Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: Boy Scouts of America - Pacific Skyline Council
February 22, 2017, via phone

Participants:

- Brian E. Curtis, Scout Executive/CEO
  
  » Relationship to Honor Camp Area: the Pacific Skyline Council of Boy Scouts of America (BSA) was the original owner and operator of Camp Pomponio, which eventually became the Sheriff’s Honor Camp. The Pacific Skyline Council covers San Mateo County, and the northern portion of Santa Clara County. Another BSA Council, Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council, covers the remainder of Santa Clara County, Santa Cruz County, and further south.

- Steve Spickard, Land Economics Consultants

Background / Familiarity with Honor Camp

- Mr. Curtis has never had the opportunity to visit the site, even though he is familiar with the camp’s history.

- The Pacific Skyline Council has an active trails program, and one of their popular trails is in the vicinity of Honor Camp. There is a patch associated with the program that has the Pomponio name on it.

- There is a trail from the Cutter Scout Reservation that connects all the way to Pescadero Creek County Park, and the Honor Camp vicinity.

Organization Needs and Concepts for the Future of Honor Camp

- The Pacific Skyline Council of BSA currently runs three camps.
  
  1. Cutter Scout Reservation, in the San Mateo County portion of the Santa Cruz mountains,

  2. Boulder Creek Scout Reservation, Santa Cruz mountains, Santa Cruz County, and

  3. Camp Oljato, Huntington Lake, in the Sierras.

- The upkeep on the three existing camps is a significant burden on the Boy Scout Council now. They are currently dealing with three slides that have occurred in the recent storms. Regulations over all aspects of their environment and operations are expensive to comply with; for example they have had to dig a new well recently due to changing water quality standards. In one of their camp locations with a long access road, they are finding road upkeep costs are “massive.”
For a facility such as the Honor Camp which has remained idle for a decade or more, Mr. Curtis would anticipate extraordinary costs of dealing with such agencies as the State Water Quality Control Board, Cal Fire, and Fish and Wildlife.

In addition to the destination camps operated and maintained by the local Council, BSA provides four additional high adventure destination camps around the country that are available for local Scout units to use. They are:

1. Philmont, in New Mexico,
2. the Scout SeaBase, in Florida,
3. the Northern Tier, in Minnesota, and
4. the massive new Summit Bechtel Reserve, in West Virginia.

The Pacific Skyline Council is experiencing a somewhat better projection for summer camp enrollment this year than they have had in recent years, but the overall trend in scouting for a decade or more has been declining participation. The trend among Council camps is to downsize.

In the 1950s and 1960s, when Boy Scout participation rates were at their all-time peak, elaborate BSA camps were developed all over the United States. In recent decades, lacking the attendance experienced in the past, a significant number of these camps have been allowed to slowly deteriorate for lack of reinvestment.

The alternative of using the Honor Camp as a corporate retreat center for the tech industry in Silicon Valley was discussed. Teambuilding exercises could be conducted on-site; although the burdens of certifying and operating a ropes course were highlighted. Decisions regarding the ability to serve alcohol, and the quality of food and beverage were discussed as policy issues. It was pointed out that serving the corporate market would require a much higher quality of development and finishes, with the speculation that the County might need to be a deep-pocket investor in order to make such a venture financially viable.

Inclusion of a dining hall in the development program was discussed in terms of burdensome regulations regarding food safety and quality, BSA’s national camp standards, and the operational difficulties in providing sufficient staff in remote locations.

Another alternative discussed was a more primitive type of camp to be developed without a dining hall. For the scouts, such a facility might serve as the home base for extreme mountain biking, orienteering, and similar outdoor sports.

As a cautionary tale for Honor Camp planners, Mr. Curtis described his experience some years ago while heading a BSA Council in Southern California. The camp at Lake Arrowhead had been damaged by fire, and the Council launched into a major donation program and rebuilt a bigger and better camp for $17 million; including lots of new cabins, a new and larger dining hall, a zip line, and other attractions. They also overbuilt the camp in order to accommodate school district Outdoor Education programs for the first time. When the camp opened they found that attendance at the annual Boy Scout summer camp was exactly the same as before the rebuilding program. After having to hire additional staff to market to school districts, they were successful eventually at winning away some Outdoor Education programs from other locations, but after one successful year of Outdoor Education, the school districts hit a budget crunch, and the Outdoor Education programs were canceled entirely, leaving the BSA camp empty during that portion of the year.

“Build it and they will come,” doesn’t necessarily always follow.
As an example of a partnership between BSA and a local government that worked very well, Mr. Curtis described the experience with Firestone Camp and the City of Industry. The local BSA Council had owned a huge parcel of land (originally donated by the Firestone Corporation?) and when the Council was running short of money it sold a significant portion of the land to the City of Industry, but the City allowed the scouts to continue to use the camp. The City got to enhance its image through service to youth, and the scouts got to continue their camping programs. Because the City of Industry had deep pockets, any physical problems with the camp were quickly remedied at no cost to the scouts.

Mr. Curtis is unaware of any other proposals for new camps or other changes in the recreational offering in San Mateo County that would affect Honor Camp planning.

**Summary of Implications for Honor Camp Reuse**

- Mr. Curtis can speak definitively for BSA, in saying that the scouts would have no interest in taking over the Honor Camp site in order to re-create Camp Pomponio, or something like it. They have their hands full with maintaining their existing facilities, and do not anticipate rapidly increasing demand.

- If the County offered to donate the Honor Camp site to a nonprofit group for free, the Boy Scouts would still not want it.

- There are lots of alternative / competitive facilities scattered throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains.

- On the other hand, the scouts and other similar outdoors groups and youth groups can always use more outdoor recreational opportunities, including overnight group campsites of various sizes. Individual troop units are always looking for more things to do and new places to go. Additional group camping sites at the Honor Camp location would likely get use from Scout troops.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) - San Mateo/Coastside Fire District

Interview #1: February 16, 2017, 9am via phone

Participants:

- Mark Mondragon, Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal
- Jesse Jones, PlaceWorks
- Skylar Hall, PlaceWorks

Paved Roads and Fire Roads near Honor Camp

- Chief Mondragon notes that he has a general understanding of the status of the paved roads and fire roads around Honor Camp but indicates that Richard Sampson, the Division Chief for the San Mateo-Santa Cruz unit may have more specific knowledge (see Interview #2 below).
- Chief Mondragon notes that Camp Pomponio Road could potentially be used for public vehicular access to Honor Camp but would need some maintenance to remove debris and further evaluate for passing areas.
- Bravo Fire Road, Towne Fire Road, and Old Haul Road are restricted to emergency and public agency vehicles. It is assumed that this would not change since the fire roads would be difficult to travel with a personal vehicle.

Public Use of Honor Camp

- Chief Mondragon notes that all buildings would need to be brought up to comply with current fire code before use. He notes the following specific items to consider:
  - Evaluate and potentially upgrade the sprinkler systems.
  - Evaluate and potentially upgrade facilities in the mess hall kitchen, including the hood and pressure system.

Emergency Staging at Honor Camp

- During a wildfire event, CALFIRE could potentially stage at Honor Camp to manage nearby fires. Chief Mondragon notes the following considerations to ensure that Honor Camp can effectively be used for wildfire staging/fire management:
» Water tanks for fire suppression: CALFIRE will use existing water tanks that are closest to fire and would need access to Honor Camp’s tanks.

