

DONNER MEMORIAL STATE PARK GENERAL PLAN

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE #2001102069

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE OF THE RESPONSE TO COMMENTS DOCUMENT

This report has been prepared to respond to comments submitted on the August 2002 Preliminary General Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report for Donner Memorial State Park. The Draft EIR identifies the potential environmental consequences associated with implementation of the Preliminary General Plan.

This document responds to comments on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR and makes revisions, as necessary, in response to these comments or to clarify any previous errors, omissions, or misinterpretations of material in the plan.

B. FINAL EIR

This document, together with the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, constitutes the Final EIR upon certification by the Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) that the Final EIR is complete and adequate under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is the lead agency for preparation of the General Plan. Lead agencies are required to consult with other public agencies having jurisdiction over a proposed project, and to provide the general public with an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR.

In accordance with CEQA, Section 21091 and State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15073, the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR for Donner Memorial State Park was circulated for a 45-day public review and comment period. During this review period, public agencies, private groups and associations, and individuals were provided the opportunity to review and comment on the contents of the document, including the evaluation of potential project-related environmental impacts and proposed mitigation.

The public was advised of the availability of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR through public notices, a newsletter, and notification on the State Parks web site. Public notices were posted in the following local newspapers: Auburn Journal, Sierra Sun, Tahoe Daily Tribune, and The Union. Copies of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR were also available for review at the following locations: California State Parks - Northern Service Center, California State Parks – Sierra District Headquarters, Donner Memorial State Park, Madelyn Helling Main Library, Truckee Branch Library, Auburn-Placer County Main

Library, Tahoe City-Placer County Branch Library, and Kings Beach-Placer County Branch Library.

The mandated 45-day public review and comment period ended on September 23, 2002. Copies of all written comments received on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR during the comment period are contained in this report.

The Preliminary General Plan and Final EIR will be presented to the State Park and Recreation Commission at a public hearing on April 5, 2003 at 9:30 a.m. in the Boardroom of the Tahoe City Public Utility District Administration Offices, 221 Fairway Drive, Tahoe City, California. At this time the Commission will consider the Department's recommendation regarding approval of the General Plan and EIR. The Director of State Parks, or her/his designee, will certify the EIR based on the findings in the Notice of Determination.

II. LIST OF COMMENTING AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PERSONS

Written comments from the following list were submitted to the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) during the public review period on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR. The comments are grouped by the affiliation of the commenting entity as follows: federal, state, regional, and local agencies, organizations, and individuals.

A. FEDERAL, STATE, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL AGENCIES

California Department of Transportation, District 3
California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region
County of Nevada
Town of Truckee, Community Development Department

B. ORGANIZATIONS

Action Coalition of Equestrians
California Association of Business, Property and Resource Owners
California Equestrian Trails and Lands Coalition
Castle-to-Martis Horse Trails Committee
Disabled Equestrians Organization
Mother Lode Arabian Horse Association
Mounted Patrol San Mateo County
Truckee Donner Land Trust

C. INDIVIDUALS

Comments related to Equestrian issues:

Carla M. Ambriz
Jeri Ayers-Scott
J. Berkey
Karl Boeger
Kathleen Boeger
Steve Braff
Betsy Braun
Spencer Scott Brown
Christine F. Cooper
Michele Dallam
Pat Dallam
Dan Dawson
Rick DeBenedetti

Michele Desiano
Mary Everett
Nancy Frank
Janice Frazier
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Glenn
Katie Guilliat
Janet B. Heimann
Catherine Kauer and Mark Hofmann
Sarah Konst
Jennifer Kurtzhall
B. J. Lingel
William Lorber
Melinda Lunn
Jean M. Machado
Cliff McDonald
Ernst O. Meissner
Wanda Moore
Sherry Moura
Carrie Nagy
Michael Peckham
Teri Personeni
Linda Potter
Michael Powers
Sharon Roseme
Ann Rubenstein
Connie Schurr
Lynnette Rollins
Michele Roush Shaw, DVM
Mr. and Mrs. P. Shewell
Candi and Larry Suddjian
Mrs. Robert Suhr
Laurie Sweeney
Casey J. Terribilini, D.C., AFICC
Jean Terry
Marilynn Terstegge
Linda Thomason
Victoria L. Thompson
Bill and Leslie Wraith III
James G. Yates

Comments from Teichert Aggregates:
Mike Isle

III. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

This section contains a reproduction of each letter that commented on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR. Specific comments are annotated in the margin of each letter by consecutive numbers. The entire set of Department responses are followed by copies of the original letters received.

