

APPENDIX F

NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND PUBLIC COMMENTS



**State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

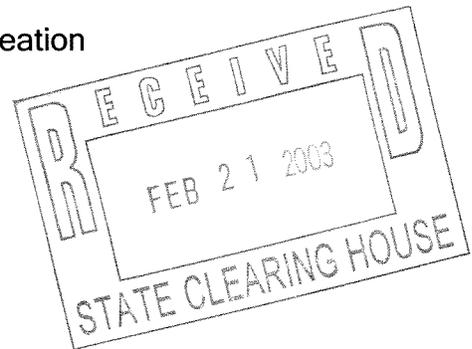
Notice of Preparation

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Interested Individuals

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a programmatic Environmental Impact Report for the **Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan**

Lead Agency: California Department of Parks and Recreation
Northern Service Center
One Capitol Mall, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814
Contact: Wayne Woodroof

Consultant: EDAW, Inc.
2022 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Contact: Curtis Alling, Petra Unger



The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), as the Lead Agency, will prepare a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan. We would like to know the views of interested individuals, organizations and agencies as to the scope and content of the information to be included and analyzed in the EIR. Agencies should comment on the elements of the environmental information that are relevant to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

The project description, location, and potential environmental effects of the proposed project (to the extent known) are included in this Notice of Preparation (NOP).

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response should be sent at the earliest possible date, **but not later than 30 days** after issuance of this notice, which establishes the final deadline as **March 24, 2003**.

Please send your written response to Wayne Woodroof, Statewide General Plan Coordinator, California Department of Park and Recreation, at the address shown above. Responses should include the name of a contact person at your agency.

A planning workshop and EIR scoping meeting has been scheduled to give the public an opportunity to comment on the scope, focus, and content of the Sonoma Coast State Beach

General Plan and EIR. The meeting will be held from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm on March 13, 2003 at the Bodega Bay Marine Lab Facility at 2099 Westside Road, Room in Bodega Bay, CA.

PROJECT TITLE

Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan

PROJECT LOCATION

Sonoma Coast State Beach extends approximately 19 miles from Bodega Head in the vicinity of Bodega Bay to Vista Trail, located 4 miles north of Jenner on the coast in Sonoma County (Exhibit I).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DPR's General Plan Unit, in conjunction with its Russian River District office, is in the process of developing a General Plan for Sonoma Coast State Beach ("Park") in accordance with Public Resources Code §5002.2 referencing General Plan guidelines and §21000 et seq. concerning the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of the General Plan is to guide future development activities and management objectives at the Park. A carrying capacity analysis will be integrated into the general planning process and EIR to evaluate the level of visitor use in relationship to its potential effects on natural, cultural, aesthetic, and recreational resources, overall visitor experience.

The Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan study area covers approximately 5,333 acres and consists of a series of beaches separated by rocky bluffs and headlands. Beachcombers, fishermen, sunbathers and picnickers can access the beach from more than a dozen points along coast Highway I. The Willow Creek Unit contains extensive stands of willow riparian scrub, wetlands, and grassland. The upper slopes of the Willow Creek Watershed are heavily wooded. The park provides various recreational opportunity including hiking, horseback riding, surfing, camping, scenic driving, rock climbing, whale watching, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and beachcombing.

Preparation of the General Plan is in its early stages, so ultimate land use and resource management provisions have not yet been determined. DPR is currently in the process of evaluating existing resources and management opportunities and constraints at the Park that will aid in the development of the General Plan, with plan provisions to minimize any potential environmental impact. Known resources within the Park include:

- Coastal environments (underwater areas, intertidal zones, fragile marine terraces with sandy beaches separated by rocky bluffs, coastal bluff wetlands, coastal prairie, sand dunes);
- Marshlands and native riparian habitat;
- Special-status species (e.g., western snowy plover, Tidestrom's lupine, anadromous fish species);
- Russian River and tributaries including Willow Creek;

- Other drainages in the park including Salmon Creek, Jenner Gulch, Furlong Gulch, Scotty Creek, and Marshall Gulch;
- A significant harbour seal haul out at the mouth of the Russian River;
- Culturally significant areas (e.g., Miwok rock shelter at Duncans Landing, Sunshine Rock, Campbell's Cove, Victorian house and historic dairy at Wright's Ranch);
- New and potential property acquisitions.