» Typical CALFIRE Vehicles used during a fire event: type 3 firetrucks, crew buses, and bulldozers.

Fire Management and Planning

- Chief Mondragon notes that there might have been a shelter in place plan and fuel reduction plan when Honor Camp was used a jail. If used as a public camp, these would be recommended.

- Chief Mondragon notes that San Mateo County Parks Department provides vegetation management in the area and could be consulted about fire management around Honor Camp.
Interview #2: February 21, 2017, 9:30 am via phone

Participants:

- Richard Sampson, Forester II/Division Chief, Felton
- Skylar Hall, PlaceWorks

Paved Roads and Fire Roads near Honor Camp

- Camp Pomponio Road: Open to Emergency and regular vehicles.
- Bravo Fire Road and Towne Fire Road: Open to emergency vehicles only because they are too steep and uneven for non-emergency vehicular access.
- Old Haul Road: Closed to all vehicles after recent storms.
- Chief Sampson notes that weather in area is preventing any assessment of current damage to the roads from recent storms.

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp

- Chief Sampson has no knowledge of a shelter in place plan; however, he notes that Honor Camp had firetruck in the past and operated as its own fire protection facility.
- Indicated the California Conservation Corps and other stakeholders visited site with the County Lands and Sheriff’s Department about 2 years ago when San Mateo County initially wanted to investigate reuse of site. Chief Sampson noted the following concerns from previous investigations:
  - Potable water source is unknown and existing system would need to be evaluated.
  - Waste water treatment facility would likely need to be reconstructed, which is estimated to be extremely costly.
- Chief Sampson fully supports Honor Camp being reused as a youth camp or other use and feels the site is going to waste in its current state.

Fire Management and Planning

- Chief Sampson notes that a fuel reduction plan may be part of County Parks management.

Emergency Staging at Honor Camp

- CALFIRE requests 100,000 gallons of water stored in tanks at Honor Camp for use in fire events.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: California Conservation Corps (CCC) – Monterey Bay Center
February 14, 2017, 10:30 am via phone

Participants:
- Janet Wohlgemuth, Conservation Supervisor
- Skylar Hall, PlaceWorks

CCC Model in San Mateo County and Surrounding Area
- The CCC is a youth development program that focuses on 18 to 25 year-olds. The Monterey Bay Center program spans from South San Francisco to King City. The current program in this region is non-residential, meaning the participants live at home and report to work.
- CCC work typically includes outdoor labor, such as trail maintenance and restoration.
- Demographic for the Monterey Bay Center program includes high school to post-college young adults.

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp
- Janet notes that another staff person from the CCC-Sacramento Center toured Honor Camp.
- CCC previously occupied the site in 1980s, but doesn’t think it was operating as a jail at the time.

Partnership Opportunity
- Because the CCC only operates as a non-residential program in this region they are looking for a place to house participants overnight for up to a year at a time. CCC is interested in Honor Camp because it already has infrastructure in place to complete this goal such as administration buildings, a kitchen, and dorms.
- The CCC currently has 120 participants in the region and could foresee a very high percentage of them wanting to participate in an overnight program.
- CCC would be interested in shared-use of the facility with other youth programs.
- Honor Camp could be used for 7-8 day spike camps for trail maintenance, but Janet would prefer to look into a year-round youth program.
- CCC funding comes from the State. There are currently no funds are allocated for a program of this type either for operation or for capital improvements.
Use Considerations

- CCC is aware of condition of Camp Pomponio Road which provides primary access to the site, but is not very concerned based on the needs of their programs and the vehicles that they use.

- There is concern about having water and Janet wanted to know if water still potable.

- The kitchen, administration buildings, water treatment, and dorm space make Honor Camp a desirable space, but they would like need to be refurbished and remodeled (for youth and not prisoners) in order to function as a CCC camp. Janet noted the following considerations for modifying the existing structures:
  
  » Ensuring that the facilities do not feel “prison like” by removing things like doors that lock from the outside and razor wire.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: County of San Mateo Department of Public Works
February 13, 2017, 1:00pm via phone

Participants:
- Gary Webb, Health and Hospital Maintenance/Operations
- Cecily Harris, County of San Mateo Department of Park Executive Director
- Jesse Jones, PlaceWorks

Background with Honor Camp
- Gary Webb worked at Honor Camp while it was in operation.

Department of Public Works Responsibility
- Department of Public Works (DPW) currently maintains Honor Camp. Gary notes that the department does the bare minimum of maintenance to upkeep the structures and infrastructure.
  - Run the heater and dehumidifier to keep the mess hall dry.
  - Run water through pipes to keep from freezing.
  - Remove trees if they come down.
- DPW maintained Honor Camp when it was in operation.

Infrastructure Summary and Capacity
- Gary notes that DPW has plans of the water treatment and sewage plant at the department’s Grant Yard.
- Water
  - When operational, could supply 30 gallons per minute and Honor Camp used approximately 10,000 gallons per day.
  - During its operation, there were 2 sources for potable water: Pescadero Creek and Keystone Creek. Gary described the water intake pipe and pump house within Pescadero Creek which is near the road to the south of the baseball diamond and pool.
  - Gary notes that a well was drilled for Honor Camp but was not put into service and Department of Public Health requested DPW to fill it in. Water in the well has not been tested for water quality. Gary notes that
it might be valuable to test the well for use as a potable water source rather than pumping from the creeks. Creek water could potentially still be used for non-potable sources, such as toilets and fire suppression.

- **Sewage**
  - During operation, all of the sewage went to the treatment plant except for one restroom in the shop, which connected to a septic tank.
  - There are two sewage treatment plants at Honor Camp: the lower plant and the upper plant. The upper plant became the primary sewage treatment plant for the entire facility in 1994. The lower plant was used to pump sewage up to the upper plant.

- **Electrical**
  - There are currently two (2) PG&E feeds and two (2) transfer switches.
  - All the buildings have electricity.
  - The generator is fairly new, but Gary is not sure about the license.

- **Gas**
  - Gas is pumped to all buildings through underground pipes. Gary notes that the pipes are not in great shape.

- **Drainage**
  - There was a drainage issue in the clearing area to the north of the parking lot that slipped right after Honor Camp closed.

- **Roads**
  - During operation, Camp Pomponio Road served as the primary vehicular access to Honor Camp. Gary estimates this included 20 van trips in and out of the camp per day, as well as food and propane deliveries by truck every few weeks.
  - Gary notes that Old Haul Road was the main access road to Honor Camp but the bridge that crosses Pescadero Creek collapsed and there is currently no connection over the creek.

- **Structures**
  - Gary was not sure about the construction period for most of the buildings at Honor Camp but noted that the two buildings by the baseball field were from the Boy Scout era. He also noted that the pool was constructed by the boy scouts and was not open for inmates at Honor Camp because it did not meet code for public access.

**Infrastructure Challenges**

- The license to operate the sewage and water treatment plants expired when Honor Camp closed. Re-using the facilities would require a licensed operator, which would be a large operational cost.
Gary notes that water treatment plant operations could cost between $100-$150k per year. He suggests asking Memorial Park for their operational costs to maintain their water treatment plant.

