



# NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS  
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**June 29, 2015**

The Sonoma County Regional Parks Department (Regional Parks) is preparing an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed:

## **TOLAY LAKE REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN PROJECT**

### **Introduction**

Regional Parks is requesting comments from responsible and trustee agencies, property owners in the project vicinity, and other interested parties regarding the scope and content of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Responsible and trustee agencies are requested to provide comments regarding the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to that agency's statutory responsibilities in relation to the proposed project. Regional Parks is also interested in comments from property owners and other interested parties regarding environmental topics and areas of concern for study in the EIR. Regional Parks' staff will prepare the EIR in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines. An EIR is an analysis of a proposed project's potentially significant environmental effects regarding construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project. After the EIR is prepared, Regional Parks will submit the document to the State Clearinghouse, the Sonoma County Environmental Review Committee (ERC), and the public for a 45-day public review period. Regional Parks will solicit public and agency comments during the 45-day public review period. These comments will be considered and responded to in the Final EIR.

### **Notice of Preparation Comment Period**

Please send written comments on the scope of the environmental analysis to Karen Davis-Brown, Park Planner II, in care of the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department, at the address listed above. The comment period for the Notice of Preparation will close at 5:00 p.m. on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015, which is 30 days after mailing of this document. Please note that while the comment period for the Notice of Preparation has a closing date, interested parties are encouraged to contact Regional Parks' staff at any time during the process to receive an update of the process, to ask questions, and share information.

### **Public Scoping Meeting**

Regional Parks will host a Public Scoping Meeting regarding the proposed project. The Public Scoping Meeting is a required part of the CEQA process. Regional Parks' staff will present an overview of the preliminary Master Plan for the Tolay Lake Regional Park Master Plan Project and the environmental review process for the project. Public comment can be provided at the meeting via verbal or written comment cards. The public is also welcome to submit comments in writing to the address above during the 30-day public review period. The Public Scoping Meeting is scheduled as follows:

**Tuesday, July, 21<sup>st</sup> 2015; 6:00 – 8:00 pm**  
**Petaluma Community Center**  
**Lucchesi Park 320 N McDowell Blvd Petaluma, CA 94954**

### **Regional Parks Contact Persons**

Please call Karen Davis-Brown at (707) 565-2041 if you have questions regarding this Notice of Preparation.

# PROJECT INFORMATION

## **Project Purpose**

The purpose of the proposed project is to develop the proposed Tolay Lake Regional Park (Park) with a variety of recreation and education uses while protecting natural and cultural resources.

## **Project Location**

Tolay Lake Regional Park is located at 5869 Cannon Lane in Sonoma County, approximately five miles southeast of the City of Petaluma (see Figure 1: Project Location). Tolay Lake Regional Park is comprised of two properties: a 1,737-acre area with primary access from Cannon Lane, a County-maintained road off Lakeville Highway, and the approximately 1,665-acre Tolay Creek Ranch, currently owned by the Sonoma County Land Trust (SLT). The Tolay Creek Ranch property abuts the southern boundary of the current Tolay Lake Regional Park property on the north, and Highway 121 on the south.

## **Existing Site Conditions**

Tolay Lake Park is named for the approximately 200-acre shallow seasonal lake in the center of the valley. Streams and artificial ponds form other water features on site. Several types of roads and trails connect the site to the surrounding community and provide a circulation network within the site. This circulation network coupled with various pastures includes associated features such as gates, fences, and bridges which relate primarily to the site's agricultural use.

The Cardoza Ranch; including homes, barns, and corrals; is located in the northwest corner of the Park just west of Tolay Lake (Figure 2). The Tolay Creek Ranch property is fenced and used for limited grazing. The Tolay Creek Ranch includes 2.5 miles of Tolay Creek, which flows into San Pablo Bay. The SLT will transfer the Tolay Creek Ranch to Regional Parks pending completion of several restoration projects (Figure 3).

## **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The two properties comprising Tolay Lake Regional Park are relatively recent acquisitions. The Cardoza portion of the Park is currently open to limited public access through the Day-Use Permit Program, as outlined in the 2008 Interim Plan. The Tolay Creek Ranch portion of the Park is managed by the SLT and is not subject to the Day-Use Permit Program.

Once the Master Plan is completed and approved, Regional Parks will open the Park to public access and undertake park improvements.

## **Project Description**

The proposed project includes development of a new open space regional park facility to serve the residents of Sonoma County. The proposed Tolay Lake Regional Park will provide day use activities and permit camping and other overnight uses on a year round basis.

