

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AGENCY

Date: June 19, 2001

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Marcia Raines, Director *M. Raines*
SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan

PROPOSAL

The San Mateo County Parks Division has prepared a Master Plan for the first time for the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. The Parks and Recreation Commission has recommended that the Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan be conceptually approved by the Board of Supervisors as revised based on public input.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Conceptually approve the updated Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan (consisting of the Draft Plan dated August 1999 and its Addendum dated January 2001) including revisions requested by the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District and County Public Works Department.
2. Direct the County Parks Division to proceed with environmental review so that the Final Master Plan can be adopted.

BACKGROUND

The County of San Mateo and the California Department of Fish and Game have "jointly owned" the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve (Reserve) since 1969. The County has jurisdiction over lands above mean high tide, and Fish and Game has jurisdiction over lands below mean high tide. This is the first Master Plan to be prepared, and only pertains to County owned property. In 1994, the County published a Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Baseline and Carrying Capacity Study that assessed the impacts of visitation on the marine resources at the Reserve. In 1997, the County acquired the Pillar Point Marsh. The County determined that a Master Plan was needed to balance the educational and resource protection mission of the Reserve, to address problems with high levels of visitation on the intertidal reefs at the Reserve, and to integrate the Pillar Point Marsh into the Reserve. As a result of three and a half years of preparation, involving four Technical Advisory Committee meetings and twelve public meetings, the Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan is ready to be considered for conceptual approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

The fundamental concept underlying the Master Plan is that protection of the outstanding natural resources of the Reserve will require a new approach in the management of ecological systems and visitors in future years. The best way to accomplish that goal is to emphasize the sensitivity

of the resource, to enhance the educational value of the Reserve, to manage and reduce visitation, and to limit use as a recreational destination.

The goals of the Master Plan were developed through the public review process, and are based on ecological and environmental conditions within the Reserve, including the Marsh. The goals are stated more or less in order of priority, with the primary goal being to preserve the natural resources of the Reserve. These goals provide the foundation for the Master Plan concept, which follows:

- Preserve and Enhance Natural Resources
- Protect Cultural Resources
- Provide Educational and Interpretive Opportunities
- Improve Baseline Information
- Improve Visitor Management
- Improve Visitor Facilities
- Minimize Impacts to Neighbors
- Provide Recreational Opportunities
- Ensure Adequate and Well-Trained Staff
- Seek Funding Opportunities

The Master Plan has four main components:

- Natural Resource Management Program
- Visitor Management Program
- Uses and Facilities Program
- Implementation Program

As a result of public comments on the Draft Master Plan, a number of clarifications to existing recommendations were made. Many of the clarifications related to the regulatory framework of Federal and State agencies, and other County departments who have responsibility or jurisdiction in the implementation of the Master Plan, and related revisions to recommended implementation actions.

Since the Addendum to the Master Plan was publicly distributed comments have been received from the Mid-Coast Community Council, San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) and County Public Works Department. The Mid-Coast Community Council expressed appreciation of the changes to the specific language of the Master Plan that provide guidance, rather than absolute statements, regarding the level of visitors and appropriate fishing activities within the Reserve (Attachment D). The San Mateo County RCD requested that text regarding the RCD be added (Attachment E). The County Public Works Department requested clarification regarding: (1) their responsibilities for public services in the area around the Reserve, and (2) the process for dealing with water quality improvements in the San Vicente and Denniston Creek watersheds (Attachment F). Staff recommends making the suggested revisions proposed by the RCD and Public Works.

Staff is requesting that the Board of Supervisors conceptually approve the Draft Master Plan so that the environmental review can proceed. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will likely be required. The Board of Supervisors has previously dedicated \$35,000 to County Parks to proceed with preparation of an EIR. Following completion of the EIR, the Draft Master Plan and Draft EIR will be brought back to the Board of Supervisors for approval and certification respectively. Following approval of the Master Plan, there will be new costs associated with implementation that will be brought back to the Board for consideration through the normal budget process. The Parks Division is not requesting any new funding commitment at this time. The Parks Division is committed to finding outside grant funding to assist in paying for some of the recommendations resulting from the Draft Master Plan.