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM CALTRANS)

1. The issues raised are not environmental, but pertain to operational issues concerning traffic patterns, signage, controls, etc. These matters will be considered at the time of specific project development when project design will be closely coordinated with Caltrans with regard to road and traffic matters.

The General Plan is a first tier environmental review document that sets up general “zones” of authorized activities and future development at the park, but does not site or approve the specific projects that will be considered at a later time. Potential adverse impacts associated with specific projects proposed within any particular area cannot be reasonably determined during the General Plan phase of park development; attempts to analyze and mitigate potential impacts from hypothetical projects would be speculative and could overlook significant impacts that would be obvious during subsequent project definition and design phases.

The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR (PGP/DEIR) generally discusses the possible impacts of future development as authorized by the General Plan and commits the Department to two general concepts: 1) to follow the management objectives and policies in the General Plan that are adopted to guide the development in a way that will avoid or mitigate impacts, and 2) to perform more detailed project analysis, including environmental analysis, prior to final decision and approval of those projects. These project-specific CEQA documents will be able to provide more detailed analysis of potential resource impacts and mitigation measures, including requirements for monitoring and success criteria (where applicable).

This tiered approach to programmatic or general planning is clearly authorized by CEQA and has been reviewed and approved in a number of court cases. The courts have ruled that an EIR is required for a general or “master” plan, but as there are no specific development projects proposed in such a plan to analyze for environmental effects, there is a reduced requirement, under CEQA guidelines, for a detailed level of specificity in the EIR.

All future projects for the park will go through an environmental review process that includes opportunities for public input. More information about the environmental review process is available at:

<http://www.opr.ca.gov/clearinghouse/Environmental.shtml>, or you may contact the local State Park District office.

2. On page 141 of the Environmental Analysis section of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, a potential increase in visitation following development of the plan's key proposals is acknowledged, and a statement made that adverse environmental impacts from this increase be avoided through improvements to existing facilities and development of new facilities. As part of a potential future planning process to build a new museum/visitor center for the park, site-specific evaluations, including traffic analysis, will be undertaken that will detail current and projected use patterns and traffic levels. If potential adverse impacts are indicated, appropriate mitigation will be developed to avoid or substantially lessen the impacts to less than significant levels.
3. Caltrans was notified of our public workshop held at the park on May 30, 2002, where State Parks staff explained the planning process and presented planning alternatives for public comment. See Response #1 for an explanation of the first tier environmental review requirements for this Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR. Further environmental and other documentation, including traffic analysis, will be conducted at the time a new museum/visitor center is proposed for development; Caltrans will be notified at that time for input and review.

(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD – LAHONTAN REGION)

4. The Department recognizes the importance of water quality protection in the Truckee Basin. This Preliminary General Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report (page 130, Water Quality Impacts, Mitigation, paragraph 1) explicitly states that the "Department will comply with all applicable water quality control standards for the Truckee River Hydrologic Unit as contained in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan)." The plan identifies appropriate best management practices, including BMPs for the Lahontan Region as developed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, as one of a number of measures that the park will utilize to comply with these water quality control standards (see page 130, Mitigation, paragraph 2). Specific BMPs, as well as calculations relating to water quality treatments, will be determined as part of project-specific planning when detailed projects, project impacts, and potential mitigation are defined.

The plan (page 84) also proposes development of a Watershed Management Plan that would identify water quality objectives, negative impacts to water quality, and management actions to minimize and prevent impacts from visitor use, park maintenance, and development activities.

Please refer to Response #1 for a more complete discussion of the scope of this first tier environmental review document.

