

# **CALIFORNIA STATE PARK and RECREATION COMMISSION**

Westin Los Angeles Airport Hotel - Lindbergh Room  
5400 West Century Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California

## **Minutes of the Meeting - Friday, July 16, 2004**

### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Joseph Cotchett  
Raquelle de la Rocha, VICE CHAIR  
Caryl Hart, CHAIR  
Gail Kautz  
Sophia Scherman  
Bobby Shriver  
Phillip Tagami  
Paul Junger Witt

### **COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Clint Eastwood

### **STATE PARKS STAFF PRESENT**

Ruth Coleman, Director  
Ron Brean, Deputy Director, Park Operations  
Wayne Donaldson, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Nick Franco, Superintendent, San Luis Obispo Coast District  
Suzanne Goode, Senior Resource Ecologist, Angeles District  
Tim La Franchi, Chief Counsel  
Louis Nastro, Assistant to the State Park and Recreation Commission  
Ron Shafer, Superintendent, Angeles District  
Hayden Sohm, Malibu Sector Superintendent

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF BEACHES AND HARBORS STAFF**

Joseph Chesler, Chief, Planning Division  
Greg Woodell, Planning Specialist

### **SPEAKERS REGISTERED/REPRESENTING**

Alice Bailey, Individual  
Louise E. Barcus, Individual  
Nancy Bast, Individual  
Melanie Beck, National Park Service/Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area  
David Brown, Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, Sierra Club  
Beth Caskie, California Wildlife Center  
Mandy Davis, Individual  
Dr. David Dubbink, Individual  
Sara Feldman, California State Parks Foundation  
Ruth Gerson, California Equestrian Trails & Lands Coalition, Equestrian Trails Inc., Recreation & Equestrian Coalition, Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council

Michael Goodman, CORBA (Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association)  
Jim Hasenauer, International Mountain Bicycling Association  
Peter Heumann, Individual  
Lenny Koepsell, Individual  
Joe Lawson, Individual  
Robin Mitchell, Malibu Creek Docents, Individual  
Ray McKelligott, Individual  
Will Slavin, Individual  
Lily Stewart, Individual  
Kym Taborn, Malibu Creek Docents  
Don Wallace, Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation  
Betty Winholtz, Individual

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Legal notice having been given, the California State Park and Recreation Commission meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m. by Chair Caryl Hart. Chair Hart introduced the commissioners present, along with State Parks Director Ruth Coleman and Chief Counsel Tim La Franchi.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MAY 14, 2004 MEETING IN SANTA ROSA**

Chair Hart noted that approval of the minutes of the May 14, 2004 meeting in Santa Rosa included confirmation of the final resolution for approval of the Tomales Bay State Park General Plan to conform it to the action taken to amend the Preliminary General Plan as submitted by State Parks. She then asked if there were any changes to the draft minutes as submitted. There being none, Chair Hart asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion Commissioner de la Rocha, second Commissioner Witt. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the minutes as submitted.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Chair Hart called on State Parks Director Ruth Coleman to present her Director's Report.

**State Park fees increase on July 1, 2004** – Director Coleman welcomed all to the meeting and noted that her report would be brief in light of the meeting agenda. Director Coleman noted that fee increases at many state parks went into effect on July 1st. She further noted that the new fees were announced last December 30th to minimize their effect on park users, and that reports indicated the public had been understanding and supportive of the need to raise fees, and that they recognize State Parks as a tremendous bargain. Reservations are up six percent over the same period last year.

**Hearst Conservation Plan** – Director Coleman stated that the administration had recently announced a plan to purchase a large conservation easement at the Hearst Ranch in San Luis Obispo County. The result of a five-year effort by the Hearst Corporation, conservationist, environmentalist, and agriculture interests in the local community, a draft Hearst Conservation Plan had now been presented to the public. If adopted, the plan would transfer 13 miles of coastline and fee title to State Parks and create a conservation easement held by the Wildlife Conservation Board of 82,000 acres. Propositions 40 and 50 would provide funds for the purchase of this land by two State Parks sister agencies, the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State Coastal Conservancy. State Parks would not be investing in the purchase but would accept fee title and management responsibility for the 13 miles of coastline. Director Coleman noted that State Parks was excited about the prospect of bringing this extraordinary resource into public ownership. The Director stated that the plan was still being evaluated in public hearings, and that the cost of the property was considerably below market value. She also noted that some landowners were not willing to sell certain portions of the property, but that State Parks was convinced the plan represented a good value for the state.

Director Coleman closed by noting that the report on pesticide use that had been requested at the May 14th Commission meeting was included in the meeting packets the commissioners had in front of them today.