Issues that will be considered as part of the General Plan process include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Protection and long-term management of sensitive natural, cultural , and aesthetic resources;
- Potential impact to threatened and endangered species and sensitive natural habitats;
- Invasive species management and restoration of natural ecosystems;
- Compatible and incompatible uses of significant cultural resource areas;
- Preservation and restoration recommendations for sensitive cultural resources;
- Expansion of recreational facilities (i.e. campgrounds and trails);
- Erosion control and slope stability issues;
- Water supply and water quality issues (i.e. mechanical opening of the Russian River and available drinking water supply);
- Increased recreational access, including improved water and undeveloped area access and ADA access to the beach,
- Incorporation of new and planned property acquisitions (Redhill and Willow Creek properties);
- Facilities development and siting to avoid flood events (i.e. relocation of Jenner visitor center);
- Development of interpretive facilities at the park;
- Relocation of maintenance facilities at Salmon Creek and historic Willow Creek Ranchhouse;
- Relocation of shooting range at Willow Creek;
- Potential reclassification of inland units as separate park;
- Increased park staffing to ensure public safety;
- Current and future concessions;
- Carrying capacity of the park.

POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Although ultimate land use and resources management provisions of the General Plan have not yet been determined, generally expected types of environmental impacts that could occur as a result of the General Plan can be identified. The General Plan will seek to minimize any potential effects through the plan alternative development process. Based on the known resource characteristics of the Park and generally anticipated Park needs and uses, potential environmental effects that will be addressed in the General Plan and EIR, include:

- Potential conflicts between sensitive biological and cultural resources and facility development;
- Protection and long-term research and management of sensitive natural communities;
- Potential impacts to threatened and endangered species or their habitats;
- Potential impacts to sensitive marine resources, including tidepools and underwater reserve;
- Confirmed presence of sudden oak death syndrome in the park;
- Impacts resulting from increased recreational access, including improved water and undeveloped area access and ADA access to the beach;
- Impacts resulting from construction of additional housing sites for permanent and seasonal staff;
- Erosion control issues;
- Mechanical opening of the mouth of the Russian River;
- Shortage of potable water in the park;
- Percolation and other water quality related problems; and
- Traffic safety for along Highway I.

Because recreational use levels at the Park are not expected to change substantially as a result of the General Plan, no significant transportation improvements and/or impacts are anticipated. If the potential to take threatened and endangered species is identified, the EIR will describe future State and Federal consultation and permit requirements that will be necessary for facility development and the types of typically mitigation expected.

INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

DPR and the Parks and Recreation Commission will use the EIR component of the General Plan to consider the environmental effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives, when reviewing the proposed General Plan for approval. The EIR will serve as the State's CEQA compliance document for adoption of the General Plan. It will also serve as the programmatic environmental document that may be referenced in implementing future actions included in the General Plan. Subsequent project-level activities identified in the General Plan will be examined in light of the program EIR to determine whether and additional environmental document must

be prepared prior to project approval and implementation (State CEQA Guidelines 15168 (c)). Responsible agencies may also use the EIR for subsequent discretionary action as needed.