5. The Draft EIR describes the proposed project features, potential impacts, and potential mitigation at an appropriate level of detail for a General Plan level EIR. The discussion of project-specific source control measures and treatment measures are not appropriate in this first tier CEQA document. These mitigation elements would be discussed in future site-specific project impact and mitigation documents. Please see Response #4.
6. A temporary and permanent Best Management Practices maintenance plan will, as appropriate, be included in future environmental analysis and potential mitigation when project-specific impacts have been determined. Please see pages 84-85 in the Plan Section for a park-wide guideline referencing the development of Best Management Practices for any future park project, and page 130 of the Environmental Review section for a discussion regarding compliance with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board's water quality control standards and project requirements. Please see Response #1 for a complete discussion of the scope of this first tier environmental document.
7. The Department recognizes the importance of identifying potential impacts related to snow removal and storage, and deicing procedures (see page 130, Water Quality Resources, paragraph 3). Potential impacts from snow removal and storage and deicing procedures will be evaluated during site-specific project planning and development. Please refer to Response #1 for a discussion of this first tier environmental review document.
8. Page 129, Water Quality Resources, Discussion, paragraph 4 identifies, as requested, the surface waters within the park that are susceptible to water quality impacts. Surveys to identify surface waters (including rivers, streams, drainage swales, wetlands, springs, etc.) will be conducted as part of site-specific planning. Page 131 of the Environmental Analysis discusses potential mitigation for construction impacts to water quality, as well as developing improvements to the existing interpretive program in order to "educate the public on ways to improve and maintain water quality, including information on the water quality impacts of recreation."
9. Please see Appendix F of the document for a listing of agencies that would affect future planning and construction processes, including The U.S, Army Corps of Engineers. The Department will follow all applicable regulations with regard to water quality and disturbance to any surface waters, including wetlands and flood plain areas.

10. The Department is aware of the prohibition areas relating to surface waters and 100-year flood plain areas. The General Plan includes guidelines for water quality (p. 84) that indicate the Department will comply with all water quality protection standards available in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region. Environmental analysis of future site-specific projects will discuss compliance with the prohibitions or how any proposed disturbance will satisfy the exemption criteria specified in the Basin Plan. This level of detail is not appropriate for this first tier CEQA document. More detailed descriptions of future recreational, operational, and maintenance activities and future facilities will be provided as part of subsequent CEQA review for specific projects and management plans. Please refer to Response #1 for a discussion of the scope of this first tier environmental review document.
11. The Regional Board has requested the identification of project-specific impacts and potential mitigation. As previously stated, this is a first tier environmental review document that offers a direction for park management, but does not provide details of specific park facilities or development. Tiering of the environmental process allows State Parks to conduct preliminary environmental analyses of planning concepts at the general planning stage, followed by a more detailed examination of actual development projects in subsequent environmental review documents. The Environmental Analysis section of this document identifies potential impacts and mitigation associated with proposed future activities, facilities, and plan development at a level appropriate with the scope of this first tier document. Please refer to Response #1 for more discussion of the scope of this first tier environmental review document.

(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM NEVADA COUNTY)

12. Please contact the Sierra District for more information on the Roads and Trails Plan for the park.

(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE TOWN OF TRUCKEE)

13. See Response #1. The commentor requested that the Draft EIR provide policies to address drainage and water quality to ensure that “policies are in place before a Watershed Management Plan is adopted.” The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR (pages 84-85) contains a number of water quality goals and guidelines, including adherence to the water quality protection standards and control measures available in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region and development of best management practices for erosion control and surface runoff. For future developments with ground disturbance greater than one acre, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will also be produced for applicable projects as required by the Regional

Water Quality Control Board. This requirement will go into effect in March 2003.

In addition, the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR (page 130) states that “the Department will comply with all applicable water quality control standards for the Truckee River Hydrologic Unit as contained in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan).” Site-specific mitigation measures, appropriate best management practices, and the implementation of park guidelines will ensure compliance of this mitigation measure.

The Watershed Management Plan proposed in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR will identify surface and groundwater quality objectives, existing negative impacts to water quality, and establish policies and management actions to minimize and prevent impacts to water quality from visitor use, park maintenance, and development.