Chair Hart asked if the commissioners had any questions for Director Coleman.

Commissioner Tagami addressed the Chair, stating that in considering the California Recreation Plan that was introduced to the Commission at its May meeting, and in reviewing the Public Resources Code (PRC) and the eleven topics of responsibility for the Commission, he noted that the PRC states that the Commission will report annually to the Governor through the Director, and it was his understanding that this had not been done for many years as an annual report but rather as a series of small reports. Commissioner Tagami suggested that it would be in the Commission's interest to ensure its statutory obligations were being met, and that he wished to ask the Director to prepare some recommendations of how the Commission could address these requirements or initiate language changes that would clarify that what was currently being done was in compliance with the PRC.

Director Coleman addressed the Chair and Commissioner Tagami, noting that she had already asked staff to investigate this issue, and that the statute in question was very old, dating to the days when the State Parks was the Division of Beaches and Parks. She confirmed that it probably had been thirty years since such a report had been made. Director Coleman confirmed that the Statewide Recreation Policy serves the entire State of California and that this in some ways fulfills the reporting requirement in question, in that this and other reports of this type dovetail into each other in fulfilling the requirements of the statute in question.

Commissioner Tagami thanked Director Coleman for this information.

## **CHAIR'S REPORT - RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE RETIREMENTS**

Chair Hart announced that if there were no further questions for Director Coleman the next agenda item would be the Chair's Report and the Commission's recognition of retiring State Parks employees. Chair Hart stated on behalf of the Commission that she wished to express her appreciation to all of those who work for State Parks, and she asked the members of the public present to please note the number of service years mentioned as Angeles District Superintendent Ron Shafer read the names of State Parks employees who had retired between April 1st and June 30th 2004:

Phillip W. Collett, OHV Division/Twin Cities District .....	10 years, 4 months
David M. Collins, Gold Fields/Folsom Sector .....	17 years, 7 months
Robert Culbertson, Pajaro Coast Sector .....	32 years, 9 months
Mary A. Dumford, Capital District/State Capitol Sector .....	23 years, 1 month
Daniel Dungy, OHV Division/Hollister Hills District .....	27 years, 2 months
Jo Ann Frierson, Grants & Local Assistance .....	17 years, 11 months
Jacklyn A. Fronk, Contracts & Facilities Services Section .....	15 years, 11 months
Rosa L. Hernandez, Inland Empire/Perris Sector .....	15 years, 11 months
Paul Holman, Northern Buttes District/Lake Oroville Sector .....	29 years, 8 months
Gary Howard, Sierra District/Grover Hot Springs Sector .....	31 years, 5 months
Donald F. Leach, Acquisition & Development .....	8 years, 7 months
Fred Lew, North Bay District/Marin Sector .....	28 years, 11 months
Thomas Lindberg, North Bay District .....	31 years, 5 months
Alvin W. McGee, Business Services .....	23 years
David Milam, Central Valley District/Four Rivers Sector .....	28 years, 11 months
Blanche T. Painter, Colorado Desert District .....	22 years

Carlos E. Porrata, North Bay District/Marin Sector .....	28 years, 4 months
Douglas B. Seekatz, Mendocino District/Mendocino So. Sector .....	26 years, 9 months
Jack K. Shu, External Affairs/Office of Community Involvement .....	27 years, 9 months
Dwight L. Thomas, Sierra District .....	28 years, 10 months
Alex Vosher, Diablo Vista District/Silverado Sector .....	29 years, 9 months
Rayann Watson, External Affairs/Human Rights Office .....	34 years, 10 months
Thomas J. Willis, Colorado Desert District/Anza-Borrego Sector. ....	12 years, 5 months

Chair Hart thanked Superintendent Shafer, and noted that each of these individuals were highly valued employees whose contribution and dedication to State Parks was greatly appreciated by the Commission.

### **APPROVAL OF MEMORIAL REDWOOD GROVES**

Chair Hart asked Commissioner Raquelle de la Rocha to read the Memorial Grove requests as submitted by Sempervirens Fund. Commissioner de la Rocha read as follows:

As Requested by Sempervirens Fund:

Jeremy Holden Memorial Grove in Butano State Park  
*Barbara Holden, donor*

Commissioner de la Rocha made a motion that the resolution establishing this grove be approved by the Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Scherman. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolution establishing this memorial redwood grove.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Chair Hart opened the public portion of the meeting at 9:46 a.m. Chair Hart noted that the Commission welcomed public comment on the issues before it, and requested that those who wished to address the Commission complete a speaker registration form. She further explained that the Chair may limit the time those addressing the Commission are allowed to speak to three minutes for individuals and five minutes for those representing groups.