- Gary notes that it would be good if the re-use option could operate without an electrical connection or without propane. He notes that this would reduce operational and capital costs.

**Assets of Honor Camp**

- Gary notes that one of the major assets for Honor Camp is its connection to the regional trail network. He shared an experience of taking part in a 100 mile trail race that passed by Honor Camp. He noted that they passed one paved road along the course.

**Boundaries**

- When in operation, there were no fences to keep inmates “in bounds.” In general, visitors knew that they entered the camp when they crossed the guard station.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: Equestrian Trail Riders Action Committee (ETRAC)
February 9, 2017, via phone

Participants:

- Mike Bushue, President, ETRAC
  - Relationship to Honor Camp Area: the Equestrian Trail Riders Action Committee is an advocacy group with a steering committee of approximately 6 people. Of the dozen or so equestrian groups in San Mateo County, they are the only ones that focus specifically on trails, and provide trail oriented communications to the other groups.

- Steve Spickard, Land Economics Consultants

Background / Familiarity with Honor Camp

- Equestrian trails crisscross Pescadero Creek County Park in close proximity to Honor Camp. He is familiar with the site and surroundings.

- The access road to honor Camp is really important, for general patrol of the Park, and for fire maintenance and suppression. He would never advocate removing the road. On the Honor Camp side of the bridge, there is another road connection that gets to the Old Hall Road.

- The Honor Camp setting is a “gorgeous little canyon.” There are nice flat spots available around the site, and “cabins could be a nice addition.”

Organization Needs and Concepts for the Future of Honor Camp

- One of the biggest concerns for ETRAC is the potential for losing equestrian trails to mountain bike use. This appears to be a significant part of their advocacy for equestrian trails.

- The only place in the parks where horses are allowed to be boarded overnight is at Jack Brook horse camp.

- Horses are not allowed at Tarwater and Shaw Flat trail camps, for lack of suitable horse corral facilities.

- He would be interested in seeing some form of trail camp, which could also be available to backpackers, but which would include perhaps four horse corrals to enable equestrians to ride in, stay overnight with their horses, and ride out. Such a facility would be enhanced by having road access for driving in supplies overnight, even if the road were not able to handle horse trailer rigs.

- An example mentioned is the East Bay Regional Park District’s horse corral camp near Lake Del Valle.
There is no reason to restore the Honor Camp site to a natural state and preserve it. There are lots of natural areas all over San Mateo County just like it, which are already well preserved.

Honor Camp should be utilized for some kind of developed use.

At one time the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District was looking at a concept with a string of through camps from Santa Cruz to San Francisco that might have accommodated equestrians, but this plan never came to fruition.

Jack Brook horse camp is a top of the line facility, and need not be replicated at Honor Camp. Development of a horse arena or such other specialized facilities at Honor Camp would probably be a waste of money, because they would not be used much.

Point Reyes also has a great horse camp, and along with Jack Brook these may be the two best equestrian facilities in the Western United States.

Jack Brook is heavily used, however, and groups often book whole weeks, rendering the camp inaccessible to smaller groups and family use. For this reason, some smaller facility at Honor Camp for the smaller groups might augment the equestrian offering at Jack Brook.

The trailhead at Hoffman Flat is popular for equestrians, allowing them to “ride the park” as day users, often traveling 7 miles in and 7 miles out on the Old Hall Road.

Horses could be compatible with a much larger campground, or development that includes some cabins or other types of overnight accommodations. The equestrian users, however, would want to be off to the side somewhat, want to camp near their horses, and the horses will be need to be kept up and away from the Creek.

He sees how much Memorial Park gets utilized, and believes there’s always a need for more individual camping, group camping and more of the other recreational facilities that are present at Memorial. Does the County want to operate and maintain more of it, however, is an open question in his mind.

**Summary of Implications for Honor Camp Reuse**

- The road into Jack Brook horse camp is so tight and congested that it is controlled with 20 minutes of inbound traffic followed by a 10 minute space with no traffic, and then 20 minutes of outbound traffic each hour. Such a management technique might be appropriate for Pomponio Road between the Tarwater trailhead and Honor Camp, thereby enabling relatively intense visitor use.

- The trail network through Pescadero Creek County Park, in conjunction with the overnight facilities at Jack Brook, makes this complex of parks a significant destination for equestrians from far beyond San Mateo County alone.

- Incorporating some facilities for equestrian users could be appropriate for Honor Camp, but the demand for equestrian uses alone will not likely be sufficient to utilize the entire site.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools
February 13, 2017, 1:00pm via phone

Participants:
- Tracey Weiss, Executive Director
- Jesse Jones, PlaceWorks

Partnership Opportunity
- Exploring New Horizons is currently looking for a new permanent home for their outdoor education program. They have an open timeline for finding a new facility and are looking for the right place that can be permanent for the organization.

- They are potentially looking for an alternative location for their Sempervirens and Loma Mar programs or for potential expansion. They are looking for an approximate size of 180 beds, which represents 4-5 fifth grade classes (the typical Exploring New Horizons group). Tracey noted that the Sempervirens campus is known as the Saddle Mountain facility by Big Basin State Park. During the Big Basin General Planning process, California State Parks proposed turning the property into a parking lot and removing the outdoor school. While there is no date of when this would occur, the uncertainty has encouraged Exploring New Horizons to look for other options.

- Exploring New Horizons has completed capital improvements for its program sites (specifically improving Sempervirens to accommodate students year round) and could assist in funding improvements at Honor Camp. Exploring New Horizons is open to a lease agreement for a camp site but would like to have flexibility to make the site fit their needs.

- Exploring New Horizons currently house 10-15 staff at their program sites and would like to offer more housing.

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp and General Impression as a Site for Outdoor Education
- Tracey previously toured the site with San Mateo County Department of Public Health and is excited about it as a potential outdoor education camp for Exploring New Horizons.

- Overall layout is great because it is designed for a communal experience – all of the facilities are located around a central space.

- Access to trail network within Pescadero Creek County Park and Memorial County Park are assets to an outdoor education program for the recreational value that they provide.
- Access to a variety of habitat types/ecosystems (i.e. Pescadero Creek, redwood groves) offer different learning experiences.

- Camp Pomponio Road seemed tough for a commercial bus to travel down to Honor Camp, but Tracey noted that it was doable and was not a major concern.

- The existing barracks are a little too big for children to sleep in and smaller spaces would be more ideal.

**Exploring New Horizons Model**

- Exploring New Horizons has students from San Mateo and the Greater Bay Area. Tracey notes that most students in San Mateo County participate in the outdoor education program managed by the County’s Department of Education at YMCA Camp Jones Gulch.

- Exploring New Horizons’ Sempervirens program currently has approximately 80 students per week and the Loma Mar currently has approximately 140 students per week.

- Exploring New Horizons started as a summer camp but now are predominately an outdoor school that operates during the school year. Tracey notes that there continues to be a lot of demand for a summer program and that Exploring New Horizons would be interested in offering this option.

**Family Camp**

- Tracey notes that there are not a lot of options for “family camps” in this part of San Mateo County. She described family camps as supported nature experiences for families that may be less comfortable with outdoor events on their own. Family camps would offer food and activities for entire family to attend.

**Considerations for Future Use of Honor Camp**

- Water and sewage utilities at Honor Camp would be important for use as a camp and need to be evaluated.

