tour Strategies

Modern technology allows for a wide array of site interpretation. Currently, Pigeon Point SHP depends heavily on interpretive signage and docents to communicate the message of the site. New products, such as self-guided, cell-phone-based audio tours or mobile apps, could be added as an interpretive element, allowing for off-hours interpretation and expanded user outreach.

Interpretive Zones

There are numerous stories to tell at Pigeon Point SHP. Currently, the site's interpretive program links them together in the space that is available. Docent staff and stakeholders have suggested potentially organizing the park, and the Historic District, into Interpretive Zones that visitors move through while visiting the park. This would allow for greater investigation of certain topics, as well as help distribute visitors throughout the park.

Following are some of the topics that could be explored, along with potential locations:

Life of a Light Keeper. This area would tell the story of what it is like to live at Pigeon Point and run the Lighthouse. It could potentially be located in a new museum space located where the modular shed is currently located, or in the hostel if it is renovated to reflect the historic style.



Interpretive Sign for the Lighthouse



Whale Bone Interpretive Feature

Navigation. This area could explain how lighthouses and fog signals were used in ocean navigation. It could potentially be located in Lighthouse Tower, the detached Oil House, and Fog Signal Building.

Whaling and Shipwrecks. This area could tell the story of the shipwreck that initiated the need for the Lighthouse and the whaling industry that preceded it. It could potentially be located in Whaler's Cove and the area near the shipwreck relic if it is relocated from Año Nuevo State Park.

RECOGNIZE THE EFFORTS OF COASTAL PRESERVATION

The California Coast is a beloved public asset. Coastal preservation and enhancement has historically been a major cause for environmental and recreational advocates and continues to grow in value as a public resource for residents and tourists. Preserving coast land has been and continues to be a process with many stakeholders and active participants. It is important to recognize the efforts of important donor groups, as well as the efforts of the State Parks, public agencies, and local open space advocacy groups. Additionally, at Pigeon Point SHP there

is the added cultural resource of the Light Station that will depend on public support for restoration. Creating a space that commends donors and advocates will not only recognize the efforts that it took to renovate the space, it will also serve as a reminder to others of the importance of supporting their coastal assets.

Pigeon Point SHP could also serve as an important emblem of the California State Parks System. There are numerous groups active at the site, including the hostel and POST, and although it is important to incorporate their branding into the park, Pigeon Point SHP must reflect the image of State Parks.

EXPAND HISTORIC STATUS

The Pigeon Point Lighthouse is recognized as a national and State landmark. The Historic Core also contains the features outlined in the National Register of Historic Places "Light Stations of California" multiple property designation, and the property is listed in the Historic Lighthouses and Light Stations Inventory with the National Park Service's Maritime Heritage Program.¹

¹ National Park Service, "Historic Lighthouses and Light Stations in California." Web. 30 Mar. 2016. <<https://www.nps.gov/maritime/inventories/lights/ca.htm>>

A key opportunity for Pigeon Point Light Station SHP is the development of a multiple property Maritime Historic District that includes Pigeon Point Light Station, Año Nuevo Island Light Station, and Franklin Point Historic Shipwreck Cemetery. Maritime Districts can receive National Historic Landmark Status as they help to preserve and celebrate the, “maritime heritage of the United States.”² These other two sites are briefly described below:

The Año Nuevo Island Light Station operated from 1890 to 1948 on the small island off the coast of modern day Año Nuevo State Park. During operation, the light station included various structures, including a lens tower, fog signal building and keeper’s dwelling; however, through either fire or general deterioration, nearly all of the buildings have been significantly decayed and there are no structures on the island. The island is currently occupied by the many elephant seals, sea lions, and birds that occupy the State Reserve and is closed to the public.³

Franklin Point Shipwreck Cemetery is located between Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park and Año Nuevo State Park along Highway 1. The site was used as burial ground for sailors who died during shipwrecks and

drifted to shore.⁴ This includes the bodies of sailors from the ship “Sir John Franklin,” which wrecked on the rocks off the point on January 17, 1865 and for which the point is named. Over time, many of the graves became exposed due to coastal erosion. Through grant funding, cultural historians and archaeologists from State Parks were able to exhume some of the remains for study and eventual return to the point. State Parks developed a boardwalk and platform at Franklin’s Point over the remains, although there is currently no interpretation of site’s history. The cemetery serves as an interesting counterbalance to the light stations as it shows the importance of navigational tools, such as light towers and fog signals when sailing along this segment of the coast.

Pursuing this Maritime Historic District designation could potentially add further distinction to the park and also aide in the development of a more dynamic interpretive program that highlights the story of navigation along the Central Coast.

2 United States. National Park Service. “Maritime Districts, Buildings, and Structures (National Historic Landmarks) | Maritime Heritage Program.” National Parks Service. U.S. Department of the Interior, 2016. Web. 01 Apr. 2016. <<https://www.nps.gov/maritime/ref/landmarks/districts.htm>>.

3 Bischoff, Matt C. “Año Nuevo Light Station: Documentation of the Light Station Complex, Año Nuevo Island, Año Nuevo State Reserve, San Mateo County, California.” California State Parks. Northern Service Center. June 2005.