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AGENCY

Date: June 19, 2001

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Marcia Raines, Director *M. Raines*
SUBJECT: Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Hear a presentation by staff on the Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan (consisting of the Draft Plan dated August 1999 and its Addendum dated January 2001).
2. Open the public hearing.
3. Close the public hearing.
4. Conceptually approve the Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan, as revised from comments from the San Mateo County Public Works Department and the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District.
5. Direct the County Parks Division to proceed with environmental review so that the Final Master Plan can be adopted.

BACKGROUND

The County of San Mateo and the California Department of Fish and Game have "jointly owned" the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve (Reserve) since 1969. The County has jurisdiction over lands above mean high tide, and Fish and Game has jurisdiction over lands below mean high tide. This is the first Master Plan to be prepared, and only pertains to County owned property. In 1994, the County published a Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Baseline and Carrying Capacity Study that assessed the impacts of visitation on the marine resources at the Reserve. In 1997, the County acquired the Pillar Point Marsh. The County determined that a Master Plan was needed to balance the educational and resource protection mission of the Reserve, to address problems with high levels of visitation on the intertidal reefs at the Reserve, and to integrate the Pillar Point Marsh into the Reserve. As a result of three and a half years of preparation, involving four Technical Advisory Committee meetings and twelve public meetings, the Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan is ready to be considered for conceptual approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

DISCUSSION

A. Draft Master Plan (August 1999)

The mission of the Reserve is to preserve, protect, and interpret the resources within the Reserve for the people of the State of California. The Reserve is both a "Marine Life Refuge" and an "Area of Special Biological Significance" (ASBS) as designated by the California Department of Fish and Game. The concept of "special

biological significance" recognizes that certain biological communities because of their value or fragility deserve very special protection, consisting of preservation and maintenance of natural water quality conditions to the extent practicable. As a joint custodian of the Reserve with the California Department of Fish and Game, San Mateo County has the responsibility to manage the resources within the Reserve within its jurisdiction.

The Reserve is an important educational resource and is used as a primary educational site by schools in San Mateo County and surrounding areas. Visitor use plays an important role in meeting the educational mission of the Reserve. However, high levels of visitor use for educational and recreational activities are also the primary cause of the deterioration of the natural resources, especially those in the intertidal zone. Access to the Reserve is currently unrestricted, except for groups of 20 or more. Visitor use tends to be concentrated during periods of low tide on weekends, when more than 2,000 visitors per day may visit the reef. In 1993, the peak year for visitation recorded by Reserve staff, more than 135,000 visitors came to the Reserve. Visitor use is concentrated in the northern part of the Reserve at Moss Beach Reef; consequently, this portion of the Reserve's intertidal zone is the most heavily impacted as indicated by significant reductions in biodiversity and species populations. In the judgment of most scientists familiar with the Reserve, many groups of organisms are greatly under represented or missing altogether from the intertidal biota on this reef.

There are a variety of specific human activities that impact intertidal marine life. Foremost among these are the trampling of delicate algae and invertebrates, continued illegal collection of animals, displacement of animals, and turning rocks without replacement. Fishing and abalone harvesting also remove some animals from the area, but it is not known with much certainty whether these activities have had a long-term negative impact on the eel and abalone populations.

A high degree of scientific certainty in distinguishing human impacts from natural variability is difficult to achieve due to the lack of baseline data in pre-impact conditions, which probably existed around the turn of the century. However, data from a monitoring program instituted in 1994 indicated that in test plots of areas protected from human impact on Moss Beach Reef, biological diversity has improved.

In 1997, Pillar Point Marsh (the Marsh) was acquired and added to the Reserve with funds from the County and State through the Wildlife Preservation Act. Although the Marsh has not been well known to the general public, visitor use at the Marsh is growing. The Marsh is a destination for birders, who know the Marsh as habitat for shorebirds, waterfowl, and raptorial birds; and surfers who come to surf the world famous Maverick's off nearby Pillar Point. Following acquisition of the Marsh, the County determined that a Master Plan was needed to balance the educational and resource protection mission of the Reserve, to address problems with high levels of visitation on the intertidal reefs at the Reserve, and to integrate the Marsh into the Reserve.

The fundamental concept underlying the Master Plan is that protection of the outstanding natural resources of the Reserve will require a new approach in the management of ecological systems and visitors in future years, and the best way to accomplish that goal is to emphasize the sensitivity of the resource, to enhance the educational value of the Reserve, to manage and reduce visitation, and to limit use as a recreational destination.