- Tracey indicated an interest in attending another tour of the site with County staff.
**Honor Camp Feasibility Study**

Stakeholder Interview: Jack Brook Horse Camp Advisory Committee

February 10, 2017, via phone

**Participants:**

- Rob Krensky, Jack Brook Horse Camp Advisory Committee
  
  » **Relationship to Honor Camp Area:** the Jack Brook horse camp is owned and operated by San Mateo County, but volunteers from the horse community through the Advisory Committee have a lot of input. They also volunteer their time, for example having a workday in the spring each year before the camp opens.

- Steve Spickard, Land Economics Consultants

**Background / Familiarity with Honor Camp**

- Mr. Krensky has ridden through the Honor Camp site a few times in the past. Before the current network of equestrian trails existed in Pescadero Creek County Park, equestrians used to use old ranch roads, some of which led through Honor Camp. The equestrians’ riding club used to have permission from the Sheriff’s office to ride through the camp when it was still operating.

- In addition to being part of the advisory committee, Mr. Krensky is also a member of the volunteer horse patrol, which is composed of approximately 100 people. They wear uniforms and patrol the parks serving as eyes and ears for the rangers, answering questions for visitors, and providing occasional assistance.

- Mr. Krensky is also a member of the Sheriff’s equestrian search and rescue volunteer group.

**Organization Needs and Concepts for the Future of Honor Camp**

- The existing road into Honor Camp is a challenge, it is too narrow for horse rigs to pass each other if they meet going opposite directions. The road to Jack Brook horse camp has specific timed ingress and egress, however, and that solution works fine there.

- An historical precedent was noted: Honor Camp did have visiting days on Sundays, and personal cars were able to get in and out successfully on Pomponio Road during that era.

- Some history on the Jack Brook camp: the property had been owned by Pete Town, owner of a Ford dealership in Redwood City. Mr. Town turned the property over to the County with the stipulation that it be turned into a horse camp. Jack Brook was then Director of County parks, and was a horseman himself.
- Jack Brook horse camp is highly regarded within the equestrian community, and is sufficiently well known to attract equestrian users from all over the state.

- The Jack Brook horse camp sometimes gets crowded, and some interest groups have suggested that another camp could be needed. Mr. Krensky’s personal opinion, however, is that they have their hands full with the existing facility, and do not really need another duplicate camp.

- Part of the attraction of the Jack Brook camp is that it is so highly developed. It has good bathrooms and showers, which sweaty equestrians find useful at the end of the day. Picnic tables, barbecues, large sinks, an outdoor kitchen, and a building with refrigerators all aid use of the camp by big equestrian groups.

- Jack Brook has a six month season, from May 1 through the first weekend in November. In the early days it did not get much use, but through primarily word of mouth the reputation has grown, and it is now heavily used and reservations are difficult to get.

- One specific problem at the Jack Brook horse camp is that the size of horse trailers has grown significantly over the years, and some people now have enormous rigs. Parking for these large trailers has become difficult on the existing site.

- The “Alpine Ranch” property adjacent to the Jack Brook horse camp has been discussed in the past as a potential expansion site, or for an additional horse park. There is a small building on that site which could become another hiker’s hut, and a “neat old farm house that needs a lot of work done to it.”

**Summary of Implications for Honor Camp Reuse**

- Part of the unique attraction for equestrians is that the entire Pescadero Creek County Park area has been well developed with trails accommodating horses. The trails are varied with both steep and flat routes, through both wooded and open environments, accommodating a wide range of equestrian skill levels and tastes.

- Equestrians are always interested in more trail riding opportunities, including in the area around Honor Camp, but they are reasonably well accommodated now in terms of support facilities.

- Mr. Krensky is unaware of any other proposals or projects in the area that would affect the development of Honor Camp or the future use patterns at Jack Brook Horse Camp.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: Mendocino Woodlands Camp Association
February 21, 2017, via phone

Participants:

- Cyrus Kroninger, Park Operations Director, Mendocino Woodlands Camp Association
- Patrick Miller, 2M Associates

Background / Familiarity with Honor Camp

- Cyrus has never been to the site.

Amenities and Assets of Mendocino Woodlands State Park

- This is a “group camp” only. All camping is by reservation. Group minimum size is 30. No individual or family reservations are allowed.
- It is closed from mid-November through the end of March as demand is low and weather and access become obstacles to use.
- They have “legacy” groups that return on an annual basis.
- Of note in relation to the Honor Camp are the following:
  » The facility is a wood-and-stone work of art built by the WPA and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s and is now on the National Register of Historic Places.
  » There are three camp units of different size capacities (200, 130, and 84) with different cabin / tent-cabin configurations, and a variety of “amenity” options. Selected cabins have electricity and restrooms. The largest camp has a Recreation Hall.
  » Each camp has its own kitchen. The Camp includes essential kitchen / dining facilities but no cook or food.
- There is a swimming hole on the nearby Big River. Hiking and bicycling trails abound in the State Park and surrounding Jackson State Demonstration Forest.
- A full overview of its facilities and programs is found at: http://mendocinowoodlands.org.
Financing/Costs

- The agreement between the Association and State Parks is that the Association is responsible for “maintenance and improvements” of facilities. However the State is responsible for “infrastructure” items that include roads, water, sewer and electricity service.

- In theory, any profits the Association may realize are to be forwarded to the State, but that never really happens in practice. The Association takes any surplus revenues at the end of the year and puts them back into Camp facility maintenance, essentially treating the Camp finances as an enterprise fund.

- Coordinating with State Parks at the local District level works well for small maintenance items. There are many times the local rangers help with minor facility maintenance. Sacramento is another story. The Camp now has a multi-million dollar upgrade of its sewer system in process and that took years to get going.

- Rental fees and charges are found at: [http://mendocinowoodlands.org/rental-details/](http://mendocinowoodlands.org/rental-details/)

Organization Lessons Learned, Needs, and Concepts for the Future of Honor Camp

- If individual camping is being considered, there had better be a great reservation system included with it. Group camping is much more manageable.

- Many of their campers do not leave the immediate area. They get there and stay.

- The requests for weddings by large groups also looking for a rustic outdoor setting is increasing. As of now the Association can’t meet demand throughout much of the summer, given its other reservations. Weddings have turned out to be really useful in filling in the shoulder seasons. They had about 20 weekend weddings in 2016.

- They do get requests for “festivals” of between 200 and 500 people for weekend use. Most of these are for music and dance-related activities. They turn these away and have learned to ask focused questions before accepting any bookings. They also do not want events that may damage their unique National Register structures.

- It seems from inquiries the Association has had that many group camps have been closed or are closing throughout the state either due to fire or other reasons. Locally the Boy Scouts abandoned Camp Masonite because they could not put a flashboard in the stream any longer and create a swimming area.

- They have had requests from 4-H, BSA, AND GSA but when they find out there is no swimming facility (versus a river swimming hole) to accommodate formal programs they back away.

