CREATING AN IMAGE FOR THE COASTAL TRAIL: A SIGNING AND GRAPHICS PROGRAM

Creating an Image for the Coastal Trail: A Signing and Graphics Program

The California Coastal Trail will be a statewide feature linking many distinctive communities along the California coastline. Because of its length and the wide variety of landscapes through which the Coastal Trail will run, the creation of a coordinated signing program is of central importance. Certainly, signs will be needed to guide trail users and provide them with practical information. More essential, however, is the need to weave the diverse strands and segments of the trail into a unified whole.

Our challenge is to identify and define the Coastal Trail conceptually as a single entity in a manner that is flexible enough to accommodate the wide variety of landscapes, jurisdictions, and user groups encompassed by the California Coastal Trail. The following goals, objectives, and standards have been formulated to address this challenge.

Primary Goals:
- Create a graphic identity for the Coastal Trail.
- Designate the route of the Coastal Trail.
- Preserve the scenic beauty of the California coastline.

Accomplishing these goals will entail the installation of stand-alone signs that identify the route and provide comprehensive information, as well as the placement of small “blazes” or insignias that can be added to existing trail markers. At the same time, it is important that signing efforts not contribute to visual clutter and degrade scenic resources.

Objectives of the Signing Program for the California Coastal Trail:
- Present necessary information in a manner that is clear, informative, and sensitive to the scenic beauty of natural and man-made landscapes.
- Create a variety of sign formats that can be easily and inexpensively integrated with existing signing programs.
- Comply with local land use regulations and Coastal Act requirements.
- Provide local jurisdictions with signing guidelines.

Too many signs can detract from the enjoyment of a trail.
• Supplement, not replace, local trail designations.

• Avoid the proliferation of duplicate signs.

The intent of a statewide signing program should be to coordinate with public land managers in those areas where the Coastal Trail follows the route of an existing trail system. However, certain general standards can be applied to most portions of the Coastal Trail regardless of location or jurisdiction.

**General Standards:**

• Identification signs for the Coastal Trail should be placed at all staging areas, trailheads, junctions, and special features.

• Signage along major inland connecting trails should direct users to the Coastal Trail.

• The location of CCT staging areas should be indicated from highways and major roadways.

• Signs should use international symbols as much as possible.

• ADA-compliant portions of the trail should be clearly indicated.

Completing the Coastal Trail will be a years-long project involving hundreds of public agencies and nonprofit organizations and millions of dollars. The signing program is as integral to completing the trail as the acquisition of rights-of-way and the construction of pathways. In order to assure that the goals of the signing program are met, it is recommended that the following actions be undertaken within the next year.

**Priority Actions:**

• Conduct a design competition to develop a graphic identifier (logo) for the Coastal Trail.

• Develop detailed signing standards in close cooperation with federal, State, and local agencies having jurisdiction over portions of the trail.

• Work with federal, State, and local jurisdictions to display the Coastal Trail logo on existing portions of the trail.

• Initiate discussions with Caltrans to develop a signing program for State Highways 1 and 101 where those are the principal route of the Coastal Trail.
Recommendations for Action: Statewide Policy Initiatives

The Administration and the Legislature should consider the following:

1. **Commitment to Completing the Coastal Trail.** The State should consider making a long-term commitment to completing the Coastal Trail, including designating funding sources for completion, maintenance, and repair. The Legislature should consider designating a portion of the State’s share of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund for this purpose.

2. **Integrate the Coastal Trail into State Transportation Plans.** The California Transportation Commission should consider incorporating the Coastal Trail into the State Transportation Improvement Program, and Caltrans should consider emphasizing improvements to nonmotorized traffic safety. Where Highways 1 or 101 provide links in the Coastal Trail, the Coastal Conservancy and the Coastal Commission should work with Caltrans to identify priority sites and design feasible means of implementing shoulder widening and other improvements for nonmotorized traffic safety.

3. **Use the Coastal Trail to Increase Accessibility to State Recreational Facilities.** The Coastal Trail should be incorporated into the State Outdoor Recreation Plan as a State facility, pursuant to ACR20. State Parks should complete its evaluation of accessibility conditions along the principal trail routes within park units to identify priority areas for actions that would increase accessibility for children, seniors, and persons with disabilities, including both trail improvements and informational signing.