The goals of the Master Plan were developed through the public review process, and are based on ecological and environmental conditions within the Reserve, including the Marsh. The goals are stated more or less in order of priority, with the primary goal being to preserve the natural resources of the Reserve. These goals provide the foundation for the Master Plan concept, which follows:

- Preserve and Enhance Natural Resources
- Protect Cultural Resources

- Provide Educational and Interpretive Opportunities
- Improve Baseline Information
- Improve Visitor Management
- Improve Visitor Facilities
- Minimize Impacts to Neighbors
- Provide Recreational Opportunities
- Ensure Adequate and Well-Trained Staff
- Seek Funding Opportunities

The Master Plan has four main components:

- Natural Resource Management Program
- Visitor Management Program
- Uses and Facilities Program
- Implementation Program

1. Natural Resource Management Program

The primary goal of the Master Plan is to preserve the natural resources of the Reserve, and to enhance them through careful management. Policies and activities that would accomplish these goals are described below.

Policy 1. Natural resources within the Reserve will be protected and restored through the development and implementation of resource management policies and programs.

Policy 2. Visitor management policies and programs will focus on education, one of the priority missions of the Reserve.

Policy 3. The Moss Beach Reef and Frenchman's Reef will be continuously monitored over a minimum period of 10 years to develop baseline information on the ecological system, to determine the rate of recovery, and to determine the effectiveness of Master Plan policies limiting visitor use.

Policy 4. Portions of the Moss Beach Reef may be closed to visitors as warranted by environmental conditions, research objectives, and monitoring activities.

Policy 5. The feasibility of restoring tidal action to the freshwater marsh across West Point Avenue to the northeast of the existing saltwater marsh will be determined.

Policy 6. Water quality improvements in San Vicente Creek and Pillar Point Marsh will be undertaken.

Policy 7. Special status wildlife and plant species shall be protected within the Reserve, and habitat management plans shall be developed to protect and restore all identified special status species.

Policy 8. A vegetation management program will be developed to protect and restore native plant communities.

Policy 9. Maintain the historic character and health of the plant community at the Smith-Dolger historic site.

Policy 10. Acquire land in the vicinity of Pillar Point Marsh and land eastward of the Reserve, as it becomes available, to add to the ecological system of the Reserve.

Policy 11. Introduction and possession of domestic and feral animals, including dogs, cats, ducks, and any exotic, non-naturalized species are prohibited in the Reserve.

Policy 12. Recreational hunting, fishing, gathering and collecting are prohibited within the Reserve because of the potential risks to public safety and biological resources.

2. Visitor Management Program

Policy 1. Visitor use of the Reserve will be managed and limited to the number of persons that can be accommodated without damage to the resource.

Policy 2. The primary purpose of visitor use of the Reserve will be education.

Policy 3. All groups are required to make advance reservations to go onto the reef.

Policy 4. Each group will be limited to no more than 100 individuals.

Policy 5. Any group of 20 or more individuals must be lead by a staff member, docent, or other qualified leader to be on the reef.

Policy 6. Visitor fees will be charged for access, visitor services, and/or parking.

Policy 7. Parking regulations will be clearly signed and strictly enforced in residential areas surrounding the Reserve.

Policy 8. Parking and driving on West Point Avenue leading to the Pillar Point Marsh will be discouraged through parking regulations, development of a new parking area at an alternative location, signage and provisions for a turn-around and drop-off area in the existing Harbor District parking area at Pillar Point.

Policy 9. No fishing or gathering will be allowed on the reef.

Policy 10. No picnicking will be allowed on the beach.

Policy 11. Horseback riding, bicycling, and dog walking will be permitted only on the California Coastal Trail within the Reserve.

Policy 12. The County of San Mateo Code of Ordinances, Sections 3.68.080 through 3.68.170 shall apply to activities within the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and Pillar Point Marsh.

Policy 13. Because the Reserve has no fire suppression capability, other fire control agencies will continue to be relied upon to provide that service.

Policy 14. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accommodations shall be made for disabled persons where feasible at selected areas and sites within the Reserve. Access provisions and facilities will be designed to encourage use by the disabled where feasible.