14. Existing noise sources in and adjacent to the park are discussed in the Plan on page 47. The existing major noise sources in the area are created by the freeway, railroad, power boats, and personal watercraft users. Potential noise impacts from proposed future developments in the park are discussed in the Environmental Analysis section on page 143. Increased noise levels may occur during normal park operations due to normal visitor use and traffic. Construction equipment and operations may produce temporary increases in noise levels. The plan proposes timing constraints to avoid negative impacts to park visitors, adjacent land users, and wildlife. Potential noise impacts would be further evaluated as part of future site-specific planning. Please see Response #1 regarding the purpose and goals of this first tier environmental review document.
15. The General Plan proposes a number of circulation improvements that are intended to reduce current traffic congestion, thus reducing the probability of carbon monoxide hot spots. These improvements (discussed on pages 47-49 and page 141) include a new entrance road design, separate bus parking, improvements in circulation to avoid traffic conflicts and eliminate the existing stack up congestion at the park entrance, and continuation of public transit availability at the park entrance. In addition, the General Plan proposes a Roads and Trails Management Plan to guide the development and location of future circulation and to analyze related circulation impacts. Appropriate air quality and traffic analyses will be undertaken in the planning of site-specific facility development. Please see Response #1 regarding the purpose and goals of this first tier environmental review document.
16. See Response #1 for a complete discussion of the purpose and goals of this first tier environmental review document. A resource inventory will provide the information needed to pursue park development that is compatible with

protection of the resources. The Mitigation discussion in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR (page 125) includes a variety of mitigation measures that will avoid or lessen potential adverse impacts to sensitive species and habitats. A Natural Resource Management Plan is proposed that will provide guidance for identification, protection, habitat restoration, and adaptive management of the park's resources. In addition, site specific surveys for sensitive species and habitats will be completed as part of the planning process for resource management projects, construction, maintenance, or rehabilitation of facilities and trails. Subsequent management plans and specific project plans implementing the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR will be subject to additional environmental review under CEQA.

17. An assessment of future available service capacity of local public utilities was not studied in depth during this General Plan process, except to confirm that existing utilities will remain in place and have the potential for upgrades in the future. Until specific projects are proposed for development, maximum utility demands will not be known. See Response #1.
18. The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, Park Summary, addressed potential flooding (page 23 and page 25), topographic (page 22-24), and snow avalanche (page 23) hazards in the park. Fire hazards and fire management are also discussed (pages 75-76). Goals and guidelines to protect the public from these hazards are contained in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR. The Environmental Analysis section also discusses these guidelines and their application as appropriate mitigation measures that would avoid or minimize potential hazards. More detailed analysis of any potential hazards will be provided as part of subsequent CEQA review for site-specific projects and future management plans.
19. The Preliminary General Plan addresses land use compatibility in several ways. Park-wide goals and guidelines include recommendations that decisions regarding fire management (p. 75), habitat linkages and biocorridors (p. 81), buffer zones for natural resources (p. 82), and road and trail linkages (p. 91), and aesthetics and noise (p. 97) be coordinated with surrounding agencies and landowners. Further land use compatibility issues, traffic, and visitation levels will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in future specific projects for the park. Refer to the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, page 111, Planning Zone #3, Future Study Zone, Guidelines, 4th guideline (bullet), below. This guideline applies to Planning Zones #1 and #2 as well.

“Coordination with adjacent property owners (public and private), and federal, state and local agencies having jurisdiction over nearby lands will be necessary during these future planning processes. “

See Response #1.

20. As previously stated, the Plan and Environmental Analysis sections have discussed a number of proposed improvements to park circulation in order to improve existing conditions and reduce traffic congestion (see pages 47-49 and page 141). In addition, the Department is committed to comply with Nevada County and Caltrans road requirements and the Town of Truckee General Plan recommendations to minimize impacts to users of Donner Pass Road, the primary park access (see page 141). Please see Response #1 for a discussion of the scope of this first tier environmental review document.
21. It is not the intent of the General Plan to create specific guidelines or policies in regard to a volunteer program for the park. The Department currently has programs in place to provide guidance to its District offices for administration of volunteer activities.
22. See Response #26.

