

Coastal Conservancy announces Two Del Norte Projects

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The California Coastal Conservancy awarded two grants to Del Norte County at its state-wide meeting in Newport Beach, recently.

The Conservancy awarded up to \$1.5 million to the Smith River Alliance (SRA) to implement the Point Saint George Coastal Trail Implementation Project, consisting of cultural resources Protection and construction of 1.25 miles of the the California Coastal Trail new restrooms, interpretative signage and other improvements to the main trailhead parking lot at Point St. George.

“The project will extend the California Coastal Trail, preserve sensitive resources, improve public safety and provide amenities in a natural area that is an important open space for visitors and the local community,” states Project Manager Peter Jaraush. The Conservancy purchased the 339 acre Point St. George area in 2002.

The project will provide continuous coastal access from Pebble Beach Drive, approximately 11 miles north to the Mouth of the Smith River.

The project is situated on Tolowa Dee-ni ancestral land. Cynthia Ford Tribal Heritage Preservation Office praised the Conservation grant. “ We look forward to continue the collaborate work with our partners while providing Indigenous input to protect cultural landscapes, enhance interpretive opportunities and provide responsible public access opportunities.” The trail and access improvements were identified in the 2004 Pt. St. George Management Plan prepared by Del Norte County, the Conservancy, California State Parks, California Dept.of Fish and Wildlife, the Tolowa Dee ni Nation, the Elk Valley Rancheria, and input from the private Mavris residence situated within the property.

In another Coastal Conservancy action, approval was granted to the SRA to conduct pre-acquisition planning activities and Minor clean-up for beach, dune, wetland, upland and forested parcels within the Pacific Shores Subdivision adjacent to the Lake Earl Wildlife area and to acquire those same parcels as a continuation of the Pacific Shores Acquisition Program. “80 percent of this unbuildable subdivision is in public ownership,” says Patty McCleary of the Smith River Alliance. McCleary expressed appreciation to continue the work, allowing her to speak to speak with private property owners regarding their options. The \$1.3 funding is divided \$500,000 for pre-acquisition and cleanup efforts and \$800,000 to acquire the parcels.