3. Uses and Facilities Program

Policy 1. Uses and activities will be consistent with the primary missions of the Reserve, to preserve and enhance natural resources, and to protect educational opportunities.

Policy 2. Physical improvements will be adequate to accommodate education and interpretive uses, management activities and visitor services commensurate with Master Plan goals and policies.

The proposed addition of new facilities is detailed on Pages 33 through 41 of the Draft Master Plan.

4. Implementation Program

Page 44 identifies a summary of staffing needs to carry out the proposed Master Plan and includes adding two more Naturalists, a Marine Biologist, and a Naturalist Aide to the existing personnel of Supervising Naturalist and Ranger who currently staff the Reserve and Marsh.

Pages 43 through 48 identify recommended phased actions for implementation of the visitor management, resource management, and uses and facilities programs.

B. Addendum to the Draft Master Plan (January 2001)

As a result of public comments on the Draft Master Plan, a number of clarifications to existing recommendations were made. Many of the clarifications related to the regulatory framework of Federal and State agencies, and other County departments who have responsibility or jurisdiction in the implementation of the Master Plan (as identified on Page 47), and related revisions to recommended implementation actions. The following clarifications to prior policies were made:

1. Revisions to the Goals of the Master Plan raised the priority of ensuring adequate and well-trained staff and also lowered the immediate priority of the goal of protection of cultural resources.

2. Policy 10 of the Natural Resource Management Program was revised as follows:

“Acquire land in the vicinity of the Pillar Point Marsh and lands adjacent to eastward of the Marine Reserve, as it becomes available, to add to the ecological system of the Reserve. Establish a working committee of the County Parks and Recreation Commission and Board of Supervisors to coordinate and facilitate acquisitions.”

3. Policy 12 of the Natural Resource Management Program was revised as follows:

“Recreational hunting, fishing, gathering, and collecting are prohibited within the Reserve because of the potential risks to public safety and biological resources.”

4. Policy 9 of the Visitor Management Program has been revised as follow:

“~~No fishing, or gathering will be allowed on the reef.~~ As part of the adaptive management program, access, fishing and gathering may be limited or prohibited on the reef, if such limitations or prohibitions are warranted by findings of the Monitoring Program (Resource Management Program Recommended Implementation Action 2). Such actions would require authorization by the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission, County Board of Supervisors and the California Department of Fish and Game.

5. Revisions to the recommended implementation actions, responsible agencies, and phasing have been made as identified on Pages 56 through 60. The most significant revisions pertain to:

a. Prepare Monitoring Program to determine impacts of visitation, fishing, and gathering of resources.

Resource Management Program Action 2 (identified on Page 56) has been revised as follows:

San Mateo County and the California Department of Fish and Game, with participation by the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, will jointly develop a monitoring program for the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve that will achieve the following objectives: (1) provide information to establish a baseline for future scientific, research, and monitoring activities; (2) monitor effectiveness of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan; (3) **to determine impacts on intertidal reefs related to access, fishing, and gathering activities and to implement appropriate actions, and (4) to inform future decisions regarding Reserve management.**

b. **Seek Marine Life Reserve Status**

Resource Management Program Action 16 (identified on Pages 58 and 59) has been revised as follows:

The County will continue to seek Marine Life Reserve Ecological Preserve status for the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

~~Ecological Preserve status for the Reserve will require State legislation that would designate the Reserve as a Preserve in the National Marine Sanctuary system and as part of the (see discussion in Part One, A #5, History of the Reserve"). The Friends for Fitzgerald organization has been actively pursuing this change. The County should support this legislative initiative through a new Board of Supervisors resolution that underscores the need for the change.~~

Changing the designation of the Reserve from an area of special biological significance (ASBS) and a Marine Reserve (Marine Life Refuge) to a Marine Life Reserve would be made as part of a new Master Plan for marine protection areas. (See discussion in Part 1.A, #5 "History of the Preserve.") This will depend on results of studies to monitor impacts to the Reserve's resources (Resource Management Program Implementation Action #2) and funding for these studies to monitor impacts to the Reserve's resources (Resource Management Action #2) and funding for these studies is not yet available. In the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve area, the California Department of Fish and Game has management responsibility over waters below high tide, and the County of San Mateo has management responsibility over areas above the high tide line. Any limitations on access or fishing and gathering activities within the tidal zone or coastal waters would require approval of several entities, including the County Parks and Recreation Commission, the County Board of Supervisors, and the California Department of Fish and Game. The County would coordinate with the Department of Fish and Game to implement such limitations.

