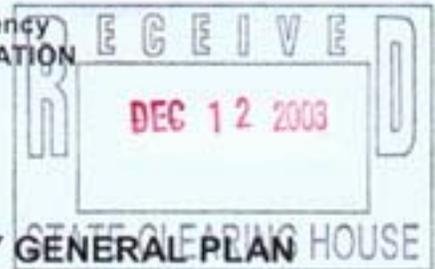




State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
SUGARLOAF RIDGE STATE PARK PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

Date: December 10, 2003

To: All Interested Agencies, Organizations, and Persons

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) for the Sugarloaf Ridge State Park Preliminary General Plan (General Plan). The Department is the lead agency, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), responsible for preparation of this document.

Project Location:

Sugarloaf Ridge State Park (Park) is located in the Mayacamas Ridge between the Sonoma and Napa Valleys just east of the City of Santa Rosa in Sonoma County. The 5,100 acre Park is accessible from State Route 12 and is approximately a 60 miles north of San Francisco and a similar distance to the west of Sacramento. It sits adjacent to the 1,450 acre Hood Mountain Regional Park.

Project Description:

The purpose of the proposed project is to develop a General Plan for the Park which has nearly doubled in size in the last five years. The Park is a popular getaway for local residents and regional visitors, and hosts numerous recreational activities in the Mayacamas wildlands including camping, hiking, and horseback and bicycle riding on its extensive trail system. The Park is home to a number of important natural and cultural resources including the headwaters to four of the region's watersheds, extraordinarily diverse wildlife habitat and a rich cultural history. The Park hosts two concessions including the Robert Ferguson Observatory and an equestrian stable. The Park has not had a General Plan before and needs a guide for future development activities and management objectives.

The General Plan contains a comprehensive and cohesive set of park-wide and location-specific goals and guidelines for the long-term direction of the Park. Several park management zones are identified in the plan, encompassing the entire Park and providing detailed direction tailored to each of the areas within the Park. The four zones are organized by the watersheds that physically divide them - Santa Rosa Creek, Upper Bear Creek, Adobe Creek, and Calabazas Creek. Each zone provides for high-quality park and wildland experiences for visitors while enhancing and preserving the natural and cultural features that make the Park a

unique destination. The General Plan responds to the issues affecting the park and seeks to balance the need for recreational facilities, the desire for a positive visitor experience supported by the park's facilities and aesthetics, and protection of the park's natural and cultural resources.

Park improvements are identified in the General Plan's goals and guidelines, including protection of water quality, provision of primitive campsites, protection of large expanses of preserved wildland areas, and development of key trail connections linking the broader and newly expanded areas of the Park. Construction of a trailhead and parking lot at an abandoned quarry site would also support public access into the newly acquired Nunns Canyon property.

The hub of visitor-serving facilities would remain in Adobe Canyon and limited expansion of facilities in this area is recommended. Expansion of the visitor center and the Robert Ferguson Observatory would allow for improved interpretation opportunities. Relocating the large group camp away from the observatory would resolve existing light conflicts between the two uses. Re-development of a small equestrian group campground with corrals is proposed near the stable concession. Moderate expansion of the family campground and picnic facilities would also help meet some of the expected increase in visitor demand.

Summary of Impacts:

The EIR analyzes a program-level analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the Preliminary General Plan. No significant environmental impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project.

Public Comment Period:

The 45-day public comment period for this Draft EIR will commence on December 12, 2003 and concludes on January 27, 2004. Copies of the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR will be available on line at www.parks.ca.gov and at these local locations:

Diablo Vista District Headquarters
363 3rd Street West
Sonoma, California 95476

The Rincon Valley Regional Library
6959 Montecito Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95409

Sonoma County Central Library
3rd and E Streets
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Please submit comments in writing to the address provided below.
Comment letters must be postmarked by January 27, 2004.

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