- When asked about facilities he wishes they had that would enhance use the following was offered:
  - Traditional “Camp” features that would support more day-use activities and that would be found in family camps throughout the state such as: a challenge course; ropes course; or archery range.
  - Swimming pool (highest priority).
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: Pescadero Municipal Advisory Committee
February 15, 2017, 9am via phone

Participants:
- David LoCoco, Chair District 4 Loma Mar, Pescadero Municipal Advisory Committee (PMAC)
- Janet Chang, PlaceWorks

PMAC’s Role in San Mateo County
- PMAC acts as a conduit between the County and residents of Pescadero, Loma Mar, and all South Coast communities. The communities bring issues that they are dealing with and what they would like the County to do to alleviate their concerns. Topics that are discussed range and include road service, public works, environmental health, and planning. The area and its issues are very unique and different from other nearby cities like Redwood City.
  » Common issues are coastal constraints; average income of farmers and affordable housing for farmers; flooding; Pescadero Marsh (the marsh was transferred from private to State ownership, but State parks did nothing with the property); and habitat sensitivities.
- PMAC holds a monthly meeting and has up to 12 seats, but there are not many members and it has historically been this way. The Committee is made up of all volunteers that go through a County election process.
- There has been a history of contention between the County and the communities – the communities do not feel like they are being heard.

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp
- Dave is the PMAC member that lives closest to Honor Camp, but noted that he is not the longest standing member so he does not have much knowledge about the history of the camp. He represents the Loma Mar seat on the Committee.
- The community tried to connect to a Supervisor in order to move different agendas forward for Honor Camp when it was vandalized and there was theft of copper pipe, but this did not lead to anything.

Community Concerns
- There is community pushback on Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) buying up large properties and taking them off the tax roll. They do not pay taxes to the School District; the School District is struggling financially and has had water issues (i.e., contaminated water).
There is sensitivity on water and septic issues in this area. There should be water capacity to provide sufficient water for uses at Honor Camp.

Development in Loma Mar is very difficult in general (i.e., guidelines, rules, constraints). It is painful to find a site that could be potentially feasible for development.

**Opportunities and Challenges for Honor Camp**

- Dave suggested several uses for the site:
  - Camp for youth
  - Family education
  - Low-income farm housing – there is a need for this in the area
  - Dog parks - community has expressed a need for this

- California Conservation Corps is interested in running an extended educational program, which would bring kids to help community with public service.

- Community does not want Honor Camp to become a campground and an extension of Memorial Park. They want it to serve educational purposes instead.

- Dave notes that larger vehicles such as buses could potentially be brought to a closer staging area and people could be shuttled to Honor Camp with smaller vehicles.

**Next Steps**

- Suggested contacts for more information:
  - Ken Pesso calstampsfan@aol.com – Sheriff of Camp Glenwood
  - Herb Hamor (phone - 707-502-6135; email – hphtrinity@gmail.com): Long-time Pescadero-ian and who ran the nearby YMCA camp and is very knowledgeable about the issues and area.

- Dave expressed an interest to get the word out to the community that San Mateo County Parks will be presenting the Feasibility Study to PMCA, County Board of Supervisors, and County Parks and Recreation Commission.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study

Stakeholder Interview: Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)
February 10, 2017, 2:15pm via phone

Participants:

- Daniel Olsten, Director of Land Stewardship, POST
- Jesse Jones, PlaceWorks
- Janet Chang, PlaceWorks

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp

- Staff from POST has toured Honor Camp and POST is aware of the history of the site, although no specific plans for reuse.

POST’s Past Relevant Experience

- POST partnered with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) on Bear Creek Redwood Open Space Preserve where facilities were taken down, but POST did not manage the removal. Midpen may plan to remove most of the facilities.
- POST has not redeveloped any abandoned sites themselves, but assisted in the acquisition of these types of site in the past because they were part of larger open space property acquisitions.

Recreational Need

- Daniel is not aware of any additional demand for camps.
- Local schools on the coast side are often challenged to provide additional programs for their students, but this is more a funding need rather than a facilities need.
- Public camping may be an option for Honor Camp.

Challenges for Public Use of Honor Camp

- Conditions of the buildings are old and would need to be renovated to meet building standards and codes and be pleasant for visitors.
- In general, anything related to construction and materials would be a challenge. Daniel notes that the construction materials used at the time of the camp’s construction may be problematic, such as lead paint or asbestos.
Sensitive species may limit where and when you can do construction.

» Possible sensitive species: salamander, fish, red legged frog, marbled murrelet bird.

Implementation

If the County pursues development of Honor Camp, POST may have a role in preserving the land, but would not be interested in additional public uses. POST would be supportive of a development proposal that includes public access.

Daniel does not know of any groups that are looking for a site like Honor Camp.

Possible contact: Vida Verde - Sean Sears or Laura Sears (Directors)

» Vida Verde program includes a range of activities, including outdoor education for youth from East Palo Alto to visit the coast as a part of nature education and agricultural education with youth from urban areas within the Peninsula.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office
February 21, 2017, via phone

Participants:
- Sheriff Carlos G. Bolanos, San Mateo County Sheriff
  - Relationship to Honor Camp Area: At one time the Sheriff’s office operated the facility.
- Patrick Miller, 2M Associates

Background / Familiarity with Honor Camp
- Sheriff Bolanos has been to the site.
- As stated by the Sheriff, the Office gave up operations at the Camp many years ago. He has been with the office for 10 years and it was “way before his time.”

Organization Needs and Concepts for the Future of Honor Camp
- He sees no need for re-activating Camp for use as any type of detention/correctional facility unless there were some really huge change of some sort that he just can’t imagine. Right now, their detention facilities are under-capacity and there is just no need in anyone’s foreseeable future for re-activating the Camp.
- The Sheriff’s office conducts a number of community programs. The one that most resembles the type of setting at Honor Camp is the S.T.A.R. Camp, an annual event aimed at reaching out to underprivileged youths throughout the County. They use the YMCA Camp Loma Mar for a week-long camping trip.
- The Honor Camp is too remote for their use and the road is an impediment for access.

Summary of Implications for Honor Camp Reuse
- Sheriff Bolanos has no ideas for how the Honor Camp could be used.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: Sierra Club Hut / Ollie Mayer Hiker’s Hut
February 10, 2017, via phone

Participants:

- Bruce Rienzo, Sierra Club, Chair of Loma Prieta Chapter Executive Committee (James Eggers, Sierra Club Chapter Director, deferred to Mr. Rienzo as the most qualified to speak on this matter.)
  » Relationship to Honor Camp Area: The Ollie Mayer Hiker’s Hut, also known as the Sierra Club Hiker’s Hut, is located in Sam McDonald County Park approximately 2 miles from the Sheriff’s Honor Camp via the Bravo Fire Road and Towne Fire Road.
  » The Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club’s purview is San Mateo, Santa Clara, and San Benito counties.
- Steve Spickard, Land Economics Consultants

Background / Familiarity with Honor Camp

- The Honor Camp is posted as off-limits, so most people don’t know that much about it. Mr. Rienzo had an opportunity to see it once, however, 8 to 10 years ago.