### **Concurrence on the Director's appointments to the Board of Directors of the California Citrus State Historic Park Non-Profit Management Corporation**

Chair Hart introduced this agenda item and asked if there were any registered or unregistered speakers. There being none, Chair Hart asked for a motion stating that the Commission concurs on the Director's appointment of Curtis Anderson, Kurt Davies Gunther, Terry Nielsen, Catherine Whitmore, and Mary Lou Morales to the Board of Directors of the California Citrus State Historic Park Non-Profit Management Corporation. Motion Commissioner Witt, second Commissioner Tagami. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolution stating that the Commission concurs on these appointments by the Director.

### **Report of informal nominating committee & election of officers**

Chair Hart asked Commissioner Cotchett to present the report of the informal nominating committee regarding candidates for Commission Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year.

Commissioner Cotchett stated that the informal nominating committee recommended Bobby Shriver as Chair and Clint Eastwood as Vice Chair.

Chair Hart asked if there was a motion to accept these candidates and elect them as Commission Chair and Vice Chair. Motion Commissioner Tagami, second Commissioner Kautz. The commis-

sioners voted unanimously to elect Bobby Shriver as Commission Chair and Clint Eastwood as Commission Vice Chair.

Chair Hart announced that as of the close of today's meeting the Commission Chair and Vice Chair would be Bobby Shriver and Clint Eastwood, noting that Commissioner Eastwood was not present today.

Commissioner de la Rocha addressed the Chair, stating that she wished to take this opportunity to express the Commission's gratitude for Chair Hart's service during the past year and a half. Commissioner de la Rocha also noted that there was much work that took place behind the scenes of the meetings, and she noted that the meetings are the culmination of much work by the Chair. She added that Chair Hart had set a tone for the meetings of inclusiveness, of having an open ear to the public, that she had expressed compassion for the individual voices heard during the public process, and that while compromises had been made, she believed Chair Hart had done an excellent job of making the public feel heard and that they'd had an opportunity for input. Commissioner del la Rocha reiterated that the Commission very much appreciated Chair Hart's leadership over the past year and a half.

Chair Hart thanked Commissioner de la Rocha and added that she appreciated Commissioner de la Rocha's assistance in her role as Vice Chair. Chair Hart stated that she believed Commissioner Shriver would enjoy serving as Chair.

Commissioner Shriver stated that he hoped to perform the role as well as Chair Hart.

### **Consideration and action on the Department's proposal for approval of the General Plan Amendment and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for Dockweiler State Beach**

Chair Hart explained that in addition to the materials the Commission received prior to the meeting, they would now hear a presentation on the Dockweiler State Beach General Plan Amendment by Angeles District Superintendent Ron Shafer. Before introducing Superintendent Shafer, Chair Hart expressed the Commission's thanks to Superintendent Shafer and Malibu Sector Superintendent Hayden Sohm for the previous day's on-site briefing, and she thanked Sara Feldman of the California State Parks Foundation for hosting the Commission's dinner the previous evening.

Superintendent Shafer explained that Dockweiler State Beach is one of several beaches owned by the state and managed by the County of Los Angeles. Superintendent Shafer reviewed the history of Dockweiler State Beach and the 1992 general plan that provided for the development of the facilities seen by the Commission the previous day. He explained that the 1992 general plan stated that future, more intensive recreational facilities should be clustered with existing facilities, and that this was the proposal of the general plan amendment the Commission was being asked to approve today. Superintendent Shafer then introduced Joseph Chesler, Chief of the Planning Division of the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors, to review the highlights of the proposed general plan amendment.

Mr. Chesler thanked Superintendent Shafer and the Commission. He then narrated a slide presentation on Dockweiler State Beach and the proposals of the general plan amendment. The slide presentation included a video presentation on the Los Angeles County W.A.T.E.R. (Water Awareness, Training, Education, and Recreation) youth programs that take place at Dockweiler, noting that the youth center proposed in the general plan amendment would serve as home of the W.A.T.E.R. program. Mr. Chesler explained many of the specific services that would be provided through the proposed youth center, and that many planning meetings that had previously taken place with Los Angeles County's various partners, Dockweiler State Beach's neighbors, and various oversight bodies. In closing Mr. Chesler stated that he would be happy to answer questions from the Commission.

Chair Hart thanked Mr. Chesler and asked if there were any questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Scherman addressed the Chair and Mr. Chesler, asking if the proposed facility provided for wheelchair and bicycle storage for program participants who might need it.

