



Muir Woods Transportation and Access Site Improvements

Project Description

The purpose of this action is to better manage visitor demand and congestion at Muir Woods in order to improve the visitor experience and safety, improve existing facilities, and reduce on-going impacts to natural and cultural resources from the existing transportation system. The project is needed to address serious problems with traffic, safety, park resources, and visitor experience caused by growing visitor demand. The resulting conditions do not meet park goals outlined in the GMP and Watershed Management Plan for much of the year.

Traffic and safety problems include a congested entry experience on upper and lower Muir Woods Road and in the monument's tight parking lots where cars, buses, bicyclist, and pedestrians mix. This congestion contributes to back-ups on the surrounding roadway network in various areas, such as Shoreline Highway at Tamalpais Junction.

Unregulated shoulder parking, traffic congestion, and lack of designated pedestrian pathways are causing degradation of the natural resources and habitat in the Redwood Creek watershed. This watershed is home to several threatened and endangered species, among them Coho salmon, steelhead trout, and northern spotted owl.

The experience of most visitors to Muir Woods is diminished by traffic conditions, unmanaged parking at the Woods, gaps in the surrounding trail system which do not connect parking to the entry plaza, and aging and inadequate facilities in the entrance area.

The existing entrance area includes aging, incomplete and undersized infrastructure. Heavily used trails are rutted, with uneven surfaces, failed embankments and culverts. Many do not meet accessibility guidelines. The restrooms are undersized for most days. Parking lots are narrow and crowded; most lack pedestrian paths. Aspirations for a more functional, natural and attractive entrance plaza have not been realized.

Possible actions could include the following:

- A new parking lot on Panoramic Highway that would be served by the park shuttle
- Minor expansion and/or reorganization of existing parking lots at Muir Woods to improve vehicle and pedestrian circulation
- Conversion of existing operational areas at Muir Woods for parking and other uses
- Extension of the Redwood Creek Trail from Deer Park Fire Road to the monument entrance, including boardwalk sections
- Completion of plaza improvements begun in 2010, including additional re-vegetation and a new restroom
- Improved Dipsea Trail route
- Changes in the management and use of Muir Woods Road

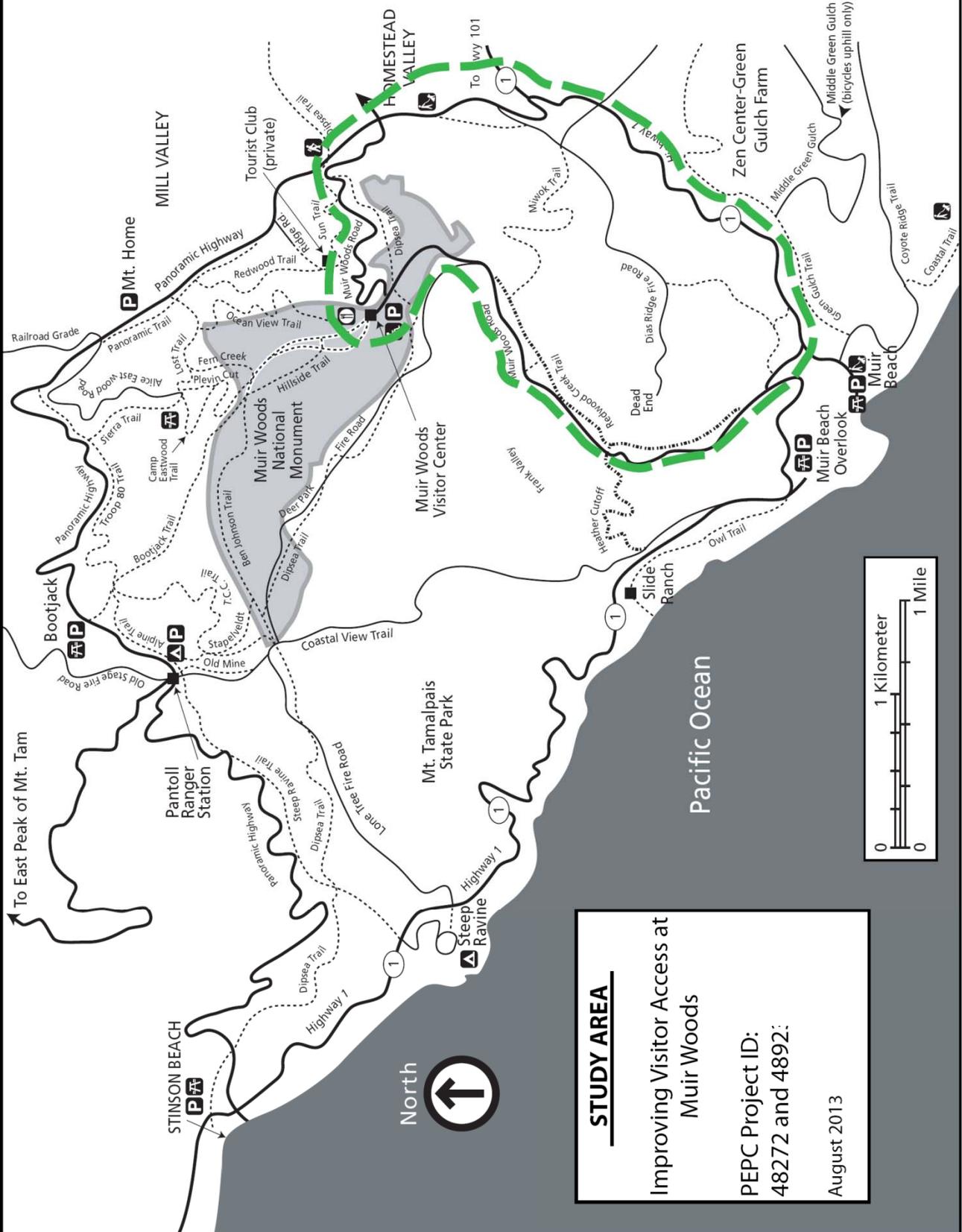
Implementation of any improvements will be dependent on environmental compliance, permitting, availability of funds, and would likely be phased over several years.

Public Scoping Period

NPS would like to hear your thoughts about this proposal. You are invited to submit comments beginning September 4 through October 4, 2013 online at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/muwo_access; in person at the public scoping meeting to be held on September 18, 2013 at Tam Valley Elementary School from 6:30-8:30PM; or in writing to GGNRA, Attn: Muir Woods Transportation Projects, Fort Mason, Building 201, San Francisco, CA 94123.

Next Steps

Once the scoping period concludes, the NPS will evaluate all of the comments received, incorporate them into the planning process, and decide what level of NEPA compliance will be completed (at this time it is anticipated to be an Environmental Assessment). The NPS will present a summary of scoping comments and a range of feasible alternatives that incorporate scoping comments at a public meeting to be held on November 20, 2013 at Tam Valley Elementary School.



STUDY AREA
 Improving Visitor Access at
 Muir Woods
 PEPC Project ID:
 48272 and 4892:
 August 2013