2003 ANNUAL REPORT OF MAINTENANCE AND CONDITIONS OF DEL MONTE FOREST OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES

This is the third annual report of maintenance and conditions for Del Monte Forest Open Space Properties. The 2001 report prepared by Mary Howden, Chairman of OSAC at that time, provided a succinct discussion of the historical background of OSAC's development of Maintenance Standards for each individual open space property contained in the Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. The Del Monte Forest Foundation (DMFF) administers ongoing maintenance operations in order to comply with the Maintenance Standards for each of its open space properties.

This report summarizes significant maintenance activities over the last year and offers the following observations, comments and recommendations:

SFB MORSE BOTANIC RESERVE

The site remains in compliance with its maintenance standards. Tree failures occurred during winter storms, blocking both major trails and in one case, a treetop fell onto Congress Road. Annual inspection of stream areas included control treatments of pampas grass in both depositional and steeper streambank areas. Consultation on advisability of additional channel stabilization work is in progress with restoration ecologists. Exotic plant control of acacias, pampas grass, genista, and gorse continue as annual follow-ups. Preliminary review of possible prescribed burning areas suggests that smoke management issues may be insurmountable in this area due to residential density above the area and potential health problems in a predominantly older residential population. Possible contract research on Yadon's piperia by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for the Reserve was abandoned as the scope of the project was narrowed by the contractor and USF&WS. DMFF informed USF&WS of its willingness to participate in ongoing monitoring of Yadon's piperia once appropriate protocols are established through the pending research.

Recommendations

As always, maintain an annual program of timely exotic plant control and regular trail maintenance work. Identify a trial area to use mechanical methods to rejuvenate overgrown forest and shrub areas. Continue to improve drainage on the FDIP fire roads.

CROCKER CYPRESS GROVE

The site is in basic compliance with the standards in the Management Plan. Two trees partially uprooted in the southeast corner and three more have had to be removed near Portola Road. Most trees planted in the last two years near Portola Road are doing well but non-native plants continue to be a constant maintenance issue in this area where significant mature tree cover has been lost over the last four years due to a combination of blowdown, disease and insect activity. Minor thistle and veldt grass infestations were treated in the southern portion of the parcel, but veldt grass continues to be a persistent problem in some areas. An apparent combination of pitch canker and bark beetle activity are continuing to affect pines in the grove but pine regeneration is

abundant in a few areas and appears to be at least adequate in most areas. The split-rail fence installed last year on the north side of the Grove is intact and controlling vehicle encroachment into the Grove as hoped.

Recommendations

Remove two partially uprooted trees in the southeast corner that are resting on intact trees. Continue annual non-native plant control and understory restoration programs. Assess patterns and rates cypress regeneration and recruitment.

PESCADERO CANYON AND CARMEL WAY

The site is in basic compliance with its OSAC maintenance standards. Several new tree failures occurred during winter storms. One top fell across the lower channel onto the adjoining residential parcel and was cleaned up. Another tree fell across 17 Mile Drive below Ford Meadow. Major genista control treatments were made in portions of the lower canyon and in and near the common garden Monterey pine research plot below Ford Meadow. That research plot is due to be removed within the next one to two years. Vinca was controlled in that area as well. Potential tree hazard concerns of upslope neighbors were reviewed and addressed in four spots. Some of the willow wattling and brush boxes installed near the bottom of the artificial channel from Carmel Woods performed well but in other cases were undercut or diverted around. There is annual mortality of individual trees, but natural regeneration continues to occur at a roughly comparable rate. Additional cape ivy control treatments were done in the lower canyon. Unauthorized trail construction has occurred both from the top of Pescadero Road down toward Ford Meadow and from the bottom of the canyon up to the same place, including a stream crossing. We have been unable to identify the well meaning but misguided people doing this clearing and have recovered bare trail areas near stream channel areas.

Recommendations

Establish a stabilization program with appropriate funding and County cooperation for the area eroded by drainage from Carmel Woods. Continue non-native plant control and required fire clearance operations.