The Master Plan includes recreational improvement recommendations for multi-use and hiking-only trails; equestrian facilities; a park center that includes a visitor center with interpretive and educational facilities; as well as improved restrooms and parking. Additionally, the Master Plan includes improvements to park access, a new ranger residence, and water supply and wastewater facilities. The Master Plan provides recommendations for habitat restoration focusing on the restoration of Tolay Lake to maximize and improve the lake ecology for native species, and restoration of 4.5 miles of Tolay Creek in the Park.

The Master Plan defines the anticipated equestrian concessions, provides resource management recommendations for continued cattle operations, as well as improvements in fencing, boundaries, and

exclusion zones for sensitive habitats. In addition, the Master Plan provides recommendations for the protection and interpretation of the significant cultural and historical resources of the property.

The types of recreational activities proposed for the site include; nature study and outdoor educational programs, hiking, docent led walks, horseback riding, mountain biking, group and family picnicking, birdwatching and other types of passive recreation, and overnight hike-in individual and group camping on a permit basis.

The preferred conceptual site plan for the Park's Northern Core area is shown in Figure 4, and for the remainder of the Park in Figure 5.

**Areas of Potential Environmental Effect**

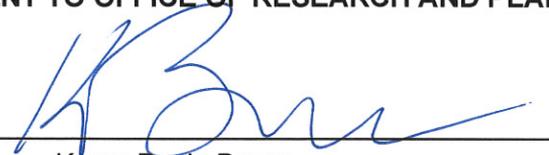
The EIR will analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project. Specific areas of analysis will include: aesthetics, agricultural and forest resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gases, hazards, hydrology and water quality, land use, energy and mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. These resource categories are included in Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines.

**Jurisdictional, Permitting, and Regulatory Agencies**

The following agencies may have jurisdiction associated with development of the proposed Tolay Lake Regional Park:

- ❖ United States Army Corps of Engineers
- ❖ United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- ❖ California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- ❖ California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region
- ❖ Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District
- ❖ Marin - Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District
- ❖ Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
- ❖ Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department

**PUBLICATION AND MAILING DATE:** June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
**SENT TO OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND PLANNING:** June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

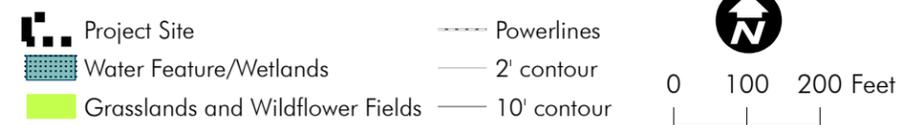
X  Date: 6/23/15  
Karen Davis-Brown  
Tolay Lake Regional Park Master Plan Project Manager



