



Ecological Concerns Inc.

Ecological Landscapes
Habitat Restoration
California Native Plants

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CCL #778397

April 29, 2020

Stakeholder Interview Report Perkins Park Vegetation Management Plan

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Stakeholder Interview List and Communication Log

	Name/Organizations	POC/Title	Initial contact	Followed up	Interviewed
1	Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation	Louise J. Miranda Ramirez, Tribal Chair	26-Feb	Followed up 3/10	
2	State Parks	Eric Abma, Asilomar State Parks Superintendent	26-Feb	Meeting for 3/10 was rescheduled to 3/13. Never picked up or responded on 3/13.	
3	California Fish and Wildlife	Renee Robison, Environmental Scientist	26-Feb	On Maternity leave. Called & left message for her boss on 3/13	
4	Coastal Conservancy	Tim Duff, Project Manager Coastal Trail Program	26-Feb		Declined 2/27
5	Monterey Bay Aquarium	Barbara Meister, Public Affairs Director	26-Feb		Interviewed 3/18
6	Chamber of Commerce	Moe Ammar, President	27-Feb		Interviewed 3/31
7	Museum of Natural History	Juan Govea, Director of Community Engagement	27-Feb		Interviewed 3/5
8	Friends of Perkins Park (501c3)	Bill Fredrickson/Ron Llyod/ David Laws	27-Feb		Interviewed 3/5
9	Downtown Business Improvement District	Tom McMahon, BID Advisory Board	27-Feb	Followed up on 3/10	
10	Economic Development Commission	Mia Jarick, Chair	27-Feb	Followed up on 2/28	Interviewed 4/4/2020
11	Sustainable Pacific Grove	Denyse Frischmuth, Steering Committee Coordinator	27-Feb	Followed up on 3/10	



Stakeholder Analysis and Findings

Process:

ECI was provided with a list of 11 organizations to contact for this study*. The list was provided by the City of Pacific Grove's Public Works Department, who are spearheading the Perkins park Revegetation plan. The list consisted of organizations who the Public Works Department deemed to be important to the design and development of Perkins Park. ECI then reached out to the stakeholder groups via email and phone calls. Each stakeholder was approached a minimum of 2 times to inquire if they would be willing to participate in a survey about Perkins Park.

Unfortunately, only 6 of the 11 Stakeholders returned communications, 1 of which declined the interview, stating they were not familiar with the park and thus not in a position to comment.

**This report does not include the results of individual stakeholder feedback survey post-presentation results, the presentation and survey have not yet been conducted as of the writing of this report..*

Analysis:

The five interviews that were conducted varied greatly in opinion. In general, we found that the two stakeholders that were involved with more science based organizations, Museum of Natural History and Monterey Bay Aquarium, were more interested in restoring native plants and providing habitat for native species rather than restoring the ice plant "magic carpet." The stakeholders we interviewed from more commerce focussed groups,, such as The Chamber of Commerce and The Economic Development Commission, had the opposing view and preferred to restore the original concept of Henry Perkins. The Friends of Perkins Park had similar views in general to these commerce focussed organizations. They all preferred to restore and preserve the ice plant in areas where historically accurate and environmentally plausible. Importantly, these groups also stressed the importance of maintenance for the park to ensure its longevity and success.

To Summarize each interview:

1. Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History
 - a. Strongly believes the park should be natives only, no monoculture iceplant
 - b. Would like us to consider the History of the park beyond Henry Perkins, look into Ohlone and uses 100 years ago
2. Monterey Bay Aquarium:
 - a. Prefers native plant restoration
 - b. In order of 1 to 3 (1 being most important) is most concerned with: 1) Providing Ecological Benefits 2) Buffering Coastal Erosion 3) Beauty