Mr. Chesler stated that the W.A.T.E.R. program was oriented toward disadvantaged youth of all abilities and economic levels. He noted that program lifeguards were trained to work with persons with disabilities. Mr. Chesler also noted that Los Angeles County's beach wheelchair access program offered 21 beach wheelchairs, that at least two of these would be available at Dockweiler State Beach when the facility was complete, and that beach lockers were provided to enhance accessibility.

Commissioner Scherman clarified that her question pertained to the storage of personal wheelchairs that were used by program participants.

Mr. Chesler responded that there would be storage areas available for users throughout the day, but that this particular need had not been considered. Mr. Chesler noted that the design of the proposed youth center offered several areas that could be utilized for such storage. Mr. Chesler and Commissioner Scherman discussed the specifics of the Commissioner's concern related to storage, and Mr. Chesler stated that he would call these needs to the attention of the project's architect.

Commissioner Scherman then asked Mr. Chesler about the beach wheelchair program and how reservations were made to use a beach wheelchair.

Mr. Chesler replied that the county-wide beach wheelchair program distributed the chairs on a first-come, first-served basis, and this appeared to be efficient. Mr. Chesler also explained other details of the beach wheelchair program and how it was administered.

Commissioner Scherman asked if any consideration had been given to use of solar panels in the design of the proposed youth center.

Mr. Chesler replied that sustainability through passive design and active energy efficiencies was always a consideration. He noted that this particular building's budget did not provide for solar collectors, but that great efficiencies would be attained through passive design, providing natural light, etc. He also noted that the building's roof design made it a good candidate for retrofitting of sustainable solar technologies.

Commissioner Shriver asked the cost of a beach wheelchair.

Mr. Chesler replied that the beach wheelchairs cost \$2,500.00 each.

Commissioner Shriver then asked if the demand for beach wheelchairs exceeded the number of wheelchairs that were available.

Mr. Chesler responded that this was not usually a problem, but that during peak season there situations could arise where all the beach wheelchairs were in use and not available for others.

Chair Hart asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Chesler.

Commissioner Tagami noted that he wished to thank Superintendent Shafer and his staff for conducting the previous day's site visits. He then asked Mr. Chesler for clarification that the \$3 million for the proposed youth center was being provided by a state grant.

Mr. Chesler replied that Los Angeles County would be utilizing a \$3 million state local assistance grant administered through the State Parks specifically for locally-operated State Park units to build the youth center. He added that the construction budget is \$1.8 million and that the balance would be expended on eligible soft (non-construction) costs.

Commissioner Tagami stated that he believed State Parks should investigate the ratio of soft costs to hard costs on such projects and provide limits or caps on how the funds may be used. He noted that the ratio of hard costs to soft costs described by Mr. Chesler would be considered unreasonable in the private sector. A brief discussion ensued during which Commissioner Tagami, Commissioner

Cotchett, and Mr. Chesler discussed the costs involved in the proposed youth center. The discussion concluded when Commissioner Shriver suggested that the Commission wait to receive the written schedule of costs Mr. Chesler had promised to provide for the project before discussing this further. Mr. Chesler stated that the schedule of costs would be provided to Director Coleman during the week following the Commission meeting.

Commissioner de la Rocha noted that the costs being discussed were only estimates as the project had not yet gone to bid. Mr. Chesler confirmed that this was correct.

*Commission Assistant's Note:* The cost schedule for the proposed youth center at Dockweiler State Beach subsequently revealed that the figures and ratio of hard costs to soft costs presented by Mr. Chesler were in error, and that the project was in fact in compliance with the requirement for the expenditure of a maximum of 25% of the Project Grant Amount for non-construction costs required by State Parks' *Procedural Guide - Local Assistance Grant Program For Locally Operated Units of the State Park System*, Guideline 9, page 5.

Chair Hart asked if there were any registered or unregistered speakers on this agenda item. There being none, Chair Hart closed public comment on this item and asked for a motion to adopt the resolution before the Commission to approve the general plan amendment and draft mitigated negative declaration for Dockweiler State Beach. Motion Commissioner Cotchett, second Commissioner Scherman. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the general plan amendment and draft mitigated negative declaration for Dockweiler State Beach.

### **Consideration and action on the Department's proposal for approval of the Preliminary General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Malibu Creek State Park**

Chair Hart explained that in addition to the materials the Commission received prior to this meeting, Angeles District Superintendent Ron Shafer would now provide a short presentation on the proposed Malibu Creek State Park General Plan.

Superintendent Shafer narrated a slide presentation on the various proposals of the Malibu Creek State Park General Plan, including a review of the aspects of the plan covered in the Commission's on-site briefing on the previous day. Superintendent Shafer explained that Malibu Creek State Park is a part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and he explained the cooperative relationships that existed amongst California State Parks, the National Park Service, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. In addition to reviewing the proposals of the general plan, Superintendent Shafer emphasized the importance of Malibu Creek State Park to the large urban populations the park serves in the Los Angeles Area. The Superintendent closed by asking if there were any questions from the Commission.

