

## **PROJECT INVESTIGATION**

### **Proposed Additions to Tomales Bay State Park**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Since the mid-1940s the state and federal governments have been responding to the petitions of Marin County and Bay Area citizens to buy property for parks along the west side of Tomales Bay. More recently, Tomales Bay State Parks and Golden Gate National Recreation Area have been expanding along the bay's east side. These expansions, along with conservation easements purchased by the Marin Agricultural Land Trust and others on large private land holdings, and more restrictive zoning by Marin County, have been part of a multi-party effort to preserve the scenic beauty of the east side of Tomales Bay and provide other amenities for the common good.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The proposed additions consist of three parcels in two properties: one property (Marquis) is a 29.67-acre parcel, and the other (Braun) consists of two parcels of 10 and 30 acres. They abut the east side of Highway 1 near Tomasini Point. All the parcels are adjacent to each other and form a continuous boundary with property owned or in process of being owned by the state as Tomales Bay State Park. The land on these parcels is gently rolling and mostly open. It ranges in elevation from 10 feet above sea level at Highway 1 to approximately 100 feet toward the inland (easterly) boundaries. It is primarily rangeland with grasses and forbs, with a ravine along the eastern boundary wooded with coast live oaks, bay trees, and other woody plants typical of the area. The land has cattle on it and has been used as grazing land for at least 150 years. The properties have scenic views to the west of Tomales Bay and Inverness Ridge, including parts of Point Reyes National Seashore. A twisty two-lane, low traffic-volume section of Highway one presents the only barrier to wildlife or pedestrian travel between these properties and Tomales Bay.

Both properties have access rights from a paved, private road that connects to Highway 1 and runs along the northern boundary of the Marquis property. The properties have standard range fences, access to power lines along Highway 1, and the Braun property has a 1 gal./min. domestic water well.

#### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

This project meets State Park System objectives of protecting significant natural resources for public access and recreation. Protecting the east side Tomales Bay viewshed is the first-priority objective. Additional trail access and habitat restoration are will also be made possible through the acquisitions. While Tomales Bay State Park lacks a General Plan to guide its development and uses, preparation of a General Plan is scheduled to begin in the near future.

## COOPERATIVE PROJECT

Protection of the east side of Tomales Bay is supported by all the local state and federal legislators, the Marin County Board of Supervisors, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Marin Agricultural Land Trust, and many other organizations. Funding for these additions has been approved out of the State General Fund.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the proposed additions as described above be approved for acquisition by the state for inclusion in Tomales Bay State Park.