Organization Needs and Concepts for the Future of Honor Camp

- The Sierra Club Hiker’s Hut is on land leased from the County for a nominal amount. The Sierra Club paid for the construction of the hut in 1976, and is its owner today.
- The terms of the lease with the County gives the County one day of use per year, which they have never used.
- The hut is open seven days a week, year round. In earlier years it had shorter use weeks during winter, but it is now heavily used and is made available year round. The Sierra Club does not need to advertise; word of mouth alone keeps the Hiker’s Hut booked.
- Sierra Club membership is not a requirement for using the hut, but many are members. The largest portion of the users appear to come from Santa Clara County, simply due to the larger size of that county’s population within the three-county chapter membership area.
- The hut can accommodate up to 14 people. Unrelated individuals used to be able to rent space simultaneously, but now the entire hut is made available through a single reservation per night, putting the burden on user groups to organize the number of visitors themselves. There are lots of small groups, including families and occasional couples by themselves, but 4 to 6 people per night is the typical party size.
The rental income from the Hiker’s Hut is enough to cover its administrative expenses and general upkeep, but the Sierra Club is making no profit on the enterprise.

The Sierra Club has been talking to POST regarding the “Alpine Ranch” property, which is immediately adjacent to the Hiker’s Hut (and is the out-parcel on the County Parks map between Sam McDonald Park and the Tarwater trailhead.) The Alpine Ranch property includes an existing cabin that the Sierra Club believes could become another overnight Hiker’s Hut. (There is also an existing farmhouse on the property that POST reportedly wants to rent out separately on a more permanent basis.) It is also thought that POST may eventually transfer the entire property to the County.

In the 1970s, the Sierra Club had plans for a string of huts up and down the Peninsula, and this Hiker’s Hut was essentially the first one. It was envisioned as being similar to strings of hiking huts in Europe. Priorities within the Sierra Club soon changed, however, and no significant further funding was ever put into the hut system.

GGNRA is coming to visit the Hiker’s Hut March 1, because they are interested in doing huts of this type in their jurisdiction.

In addition to operating the Hiker’s Hut, this Sierra Club chapter also runs a number of nonprofit programs, some of which are education related. They are often looking for camps or “outdoors-y” retreat types of settings and venues in which to host these programs.

» They have used Little Basin, which is operated by an independent company, and is able to serve 200 or so people with a combination of campgrounds, cabins, and an amphitheater and other shared facilities. The club’s experience, however, is that Little Basin is heavily booked and they have trouble getting in.

» The club has also looked at Redwood Glen as a possible venue, but finds they are “restrictive” and expensive.

» They have considered producing environmental programs at TomKat Ranch, a working cattle ranch owned by Tom Steyer and his wife near Pescadero that has its own associated educational foundation.

» They have found there is a wide range of facilities available in the Santa Cruz Mountains, but everyone is different, and the pricing varies tremendously.

Summary of Implications for Honor Camp Reuse

The Sierra Club would be interested in having more hiker’s huts on the Peninsula, and perhaps one could be included in the reuse plans for Honor Camp, but they have not been focused on this possibility.

Another trail camp similar to Tarwater could be nice, but they do not get used very much in his opinion.

When asked if a traditional campground would be a reasonable use for the Honor Camp site, Mr. Rienzo pointed out that campgrounds are more popular when they are in state parks, but then admitted that Memorial County Park Campground is heavily used.

The Sierra Club could be an occasional user of a larger camp/resort as a venue for their programs if the size happened to fit and they could afford the rates.

Mr. Rienzo is unaware of any other projects that may affect or influence what happens at Honor Camp.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: San Mateo County
March 1 2017, 455 County Center, 4th Floor Conference Room

Participants:

- Sarah Birkeland, Acting Park Director, County Parks
- Scott Lombardi, Parks Superintendent, County Parks
- Cecily Harris, Development Consultant, Project Manager, County Parks
- Joe LoCoco, Deputy Director, Road Services, San Mateo County Public Works
- Joe LaClair, Planning Services Manager, San Mateo County Planning
- Deborah Hirst, Supervisor Don Horsley Office (District 3)
- Chris Hunter, Supervisor Don Horsley Office (District 3)
- Patrick Miller, 2M, Associates
- Jesse Jones, PlaceWorks

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp

- The interview began with a brief overview presentation of Honor Camp and images of the site for those stakeholders who have not had a chance to visit the site.

- Joe LoCoco commented on his knowledge of Camp Pomponio Road. He noted that it is not a “County-maintained” road and does not have a maintenance plan. Public Works helps to remove trees when they are down on the road. Mr. LoCoco additionally noted that there was some issues with the bridge along Camp Pomponio Road. There were scour issues along the bank that required lengthening the bridge. He noted that the bridge might be at its limit for length.

- Joe LaClair indicated that the Water Board is currently evaluating sediment load in Pescadero Creek and that future reuse must be cognizant of sediment impacts.

- Chris Hunter and Deborah Hirst noted that members of the public have proposed alternative options to the Supervisor’s office, including housing for the mentally ill, farm working housing, or a recovery center. The stakeholders discussed that these types of private uses would need to follow a separate planning process, and potentially require a new Specific Plan. It would be recommended that parties interested in private uses wait until the Feasibility Study is complete.
Opportunities for Honor Camp

- Chris Hunter considered youth camp as a potential reuse option – a camp that is rustic but significantly upgraded. He has heard from the public that they want more camping in the area. He adds that it would be a shame to “mothball” the entire site.

- Jo LaClair noted that the site has value as a site for disadvantaged audiences to gain access to an outdoor experience.

Challenges with Honor Camp

- Deborah Hirst indicated that she heard anecdotally that reuse would be very expensive.

- Jo LaClair noted that the major issues include potable water, wastewater management, and site access. He noted that it would be good to figure out a way to generate money to pay for the maintenance costs. He noted that having a multi-use facility with many client bases would be helpful in generating income.

- Jo LaClair additionally noted that Camp Pomponio Road is likely the limited factor in opening the site to the public. From a construction perspective, Joe LoCoco noted that the road may not be open for larger vehicles at all times of year and having a construction window will be important.

- Chris Hunter noted that since Honor Camp is located on County property, even if it is not reused, the County is responsible for it and will have to continue to maintain it.

- Sarah Birkeland noted that marbled murrelet has been observed in proximity to Honor Camp, which might constrain future use.

Public Need/Public Service

- The group discussed the potential benefit of using the site to provide a public service and the County’s general responsibility to provide that service at a potential operating loss. Sarah Birkeland noted that having a greater understanding of the long-term operation costs will be helpful in evaluating whether or not the County can provide this service. Sarah additionally noted that the County would likely only be interested in supporting services that provide a “public” benefit as compared to a “private” one.

- The group noted that demand for camping is high and will likely increase. Other potential needs listed include outdoor education and artist-in-residence. Chris Hunter additionally noted that he thinks that if the County builds a nice facility there (of any type), it will get used.

Implementation

- Joe LaClair noted that if County Parks or another County agency reuses the site, building permits will likely be the only County permit requirement.
- There is a general question about who will pay for capital improvements. There was some discussion of having different groups develop separate parts of a new overall facility.

- Joe LoCoco notes that the County is potentially going to restore Old Haul fire road if there is enough money for repairs, although not a bridge across Pescadero Creek near Honor Camp.

**Operations**

- Scott Lombardi noted that the operational costs of maintaining a sewage treatment facility can be very high. He informed the group that if there is a sewage treatment facility at Honor Camp, it will be more beneficial to have the site operate year round because it would have to be primed every time the site is reopened.