Chair Hart recognized Commissioner de la Rocha, who asked if dogs were allowed on trails in Malibu Creek State Park.

Superintendent Shafer and Malibu Sector Superintendent Hayden Sohm explained that dogs on-leash were allowed in the developed areas of the park, but not on the trails.

Commissioner de la Rocha asked if a particular park's dog policy was typically addressed in a general plan. Director Coleman noted that an individual park unit's dog policy is usually addressed in a more specific trail management plan, rather than a general plan.

Commissioner Shriver asked why dogs were not allowed on trails. A brief discussion took place during which Superintendent Shafer, Commissioner Shriver, Commissioner de la Rocha, and Chair Hart discussed general policies regarding dogs in units of the State Park System. Because this is a State Parks policy rather than a policy specific to any one park, the group concluded that this would be an item better suited for inclusion in a subsequent meeting rather than to discussion at this time.

Chair Hart recognized Commissioner Kautz, who stated she had a question pertaining not only to Malibu Creek State Park, but to the State Park System in general. Commissioner Kautz asked if there were any policies regarding the monitoring of exotic insects, including the Glassy-Wing Sharpshooter, and the Med Fly.

Superintendent Shafer introduced State Parks Angeles District Senior Resource Ecologist Suzanne Goode to address Commissioner Kautz' question. Ms. Goode explained that no District-specific monitoring for exotic insects was being conducted by State Parks, though this type of monitoring was usually conducted by the county agricultural office. She explained that Los Angeles County had monitored for the Long Horn Eucalyptus Bark Boring Beetle, and that if the county has reason to believe there could be exotic insect issues on state park property they would notify State Parks who would then permit the county to conduct the necessary monitoring.

Commissioner Kautz asked if insect traps were set to detect the presence of exotic insects.

Ms. Goode explained that while State Parks does monitor other threats to park resources, the monitoring of agricultural insect pests fell under the jurisdiction of the County Agricultural Commissioner. Ms. Goode added that more monitoring could be done if staff were available to perform it.

Commissioner Kautz noted that such monitoring would fit in well into State Parks "good neighbor" policy. Ms. Goode agreed that this was true.

Chair Hart recognized Commissioner Tagami.

Commissioner Tagami commented on the issue of filming in state parks, noting that he had read the public comments on this subject. Commissioner Tagami stated that he believed television programs like M.A.S.H. (filmed in part in Malibu Creek State Park) were an important cultural resource that provided an opportunity for young people to understand the events of the past (in this case the Korean War). He further stated that he believed resources like the M.A.S.H. site should be preserved and protected, and that sites such as this attracted park users that might not otherwise visit, and that they could help these visitors understand habitat, conservation, and preservation issues. Commissioner Tagami stated that while he appreciated that many opinions existed on either side of the filming issue, it was his hope that a way could be found to respect everyone's values while utilizing filming in state parks as an opportunity to promote parks, increase visitor numbers, and build a sense of stewardship in these visitors.

Commissioner Tagami also noted that in each park he has visited as a commissioner there is always a particular staff member that stands out as a deeply-committed individual with a passion for their work. He noted that the commitment of these individuals was what made the State Park System what it was, and that he would like to recognize one such individual at each Commission meeting. Commissioner Tagami stated that on this visit the staff member that so moved him with her commitment and skill had been Lynette Hernandez, Events Manager in the Angeles District. He thanked Ms. Hernandez, who was present at the meeting, for her efforts to open up new avenues and business opportunities for State Parks, and recognized her creativity in developing inexpensive ways to perform maintenance and increase accessibility in state parks.

Chair Hart asked Lynette Hernandez to stand and be recognized.

Commissioner Scherman asked for a brief explanation of the traffic-calming measures proposed in the Malibu Creek State Park General Plan.

Superintendent Shafer explained that the proposed traffic-calming measures were designed to realign existing roads for fewer straightaways and more curves, thereby providing a meandering, calming type of roadway that would result in a safer environment for pedestrians in the park.

Commissioner Scherman thanked Superintendent Shafer for his response.



Commissioner de la Rocha asked if the National Park Service “Heart of the Park” shuttle that was expected to begin operation in November 2004 would improve access to Malibu Creek State Park.

Superintendent Shafer replied that there was no question the shuttle would improve access, in that it will connect with the inner-city, the Los Angeles Metro, and several local communities. Superintendent Shafer also noted that it was his hope that the shuttle would result in fewer people driving cars to the park.