4 Stannard, Matthew B. “Graves Safe from Wind, Waves, Time / Shipwreck Victims Buried under Deck.” SFGate. 21 Apr. 2003. Web. 01 Apr. 2016. <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Graves-safe-from-wind-waves-time-Shipwreck-2620938.php#photo-2106687http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=22648>.



Visitors on boardwalk overlook

MODERNIZE UTILITIES AND UPGRADE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFICIENCIES

Water

The lack of potable water at Pigeon Point SHP is a major impediment to park use and concessions offering. Ensuring a stable supply of water to the Light Station Parcel will be a necessary upgrade. Additionally, availability of water and electricity to the Bolsa Point Parcel could determine potential use of this area.

Although potable water will be necessary, it is also important the Pigeon Point SHP operate in an efficient and ecological manner to avoid overuse of water supplies. As a representative of the State of California, the park must be a leader in water efficiency.

Electricity

Currently, there are light poles and overhead lines running along Pigeon Point Road between the road and the beach. These impede views of both the ocean and the Historic Core. There is potential to underground the overhead utilities and enhance the viewshed. Additionally, as with water efficiency, the park must pursue upgrades that improve energy efficiency throughout the park.



Utility Poles along Pigeon Point Road

OVERARCHING CONSIDERATIONS

The existing conditions and planning context give rise to several issues and opportunities that will need to be considered regardless of improvements proposed. These overarching considerations are listed below.

Sea-Level Rise. Although predictions vary, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates that this area could experience up to six feet of sea-level rise in the future. With this reality, there will be a need to consider strategies for adaptation and mitigation of important facilities such as the Historic District, beach assets, and other key site features.

Bluff Erosion and Steep Topography. Bluff erosion is a problem on many coastal bluffs and there is evidence of erosion within Pigeon Point SHP. Any further development along the bluffs must consider the potential for increased erosion and will likely need the result of a geotechnical study to evaluate risk.

Scenic Corridor. Preservation and enhancement of views of the coast along Highway 1, as well as views of other key features, such as the Lighthouse, will require sensitivity, as well as an appropriate selection of materials.

Coastal Climate. Pigeon Point SHP, like other exposed locations on the central coast, can experience inclement weather at all times of year. Additionally, that weather can come quickly and unexpectedly. Planning should consider opportunities for site visitors to get out of inclement weather to minimize their retreat from the site. Additionally, experiences that would keep a site visitor at the park for a long period of time, such as camping, could incorporate protective features, such as wind breaks and warming units.

Adjacent Land Uses: Nearly all of the surrounding lands around Pigeon Point SHP are actively used for agriculture. Although many of these farmers work with and support local open space advocates, such as POST, their needs are important to consider in planning for Pigeon Point SHP.



Mouth of Spring Bridge Gulch in Bolsa Point Parcel

Parking and Infrastructure Capacity: Infrastructure and facilities, including parking and water infrastructure, are key factors in defining site capacity. Limitations to parking capacity may be offset by allowing tour bus parking, or creating new places for parking that will not interfere with the natural and cultural resources of the site. The existing leach field for the light station parcel is located under the parking lot. Future development at the park will need to consider capacity and status of this waste disposal facility. Any new uses will need to consider water supply and waste production.

Habitat Protection and Sensitive Biological Resources. Although there are limited sensitive habitat areas at Pigeon Point SHP, it is important to preserve or enhance existing resources, particularly ones that are rare in the area. Specifically, the drainage areas including Spring Bridge Gulch in the Bolsa Point Parcel and Yankee Jim Gulch in the Light Station Parcel will need to be protected as sensitive habitat, which could potentially limit use in and around these areas.

Sensitive Cultural Resources. Pigeon Point SHP is an important historic place and any improvements should be respectful of this context. As a landmark on the National Register of Historic Places and a California Historic Landmark, there are limitations to the type of development that can occur within the Historic Core or in areas that could potentially impede views of the Historic Core. Any improvements

must be evaluated for their potential to impact the site's historic quality and should enhance the experience of visiting a historic destination.

Additionally, although no evidence of prehistoric archaeological materials were found during the initial site survey, future development of the site must consider the impact of discovering such material in the future. In September of 2014, The California Legislature passed Assembly Bill (AB) 52, which added provisions regarding the evaluation of impacts on tribal resources under CEQA. AB 52 now requires lead agencies to analyze project impacts on "tribal cultural resources" separately from archaeological resources. If archaeological resources are encountered, including human remains, all activity within 100 feet of the find should immediately halt until it can be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist and a Native American representative if the artifacts are prehistoric. Due to the general archaeological sensitivity of the Pigeon Point area, researchers have recommended archaeological and Native American monitoring during initial ground disturbing activities at the Light Station.

Allow Growth While Maintaining A Sense of Being Away. While Pigeon Point SHP is expected to increase visitation with the re-opening of the Lighthouse and with the increase in docent support, it is important to balance this new growth with the opportunity for an escape away from everyday life.

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