- Sarah Birkeland noted managing existing parks is difficult with existing staff levels and taking on a new facility would require additional operational effort. She additionally noted that when the department is looking to offer more specialized activities or services, they typically look for an outside concessionaire (such as kitchen staff).

- Chris Hunter noted that it might be difficult for a concessionaire to make enough money at the site and might require County support.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: San Mateo County Historical Association
February 10, 2017, 10am via phone

Participants:
- Mitch Postel, President, San Mateo County Historical Association
- Janet Chang, PlaceWorks

Role of the San Mateo Historical Association
- Historical Association operates a museum and two historic sites in the County – Sanchez Adobe and Woodside Store.

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp and Other Programs
- Mitch does not think there are many existing outdoor youth programs that would compete with Honor Camp if it was used as a camp, but other existing outdoor youth programs are easier to access compared to this site. He notes some programs to consider:
  » Pie Ranch, a 19th century demonstration organic farm, might be competition if San Mateo County decided to use Honor Camp as a farm.
  » Vida Verde Nature Education is another outdoor youth program that serves San Mateo County.

Opportunities for Historic Preservation
- Historical Association could support another agency in reusing Honor Camp, but would not act as a lead agency. Examples of support include fundraising, providing letters of support, acting as an archival repository, etc.
  » In particular, if the Boy Scouts are interested in restoring the camp back into a Boy Scouts camp, the Historical Association could help with letters of support and/or fundraising.
- Historical Association may be interested in any original structures of the Boy Scouts if they were found to be from the 1930s and 40s. If structures are newer than that, the Historical Association would not have an interest in preserving any of Honor Camp’s buildings since they are too modern.
  » Without a site visit, Mitch would not be able to determine whether any of the structures should have a historic structures assessment. Mitch suggested reaching out to the County’s Historic Resources Advisory Board (Mitch is on this board) about evaluating the structures to determine whether they could be considered historic. He suggested reaching out to Dave Holbrook in Planning is the staff liaison. The Board may be interested in taking a field trip to view the site and determine whether there should be a historic structures assessment.
- Historical Association would be interested in acting as an archival repository for Ken Kesey for any photos, maps, and writings related to Honor Camp and the author’s time there.

**Opportunities and Challenges with Honor Camp**

- Honor Camp is in an isolated location so whoever will want to use it would be looking for an activity that requires isolation. For example, an artist colony could be an option.
  - Mitch notes a potential collaboration with the Djerassi Resident Artists Program run by the Djerassi family. He suggests contacting Dale Djerassi.
- In general, the Bay Area needs more venues for artists – Ken Kesey’s history at Honor Camp would be a good theme for the site if it were dedicated for artists.
- If Honor Camp is used as a camp, Mitch notes that the camp program would have to be at least a week long in duration to make the long travel time worthwhile.

**Potential Next Steps**

- Mitch expressed willingness to participate in a brainstorm session for ideas on uses for the Honor Camp site.
- Recommended a site visit with the Historic Resources Advisory Board to determine if there is interest in any existing structures.
**Honor Camp Feasibility Study**

**Stakeholder Interview: San Mateo County Office of Education**  
**February 13, 2017, 11am via phone**

**Participants:**
- Anne Campbell, Superintendent of Schools, San Mateo County Office of Education
- Janet Chang, PlaceWorks
- Steven Spickard, Land Economics Consultants (LEC)

**Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp**

- Anne has toured Honor Camp. At the tour, they were specifically looking at the existing facilities for the potential to house San Mateo County’s outdoor education programs.

**Current Program**

- Current environmental education program, Outdoor Education, is located at YMCA Camp Jones Gulch (Jones Gulch). The camp is in a similar setting as Honor Camp.
- Anne clarified the term “outdoor education” as a way of describing the County’s program.
  - Outdoor education definition: Opportunity to get kids to be involved in the outdoors and gain an appreciation for the outdoors. Outdoor Education program acts as a “rite of passage” for 5th and 6th graders and it is their first time being away from home for an extended period of time as a group.
- In the County, 5th or 6th graders (depending on districts’ preferences) spend a week at the Jones Gulch during the school year.
- Current Outdoor Education program capacity averages 200 kids per week (depending on the school district) and runs from the end of September to the second week of May.

**Jones Gulch Site and Relationship to YMCA**

- Jones Gulch’s location and facilities are desirable and unique, including:
  - Large site.
  - Located near Memorial County Park.
  - Old redwood groves.
» Creek to study salamanders.
» Variety of microclimates.
» Close to the ocean - students spend one day at the beach.
» Natural amenities are aligned with the students’ science curriculum.

- Jones Gulch also runs other programs simultaneously, but is large enough to accommodate their entire program. For example, they simultaneously run San Mateo County and San Joaquin County programs, but keep the programs on two very distinct sides so the students from each county do not see each other during their stay.

- The Office of Education has had this program/relationship with YMCA for a very long time, is happy with the arrangement, and is not looking at other facilities to house their current Outdoor Education program. Office of Education has had conversations with YMCA about their future relationship to ensure that the Outdoor Education program will continue to run at Jones Gulch.

**Costs and Staffing for Outdoor Education Program**

- Cost for the 5-day week program is $305 per student and $175 per teacher. The majority of families pay this $305 per student cost, although there are camperships available for low-income families, and some districts do fundraising to send kids to the program.

- Cabin leaders, generally juniors or seniors in high school within San Mateo County, are recruited by the school district as volunteers and do not pay a fee for the program.

- $250,000 annually is allocated from the San Mateo County Office of Education General Fund to subsidize the program’s costs in order to keep the costs to students reasonable.

- The following staff members are part of the Outdoor Education program:
  » Mark Nolan, Director – part of Office of Education administrative staff, in charge of the program.
  » Steve Van Zandt, Program Manager/Principal – part of Office of Education administrative staff, principal of the project.
  » Teachers of students who are involved in the program.
  » Naturalists who act as individual instructors - college graduates with a degree in environmental science.
  » Interns - young educated adults who are there to learn in an outdoor education environment and then often move on to an advanced degree.

- Naturalists and interns are paid a nominal salary with room and board included.

**Future Program Opportunities**

- Office of Education is in the very early stages of looking at other ways to accommodate additional Environmental Education programs in the future, including:
Environmental education: Relatively more recent concept and has an overarching scientific approach. Teaches kids to be good stewards of the environment. Outdoor education incorporates environmental education in its program. Students learn about environmental systems, the impacts that people have on the environment, and sustainability practices. There is also a civic engagement component. Focuses on a broader age of students (K-12) beyond 5th and 6th graders.

Professional Development for Teachers: Professional Development for Teachers in the summer: Teachers would spend a couple of days working on environmental educational units tied to the Next Generation Science Standards that they can implement in their schools.

Green collar career development pathway: Green collar career development pathway: Collaboration between high schools and community colleges so students can have an authentic experience and practically apply what they learn about the environment.

More involvement with middle school students: More involvement with middle school students: They are at an age where they can benefit from being outdoors rather than always in a classroom (Anne notes that this idea has not been fully fleshed out – perhaps it would include environmental service projects.)

- Jones Gulch might not have the capacity to accommodate these other future programs since they also provide accommodations for family/residential camping and retreats. Therefore, Office of Education is open to looking at other sites for these potential programs.