Chair Hart stated that she was concerned about wildlife crossing Highway 101, and she asked if there were any plans to address this connectivity issue.

Superintendent Shafer noted that Highway 101 was outside of State Parks property, but that it was on the property known as Ahmanson Ranch which was now owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Superintendent Shafer called on Malibu Sector Superintendent Hayden Sohm to address this question further.

Sector Superintendent Sohm stated that the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy had been proactive in addressing connectivity issues, in that they had recently acquired property to allow for the movement of wildlife under Highway 101. He noted that this area is close to Malibu Creek State Park in what is known as the Liberty Canyon area.

Chair Hart noted that the connectivity here was very important, and Superintendent Shafer introduced Senior Resource Ecologist Suzanne Goode to provide further information.

Ms. Goode explained that the Liberty Canyon area includes natural habitat areas on both sides of Highway 101, which makes it the focus of all the relevant park agencies’ efforts to acquire property and providing opportunities for connectivity. She further explained that there was some interest at CalTrans to provide a tunnel underneath the freeway in this location. Ms. Goode noted that there is an existing underpass but that it is not as wildlife-friendly as it could be.

Chair Hart asked about the possible future designation of the Malibu Canyon area as a natural preserve. She asked if the Commission’s approval of the proposed general plan could prevent this designation, and if it would require a general plan amendment to make the designation at a later time.

Superintendent Shafer replied that the natural preserve designation would require an amendment to the general plan, and he clarified that State Parks was not making a proposal for a natural preserve designation today. He further noted that the future of the existing Ringe Dam would need to be studied in greater detail before such a proposal could be made.

Chair Hart stated that it was her desire that this area be designated as a natural preserve once the dam had been studied and the various issues resolved.

Chair Hart stated that if there were no further questions from the Commission she would like to begin public comment on this agenda item. Chair Hart noted that there were a number of registered speakers, and she asked that the speakers please be respectful of the time and try not to repeat subjects or statements that had already been addressed by others. A brief discussion took place amongst the commissioners during which it was suggested they take a short break before beginning the public comment on this agenda item. Chair Hart called for a 10 minute break at 10:51 a.m.

Chair Hart reconvened the meeting at 11:04 a.m. She noted that she would be calling the public speakers in the order that they had registered, and called the first speaker:

**Melanie Beck, National Park Service/Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area** – We assume a neutral position and do not support or oppose other agencies’ development plans although we provide comment on issues concerning park resources. To this end, we find the general plan consistent with congressional mandates for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and with the goals and objectives defined in the recreation area’s 2002 General Management Plan, a

document jointly prepared with State Parks and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Several goals presented in the general plan are being realized as interagency projects making use of the cooperative management agreement among State Parks, National Parks Service, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. This selected park plan for Malibu Creek State Park reflects an appropriate combination of the best proposals from the draft alternatives. I now wish to briefly discuss aspects of the park plan. Management zones: The management zones depicted in the park plan present an appropriate refinement of similar zoning in the national recreation area's general management plan. The zones balance resource protection with adequate recreational opportunities for today and for the future. A potential new inclusion into the core habitat zone would be the proposed Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve. Malibu Creek supports several listed species including the charismatic, Federally-listed, endangered Steelhead Salmon. The rugged Malibu Canyon gorge is also of critical viewshed value for the motorists using Malibu Canyon Road, a state-designated scenic route. The canyon is a unique aesthetic resource that embodies the juxtaposition of the Santa Monica Mountain's wildness against the highly urbanized Los Angeles metropolis. Trail management and park access: State Parks, Conservancy and National Park Service staff are actively engaged in preparing the draft interagency regional trail management plan for the national recreation area commonly referred to as the TMP. The TMP will prescribe a fifteen to twenty-year management vision for the three hundred eighty-five-mile existing public trail network as well as planning for new trails. Park plan and TMP goals and objectives are fully consistent. Another public-access joint project referenced in the park plan is the public transportation "Heart of the Park" shuttle with stops planned at Malibu Creek State Park and Tapia Park. State Parks and NPS staff is actively coordinating on shuttle stop locations and facility design. Agency shared facilities: We support the park plan's proposal to find agency shared maintenance and administrative facilities. It's an ongoing challenge to keep out of public view the equipment and materials necessary to maintain park facilities. In conclusion, the National Park Service appreciates State Park's commitment to planning within the joint management framework of the National Recreation Area. We recommend the Commission approve the plan as presented and we look forward to continued partnering while implementing the plan. Thank you for considering our comments. I'd be happy to entertain any questions.