# Northern Park Core Area

## Building Key

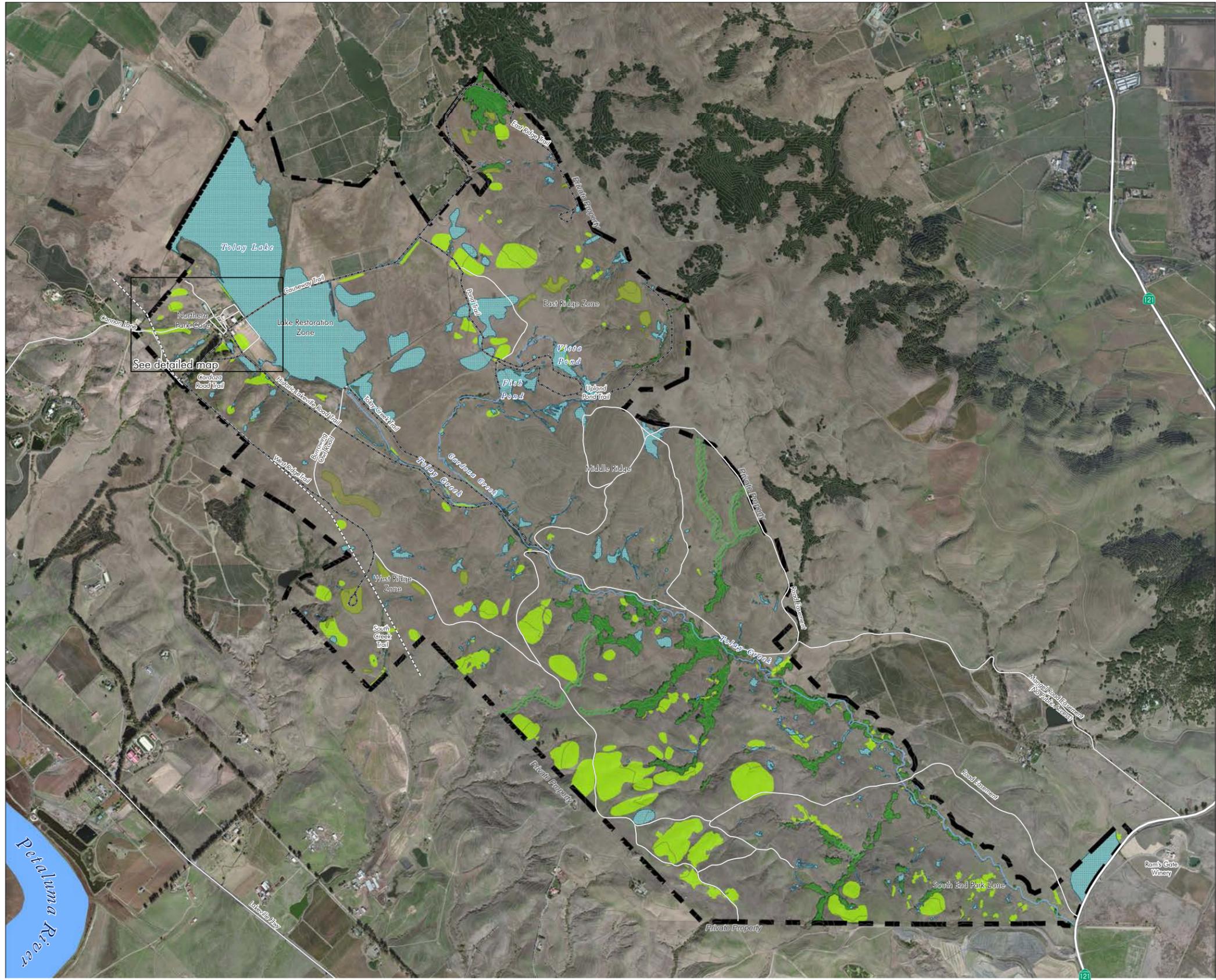
- 1 - Cottage / Julie's House / Little Green House
- 2 - Bunkhouse/Ranger Residence
- 3 - John Cardoza Sr. House/Ranger Residence
- 4 - George & Vera Cardoza / Green House
- 5 - John Jr. & Beatrice Cardoza / Yellow House/Park Office
- 6 - Hay Barn / Old Stone Floor Barn
- 7 - Old Dairy Barn
- 8 - Creamery / Wine Storage
- 9 - Granary / Museum
- 10 - Line Shack
- 12 - Old Shop / Work Shop
- 13 - Tractor Barn / Equipment Barn
- 14 - Storage Shed / Equipment Shed
- 15 - Slaughterhouse
- 16 - Building has been removed
- 17 - Modern Barn
- 18 - Cattle Scale
- 19 - Marvin's Garden
- 20 - Corrals



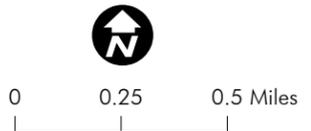
Data Sources:  
 Sonoma County Parks, LSA, WRA, 2013 Cultural Landscapes Inventory, 2012 Historic Structures Report for Cardoza Ranch, 2013 Field Visits by MIG, Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



# Overall Project Area



Data Sources:  
 Sonoma County Parks, LSA, WRA, 2013 Cultural Landscapes Inventory, 2012 Historic Structures Report for Cardozo Ranch, 2013 Field Visits by MIG, Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community