c. **Prepare Water Quality Plan (to improve water quality in drainages and reduce erosion)**

Resource Management Program Action 13 (as identified on Page 59) has been revised as follows:

Prepare a Water Quality Management Plan for San Vicente Creek, the Sunshine Valley Creek drainage, Denniston Creek and Pillar Point Marsh that will include drainage improvements, BMPs and enforcement of non-point source water quality regulations. The County should coordinate the Plan with local landowners, and the surrounding communities of Half Moon Bay, Moss Beach, and Princeton.

d. **Develop Cultural Resource Management Plan**

Resource Management Program Action 15 (as identified on Page 59) has been revised as follows:

Develop a Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) to guide management of cultural resources within the Reserve. These resources include the four identified archaeological sites and the Smith-Dolger home site. The Cultural Resources Management Plan should assess the presence of and potential for cultural resources, including prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, historic structures and buildings. The Cultural

Resources Management Plan should provide for protection of the sites while expanding interpretive and educational opportunities for visitors to the Reserve.”

e. Acquisition Program

Resource Management Program Action 6 (as identified on Page 57) will be revised as follows:

Develop a land acquisition program, in conjunction with the California Coastal Conservancy and other non-profit groups, to expand the Reserve boundary. A working committee of the County Parks and Recreation Commission and Board of Supervisors should be established to coordinate efforts to acquire these lands for inclusion into the Reserve. The committee may include members of governmental agencies with jurisdiction and non-profit organizations that may facilitate of fund acquisitions.

f. Identify Funding Sources for Resource Management Program

Resource Management Program Action 9 (as identified on Page 60) will be added as follows:

Identify opportunities for resource management programs. Such opportunities may include grants and funds for scientific research and education development and special Federal, State, and local programs for marine life, wildlife and resource protection.

g. Facilities Development Program

The second bullet of Uses and Facilities Program Action 2 (as identified on Page 58) has been revised as follows:

- **Pillar Point Marsh facilities, including the parking area, restrooms and parking area. Current proposal is conceptual only. Additional siting and design studies to be undertaken by County as part of the San Mateo County Trails Plan (see also topic 7: Access and Trails). The County should coordinate this effort with the Harbor District, the County of San Mateo, Half Moon Bay Airport and the community of Princeton.**

The County will coordinate the design of the Education Center, Pillar Point Marsh facilities, and other facilities with the public and the community.

h. Master Landscape and Trails Plan

The Use and Facilities Program Action 3 (as identified on Page 58) has been revised as follows:

Develop a Master Landscape and Trails Plan for the Reserve that would include the Overlook Areas; the San Vicente Creek footbridge; fencing locations and designs; and trail system design and alignments. The trails components of this Plan may require acquisition of land or trail easements (for example, to complete the link to Wienke Way).

The Master Landscape Plan and Trails Plan will be coordinated with the San Mateo County Trails Plan to ensure the trails located within the Reserve are linked with surrounding public trails, and that the design is consistent with County standards. The San Mateo County Trails Plan includes the following components:

- **Inventory of existing formal and informal trails, and service roads.**
- **Evaluation of existing trails, trailheads, and parking needs.**
- **Specific trail use policies.**
- **Criteria for trail use by multiple users.**

- Design and management guidelines to include guidelines for signage, trail design and construction and maintenance guidelines for trails.

The San Mateo County Trails Plan was developed in a public planning process with input from the public and coordination with other agencies.

C. Comments Received to Date

1. Mid-Coast Community Council

Following staff's presentation to the Mid-Coast Community Council Park and Recreation Committee and Mid-Coast Community Council, a letter was sent from the Chair of the Mid-Coast Community Council in appreciation of the changes to the specific language of the Master Plan that provide guidance, rather than absolute statements, regarding the level of visitors and appropriate fishing activities within the Reserve (Attachment D).

2. San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD)

Based on the fact that a significant portion of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve is located within the San Mateo County RCD, the Directors of the San Mateo County RCD has requested that the following text be added to Table I-1, Agencies with Responsibilities and/or Jurisdiction in Fitzgerald Marine Reserve (page 19):

Agency: San Mateo County RCD

Jurisdiction: Not Applicable.