Chair Hart asked if the commissioners had any questions for Melanie Beck of the National Park Service.

Commissioner Cotchett joked that there are always questions for the National Park Service. A brief exchange took place between Commissioner Cotchett and Ms. Beck, during which Commissioner Cotchett teased Ms. Beck about the National Park Service contributing its fair share to the partnership. Ms. Beck appreciated this and played along. Commissioner Cotchett concluded that he appreciated the wonderful partnership that existed between State Parks and the National Park Service.

**Melanie Beck** – Thanks. We esteem our relationship with State Parks.

**Ruth Gerson, California Equestrian Trails & Lands Coalition, Equestrian Trails Inc., Recreation & Equestrian Coalition, Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council** – Good morning Commissioners. I'm speaking to you as a member of several organizations: The Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council, Recreation and Equestrian Coalition, Equestrian Trails, Inc., and California Equestrian Trails and Lands Coalition. Some of the organizations are in support of various issues. The Ronald Reagan Equestrian Campground, which I understand you saw the area yesterday, I personally lobbied for this for twenty-four years and I agreed to raise the funds to develop it. So now that we have the permission to go ahead with it, we're definitely open to any suggestions, advice, or help that you can give because this is a private fund-raising for a public facility. We put the stakes in for the survey, we did the research for other campgrounds to see what would work best at that location, and we gave our suggestions to the Southern Service Center. We met with them and they did a professional survey, and worked on the layout and the maps and now we're refining the PowerPoint and other details of such an undertaking. We probably will need \$700,000 to a million dollars. The big-

gest cost is the restroom, which is like over \$300,000. It's unbelievable. Anyhow, so far we have, without any fund-raisers yet, raised \$300. A paltry sum. But we also have been donated quite a few almost-new pipe corals and we plan to have certain events, obviously to raise it, and to bring the issue before some corporations and businesses. But anything that you can suggest in this way is most appreciated. The other issue I want to speak to are trails, and trails are a main part of Malibu Creek State Park and other State Parks. I'm president of the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council. The Counsel is 32 years old. We have a volunteer trail crew working every Saturday of the year except August on public lands. The Tapia Spur Trail in Malibu Creek State Park is now a multi use trail, however, it has at least eight blind curves and switchbacks and steep drop-offs and steep slopes up, and it is now multi use, it didn't use to be originally. It is an accident waiting to happen, as well as it has now displaced the hikers and equestrians who have a perceived risk, you wouldn't go swimming if you knew there were sharks in that particular location of the water, bad idea, as well as those people who have had bad experiences with some of the mountain bikers, not everybody, but there should be in that location an alternate trail for mountain bikers. The conflict that arises and the displacement is not supportive of State Parks' policy for a safe and enjoyable trail experience. So I hope you will keep that in mind. The Backbone Trail is approximately 65 miles long from the ocean to Will Rogers and the biggest problem so far is crossing Topanga Canyon Boulevard. I hope you will support working with CalTrans in giving a little political push to help us get a safe crossing to bridge that particular highway. It is very, very busy. Along the Backbone Trail, trail camps need to be implemented. About seven years ago the smart process was developed with various issues and one of the issues was trail camps. No trail camps have yet been implemented. That's a long time. And it was done in cooperation with the River/Trails Assistance Cooperation, it's a National Park organization, as well as with State Parks. So many people, as you heard Supervisor Ron Shafer and Supervisor Hayden Sohm say, camping is the main consideration for Malibu Creek State Park and the adjoining areas. Now the general plan, the position of Recreation and Equestrian Coalition, another organization that I happen to be president of, we all wear many hats. We are opposed to the preserve, to the designation of Alternative II because Alternative I is a better balance and balance is...

The Commission Assistant called five minutes.

**Ruth Gerson** – Pardon me? Okay. And balance is what life is about including State Parks. The preserve...

Chair Hart asked Ms. Gerson to please conclude her comments in light of the many speakers that were yet to be heard. Chair Hart also noted that the commissioners had been provided Ms. Gerson's comments in writing.

**Ruth Gerson** – Yes, all right. Preserve would give the perception that that particular area of the Malibu Canyon Preserve is more important than any other area. It is already protected by its steep topography. So I hope you will go with designation one, I get the numbers mixed up unless I read them, Alternative I, which is a preference. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak and if you have any questions about any of the issues that I have addressed, I would be happy to answer them and I'm easy to contact.

Chair Hart thanked Ms. Gerson for her comments.

Chair Hart asked the Commission Assistant to provide the speakers with a thirty second warning.