(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS, PROPERTY AND RESOURCE OWNERS)

23. The acquisition from The Nature Conservancy did not include the NW 1/4 of Section 20. The maps within the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR correctly show the Department's current ownership.
24. **Map #2: The final map will show these changes as requested: 1) repositioned U.S. Forest Service campground symbols; and 2) public property at Martis Creek Lake will be shown as such. A note for the park will be added: "See Map #3 for information regarding Donner Memorial State Park."** The railroad track in Section 21 is shown in beige, intended to be "other ownership" (depicted in beige on the whole map). **The final map will have a legend symbol for "other ownership" for the beige areas shown on the map.**

Map #3: U.S. Forest Service and private properties were not identified on this map as it functions primarily as an identification of land uses and facilities within State Park boundaries.

25. The Planning Zones shown on Map #8 in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR have approximately the following sizes:

Planning Zone 1: 78 acres
Planning Zone 2: 29 acres
Planning Zone 3: 1443 acres

26. The General Plan, as a planning document containing long-term goals and guidelines, defines the broadest framework for a park unit's development, management, and public use. The General Plan will help guide day-to-day decision-making and serve as the basis for developing focused management plans and specific project plans, and for other management actions necessary to implement the goals of the plan. Under this planning structure, the General Plan does not have a finite lifespan and does not identify a specific timeframe for implementation of its goals and guidelines.
27. Subsequent management plans or projects do not become General Plan Amendments unless they suggest actions contrary to the General Plan, in which case a General Plan Amendment may be necessary and require subsequent approval by the State Park and Recreation Commission.
28. See Responses #1 and #2. Specific future projects will evaluate changes in park visitation.
29. This comment does not appear to address environmental issues. The referenced Executive Order directs and reminds state agencies to consider the effect of their activities and projects on uses of private property so as to insure that private property rights are appropriately respected. In all of its activities, the Department is mindful of its obligations with regard to property acquisition without just compensation. In connection with the General Plan and its implementation, the Department will continue to be sensitive to these issues whether or not the Executive Order remains in effect.
30. This comment does not raise an issue with regard to the Environmental Analysis section of the PGP/DEIR. However, the Roads and Trails Plan being developed by the Sierra District will include guidelines for monitoring of use and resource impacts. See Response #1.
31. This comment does not raise an environmental issue. Nevertheless, the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR describes in a general way the various municipal jurisdictions over the length of Coldstream Road. Please contact the Sierra District office and the Town of Truckee for more information regarding the exact locations of these jurisdictions, and what they believe their responsibilities to be for the road.
32. The acquisition of the Schallenberger Ridge property from the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) was to be conducted as a phased acquisition. It was necessary for TPL to reserve an access easement across that portion of Section 19 acquired as a Phase I acquisition, so as to allow TPL continued access to the Phase II property until such time as the Phase II acquisition is complete. As the current owner, TPL requires continued access to the

property for the purposes of monitoring, inspecting, and maintaining the property.

33. The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR is not intended to be a document that contains a comprehensive listing of all easements and encumbrances existing for every parcel in the park. The section in the Park Summary on page 18 titled “Existing Utilities, Easements, and Encumbrances” describes several that do exist. These were noted as information to assist in determining appropriate alternate sites for a new park museum/visitor center, in Planning Zones #1 and #2. The Park Summary does not contain a complete listing of utilities, easements and encumbrances for the park, especially for those lands included in Planning Zone #3. This zone is the “future study zone,” which was not a primary focus of this planning effort and for which future studies and planning processes will be conducted to determine appropriate land uses and management strategies. The Department is aware of the issues that are raised by the comment, and it is not the intent or purpose of the Department or any aspect of the Plan to deprive the public or other private landowner rights of access or uses that lawfully exist through the park.
34. Page 72 of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, second paragraph under “Riparian and Wetland Areas” is to be revised as follows:

While park activities have probably not substantially disrupted the ecological integrity of wetland, riparian, and lakeshore habitats, prior uses within the park and management of adjacent lands and waters have had substantial negative impacts in some areas, particularly on soils compaction and wildlife disturbance. Logging, road and railroad construction, off-road vehicle use, and fire suppression have contributed to vegetation loss and corresponding fragmentation of wildlife habitat, while stream diversions and chemical contamination have reduced the viability of aquatic habitats.