4. **All State Programs Should Support Completing the Coastal Trail.** Whenever a State agency uses or grants funds as a part of a land acquisition project within the coastal zone, the acquiring agency or organization should provide an easement for nonmotorized public passage along the existing or potential route of the Coastal Trail.

5. **Eliminate Shoreline Obstructions.** Wherever practical, existing manmade structures that impede public access along the shoreline should be removed or redesigned to facilitate public access. To avoid the loss of public recreational access where new shoreline development is proposed, the State Lands Commission should provide review and comment as requested by the Coastal Commission regarding the current location of the mean high tide line.
Recommendations for Action:
Projects to Implement the Coastal Trail

To complete significant portions of the California Coastal Trail within each coastal county, the following projects (listed from north to south) should be accomplished over the next three years:

**Del Norte County**

1. Work with private landowners to design improvements at the border crossing to create a clear continuity in the Coastal Trail from California to Oregon.

2. Encourage Caltrans to design improvements for pedestrians and bicycles at the crossings of the Smith River and the Klamath River along State Highway 101.

3. Design and build multi-use trails across the recently acquired Point St. George headland, connecting Crescent City with Tolowa Dunes State Park.

4. Complete the pedestrian and bicycle access improvements described in the Crescent City Harbor Trail Study.

5. Support State Parks in their effort to provide inland trails within the recently acquired Mill Creek property to connect with the coastal trail.

**Humboldt County**

1. Support implementation of the Humboldt Bay Trails Feasibility Study to develop a continuous trail system around the east side of Humboldt Bay.

2. Complete the extension of the Hammond Trail from the Mad River bridge south, developing links to Arcata and Eureka.
3. Restore the Hammond Trail pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the Mad River.

4. Using abandoned railroad right-of-way, develop the Annie and Mary Trail to encourage nonmotorized access to the coast by linking Arcata with Blue Lake and other inland communities.

5. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights at several locations from Centerville Beach to Cape Mendocino.

6. Encourage Caltrans to design improvements for pedestrians and bicycles on the bridges crossing the Eel River and Mattole River.

**Mendocino County**

1. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights and improve a trail corridor connecting Usal Road and Westport-Union Landing State Park.

2. State Parks should complete restoration of the Pudding Creek trestle to connect MacKerricher State Park with the city of Fort Bragg.
3. Complete a system of trail improvements separate from State Highway 1 that will connect Russian Gulch State Park, Point Cabrillo Reserve, Caspar Headlands, Caspar State Beach, and Jug Handle State Reserve.

4. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights along the bluffs from Dark Gulch to Albion Cove and the Albion Headlands.

5. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights and improve a trail corridor connecting Manchester State Beach and the Point Arena Pier.

**Sonoma County**

1. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights and improve a trail corridor connecting Salt Point State Park, Stillwater Cove Regional Park, and Fort Ross Historic State Park, consistent with the recommendations of the North Russian River Parcel Analysis Study.

2. Encourage State Parks to extend the existing trails within Salt Point State Park and Fort Ross State Historic Park to provide safe pedestrian access west of State Highway 1.

3. Work with private landowners to acquire additional public access rights west of State Highway 1 extending northward from Salt Point State Park, for the development of a blufftop trail and recreational support facilities.
4. Provide safe pedestrian access separate from State Highway 1 through the extension of the Kortum Trail between the Sonoma Coast State Beaches units at Wright’s Beach and North Salmon Creek Beach.

5. Complete a design plan for pedestrian and bicycle access through the community of Bodega Bay, including specific land acquisition and improvements needed to alleviate the current safety problems along State Highway 1.

6. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights between Bodega Bay and Estero Americano.
**Marin County**

1. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights between Estero Americano and Dillon Beach.

2. Work with private landowners to obtain trail easements across the protected open space east of Tomales Bay, and install improvements needed to minimize conflicts with working ranchlands.

3. Work with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and State Parks to acquire parcels east of Tomales Bay and west of State Highway 1.

4. Work with Point Reyes National Seashore to connect existing trails through the park to create a continuous trail from the northern to southern extents of the park.

5. Encourage the GGNRA to develop trails closer to the coast where topography permits.
**San Francisco County**

1. Assist the National Park Service to design and construct a trail along Lincoln Boulevard between State Highway 1 and Baker Beach.

2. Encourage the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure permanent public trail and bicycle access as part of any effort to control beach erosion south of Sloat Boulevard.