- The program is not obligated to stay within San Mateo County and is open to sites outside of the county. Office of Education has looked at other sites, including Redwood Glen in Loma Mar. Redwood Glen, however, is having water issues. They are unable to find other appropriate sites.

- Board members are meeting regularly to understand what the possibilities are for additional opportunities for environmental education.

Challenges with Honor Camp

- Road to the site is narrow and windy, which would likely not be able to accommodate the students’ mode of transit by school bus.

- Cabins would need to be renovated. Students are better sleeping in smaller cabins rather than Honor Camp’s barracks/bunk-style housing:
  - 10 kids per cabin with a leader is ideal. Having too many kids all in one area for sleeping is not effective.

- Anne expressed concerns that the facilities may not be large enough to accommodate the number of typical students (e.g., dining hall) especially for the types of desired living arrangements (e.g., multiple cabins versus barracks).

- The site has nice vegetation, but Anne noted from her site visit that Honor Camp does not offer the same variety of ecosystems available at Jones Gulch.

- Facilities would need accommodations for not just K-12 students, but also adult staff such as teachers, naturalists, etc. For a teacher professional development program, teachers would need amenities like showers and a roof over their head (no tent cabins).
Implementation

- Office of Education has worked hard with the YMCA to try to figure out how to keep the costs of the Outdoor Education reasonable for students so that the program can continue at Jones Gulch for the foreseeable future.

- Office of Education does not have current funding to develop a site like this. They are flat funded for the next 25 years, but are willing to explore foundation opportunities.

- If San Mateo County Parks invested in the capital costs for rebuilding Honor Camp, Office of Education would not be obligated to use a redeveloped Honor Camp facility since it is completely separate from San Mateo County.

- Office of Education is not aware of any other proposals and projects similar to Honor Camp in the pipeline.

- Anne requested that San Mateo County Parks keep Office of Education updated as the project progresses.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: San Mateo County Office of Education
March 02, 2017, 2pm via phone

Participants:
- Scott Morrow, MD, MPH, MBA, FACPM; Health Officer, San Mateo County Health Department
- Jesse Jones, PlaceWorks

Existing Knowledge of Honor Camp
- Dr. Morrow is very familiar with the site and has been tracking it since it closed as a honor camp. He has toured the site with County Parks and with outdoor education providers.
- Dr. Morrow reached out to Supervisor Don Horsley (District 3) to direct a feasibility study for Honor Camp (prior to the initiation of a feasibility study by County Parks) and is excited to see the site reused, particularly for outdoor education.
- Dr. Morrow additionally reached out to Sheriff’s department following the closure. The Sheriff’s department was supportive of reuse but could not offer any money for this purpose, although they did upgrade the Minimum Security Facility (MSF) in 2008.

Opportunities for Honor Camp
- Dr. Morrow believes that Honor Camp should only be explored as an opportunity for outdoor education because there is a large need for more outdoor education in the area – particularly for school with lower-income students as compared to more affluent schools.
- During site visits, Dr. Morrow noted that Camp Pomponio Road seemed to be fine for outdoor education uses. He is less concerned about the state of the road than the distance from developed areas.
- Major assets include:
  - The feeling of being far away.
  - Access to creeks and trails, which can be good learning opportunities. Dr. Morrow specifically noted that the riparian interface is an interested ecosystem to learn about in outdoor classrooms.
  - Existing development is supportive of large groups. It holds a lot of people in the existing layout and offers extra amenities, such as a kitchen and a pool.
- In considering reuse, Dr. Morrow has not assessed the existing infrastructure but noted that a septic system may be a better option in the future if the site is reused.
Implementation/Public Health’s Role

- Dr. Morrow noted that Public Health’s role in identifying the site as an outdoor education facility was a proactive one to address an issue that he considers to be a need in the community; however, it is not typically within the County Health Department’s role to develop such sites or operate them.

- If the site was reused, the County Health Department would play a regulatory role to evaluate potable water, sewage, and food preparation for code compliance. Dr. Morrow noted that the last inspections would have been in 2003.

- Public Health would likely support a secondary group, such as Exploring New Horizons or Vida Verde, using the site for outdoor education.

- Dr. Morrow considers the site to be a good opportunity for public-private partnership. He notes that raising the money for improvements and operations would be a “herculean effort” for a non-profit outdoor education group, but that there might be benefactors throughout the County that could contribute to capital improvements.
Honor Camp Feasibility Study
Stakeholder Interview: YMCA Camp Jones Gulch
February 13, 2017, 9:30am via phone

Participants:
- Andrew Boyd-Goodrich, Executive Director, YMCA Camp Jones Gulch
- Jesse Jones, PlaceWorks
- Steven Spickard, Land Economics Consultants (LEC)

YMCA Jones Gulch Program and Operations
- YMCA Jones Gulch operates different programs seasonally and throughout the week:
  - **Week during the School Year (Labor Day to Memorial Day):** Outdoor Education programs from San Mateo County and San Joaquin County. YMCA offers operational support (meal services, maintenance) but does not run the education program.
  - **Weekend Year Round:** Retreats of various types that can include up to 400 people. It is possible to host multiple groups simultaneously with limited interaction between them; however scheduling has to balance compatible guests.
  - **Summer (Memorial Day to Labor Day):** 7-8 week programs for youth run by the YMCA (operations and program staff (20-30 naturalists)).

Amenities and Assets of the YMCA Jones Gulch Facility
- 4 camp villages (clusters of cabins).
- 29 guest cabins: sleep 15-20 people each, winterized and can be used year-round.
- Full-service dining hall with full-time food service employees.
- Natural assets: old growth groves, trails that connect to Pescadero Creek County Park and Memorial County Park – Andrew notes that you can hike for hours from their property. He notes that this is also an asset for Honor Camp.
- Outdoor corrals for summer equestrian program – horses are at the camp seasonally.
- Self-contained sewer and water system.
**Financing/Costs**

- The financial success of the Camp Jones Gulch is tied to the greater YMCA.
- Cost of their facilities is comparable to other resident camps and retreat centers in the area.
- YMCA offers financial assistance for its summer camp program for families with need.
- The Counties’ educational programs are slightly subsidized. The fees cover the operational costs but do not take into account long-term projects or maintenance.

**Evaluation of YMCA Jones Gulch Facility**

- Andrew notes that the camp is the “right size” for youth groups but not large enough for adult groups.
- Andrew was asked for a wish list of improvements to the Jones Gulch facility. He mentioned the following:
  - Upgrade the cabins to provide a different style of cabins for adult groups.
  - Provide year-round equestrian facilities.

**Competitiveness and the Need for Additional Camp Space**

- Andrew notes that he cannot answer definitely if the YMCA is interested in having another camp. He notes that there is a continued interest in serving more people and if there was a possibility to expand then it might be considered.
- Andrew points out that it is true that another type of camp at Honor Camp would be in competition with their facility; however, he thinks that there is still existing demand.

**Potential Use of Honor Camp**

- If YMCA were to run a satellite program at Honor Camp, it would probably operate as a “separate experience” for older youth. Andrew notes that YMCA has a program to take teens on a special nature trip (such as Yosemite) and that a short trip down to Honor Camp may not be unique enough.
- Andrew notes that Honor Camp likely has more potential as a residence camp rather than a day-use camp.
- Andrew notes that Honor Camp’s location within a park is a major asset because you can connect to the existing trail network.