COASTAL STRIP – DEDICATED SECTIONS FROM SPANISH BAY TO PESCADERO POINT

The Coastal Strip appears to be in basic compliance with the standards set forth in the OSAC Management Plan. The Pebble Beach Company continues to maintain the required public access facilities and some non-native plant control operations by the Company were noted. Formal acceptance of these public access easements continue to be hindered by problematic legal language in the Offers To Dedicate. Several discussions of alternative language to resolve the issue have occurred between representatives of DMFF, the Pebble Beach Company, and the Coastal Commission. Full inspections were not made pending resolution of this issue.

Recommendations

Regular control of exotic species should be continued. Native plant restoration work has commenced on adjoining Monterey Peninsula Country Club areas between Point Joe and Bird Rock in conjunction with their golf course rehabilitation project and should help to decrease iceplant infestation in this area over time.

INDIAN VILLAGE

Indian Village is in basic compliance with its maintenance standards. Winter storms knocked over a number of pine trees near and west of the picnic shelter. Blown-over trees and debris were only cleaned up in the picnic shelter area. The first round of resistant pine seedlings developed from on-site stock in cooperation with the Asilomar nursery staff were outplanted in the high mortality area on the western edge of the property and their locations GPSed. A number of these open pollinated seedling were vegetatively propagated prior to planting to expand available stock. Additional cones were collected to provide new seed for both Asilomar and DMFF. Control of iceplant and other non-natives was done at the dunes/pine forest boundary by the Gingerbread House and a trial area planted with representative native dunes species.

Monitoring and maintenance of the Indian Village population of Hickman's potentilla (*Potentilla hickmanii*) occurred regularly over the growing season. Control of non-native grasses and other invasive plants in the immediate area of the potentillas was done in consultation with botanist Vern Yadon. Piping of excessive drainage water past the potentilla site was largely successful but one section of the pipe behind the shelter required an adjustment in depth where it crosses under the road to Stevenson Drive. Monitoring indicated that at least five potentillas planted within the last two years appear to have naturalized and are doing well. Additional potentillas have been propagated in the nursery, including specimens from the southern group, and will be used both for outplanting this winter and to maintain a diverse reserve stock. Additional nursery plants were received from researchers at UCSC who have completed their assigned research project.

Control measures for non-native plants, principally thistles, velvet grass, kikuyu grass, and *Festuca arundinacea* have been implemented regularly. *Festuca arundinacea* appears to be particularly aggressive and expanding into native *Calamagrostis* areas in spite of control work.

Recommendations

Continue to monitor and control wetness and non-native vegetation at and near the Potentilla population. Monitor outplanted pitch canker resistance pines and continue reforestation work in the western portion of the parcel. Continue regular and consistent non-native plant control program in all affected areas.

NAVAJO PARCELS

These two parcels adjoin the Lynn "Rip" Van Winkle Park of Pacific Grove and are both in compliance with their OSAC maintenance standards. FDIP fire clearance requirements were met by clearing two fallen trees that had blocked roads, minor pruning, and limited mowing. Genista control work occurred in a number of areas and was extended into portions of Van Winkle Park with the cooperation of Pacific Grove. In addition, we coordinated work by Pebble Beach Company to control genista in the central watercourse area of Pebble Beach Company's Area B parcel. Two previous erosion control projects associated with old roads/trails remain functional.

Recommendations

OSAC maintenance standards listed in the LUP for Navajo apply to both parcels. Continue to monitor the area to prevent and correct over-use and abuse. As a highly used walking area, perform necessary measures to enhance human health and safety consistent with maintenance of a natural area. Control genista infestation near adjoining laundry parcel by northern watercourse. Review measures to control downcutting in the northern watercourse.

PESCADERO POINT

Pescadero Point is in basic compliance with its OSAC maintenance standards. Recent parking, drainage, and native plant restoration projects continue to function well considering the level of visitor use the site receives.

Recommendations

Continue regular monitoring of the site for public safety and natural resource protection. Plant five or six more native cypress trees. Control iceplant regrowth.

SFB MORSE MEMORIAL LOT

The parcel of native cypress habitat is compliance with the general standards set forth in the OSAC management plan. Routine perimeter maintenance issues were addressed.