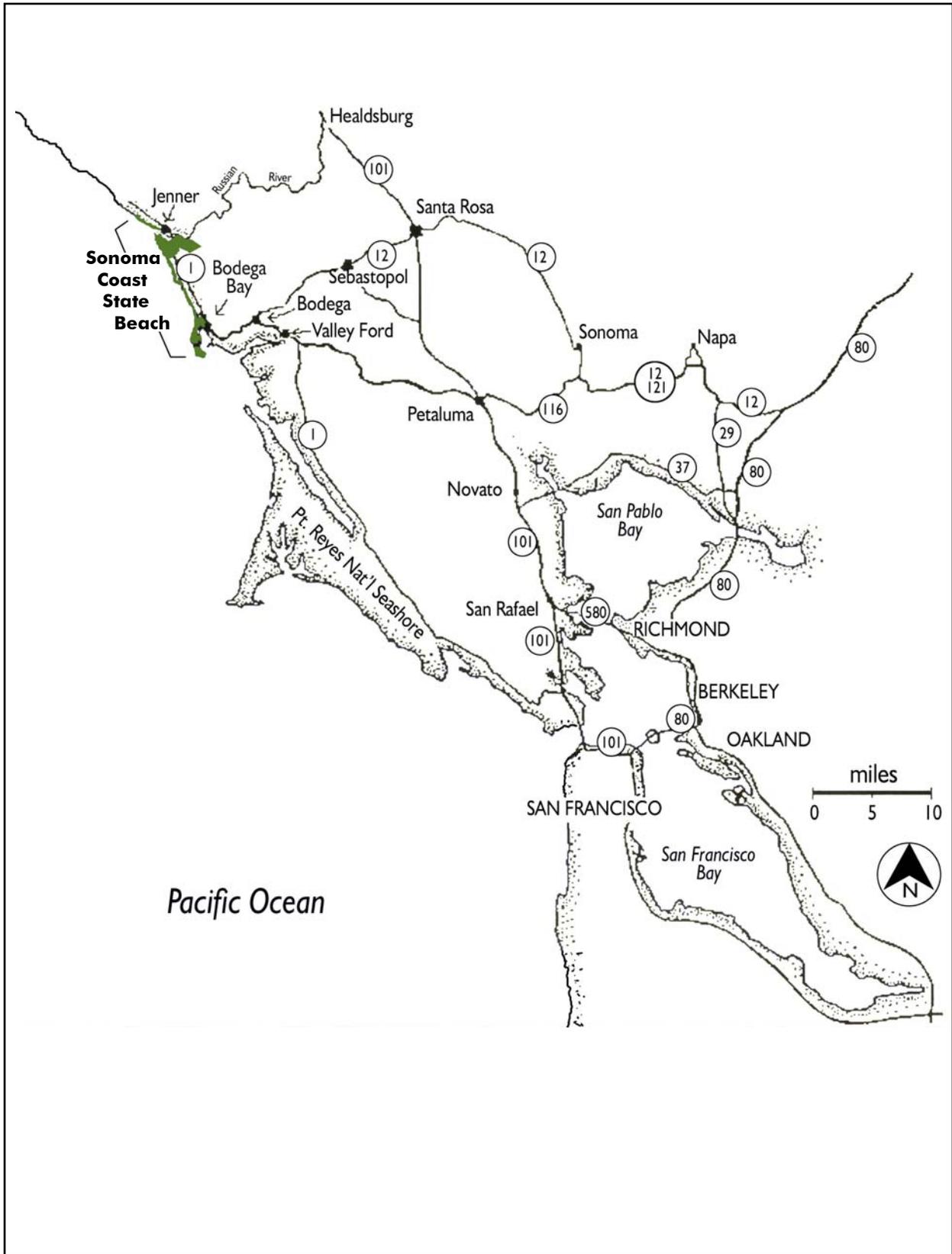
By: Wayne O. Woodroof

Signature: Wayne O. Woodroof

Title: Manager, Statewide General Plan Program

Date: February 21, 2003

Attachment: Exhibit I: Regional Location of Sonoma Coast State Beach



Source: EDAW 2003

Regional Location of Sonoma Coast State Beach

EXHIBIT 1



Memorandum

To: Mr. Wayne Woodroof, Manager
California Department of Parks
and Recreation
One Capital Mall, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via fax (916) 445-9100

Date: March 25, 2003

for Scott Wilson
From: Robert W. Floerke, Regional Manager
Department of Fish and Game - Central Coast Region, Post Office Box 47, Yountville, California 94599

Subject: Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan, Notice of Preparation
Sonoma County, SCH 2003022116

Department of Fish and Game (DFG) personnel have reviewed the California Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) Notice of Preparation (NOP) for Sonoma Coast State Beach Park (Park) General Plan.

DPR is proposing to prepare a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan (General Plan). The purpose of the General Plan is to guide future development activities and management objectives at the Park. The EIR will incorporate a carrying capacity analysis integrated into the general planning process to evaluate the level of visitor use in relationship to its potential effect on cultural, recreational, aesthetic, and natural resources.

The NOP states that the General Plan will serve as the programmatic environmental document which may be referenced for implementing future actions included in the General Plan. The NOP states that subsequent project level activities identified in the General Plan would be evaluated in the program EIR to determine whether additional environmental documents will be prepared.