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3. Friends of Perkins Park
 - a. Strongly believes the park should be restored to Henry Perkins concept of thriving ice plant and South African botanicals
 - b. Believes there are enough natives north and south of the park and this area should not be natives
 - c. One of the biggest concerns is maintaining clear paths and maintaining weeds, particularly the foxtails.
 - d. Suggested that most of the pest problem areas are under the Aloe mounds closest to the bluff
4. Chamber of Commerce
 - a. The biggest concerns are regarding how to enhance coastal beauty and how the city will maintain the park to ensure year-round beauty. *"From a commercial point of view, it is about how well kept and how scenic the park is in its current state. Any look will work, but all we care about is how well it is taken care of / if the park is thriving."*
5. Economic Development Commission
 - a. Employing year-round aesthetics is important to the engagement of the park. Currently, the park does not pose major economic value to the city outside of bloom times. Year-round interest will allow Perkins Park to become a major economic driving factor for the city beyond bloom periods.



Interview 01: Museum of Natural History

Organization: Pacific Grove Museum of Natural history

Contact: Juan Govea

Position: Director of Community Engagement

Date of Interview: 3-5-2020

- 1) Q: What value does Perkins Park in general, and specifically its vegetation, bring to you / your organization? (Does this value occur outside of the grand "pink carpet" spring bloom?)

A: Perkins Park acts as a historical and iconic park and also benefits the community that rely on tourists for economic value.

- 2) Q: What features of the park's existing conditions do you like the most and why?

A: Not a fan of much of it in its current state

- 3) Q: What Features of the park's existing conditions do you think needs improvement?

A: Would like to see more environmental advocacy and being more science orientated. Would prefer the park to be more native plant focused.

- 4) Q: What is your organization's future vision for the park, in regards to the planting and management of the vegetation?

A: Would like to have as many natives as possible

- 5) Q: What changes would you like to **avoid** in the park's vegetation in general?

A: Would like to avoid an iceplant blanket monoculture

- 6) Q: What **historic significance** does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there a historic relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A: Would like "historic significance" to focus farther back then Henry Perkins. It should also include the Ohlone Tribe and the historical plantings of Monterey Pines and rolling sand dunes.

- 7) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the cultural history of the site.

A: 5

- 8) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is to restore the ice plant to Perkins Park to enhance the spring "pink carpet?"

A: 1



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- 9) Q: What ecological significance does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there an ecological relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A: This park is ecologically relevant because it serves as open space for the public and should symbolize a space before we (humans) got here.

- 10) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the biological diversity of the site by using native plants?

A: 5

- 11) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is it to restore low maintenance native vegetation to certain areas of the park?

A: 5

- 12) Q: Do you have additional comments on or suggestions for the management of the park's vegetation that are not addressed by the questions above?

A: No



Interview 02: Monterey Bay Aquarium

Organization: Monterey Bay Aquarium

Contact: Barbara Meister

Position: Public Affairs Director

Date of Interview: 3-18-2020

- 1) Q: What value does Perkins Park in general, and specifically its vegetation, bring to you / your organization? (Does this value occur outside of the grand “pink carpet” spring bloom?)

A: The park provides coastal access which is a natural extension of the Aquarium. It allows visitors to get outdoors and experience the real thing. They can see sea otters and shore birds in their natural habitat outside of the museum.

- 2) Q: What features of the park’s existing conditions do you like the most and why?

A: The view of wide open expanse of ocean and outcroppings

- 3) Q: What Features of the park’s existing conditions do you think needs improvement?

A: Indifferent

- 4) Q: What is your organization’s future vision for the park, in regards to the planting and management of the vegetation?

A: Generally, a healthy coastline and prevention of coastal erosion that is in sync to sea level rise. I would like to see vegetation that can mitigate storm surge for coastal erosion due to sea level rise.

More specifically, in order of most importance (1 being most important, 3 being least important):

- 1) Provide ecological benefits*
- 2) Mitigate sea level rise*
- 3) Aesthetically pleasing*

- 5) Q: What changes would you like to **avoid** in the park’s vegetation in general?

A: N/A

- 6) Q: What **historic significance** does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there a historic relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A: Didn’t feel qualified to answer this question and has passed it on to co-workers at the aquarium.