Programs/Responsibilities/Regulations: The role of the San Mateo County RCD is to use available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user and local communities for conservation of soil, water, and related resources.

3. San Mateo County Public Works Department

The Public Works Department has recommended that on page 23 of the Addendum under Public Works in the chart that sewers be deleted under Jurisdiction and Programs. The responsibility for sewers in this area is Montara Sanitary District. Staff recommends the clarification be made as requested.

The Public Works Department have expressed concerns with any proposed ponds at the Half Moon Bay Airport, and proposed water quality improvements in San Vicente Creek and the Pillar Point Marsh that impact the airport.

The Recommended Implementation Actions in Table 1-3 on page 57 includes two actions, which would address water quality: (1) Action 10. Prepare San Vicente Creek Restoration Plan, and (2) Action 12. Prepare Water Quality Plan. In addition, the EIR to be completed on the Master Plan will evaluate impacts on the Half Moon Bay Airport. The EIR process is described on pages 1 and 2 of the Addendum.

D. Environmental Review

Staff is requesting that the Board of Supervisors conceptually approve the Draft Master Plan so that the environmental review can proceed. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will likely be required. Following completion of the EIR the Draft Master Plan and Draft EIR will be brought back to the Board of Supervisors for approval and certification respectively.

E. Fiscal Impact

The Board of Supervisors has previously dedicated \$35,000 to County Parks to proceed with preparation of an EIR. Following approval of the Master Plan there will be new costs associated with implementation that will be brought back to the Board for consideration through the normal budget process. The Parks Division is not requesting any new funding commitment at this time. The Parks Division is committed to finding outside grant funding to assist in paying for some of the recommendations resulting from the Draft Master Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

To review or obtain a copy of Attachments A and B, please contact either the Parks and Recreation Division, 455 County Center, 4th Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063, (650) 363-4020, or the Clerk of the Board, 400 County Center, Hall of Justice and Records, Redwood City, CA 94063, (650) 363-4123.

Attachment A: Draft Master Plan (August 1999)

Attachment B: Addendum to Draft Master Plan (January 2001)

Attachment C: Chronology of Events

Attachment D: Letter from Mid-Coast Community Council

Attachment E: Letter from the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District

Attachment F: E-mail from San Mateo County Public Works Department

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 1960s The County proposed that the State of California acquire the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve as a State Reserve.
- August 1969 Governor of California approved state legislation that identified properties to constitute a "marine life refuge", and designated one of those properties as the "James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve". As one of 34 marine "areas of special biological significance" (ASBS) in California, the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve is acquired, and is co-managed by the County and the California Department of Fish and Game.
- 1983 County passed a resolution urging the California Department of Fish and Game Commission to approve a Biological Preserve status for Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. The CA Fish and Game Commission did not approve the proposed change in status. Five subsequent attempts were made to change the status, all of which fail, mainly due to opposition from fishing interests.
- 1993 County Parks publishes Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Baseline and Carrying Capacity Study that assessed the impacts of visitation on the marine resources at the Reserve.
- 1997 County acquired Pillar Point Marsh. County determined that a Master Plan was needed to balance the education and resource protection missions of the Reserve, to address problems with high levels of visitation on the intertidal reefs at the Reserve, and to integrate the Pillar Point Marsh into the Reserve.
- December 4, 1997 First public workshop regarding preparation of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan.
- December 8, 1997 First Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting regarding preparation of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan.
- February 18, 1998 Second TAC meeting.
- February 28, 1998 Second Public Workshop
- May 6, 1998 Third Public Workshop
- September 24, 1998 Fourth Public Workshop
- November 20, 1998 Third TAC meeting.
- September 13, 1999 Draft Master Plan circulated for 30-day comment period until October 12, 1999.
- August 3, 1999 Fourth TAC meeting.

September 16, 1999 Presentation on Draft Master Plan to Mid-Coast Community Council Park and Recreation Committee.

September 22, 1999 Presentation on Draft Master Plan to Mid-Coast Community Council.

October 7, 1999 Public hearing held on Draft Master Plan by Park and Recreation Commission.

February 5, 2001 Presentation of Addendum to Draft Master Plan to Mid-Coast Community Council Park and Recreation Committee.