The Park area is located predominately along the immediate coast south of the mouth of the Russian River and extending southward and terminating at the coastal formation referred to as "Bodega Head" occurring just north of the town of Bodega Bay in Sonoma County. The U. C. Davis Bodega Marine Laboratory and its coastal reserve are bordered both on the north and south by the Park. The Park area encompasses about 5,333 acres and

consists of a series of beaches separated by rocky bluffs and headlands where the public can access the beach from more than a dozen points along coast Highway 1.

The NOP further delineates the Park's coastal environments into intertidal zones, marine terraces, sandy beaches, rocky bluffs, bluff wetlands, coastal prairie, marshlands, and sand dunes. A series of oceanic and Russian River tributaries are identified as Willow Creek, Salmon Creek, Jenner Gulch, Furlong Gulch, and Scotty Creek. The NOP acknowledges rare and sensitive plant and animal species in the Park. There is also a significant harbor seal haul-out area at the mouth of the Russian River.

DFG recommends that the Sonoma County Planning Department be made aware of DPR's General Plan and EIR progression. The County is currently addressing sensitive biological resources and riparian habitats through the County's current General Plan 2020 revision process. Due to its proximity, DFG also recommends that DPR continue to keep U. C. Davis Bodega Marine Laboratory aware of the General Plan and EIR process. DFG is aware that the March 13, 2003 public planning workshop was held at the marine laboratory.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be notified of DPR's General Plan process. This is in regard to several Federally listed species documented in or near the State Park boundaries. These species include the Federally threatened western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*), the Federally endangered Myrtle's silverspot butterfly (*Speyeria zerene myrtle*), the Federally endangered tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), and the Federal and State endangered Tidestrom's lupine (*Lupinus tidestromii*). We also recommend that DPR notify the National Marine Fisheries Service because of the Park's crucial vicinity for supporting local rare and sensitive anadromous fish.

The General Plan may present potential conflicts between facility development and sensitive wildlife species and natural communities. We are aware of DPR's brochure, "Natural Resource Management in California State Parks" (2002), which states "the goal of State Parks resource management program is to protect, restore, and maintain the natural resources in the State Park System." Through the California Environmental Quality Act

(CEQA) process, DFG will work with DPR to allow feasible alternative analysis for DPR proposed projects in order to provide avoidance and, if necessary, adequate mitigation whenever appropriate.

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15125(c), state that knowledge of the regional setting is critical to an assessment of environmental impacts and that special emphasis should be placed on resources that are rare or unique to the region. The local and regional setting should be evaluated in regard to species distribution and potential impacts. The zoning of areas for development projects or other uses that are nearby or adjacent to natural areas may inadvertently contribute to wildlife-human interactions. A discussion of possible conflicts and mitigation measures to reduce these conflicts should be included in the CEQA document.

Site-Specific Development Projects in the Park

An assessment of the flora and fauna in proposed development areas, with particular emphasis upon identifying endangered, threatened, and locally unique species and sensitive habitats, should be provided for future site-specific projects in the Park. Rare, threatened, and endangered species to be addressed should include all those which meet the CEQA definition (see CEQA Guidelines, Section 15380). The assessment should identify any rare plants and natural communities, following DFG's "Guidelines for Assessing the Effects of Proposed Projects on Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants and Natural Communities" (revised May 8, 2000). The Guidelines are available at www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/guideplt.pdf. Seasonal variations in use of the project area should also be addressed. Focused species-specific surveys, conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when sensitive species are active or otherwise identifiable, should be completed. Acceptable species-specific survey procedures should be developed in consultation with DFG, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. DFG's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) in Sacramento should be contacted at (916) 324-3812 to obtain current information on any previously reported sensitive species and habitats, including Significant Natural Areas.

Park site-specific projects should be designed or redesigned to avoid any significant impacts to special status species or habitats. If avoidance is not possible, measures to minimize impacts need to be developed. These may include seasonal restrictions or certain relocation efforts approved by DFG. Additionally, if avoidance is not possible, mitigation measures to rectify the impacts need to be developed and required. These measures may involve revegetation with native species, on-site or off-site habitat restoration, or the creation of replacement habitat features or structures. Significant species impacts that cannot be avoided may also require compensation measures such as permanent on-site or off-site habitat conservation.