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-
- 7) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the cultural history of the site.
A: 4
- 8) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is to restore the ice plant to Perkins Park to enhance the spring "pink carpet?"
A: 2 - *Would like to see the park provide ecological purpose first, then beauty.*
- 9) Q: What ecological significance does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there an ecological relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?
A: *Didn't feel qualified to answer this question and has passed it on to co-workers at the aquarium.*
- 10) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the biological diversity of the site by using native plants?
A: 5
- 11) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is it to restore low maintenance native vegetation to certain areas of the park?
A: 5
- 12) Q: Do you have additional comments on or suggestions for the management of the park's vegetation that are not addressed by the questions above?
A: No



Interview 03: Friends of Perkins Park

Organization: Friends of Perkins Park

Contact: Bill Fredrickson, Ron Lloyd, David Laws

Position: Community Members, Historical Researcher

Date of Interview: 3-5-2020

- 1) Q: What value does Perkins Park in general, and specifically its vegetation, bring to you / your organization? (Does this value occur outside of the grand “pink carpet” spring bloom?)

A: A beautiful place for both residential and tourists to enjoy. Trip Advisor listed it as one of the top things to do in the area. Draws tourists throughout the year not just during the bloom, however the tourist season does slow down in January and February. Off season to the iceplant bloom, the park still provides crucial coastal access. The park also has a historical significance.

- 2) Q: What features of the park’s existing conditions do you like the most and why?

A: Nice broad areas of flower carpet without other vegetation

- 3) Q: What Features of the park’s existing conditions do you think needs improvement?

A:

- 1. Better Weed management: There is already a team of 50 volunteers that weed, the grasses are incredibly challenging to keep up with and should all be removed, the foxtails are a problem with dogs. The Chilean ice-plant needs to be removed.*
- 2. Rodent Management: There needs to be a pest control plan. The ground squirrels are a problem that are contributing to the bluff erosion by burrowing under the Aloes along the bluff. People feeding the squirrels are contributing to the problem. Hayes recommended re-introducing weasels as a natural predator that will eat squirrels.*
- 3. The Aloes are not maintained, although they have lovely flowers, they are too big and restrict the view of the ocean. Sea Palm avenue is especially overgrown. The Aloes are also a problem because the squirrels burrow under them and contribute to the bluff erosion.*
- 4. More defined pathways, not creating new ones, that are clean and clear of vegetation.*

- 4) Q: What is your organization’s future vision for the park, in regards to the planting and management of the vegetation?

A: See mission statement for the Friends of Perkins Park:



1. *Perkins Park has been an iconic landmark in Pacific Grove for over 70 years, is world renowned, and is an important part of our heritage and our future.*
 2. *The Magic Carpet iceplant (drosanthemum floribundum) is the key feature in the park, attracts visitors who support our economy, is renowned for its spring floral display and should be maintained in a healthy and flourishing state through the majority of the park.*
 3. *The park should have safe, well-maintained trails for pedestrians and joggers, and benches for sightseers.*
 4. *Indigenous plant species should be used where necessary as a complement to the trees and Magic Carpet.*
 5. *All fertilizers and pesticides should comply with State, County, and City requirements.*
 6. *Weeds are to be actively eliminated to maintain the beauty and grandeur of the park and safety of those who use it, as is consistent with any well-publicized garden.*
 7. *Control of animals that damage the foliage in Perkins Park is necessary*
-
- 5) Q: What changes would you like to **avoid** in the park's vegetation in general?
A: *Would like to see native plants used as little as possible. The park is iconic as a botanical garden, not a native garden. There are plenty of areas north and south of the park for native restoration. Obviously you have to do what you have to do and runoff areas can be devoted to native plants where needed.*
 - 6) Q: What **historic significance** does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there a historic relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?
A: *David Laws has written an article on the history of Henry Perkins and has also looked into the idea of being listed on the Cultural Landscape Foundation. He wasn't sure about the City's ability to provide the support for that.*
 - 7) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the cultural history of the site.
A: 5
 - 8) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is to restore the ice plant to Perkins Park to enhance the spring "pink carpet?"
A: 5



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- 9) Q: What ecological significance does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there an ecological relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A:

- 10) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the biological diversity of the site by using native plants?