35. The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR provides a variety of guidelines to encourage water quality improvements within the park as well as in the Truckee-Donner Basin. All of these water quality goals and guidelines are important to ensure water quality protection and improvements.
36. The Department does not wish to specify in the general plan “how and when” these actions will occur. We will consider appropriate methods to implement the necessary actions, including resource management plans, to achieve the desired outcomes. Please see Response #1 for further information on future projects.

37. The lack of a general plan does not preclude the Department from acquiring property. There were many different reasons for acquisition of the Phase I parcels on Shallenberger Ridge. The goals and guidelines included in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR provide overall planning guidelines and further justification for potential acquisitions, including guidelines related to scenic resources. The plan's broad framework will serve as the basis for developing focused management plans, specific project plans, and other management actions, including acquisitions, from willing sellers, of areas with high scenic quality, or to protect important scenic vistas.

The last sentence of the last paragraph on page 135 is hereby revised as follows:

The existing visual character of the park could not be improved or enhanced in a significant way, and existing scenic resources may be affected, and protection of existing scenic vistas by acquisition or conservation agreement may not be provided with the no project alternative.

38. The goals and guidelines in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR are consistent with the mission of State Parks, which is to "provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valuable natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation." The Department, based on its mission, strives to acquire land that has the potential for providing resource protection and recreational opportunities where appropriate. Potential park acquisitions or conservation easements are evaluated for their natural, cultural and recreational values and, if acquired, become the subject of resource inventory and planning processes to determine appropriate uses and management strategies for those lands.

The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, page 139, Cumulative Impacts, last paragraph, will be modified as follows:

In addition, the possible acquisitions and conservation easements discussed in the General Plan will may act to protect existing park resources, preserve viewsheds, and enhance plant and wildlife habitat by providing habitat linkages and buffers.

39. See Response #1. Appropriate at this level of general planning, the section on Fire Management (pages 75-76) incorporates consideration of and planning for the concerns of adjacent private landowners. The "role of the private landowner" is included in the guidelines under "integrate the park's

management objectives into regional fire management policies and protocols through the incorporation of science, community involvement and agency cooperation.” The plan also cites “safety and cultural concerns” and “other land uses” that must be considered during the development of vegetation management plans, including the use of prescribed fire and wildfire suppression protocols. This type of specific planning is appropriate for the more technically specific and subsequent tiers of CEQA compliance and park planning.

40. See Response #1. The agencies responsible for reintroduction of native wildlife species invite public participation in their processes. The California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can be contacted for further information on species reintroduction.
41. The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR does not refer to “establishing, maintaining, and preserving buffers” on neighboring lands as stated in the comment letter. Please see Response #1 for further explanation of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR’s role in the designation of specific uses for park properties. The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR (page 82, third bullet) suggests seeking “cooperative agreements with adjacent landowners, neighbors, and local jurisdictions” in the quest for buffers for park resources, and to “consider acquiring neighboring properties from willing sources to serve as buffers...”.
42. See Responses #1 and #41. The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR does not attempt to identify properties outside the park boundaries for any particular, specific use. Future management plans and projects will study and recommend appropriate recreational and other uses and programs to manage park property.

The statements in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR regarding park-wide goals and guidelines for aesthetics (pages 97-98) noted in the comment letter were designed to emphasize the interconnectedness of resources between adjacent properties, and to stress the need for coordination and cooperation between State Parks and neighboring landowners. The plan also points out the Department’s desire for both the park and neighboring landowners to adhere to existing and future policies related to aesthetics contained in local planning documents, such as the counties’ and Town of Truckee general plans, in order to preserve important aesthetic values for future generations (see page 98, first set of Guidelines, bullet two).

43. See Response #1.

**(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM DISABLED
EQUESTRIANS ORGANIZATION)**

44. See Response #1. The Department is committed to meeting accessibility code requirements in all of its recreational facilities.

(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM TRUCKEE DONNER LAND TRUST)

45. It was not intended that the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR specify “imminent acquisitions” for the park. **Map #2 will be modified to delete the “Potential Acquisition” shown on the legend and map.** Map #3 shows several potential acquisitions for the park. As you indicated, some are in the final stages of property conveyance to the State.
46. The goals and guidelines of the general plan are intended to provide general guidance for park operations and activities, including park concessions. These activities are managed and enforced through contracts with specific requirements that must be consistent with the General Plan goals and guidelines.
47. See Response #1. The goals and guidelines developed for this Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR are intended to be used as overall management tools to avoid conflict between future resource and recreation plans that will be developed for the park. The Department will conduct site-specific studies for each future project, allowing all previous information to be utilized as well as further studies to determine impacts and mitigations of future actions. All of these plans and site-specific projects will benefit from in-house, agency, and public review to ensure compatible planning goals.