A California Endangered Species Act (CESA) permit must be obtained if the project has the potential to result in "take" of species of plants or animals listed under CESA, either during construction or over the life of the project. CESA permits are issued to conserve, protect, enhance, and restore State listed threatened or endangered species and their habitats. Early consultation is encouraged as significant modification to the project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA permit. Issuance of a CESA permit is subject to CEQA documentation; therefore, the CEQA document must specify impacts, mitigation measures, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program.

A thorough discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts expected to adversely affect biological resources should be provided. DPR project impacts should also be analyzed relative to their effects on off-site habitats. Specifically, this should include nearby public lands, open space, adjacent natural habitats, and riparian ecosystems. Impacts to and maintenance of wildlife corridor/movement areas, including access to undisturbed habitat in adjacent areas, should be fully evaluated.

A cumulative effects analysis should be developed as described under CEQA Guidelines, Section 15130. DPR's general and specific plans, as well as past, present, and anticipated future projects, should be analyzed relative to their impacts on similar plant communities and wildlife habitats.

A range of alternatives should be analyzed to ensure that alternatives to the proposed DPR projects are fully considered and evaluated. A range of alternatives which avoid or otherwise minimize impacts to sensitive resources should be included. Specific alternative locations should be evaluated in areas with lower resource sensitivity where appropriate.

DFG opposes the elimination of watercourses and/or their channelization or conversion to subsurface drains. All wetlands and watercourses, whether intermittent or perennial, should be retained and provided with substantial setbacks which preserve the riparian and aquatic values and maintain their value to on-site and off-site wildlife populations. For any activity that will divert or obstruct the natural flow, or change the bed, channel, or bank (which may include associated riparian resources) of a stream, or use material from a streambed, DFG may require a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA), pursuant to Section 1600 et seq. of the Fish and Game Code. Issuance of an SAA is subject to CEQA and DFG, as a responsible agency under CEQA, will consider the local jurisdiction's (lead agency) CEQA document for the project. The CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to the stream or riparian resources and provide adequate avoidance or mitigation, as well as any necessary monitoring and reporting commitments for completion of the SAA.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the NOP and look forward to being involved in the General Plan process. If you have comments regarding our memorandum, please contact Mr. Liam Davis, Environmental Scientist, at (707) 944-5529; or Mr. Scott Wilson, Habitat Conservation Supervisor, at (707) 944-5584.

cc: See next page

Mr. Wayne Woodruff

6

March 25, 2003

cc: Pete Parkinson, Director
County of Sonoma
Permit and Resource Management Department
2550 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

U. S Fish and Wildlife Service
Coast/Bay/Delta Branch
Endangered Species Division
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

National Marine Fisheries Services
777 Sonoma Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Dr. Peter Connors, Reserve Manager
U. C. Davis Bodega Marine Laboratory
2099 Westside Road
Bodega Bay, CA 94923

✓ EDAW, Inc.
2022 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Philip Crimmins, Project Analyst
State Clearinghouse
Post Office Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Point Reyes National Seashore
Point Reyes Station, California 94956

IN REPLY REFER TO
L76

March 24, 2003

Wayne Woodroof
Statewide General Plan Coordinator
California Department of Park and Recreation
Northern Service Center
One Capitol Mall, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Woodroof:

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the scope and content to be analyzed in the Environmental Impact Report for the Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan. The area is rich with a variety of habitats created in the interface between ocean and land and the challenges in creating a management plan are equally diverse.

As stated in the Notice of Preparation, many special status species occur in the study area. The coastal ecosystems have the potential to provide habitat for federally endangered species such as Myrtle's silverspot butterfly (*Speyeria zerene myrtleae*), as well as Tidestrom's lupine (*Lupinus tidestromii*). Dillon Beach is potential breeding habitat for the federally threatened Western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*) and could serve as local alternate habitat to birds that breed on Point Reyes beaches.

I encourage you to also consider what could be one of the newest Northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*) breeding colonies at Jenner Beach. We have received reports of elephant seals using the beach during the breeding and molting seasons and from our experience you may expect a steady increase of seals each year.