A:

- 11) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is it to restore low maintenance native vegetation to certain areas of the park?

A:

- 12) Q: Do you have additional comments on or suggestions for the management of the park's vegetation that are not addressed by the questions above?

A:



Interview 04: Chamber of Commerce

Organization: Chamber of Commerce

Contact: Moe

Position: President of Chamber of Commerce

Date of Interview: 3-30-2020

01) Q: What value does Perkins Park in general, and specifically its vegetation, bring to you / your organization? (Does this value occur outside of the grand “pink carpet” spring bloom?)

A: Perkins Park was on the cover of Life Magazine in 2005 and 1962.

Chamber of commerce conducts many surveys through the year, #1 reason people come to PG is for scenic beauty. Specifically, people are attracted to the gorgeous shoreline.

Value is year round, but more so during the spring months when carpet is in full bloom.

02) Q: What features of the park’s existing conditions do you like the most and why?

A: Pink Carpet: Because it is unique to our little town. There are a lot of other parks in a lot of places, but the pink color is so distinguished and appealing to the visitors and locals alike.

03) Q: What Features of the park’s existing conditions do you think needs improvement?

A: vegetation needs improvement. Park needs to be accessible. A few more benches and places for people to relax and enjoy the scenery.

04) Q: What is your organization’s future vision for the park, in regards to the planting and management of the vegetation?

A: We would like to bring it back to its original purpose and iteration

05) Q: What changes would you like to **avoid** in the park’s vegetation in general?

A: The thing that I would like to address is how to keep people on the path rather than encouraging people to damage and trample the ice plant?

06) Q: What **historic significance** does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there a historic relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A: The history of the perkins park is not important to us. We care about the experience, the beauty and the enhancement of the user’s experience. From a commercial point of view, it is about how well kept and how scenic the park is in its current state. Any look will work, but all we care about is how well it is taken care of / if the park is thriving.



07) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the cultural history of the site.

A: 1

08) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is to restore the ice plant to Perkins Park to enhance the spring "pink carpet?"

A: 6!

09) Q: What ecological significance does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there an ecological relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A: 2 - *We are looking to restore the park to the condition it was in back in 2015.*

10) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the biological diversity of the site by using native plants?

A: 1

11) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is it to restore low maintenance native vegetation to certain areas of the park?

A: 5

12) Q: Do you have additional comments on or suggestions for the management of the park's vegetation that are not addressed by the questions above?

A:

Signage must be provided and be multilingual. We would like to see some signs to help keep people on the path that everyone can read. In 2018 15 - 25% of our tourists were from China, and we do not provide signage that they can read. Signage is critical in keeping people using the park properly.

The pathways need to be multi-use for all residents and users alike.

The one thing that the city should not do is plant Cypress Trees. People are coming to the city for the views. We do not want to plant anything that will obstruct the views. We need to protect and preserve the viewsheds as much as possible.

The chamber of commerce just spent 7 months to Brand the City of PG. Right now we have "butterfly town USA" Rick Bragden & Branding task force.

After months of research and interviews, what are the keywords that people are googling when they type in PG? - When we are selling and promoting PG, it is all about Perkins Park and the views/ access to the ocean. Our new slogan is, "Sanctuary by the Sea."



Interview 05: Economic Development Commission

Organization: Economic Development Commission

Contact: Mia

Position:

Date of Interview: 4-3-2020

01) Q: What value does Perkins Park in general, and specifically its vegetation, bring to you / your organization? (Does this value occur outside of the grand "pink carpet" spring bloom?)

A: it is a destination for PG and people do come for the blooms. I am not sure of the value is when it is not in bloom. Unless we have a reason for people to come to visit the park when it is not during spring.

02) Q: What features of the park's existing conditions do you like the most and why?

