



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION  
OF AN  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

2950 PERALTA OAKS COURT, PO BOX 5381, OAKLAND, CA 95605-0381

**Notice is hereby given that the East Bay Regional Park District (District) is the Lead Agency and is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for:**

**2017 ROBERT SIBLEY VOLCANIC REGIONAL PRESERVE  
LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT (LUPA)  
Incorporating the McCosker Parcel and Western Hills Open Space**

The District is requesting comments on the scope and content of this EIR. **Due to the 30-day time limit mandated by State law, comments must be received no later than 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 19, 2017.**

Please send written comments to Julie Bondurant, Acting Chief of Planning/GIS, in care of the East Bay Regional Park District at the address listed above, or via e-mail to: [jbondurant@ebparks.org](mailto:jbondurant@ebparks.org).

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS NOTICE IS:** (1) to serve as the Notice of Preparation to provide potential Responsible Agencies, agencies involved in funding or approving the project, and Trustee Agencies responsible for natural resources affected by the project with sufficient information to provide meaningful responses as to the scope and content of the EIR, pursuant to Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines; and (2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the preparation of the EIR, environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR, and any related issues from interested parties, including interested or affected members of the public.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The *2017 Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve Land Use Plan Amendment* (Project) includes three sub-areas totaling 1,318 acres located within Alameda and Contra Costa Counties: 1) Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve (Preserve); 2) Western Hills Open Space (Western Hills); and 3) the McCosker Parcel (McCosker). The project area appears on the Oakland East, California U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle map. The Preserve sub-area encompasses a 678.71-acre area along the ridgelines of the East Bay Hills bordering the City of Oakland. The Western Hills sub-area comprises a 389.1-acre area, extending eastward from the ridgelines of the East Bay Hills to the western boundary of the Wilder residential development in the City of Orinda. The McCosker Sub-area comprises a 250-acre area approximately one mile northwest of the unincorporated township of Canyon in Contra Costa County. This sub-area extends from the canyon floor of the eastern face of the East Bay Hills to the east-west trending ridgelines of Gudde Ridge. Huckleberry Regional Preserve borders portions of each of the three sub-areas and trails connecting the three sub-areas are proposed to cross through Huckleberry Regional Preserve, which is owned and managed by the District.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The proposed project includes: 1) improvements to existing staging areas and development of new parking areas; 2) improvements to existing roadways and infrastructure; 3) recreation facility development; 4) expansion of the existing trail system; and 5) restoration and enhancement of a creek, its tributaries, and adjacent uplands in the McCosker sub-area.

**Improvements to Existing Staging Areas and Development of New Parking Areas.** A total of six staging areas will help to distribute use throughout the project area. Improvements will include: 1) expansion of the existing parking capacity from 34 spaces to approximately 60 spaces and adding additional family picnic sites near the Sibley Staging Area parking lot per the 1985 Sibley Land Use Development Plan; and 2) a new visitor parking lot that will accommodate approximately 20 to 25 spaces to serve reservable recreation areas within the McCosker sub-area.

**Improvements to Existing Roadways and Infrastructure.** The project roadway improvements will include: 1) repairing and repaving the existing service road access off Old Tunnel Road within the Preserve sub-area; 2) improvements to an existing ranch road within the McCosker sub-area to provide access to the reservation-only recreation area; and 3) a new, bridge, which will provide access to the Upper Terrace of the McCosker sub-area.

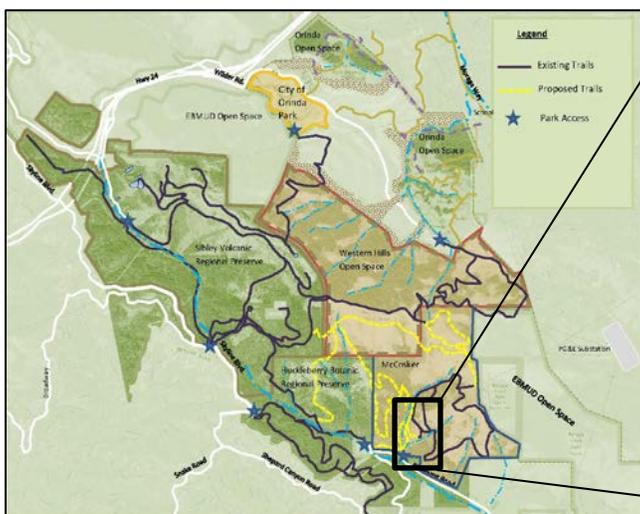
Utility infrastructure in the Preserve sub-area will include extension of an existing potable water line to the existing backpack camp. Utility infrastructure improvements in the McCosker sub-area will include: 1) installation of prefabricated toilets; 2) development of a potable water supply to service the Middle Terrace; 3) connections to existing electrical and communications services to meet recreation and maintenance needs at the Middle Terrace; and 4) installation of fencing and gates to control site access.