## Northern Park Core Area

### Existing Elements

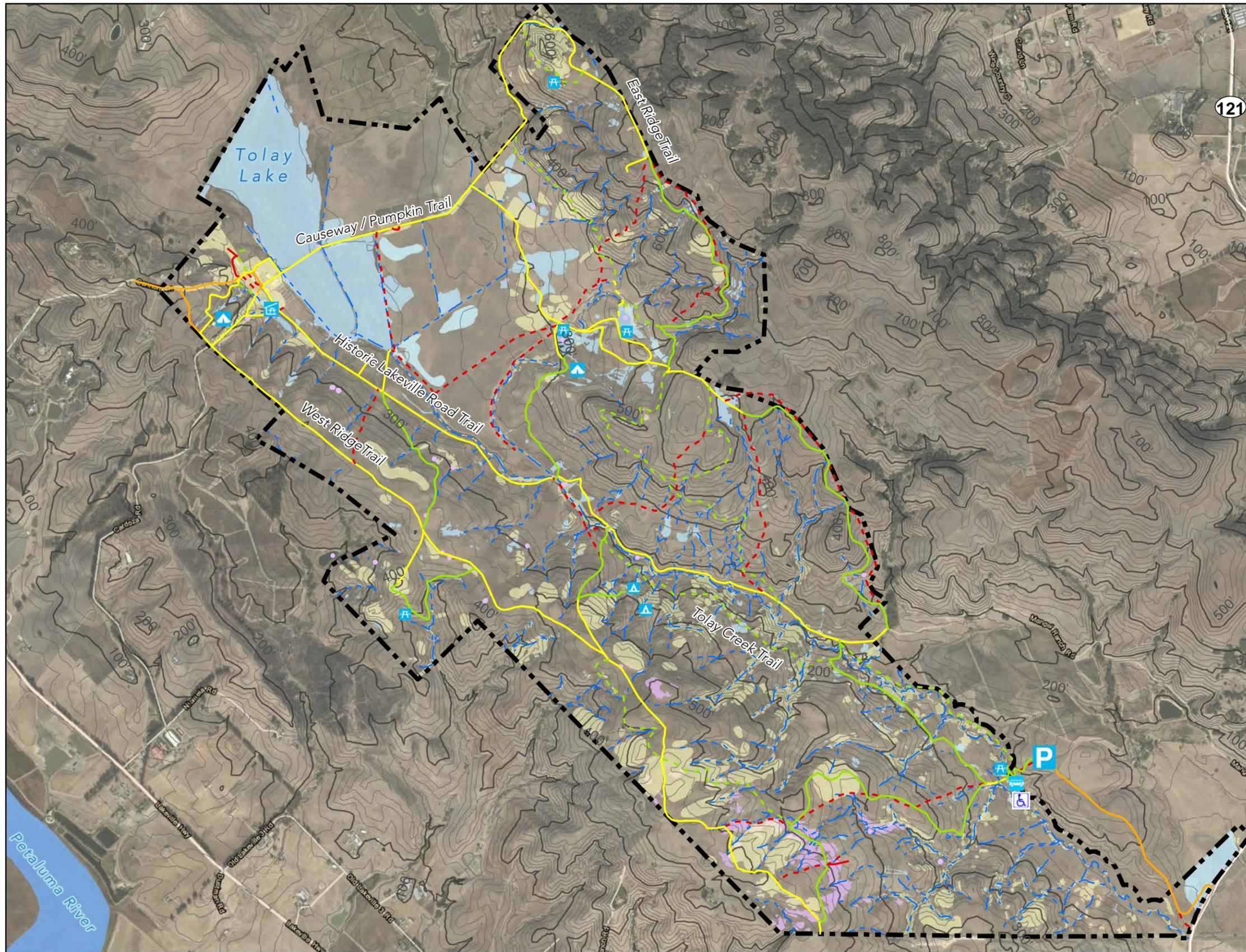
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- 12 - Old Shop / Work Shop
- 13 - Tractor Barn / Equipment Barn
- 14 - Storage Shed / Equipment Shed
- 15 - Slaughter House
- 17 - Modern Barn
- 19 - Historical Garden
- 20 - Corrals
- 21 - Picnic Site / Group
- 22 - Platform

\* Building numbers correspond to Historic Structures Report

### Proposed Elements

- A - Cultural Gathering Area
- B - Viewpoint
- C - New Equipment Shed
- D - Screen Plantings
- E - Ranch Manager Residence
- F - Entry Road Improvements
- G - Group Camping by Permit
- H - Overflow Parking
- I - Animal Pen
- J - Move Historical Corral
- K - Visitor Center
- L - Preserve and Interpret
- M - New Bunk House
- N - Park Office
- O - Group Picnic
- P - Functioning Ranch Operations
- Q - Culinary Ethno Garden
- R - Temporary Residence (Artist, etc.)
- S - Sales/Group Picnic Shelter
- T - New Ranger Residence
- U - Showers
- V - Restroom
- W - Riparian/Wetland Restoration
- X - Kitchen and Dining
- Y - Potential Spray Irrigation Area
- Z - Equestrian Parking
- AA - Boardwalk
- BB - Outdoor Class / Stage





**Legend**

- Existing Multi Use Trail (12.6 miles)
- Existing Hike Only Trail (0.17 miles)
- New Multi Use Trail (7.37 miles)
- New Hike Only Trail (6.87 miles)
- Park Entry Roads (1.73 miles)
- Park / Ranch Use Roads Only (0.29 miles)
- Decommissioned Trail / Road (8.08 miles)
  
- Project Boundary
- Wetlands & Waters
- Streams & Culverts
- Existing 20' Contour
- Existing 100' Contour
- Biological Resources
- Special Status Species
- P Public Parking
- ▲ Group Camping (Reservation)
- ▣ Group Picnic
- ⊠ Picnic
- ▲ Individual Camping (Hike In Backcountry)
- ♿ ADA Parking
- ⊠ Camp Host

Sources: Esri Digital Basemap, Sonoma County Regional Parks (Trails), WRA (Natural Resources)

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



Tolay Lake Regional Park Master Plan  
Sonoma County, CA

**Figure 5**  
Preferred Conceptual Site Plan for Park Interior