3. Construct stairs over the wastewater outfall pipe on the beach below Fort Funston.

**San Mateo County**

1. Work with public and private landowners to design and construct a trail west of Skyline Boulevard from the San Francisco County line south to Pacifica.

2. Encourage Caltrans to assure pedestrian and bicycle access along the abandoned State Highway 1 right-of-way at Devil’s Slide, and transfer this property to the GGNRA for permanent management.

3. Encourage the National Park Service and the City of Pacifica to design and construct trail segments on the public properties at Mori Point and the Pedro Point Headlands.

4. Work with San Mateo County and private landowners to design and construct a trail on the landward portion of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

5. Design and construct trail improvements along the existing public trail easements on Cowell Ranch and Purisima Farms, and transfer these easements to State Parks or another suitable agency for permanent management.
6. Work with the Peninsula Open Space Trust to facilitate transfer to State Parks of the Whaler’s Cove and Bolsa Point properties, and encourage State Parks to design and construct trail improvements on these properties.

7. Work with State Parks to design and construct a trail west of State Highway 1 through Año Nuevo State Park that will avoid degrading sensitive habitat areas.

Santa Cruz County

1. Work with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission to acquire the former railroad right-of-way and develop the multi-use trail from Davenport to Watsonville.

2. Complete the environmental analysis and design of a principal trail alignment through the former Coast Dairies property in cooperation with the Trust for Public Land and others, and construct the trail.

3. Work with State Parks to complete the coastal trail segment across the Gray Whale Ranch property and open the property to the public.

4. Work with Santa Cruz County to identify a trail alignment through Live Oak and work with the County, State Parks, and private landowners to identify a trail alignment from Capitola to the County line.

5. Encourage and assist in the completion of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail.

6. Work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties to complete the trail systems along both sides of the Pajaro River and connect them to the Coastal Trail.
Monterey County

1. Encourage and assist in the completion of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail.

2. Encourage the Pebble Beach Company to maintain public access to the existing trail systems in the Del Monte Forest and between Asilomar and Carmel Beach, and to improve nonmotorized access along 17-Mile Drive between Cypress Point and Forest Lake Road, and provide public financial assistance to facilitate such use.

3. Encourage Caltrans to complete the Coast Highway Management Plan and provide public financial assistance to increase and facilitate nonmotorized access along the stretch of Highway 1.

View of Gray Whale Ranch from below Wilder Ranch State Park, Santa Cruz County
improve pedestrian and cycling safety along State Highway 1 in Big Sur.

4. Encourage the development of a trail network through Palo Corona Ranch that will provide connections to the coast.

5. Provide a public trail connection from Andrew Molera State Park across Deer Ridge to Pfeiffer Beach.

6. Assist State Parks to reestablish the Coastal Trail through Garrapata State Park.

7. Encourage the U. S. Forest Service to develop a trail through the forest and along the seaward slope between State Highway 1 and the Coast Ridge Trail.

**San Luis Obispo County**

1. Design a public trail west of State Highway 1 from the Monterey County line south to San Simeon to provide safe pedestrian access that will avoid degrading sensitive habitat areas, and work with private landowners to acquire necessary access rights.

2. Implement the East-West Ranch Management Plan to develop a public trail and support facilities providing access to this recently acquired property.

3. Work with public and private landowners to acquire public access rights and develop a blufftop trail along the Harmony Coast between South Cambria and the Estero Bluffs property.

4. Assist State Parks to develop a trail and associated access facilities on the recently acquired Estero Bluffs property.

5. Construct the Morro Bay Waterfront Boardwalk along the east side of the Morro Bay National Estuary.

6. Support State Parks’ work with private landowners to acquire and develop a public trail corridor through the Irish Hills, connecting Montaña de Oro State Park with Avila Beach, as a feasible near-term alternative to a coastal blufftop trail through the Diablo Canyon Power Plant property.

**Santa Barbara County**

1. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights west of Highway 101 between Jalama County Park and Gaviota State Park.

2. Work with private landowners to acquire public access rights west of Highway 101 between Refugio State Park and Gaviota State Park.
3. Assist Santa Barbara County to design and implement pedestrian and bicycle trail improvements parallel to Highway 101 along the Gaviota Coast.

4. Assist Caltrans in evaluating and improving nonmotorized access opportunities along the Highway 101 corridor between Rincon Beach County Park and Carpinteria State Beach.