**Recreation Facility Development.** Recreation facility development will occur on the Lower, Middle and Upper Terraces of the McCosker sub-area. The Lower and Middle Terraces will be designed to accommodate interpretive programs and camping activities for 30 to 50 people. Use will be by reservation only. Reservations will be administered by District park staff. The proposed staging area and activity areas will provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant facilities, including parking, toilet, picnic, and campsite amenities. ADA compliant

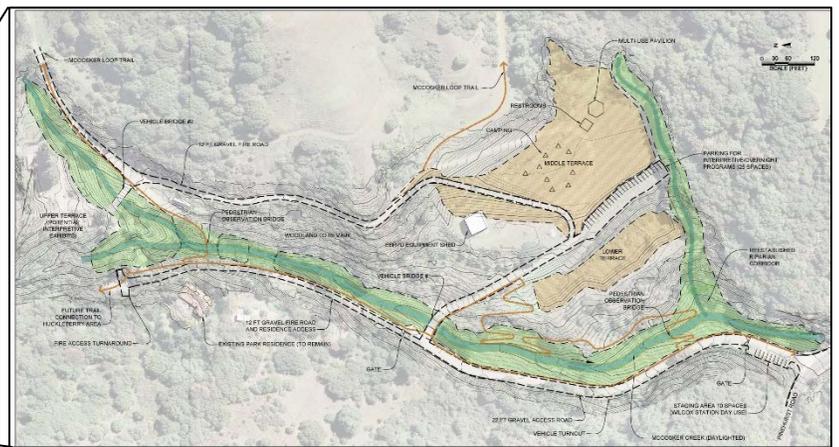
trails will provide connections between developed areas on the Lower and Middle Terraces, and a lower reach of the Nature Trail. The Upper Terrace will be designed as an informal site for passive day use activities only and will incorporate existing concrete walls remaining from the former construction and quarrying business. The development of these terrace sites for recreational uses will add riparian and oak woodlands. These plantings will emphasize the use of trees that will augment existing habitat located at the perimeter of these sites, as well as providing screening, shade, and aesthetic value for park visitors. Soil excavated to “daylight” or create an open, natural creek channel, will be placed as engineered fill on the Lower and Middle Terraces. The thickness and location of the fill will be governed to a degree by slope stability considerations; completed fill areas will be graded to accommodate future recreational improvements.

**Trail System.** The trail system will incorporate: existing trails, approximately three and one-half miles of new narrow, natural surface trails, and changes in trail uses for approximately two miles of existing trails to improve circulation and provide greater connectivity with other District lands and neighboring residential communities. Trail signage will include directional, regulatory and wayfinding signs. Trail information will also incorporate interpretive features, such as maps and exhibits. Park usage accommodations will conform to the District policy on use of Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) - 2011. Trails will be rated according to the Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP) and the State Park Accessibility Standards when evaluating trail difficulty and obstacles.

**Restoration and Enhancement of a Creek, Its Tributaries, and Adjacent Uplands in the McCosker Sub-area.** Approximately 2,100 linear feet of the deteriorating, culverted McCosker Creek, and 600 linear feet of a side tributary will be daylighted and restored. The restored creek channel will connect to three existing tributaries. The reconstructed creek will incorporate a mix of cascades, step pools, resting pools, including pocket pools in steeper areas, and potential spawning sites for rainbow trout. A new riparian habitat environment will be established throughout the length of the restored channel and tributaries. Construction of the restored creek channels are anticipated to require removal of fill, most of which will be transferred to the Lower and Middle Terraces.



Project Location & Trail System



Preliminary Creek Restoration & Recreation Improvement Areas

**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** Because the Lead Agency has determined that an EIR will be required, no Initial Study has been prepared for the proposed project. The EIR will address the potential physical environmental effects for each of the environmental topics outlined in the CEQA:

Aesthetic & Visual Impacts	Agricultural & Forestry Resources	Air Quality	Biological Resources
Cultural Resources	Geology, Soils & Seismicity	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
Hydrology & Water Quality	Land Use & Planning	Mineral Resources	Noise
Population & Housing	Public Services	Recreation	Transportation/Traffic
Tribal Cultural Resources	Utilities & Service Systems		

The EIR will include a discussion of the existing conditions for each environmental issue and identify short-term and long-term environmental impacts associated with the project, and their levels of significance. Mitigation measures will be identified to reduce any potentially significant or significant impacts. The EIR will also examine a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project, including the CEQA-mandated No Project Alternative, and other potential alternatives. The level of analysis for these subject areas may be refined or additional subject areas may be analyzed based on responses to this NOP and/or any refinements to the proposed project that may occur after the publication of this NOP.

**PUBLIC MEETINGS.** To date, there have been three community meetings, including a CEQA scoping meeting, two site tours, and two youth engagement workshops. A summary of these meetings can be found on the District website at: [http://www.ebparks.org/about/planning#robert\\_sibley\\_lupa](http://www.ebparks.org/about/planning#robert_sibley_lupa). The District anticipates a fourth community meeting will be held in late summer 2017.