A: To be honest, the only thing that I like about it is when its blooming.

03) Q: What Features of the park's existing conditions do you think needs improvement?

A: We need seasonal interest. I dont feel that it has anything to offer when its not in bloom. There are other prettier areas to visit when the park is not in bloom. We need additional interest so people come to visit outside of the bloom time.

04) Q: What is your organization's future vision for the park, in regards to the planting and management of the vegetation?

A: We need to make sure that the park looks great all of the time. That we cannot rely on volunteers and short staff. Why spend all the money if we can't keep it maintained to look the way that we want?

05) Q: What changes would you like to **avoid** in the park's vegetation in general?

A: Avoid high maintenance planting, and plants that only bloom 1 time every year.

06) Q: What **historic significance** does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there a historic relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A: To the best of my knowledge, the best history is about the blooming.

07) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the cultural history of the site.

A: 5 (we need some other reason for people to come to the park beyond when it is in bloom. Plaques or statues could add interest.)



08) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is to restore the ice plant to Perkins Park to enhance the spring "magic carpet?"

A: 5

09) Q: What ecological significance does this park symbolize to your organization? Is there an ecological relevance to this park that is not commonly known which you believe would be beneficial to the community to learn about?

A: 5

Its a tourist attraction. It gives people a reason to visit PG and walk on the path. This is vital to destination tourists.

10) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important it is to restore the biological diversity of the site by using native plants?

A: 5

It needs to have a natural design that looks great and keeps year round interest.

*Environmental design needs to be appealing and **have a nice look 12 months** out of the year. Adding in some rocks and additional interest will provide some depth and texture.*

11) Q: On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being most important), How important is it to restore low maintenance native vegetation to certain areas of the park?

A: 5

12) Q: Do you have additional comments on or suggestions for the management of the park's vegetation that are not addressed by the questions above?

A: We need to make sure that we allocate enough advertising budget to ensure that we are encouraging local and tourists to come see it when the installation is completed and things are in full bloom.

People come to Perkins Park for its beauty. Perkins park is more important than the butterfly sanctuary.

Tamplng of the gardens is an issue. We need to have rocks or something to delineate pathways and prevent people from walking in the gardens.



Conclusions:

The opposing views of the organizations indicate the best method to satisfy all stakeholders may be a multi-faceted approach to the vegetation design of the park. This would include spaces for both native habitat and the South African botanic gardens envisioned by Henry Hays Perkins, with its strong ice plant component. Because Perkins Park is 0.8 miles in length and has various terrain conditions and microclimates, we believe that it is possible to design the park in a way which facilitates the needs for all parties yet maintains a cohesive feel. Fortunately, this approach fits well with a design that fits the maintenance needs of the park, with difficult to maintain areas being set aside for natives and more easily maintained areas being utilized for rehabilitation of the ice plant and accents of other South African plants. This approach also leads to greater year round interest, as California natives in the difficult to maintain areas and South African accent plantings amongst the ice plant will provide texture and color outside of the ice plant bloom period.

Additionally, maintenance and longevity are a major concern for the park to remain as an economic driver for the city. Thus, the results of this survey reaffirmed the importance of a proper maintenance plan and irrigation plan.

Our Findings:

- Maintenance of the park and long term success was a major concern for 3 out of 5 parties involved.
- Keeping the park as a major economic driver for the City of Pacific Grove was a concern for 4 out of 5 parties interviewed.
- Enhancing the Ice Plant "Magic Carpet" was important to 3 out of 5 parties.
- Focusing on California native planting & native habitats was important to 3 out of 5 parties.
- 2 parties emphasized that they like to see a mix of gardens which contained native and non-native plants based upon ecological conditions, aesthetics of the park and long-term maintenance considerations.
- 1 party wanted to restore the vision of Henry Hays Perkins to its original vision.
- 2 parties wanted to restore the park to its condition in the early 2000s.
- 2 parties would like to emphasize year-round interest to the park and wanted to see alternative plantings to offset lack of interest outside of bloom times.