Ventura County

1. Assist Caltrans in evaluating and improving nonmotorized access opportunities along the Highway 101 corridor between the County line and Mussel Shoals.

2. Design a recreational access trail along the Santa Clara River to encourage nonmotorized access to the coast from inland cities.

3. Restore the pedestrian and bicycle pathway damaged by erosion at Surfers’ Point (County Fairgrounds).
4. Encourage the U.S. Navy to provide a shoreline public access connection on the Naval Construction Battalion Center, Port Hueneme, consistent with military security requirements.

5. Provide pedestrian and bicycle paths in conjunction with planning for restoration of the Ormond Beach wetlands, to connect with the trail in Port Hueneme.

6. Work with the City of Oxnard to design and construct recreational support facilities at the terminus of Arnold Road to improve beach access opportunities and avoid impacts to sensitive habitat areas.

**Los Angeles County**

1. Assist Caltrans in evaluating and improving nonmotorized access along the State Highway 1 corridor from Leo Carrillo State Beach to the beginning of the South Bay Bicycle Path near Temescal Canyon. Encourage Caltrans and local agencies to extend bicycle and pedestrian improvements through Malibu.

2. Facilitate continuous lateral access along the Malibu shoreline from Leo Carrillo State Beach to the city limit.

3. Link the inland portions of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area with the coast by assisting the National Park Service, State Parks, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and the City of Malibu to acquire necessary rights-of-way and develop improvements to complete the Coastal Slope Trail.

4. Extend the pedestrian/bicycle path from Washington Street to the north jetty of Marina del Rey, and support the seasonal ferry service for pedestrians and cyclists across the channel to Playa del Rey.
5. Assist the Cities of Los Angeles and Long Beach in providing a continuous pedestrian and bicycle trail around the western and northern edge of the harbor area from Cabrillo Beach to the Los Angeles River Trail.

**Orange County**

1. Implement the planned State Highway 1 improvements between Seal Beach and Anderson Street in Huntington Beach to create a separated nonmotorized trail.

2. Encourage local agency efforts to work with private landowners and acquire public access rights necessary to provide a trail connection to the coast from Aliso Creek Regional Park.

3. Encourage local agency land acquisitions, trail design, and development to provide a public access connection to the coast from Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

4. Complete improvements of “missing links” to provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access adjacent to State Highway 1 between the cities of Laguna Beach and Dana Point.

5. Support the effort by the City of San Clemente to provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle trail along the railroad right-of-way west of State Highway 1.
San Diego County

1. Encourage the U.S. Marine Corps to reopen the Camp Pendleton coastal bicycle trail when consistent with military security requirements, and to consider opening this trail to pedestrian use.

2. Support local agency efforts to develop a safe pedestrian and bicycle trail along the railroad right-of-way west of State Highway 1 between the cities of Carlsbad and Del Mar.

3. Design a recreational access trail along the San Diego River to encourage nonmotorized access to the coast from inland cities.

4. Complete improvement of the Bayshore Bikeway around South San Diego Bay.

5. Design and construct a trail linking Border Field State Park with the San Ysidro community and the city of Imperial Beach, in conjunction with planning for habitat restoration within the Tijuana River Estuary.
What Do the Map Symbols Mean?

**Needs Substantial Improvements (red line)**
In these areas, substantial public actions are needed to: (1) acquire and develop new rights-of-way to establish the location of the California Coastal Trail; or (2) increase accessibility through major new trail improvements on existing public lands.

**Improvements Adequate (green line)**
In these areas the location of the California Coastal Trail is well established and open to the public, and major improvements to increase accessibility are unnecessary or infeasible.

**Pacific Coast Bicycle Route (blue dotted line)**
The route of the Pacific Coast Bicycle Route established by the Department of Transportation

**Connecting Trails (thin black line)**
Major trails promoting nonmotorized access to the coast from inland communities, including both existing trail systems and those currently in planning or development

**Continuous Shoreline Passage (blue hatched shading)**
These portions of the California coast, including both sandy beach and rocky shorefront, are open to the public and continuously passable for able-bodied persons during most tides and times of the year.
(NOTE: This designation does not imply a lack of need for additional points of vertical access to the shoreline.)

**Parklands (pink areas)**
These areas include federal, State, and local parklands.
COASTAL TRAIL
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For further information and updates on the California Coastal Trail, see:
www.californiacostaltrail.info