Recommendations

Continue regular annual maintenance operations.

HERMANN PROPERTY

The parcel is compliance with the general standards set forth in the OSAC management plan. Routine perimeter fire hazard control measures were implemented along the west and northern boundaries. Non-native plant control treatments were undertaken where indicated and will be required annually at modest levels.

Recommendations

Continue regular annual maintenance operations. Plant a few oaks and pines in the western portion of the parcel to replace trees lost over the last several years. Seedling and sapling pines have become established in the center and eastern portion of the parcel over the last several years.

HUCKLEBERRY HILL NATURAL RESERVE

The Huckleberry Hill parcel is in basic compliance with its OSAC maintenance standards except in the 10+ acre section east and north of Highway 68 that DMFF had not realized was included within the Reserve. In that area, extensive disturbance from old quarrying has led to dense infestations of pampas grass and genista. Fallen pines blocked several fire roads over the winter and were cleared. Non-native plant control efforts by the Pebble Beach Company were implemented in many locations, but infestations are persistent and require annual control measures. Non-native infestations of pampas grass and genista within the Highway 68 corridor continue to increase. Inquiries about methods to minimize unauthorized bicycle use indicate that upgrading enforcement is not considered a cost effective priority county sheriffs or local police, particularly in view of the difficulty of apprehension on single track trails. Existing ad hoc efforts will have to be sufficient for the time being.

Dr. John Silba, a noted botanist specializing in cypress species, noted the presence of Monterey cypress trees in the revegetation area of the Upper Pit and urged that they be removed as soon as possible in order to prevent contamination of the native Gowen cypress gene pool. DMFF identified the trees to be removed and contacted Pebble Beach Company to do the work. PBC requested that appropriate authorities be informed before work was started. County acknowledgement and support has been received and is under review by Coastal Commission staff.

Recommendations

Complete removal of Monterey cypress in the Upper Pit area as soon as possible. Add several rolling dips to entrenched sections of fire roads to minimize erosion and disperse drainage. Concentrate on initial treatments to control non-natives in the 10+ acre section identified above and along the highway 68 corridor. Follow-up genista control treatments in the area grazed by goats last year.

COURTLANDT HILL PRESERVE

The parcel is in basic compliance with the natural open space management standards. Trespass damage occurred during a major spectator event Signage and fencing has been upgraded by donation of the Hill family to prevent future occurrences. Routine CDF perimeter clearance was done along 17 Mile Drive and the northerly residence boundary. Iceplant continues to be a problem in some areas.

Recommendations

Continue monitoring of the parcel and limit access to maintenance activities only. Evaluate cypress tree seedling and sapling recruitment. Control iceplant infestation to maintain habitat conditions suitable for native plants.

SCENIC EASEMENTS

Three new residential scenic easements were accepted by DMFF in cooperation with Coastal Commission staff who had found previously recorded Offers To Dedicate that DMFF had never been informed of. All three of the new easements and most of the old are in compliance with the OSAC Management Plan and the terms and conditions of the individual Easement Agreements. Infestations of non-native plants, while generally not severe, are an ongoing issue on a number of parcels. A property owner who had previously been advised of non-compliance by DMFF was issued a violation by Coastal Commission staff that was confirmed at a full Commission hearing. The case is now on legal appeal. Easement monitoring is ongoing as are contacts with individual easement holders.

Recommendations

Continue annual inspections of existing scenic easements by the Forest Manager. Continue efforts to have the Pebble Beach Company Architectural Review Board and/or the County of Monterey provide automatic notification to the DMFF of any pending construction on property that has, or should have, a scenic easement according to the terms of the LUP. Prepare for easement property owners a list of contractors qualified to do non-native plant control on residential parcels.

This Annual Report of the Maintenance and Conditions of Del Monte Forest Open Space Properties is hereby respectfully submitted.

June Duran Stock, Chairman
Open Space Advisory Committee

Ed Brown, Director
Del Monte Forest Foundation

Stephen Staub, Forest Manager
Del Monte Forest Foundation

DATE: December 15, 2003