

BOLINAS COMMUNITY PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT

BCPUD BOX 390 270 ELM ROAD BOLINAS CALIFORNIA 94924 415 868 1224



MEMORANDUM

TO:	Board of BCPUD Directors
FROM:	Ad-Hoc BEP/Bike Path Committee (Jack Siedman & Kevin McElroy)
RE:	Status of Bolinas Eucalyptus Project, Repair of Bike Path and Working with Bolinas Fire Protection District to Address Roadside Trees
TO:	May 21, 2025

The Ad-Hoc BEP/Bike Path Committee, after consulting with BCPUD General Manager, Georgia Woods, and members of BEP, and considering financial and timing constraints, recommend we pause the pursuit of BEP's permit application to remove the full grove of ~1,000 trees on BCPUD land. Instead, we recommend BCPUD simultaneously pursue: (1) Bike Path Repair Project using existing California State Parks grant funding AND (2) the clearing of hazardous roadside trees on Olema-Bolinas Road and Mesa Road in collaboration with Bolinas Fire District and Marin Wildfire Protection Agency as laid out in [Governor Newsom's recent Executive Order](#).

Once the bike path project has been completed and the hazardous roadside trees have been removed, we intend to pursue the broader removal of hazardous trees within the grove and environmental restoration as the Bolinas Eucalyptus Project envisioned.

Overview of District efforts to repair Bike Path and Addressing Hazardous Trees in the Eucalyptus Grove

Efforts on the "Bike Path Repair Project" and the "Bolin Eucalyptus Project" (BEP) have been ongoing for the past several years. These efforts have been complex and convoluted. The following is meant to summarize these efforts and help contextualize the recommendations of the Ad-Hoc BEP/Bike Path Committee at this important juncture.

Summary of Milestones for BEP/BIKE Path Repair Projects over the past year plus:

- **April 2022**—BCPUD engages WRA to create biological [Constraint maps](#) for the property in anticipation of the bike path project (and Marin Water project)
- **January 2023**—BPCUD executes [grant with CA State Park](#) to receive funds to rehab the Bike Path
- **April 2023**—BCPUD GM is advised by CDA that the Bike Path will not likely need a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) because it will qualify for a repair and maintenance exemption, as described in the Local Coastal Program (LCP).

- **February 2024**—BKF (engineers for Bike path) presents [Concept Design Drawings](#) for Bike Path Repair Project
- **March 2024**—BCPUD staff meets with County Planner regarding Bike Path Project
 - we are alerted that, based on WRA’s maps, portions of the existing path appear to lie within 50 feet of identified ESHAs
 - in this case a CDP will be required because in order to qualify for “repair and maintenance exemption” the existing path must lie outside the mandated 50-foot buffer of identified ESHAs
- **August 2024**—BCPUD Board of Directors approves BCPUD to be a co-applicant on Bolinas Eucalyptus Project’s CDP to the County (BCPUD staff advises BCPUD Board to hit pause on pursuit of Bike path repair, until the BEP application plays out)
- **August 2024**—BEP submits [CDP application](#) to the County for the removal of ~1,000 trees on District property
- **October 2024**—BEP application receives [Status Letter](#) from the County Indicating that the BEP application is “incomplete”
 - BEP and BCPUD staff begin to internally address “incompleteness checklist”
- **February 12, 2025**—Despite BEP/BCPUD not yet having had the opportunity to formally address incompleteness checklist, we receive a [letter from Environmental Planning that the Planning Division](#) has been deemed our project “complete” and that the application has moved forward to Environmental Review (including CEQA)
- **February 28, 2025**—BEP representative and BCPUD GM meet with Environmental Planning and CDA Planners to learn more about the environmental review process
 - BCPUD/BEP are notified that the BEP project is not CEQA exempt
 - We are advised that CEQA phase/Environmental Permitting is not the ideal time to modify project scope, or introduce “phased approach”, or provide further project narratives to justify the need for the project (we are advised that these issues would have been most appropriately addressed during CDP phase)
 - They explain Environmental review process: We will need to conduct an “Initial Study”, they explain that we can expect to pay at least ~\$40K for this study, and County will solicit a firm from an accredited list (any firms we’ve previously worked with will be excluded).
 - During the Initial Study it is likely that additional technical memoranda/or peer reviews may be required
 - County reps suggest that a project of this magnitude (with substantial impact and within environmentally sensitive area) will likely take multiple years and could be expected to cost over \$100K-\$200 to get through permitting
 - If an “Environmental Impact Report” is deemed necessary, then it could cost much more than this.
- **March 1, 2025**—Following devastating wildfires in Southern California, Gov. Newsome issues an [Executive Order](#) suspending Coastal Act and CEQA for removal of Hazardous trees.

- **April 17, 2025**—Ad Hoc BEP/Bike Path Committee and BEP representatives and BCPUD Staff meet with HT Harvey (biological consulting firm that BEP has previously employed to help prepare their CDP) to discuss next steps and the potential to apply the Executive order to enable removal of eucalyptus within zone 5.
- **May 6, 2025**—BCPUD/BEP receive [proposal from HT Harvey](#) for “single task” to determine if the project is eligible for CEQA exemption under the Gov. Executive Order (est. cost \$13,250).
- **May 7, 2025**—BCPUD staff receives alert from California State Park that the Bike Path Repair Project must be open to the public no later than January 1, 2028, and BKF Engineer advises that we need to resume project design by September 2026 to meet this new deadline. The work to be completed in this time frame will include: finalizing design, preparation of bid documents, public bidding & construction. (This work window does not include obtaining the CDP that we will need to acquire prior to commencing the work!)
- **May 8, 2025**—BCPUD staff meets with Bolinas Fire Protection Staff to discuss the implications of the Executive order and possibility to partner with the Fire District and Marin Wildfire Protection Authority to receive permission under the Executive Order to remove hazardous trees.
 - MWPA is working with an environmental consulting group ([Panorama](#)) that is helping them navigate and prepare project application for exemption under the Gov. Order.
 - Panorama advises BCPUD/BFPD to submit an arborist report identifying hazardous trees we would like to identify for removal and they will prepare application under their existing MWPA workorder.
 - Applications to remove hazardous roadside trees under the Gov. Order must be received within one year after the signing of the Gov. Order (so before April 2026).
- **May 15, 2025**—Ad-Hoc BEP/Bike Path Committee meets with BCPUD staff & BEP to discuss next steps and Ad-Hoc BEP/Bike Path Committee formulate their recommendations.

Recommendation to the Full Board from the Ad-Hoc BEP/Bike Path Committee:

- * Approve pursuit of CDPs for the Bike Path (and seek proposals from WRA and HT Harvey for this work).
- * Direct BCPUD staff to continue to work with the Bolinas Fire Protection District with support of MWPA (and their consulting biologist) to receive permission to remove hazardous roadside trees and seek permit exemptions to do so, under the Governor’s Executive Order.
- * Communicate to Marin County Planning Department and Environmental Planning our intent to: (1) pause our pursuit of the full BEP Project; (2) seek approval to remove hazardous roadside trees through the Executive Order and (3) apply for a CDP for the Bike Path Project.