We have developed adaptive management strategies for each of the species discussed above and will look forward to working with you to preserve and protect these species and habitats for future generations. Please contact Dawn Adams, Inventory and Monitoring Coordinator, at 415-464-5202 or Dawn_Adams@nps.gov for further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Don L. Neubacher
Superintendent

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

P. O. BOX 23660
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
(510) 286-4444
(510) 286-4454 TDD



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March 24, 2003

SON-1-20.1
SON001221
SCH 2003022116

Mr. Wayne Woodroof
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Northern Service Center
One Capitol Mall, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Woodroof:

Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan – Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation in the environmental review process for the general plan (proposed project). We have reviewed the NOP and have the following comments to offer:

Our primary concern with the proposed project is the potentially significant impact it may have to traffic conditions on State Route 1 (SR 1) and State Route 116 (SR 116). In order to adequately assess the proposed project's impact on these highways we recommend a traffic impact analysis be prepared, which should include, but not be limited to the following information:

1. Information on the proposed project's traffic impacts in terms of trip generation, distribution, and assignment. The assumptions and methodologies used in compiling this information should be addressed.
2. Current Average Daily Traffic (ADT) and AM and PM peak hour volumes on all significantly affected streets, highway segments and intersections.
3. Schematic illustration of the traffic conditions for: 1) existing, 2) existing plus project, and 3) cumulative for the intersections in the project area.
4. Calculation of cumulative traffic volumes should consider all traffic-generating developments, both existing and future, that would affect state highway facilities.

5. Mitigation measures should consider highway and non-highway improvements and services. Special attention should be given to the development of alternate solutions to circulation problems that do not rely on increased highway construction.
6. All mitigation measures proposed should be fully discussed, including financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities, and lead agency monitoring.

We recommend utilizing Caltrans' "Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies" which can be accessed from the following webpage:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/devlopserv/operationalsystems/reports/tisguide.pdf>

We look forward to reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Report for this project. We do expect to receive a copy from the State Clearinghouse, but in order to expedite our review you may send a copy in advance to:

Maija Cottle
Office of Transit and Community Planning
Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Should you require further information or have any questions regarding this letter, please call Maija Cottle of my staff at (510) 286-5737.

Sincerely,


TIMOTHY C. SABLE
District Branch Chief
IGR/CEQA

c: Philip Crimmins (State Clearinghouse)



SONOMA COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL
PRESERVATION
& OPEN SPACE
DISTRICT

747 Mendocino Avenue
Suite 100
Santa Rosa, CA
95401-4850
(707) 565-7360
Fax: (707) 565-7359

March 18, 2003

Mr. Wayne Woodroof
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Northern Service Center
One Capitol Mall, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Woodroof:

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the scope of issues to be covered in the Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan Environmental Impact Report.

Sonoma County's Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District has partnered with the California's State Department of Parks and Recreation on several conservation projects. The District's primary role has been acquisition of important lands, securing trail offers, and organizing stewardship activities in conjunction with its non-profit partner LandPaths.

In the context of the Sonoma Coast General Plan, District staff would like to bring to your attention ongoing negotiations on properties which would be offered for addition to the existing park unit. District staff has been in close communication with State Parks staff and makes every effort to provide regular updates on the progress of negotiations.

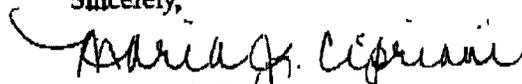
District staff is currently in active negotiations on the following properties in this area. A regional map has been enclosed for your reference.