(DPR RESPONSES TO A COMMENT LETTER RECEIVED FROM BILL WRAITH. THIS LETTER WAS CHOSEN TO REPRESENT A TOTAL OF 57 LETTERS RECEIVED FROM EQUESTRIAN USERS THAT WERE VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL IN CONTENT.)

48. As a first tier environmental review document, this Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR allows for the consideration of a wide variety of recreation facilities for the park, including equestrian facilities. Future site-specific studies and projects may be identified to evaluate the potential location, impacts, and appropriate mitigation for future recreational facilities.

In addition, in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, the Park-Wide Goals and Guidelines for Recreation, Guidelines, page 92, second and sixth guidelines (bullets) will be combined and amended as follows:

Evaluate the current capacities of the following kinds of the need for, and current capacities of, existing recreational facilities, and consider construction of new

and/or upgraded facilities in order to provide a quality visitor experience for ~~while embracing facility upgrades to make current and future programs accessible to the general public.~~ Facilities include, but are not limited to, small and large group day use facilities, vehicle-oriented campgrounds, group camping, environmental camps, equestrian facilities, a museum/visitor center facility, and trails. If recreation trends and visitor desires indicate viable interest in types of facilities that would be new to the park, complete feasibility studies as necessary to evaluate compatibility with other uses and resource management objectives.

Please see Response #1 for further explanation of the role of this General Plan as a first tier environmental review document.

49. See Response #1.
50. Thank you for your suggestion of a Volunteer Trail Patrol at the park. The Donner Memorial State Park Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR is a first tier environmental document (see Response #1 above) and does not include details regarding specific plans and programs for the park. The Sierra District is currently conducting a Roads and Trails Plan planning process to determine appropriate uses and locations of roads and trails in the park, including equestrian trails. Please contact the Sierra District office to discuss the Roads and Trails Plan and volunteer activities in more detail.

(DPR RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM TEICHERT AGGREGATES)

51. We agree there may be some confusion in the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR regarding the use of the word “alternative(s).” The “preferred alternative” is contained in The Plan section of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, which presents two preferred site locations: 1) The “Teichert site,” and 2) the “in-park site.” These two sites, preferred by our Department, are also reflected in the Summary of the Plan (page 6) and Environmental Analysis (page 115+) sections of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR document.

In the Plan Section, Park Planning Zones, page 105, Teichert Property Alternative, revise the first sentence as follows:

A site within the A. Teichert and Son, Inc. property east of the current park is the General Plan’s preferred ~~alternative for the location of~~ for a new museum/visitor center for Donner Memorial State Park.

52. In the Summary of the Plan, page 6, New Museum/Visitor Center Alternatives, second paragraph, first sentence, revise as follows:

The Department, along with support from Teichert, has applied for a federal Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) grant, ~~to work in partnership and in July 2002~~ was awarded a \$3.1 million grant to build a new museum/visitor center on a portion of Teichert's land, subject to further project site evaluation and study and a subsequent decision to proceed with the project using the TEA grant funds and other funding sources as required.

53. To date, the Department has been unable to confirm through documentation that the ponds have been fully reclaimed.
54. The sentence on page 102 of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR is hereby revised to reflect **35 acres**, not 40 acres as stated.
55. The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR (pages 96-97) lists a variety of interpretive themes to be explored and interpreted for the public. The current museum contains a large amount of information about the pioneers and their hardships and successes in reaching California. A new museum would include additional information regarding transportation development through the region and a more extensive discussion of the park's natural resources, which are under-represented in the current museum.
56. See Response #1.
57. See Response #51.
58. See Response #51.
59. See Response #51.
60. **The note on Map #4, west side of the Teichert property, "Unconsolidated Material, Potential Contamination," will be eliminated in the final version of the General Plan.**