February 13, 2001 Presentation of Addendum to Draft Master Plan to Princeton Citizens Homeowners Association.

February 14, 2001 Presentation of Addendum to Draft Master Plan to Mid-Coast Community Council.

March 13, 2001 Presentation of Addendum to Draft Master Plan to Friends of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

April 24, 2001 The Parks and Recreation Commission recommended to the Board of Supervisors that: (1) the Draft Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan be conceptually approved; and (2) the County Parks Division be directed to proceed with environmental review so that the Final Master Plan can be adopted

Midcoast Community Council
P.O. Box 64
Moss Beach, CA 94038

An elected Municipal Advisory Council of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Serving 12,000 Coastal Residents

March 7, 2001

Ms. Mary Burns, Director
Parks and Recreation Division
County of San Mateo Environmental Services Agency
455 County Center, 4th Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

Dear Ms. Burns,

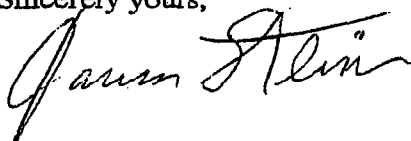
The MidCoast Community Council very much appreciates the time and effort of Sam Herzberg in visiting our Parks and Recreation Committee on February 5 and our regular MidCoast Community Council meeting on February 14. Mr. Herzberg presented the County's response to public comments on the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Draft Master Plan, explained the significant changes in the Addendum and answered questions from Council members and the public. We would like to thank Mr. Herzberg for his cooperation in making these revisions known to the community.

After reviewing the Addendum, we would like to congratulate San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division on a thorough response with careful attention the diverse comment submitted. The revised Master Plan has significant improvements, including the table showing all agencies that have some level of jurisdiction over the Reserve and their appropriate roles and responsibilities.

Many community members also appreciate the changes to the specific language in the Master Plan that provide guidance, rather than more absolute statements, regarding the level of visitors and appropriate fishing activities within the Reserve. Further study seems appropriate to ensure that the marine resources are protected without being put completely off limits.

We look forward to working cooperatively with your Division on other projects affecting the MidCoast, particularly the current Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment.

Sincerely yours,



Laura Stein, Chair
MidCoast Community Council

cc: Sam Herzberg
Supervisor Richard Gordon

**SAN
MATEO
COUNTY**

**RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

**625 Miramontes St., Ste. 206
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019
Phone(650) 726-4660 * Fax 726-0494**

March 28, 2001

Samuel Herzberg
Senior Planner Parks and Recreation Division
San Mateo County Environmental Services Agency
455 County Center, Fourth Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1646

Subject: Addendum to the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Draft Master Plan

Dear Sam,

It has come to the attention of the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (SMCRCD) that the Addendum to the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Draft Master Plan does not mention the SMCRCD or that a significant portion of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve is located within the SMCRCD boundaries.

Therefore, the Directors of the SMCRCD would like to see the following text added to **Table I-1, Agencies with Responsibility and/or Jurisdiction in Fitzgerald Marine Reserve** (page 19), or where you deem it to be most relevant:

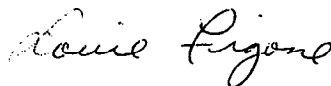
Agency: San Mateo County Resource Conservation District

Jurisdiction: Not applicable

Programs/Responsibilities/Regulations: The role of the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District is to use available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user and local communities for conservation of soil, water, and related resources.

The Fitzgerald Marine Reserve is an important resource. We appreciate your efforts in creating the long-awaited Master Plan.

Sincerely,
Louie Figone



Chair
San Mateo County Resource Conservation District

From: Brian Lee
To: Samuel Herzberg
Date: 3/23/01 12:02PM
Subject: Addendum to the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Draft Master Plan

Sam,

I just got a copy of the addendum and quickly skimmed over it. I have two comments:

1. On Page 23 under Public Works Department in the chart, delete sewers under Jurisdiction and Programs. The agency responsible for sewers in that area is Montara Sanitary District.
2. In our comments to you in 1999, we were concerned with any proposed ponds at the airport ground; and proposed water quality improvements in san Vicente Creek and Pilar Point Marsh that impact the HMB Airport. I can't find any response on these two issues.

Thanks!

Brian

CC: Mark Larson; Neil Cullen