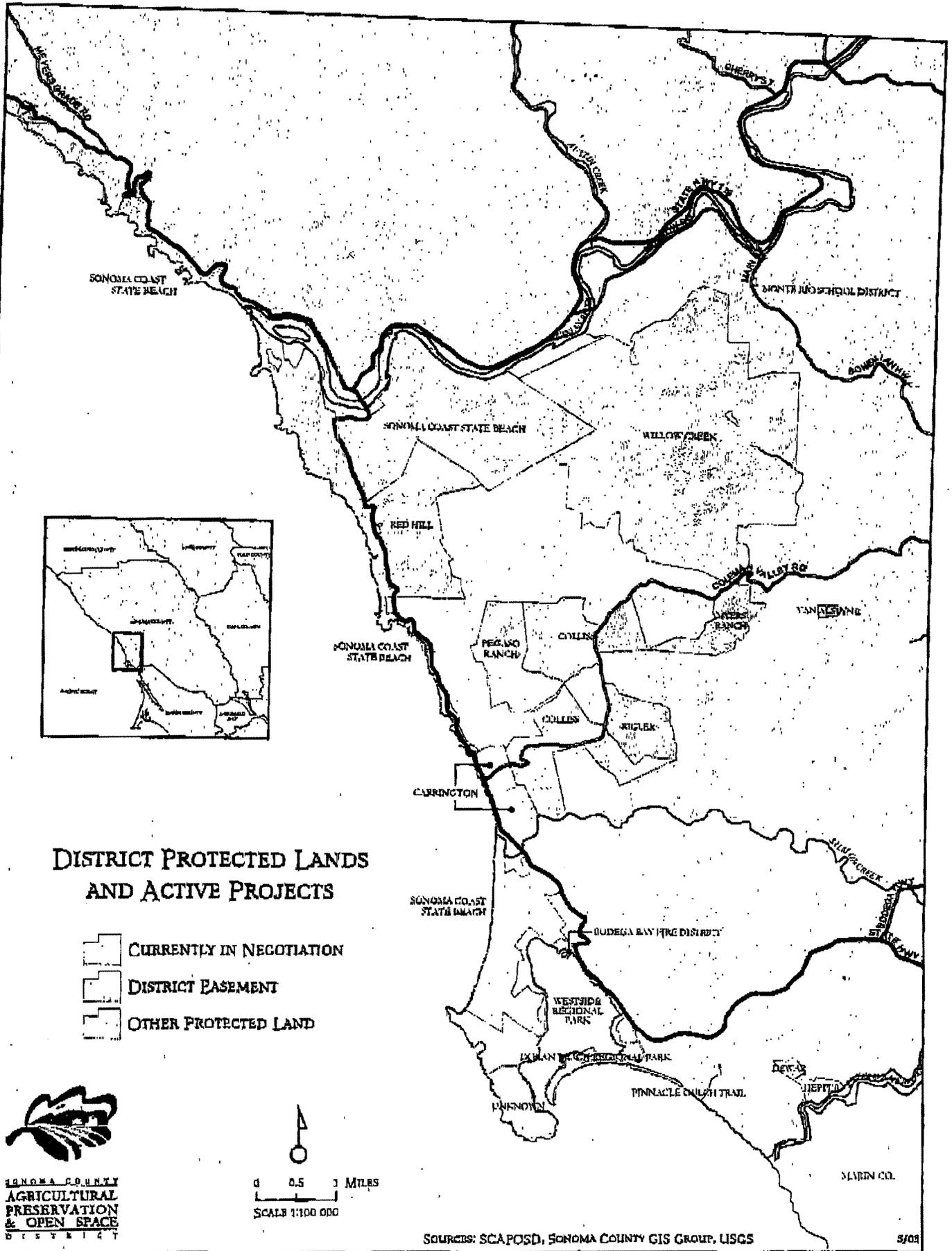
- 1) Carrington— 332 acres. This project is under contract for fee purchase for public outdoor recreation and is expected to close by June 30, 2003.
- 2) Willow Creek— 3300 acres. This project is in negotiations.
- 3) Pegaso Ranch— 600 acres. This is a new project and the conservation project structure is in process.

Also shown on the enclosed map are lands for which the District has acquired either a fee or easement interest.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions regarding the information I have provided herein.

Sincerely,


Maria J. Cipriani
Assistant General Manager

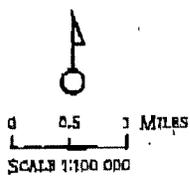


DISTRICT PROTECTED LANDS AND ACTIVE PROJECTS

-  CURRENTLY IN NEGOTIATION
-  DISTRICT EASEMENT
-  OTHER PROTECTED LAND



SONOMA COUNTY
 AGRICULTURAL
 PRESERVATION
 & OPEN SPACE
 DISTRICT



SOURCES: SCAPOSD, SONOMA COUNTY GIS GROUP, USGS