**Robin Mitchell, Malibu Creek Docents** – Good morning. My name is Robin Gensley Mitchell of Orion Ranch Star Route, 24466 Mulholland Highway, Calabasas, and this has been either my primary or secondary residence for the past 62 years. This also is my twenty-fifth year as a docent at Malibu Creek State Park and I would like to join with Mr. Tagami in stating the rangers that I know that really put in 24-7 even though they're only hired for a partial time, and that is Hayden Sohm and Lindsay Templeton. They both work very closely as a team and have made things go forward that

were not accomplished before they came on as a team. One thing that is my real interest is the Sepulveda Adobe, and it languished for about 20 years with the docents saying hey, we've got to pay attention to this, and Hayden Sohm got it moving. I'd also like to add that my parents were docents so that makes me a second generation docent - it's kind of a family thing. And one thing that didn't come out about Malibu Creek State Park is it is a microcosm of California history because close to that area is where Juan de Anza came through in 1776 and camped. Some of the descendents of that expedition came back and Pedro Alcontara Sepulveda, who built the Sepulveda Adobe, is one of those descendents. And my contemporary over here, Dave Brown, who is basically the docent historian, knows more about the Chumash and we do hope and it is in the General plan to establish a Chumash village. Then we'll have the Sepulveda Adobe, and White Oak Farms, so it will show the prehistory, the 19th Century history, 20th Century history, into the 21st Century history of California. So thank you very much. Oh, and I'm for the plan.

Chair Hart thanked Ms. Mitchell for her work as a docent, and further expressed her appreciation for all who volunteer for parks. Chair Hart addressed the prior speaker, Ruth Gerson, calling to her attention that Sara Feldman of the California State Parks Foundation was present today, noting that there was no better partner for fundraising, and suggesting that the Ms. Feldman may be able to assist Ms. Gerson with her campaign. Ms. Gerson thanked Chair Hart.

The Commission Assistant addressed the Chair, noting that he would be providing a visual reminder when speakers had 30 seconds remaining.

**Michael Goodman, CORBA** – I'm not speaking as an individual although I certainly share the views that I'm going to discuss today, but I'm speaking on behalf CORBA, the Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association. I want to just briefly introduce who CORBA is before I talk about our view of the plan. CORBA, since 1987, has been the sole voice representing responsible mountain bike use in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. In addition to our advocating for responsible use of mountain bikes off-road, our primary mission is advocacy for trail access for off-roading. In addition to our advocacy though, we also have a number of programs that we were work on. One is Youth Adventures. The purpose of Youth Adventures is to provide off-road outdoor experiences for disadvantaged and inner-city youth on bikes in the parks. We also have a trail crew which does trail work at least once a month, frequently more than that, on both multi-use and non-multi-use trails. We also founded and created the Mountain Bike Unit, which is a mountain bike patrol formed in cooperation with both State Parks and the National Park Service. They have now spun off into their own separate organization, but we founded and created that. The Mountain Bike Unit, in a number of years has volunteered for in excess of ten thousand hours, volunteer hours at the parks. The three points that I want to make today about the general management plan are, first of all, we are in favor of the preferred alternative and we support it very strongly. We recognize that in the areas where we are, we are appreciative of the fact the plan recognizes that in areas where mountain bikes, excuse me, where hikers and equestrians are appropriate uses of the park, mountain bikes have also been recognized as an appropriate use of the parks and we appreciate our inclusion in the four management zones for different uses within the park as well. We also appreciate that the plan recognizes that mountain bikers are, in general, responsible park users. It's taken us a while to reach the state where we are included in a plan like this and recognized specifically, and we appreciate that we're recognized and included in long-term park planning. The third point that I really want to make is that we appreciate the inclusionary nature of the plan and how well it takes into account the interests of all of the different users and nevertheless also still has tremendous respect for preserving the natural resources, and we are strongly in support of it, and, by the way, very appreciative of the work that State Parks did and in particular Hayden Sohm did really terrific work in I think negotiating with a lot of diverse and not necessarily agreeable groups of people and nevertheless helped put together a plan that I think a lot of us are able to very strongly support and we're appreciative of that. I do want to point out one thing with respect to the presentation that was made. There was the slide

that we've talked about that talks about the percentage of use with the State Park and it lists that mountain bikers are approximately 20% of the users in the park and I think it's important to note that although we are, in that study, 20% of the users, one of the reasons that we appear to be a relatively small user group in the park, the study was done on trails that in large part were closed to mountain bikes, and so the fact that we weren't present to be part of that study, I think skews the statistics to make it appear that we were a smaller user group than we in fact are. We are appreciative of the fact that the plan notes that approximately 65% of the off-road opportunities within Malibu Creek State Park is available to mountain bikes. It's important to note though that while 45% of the off-road uses are available to mountain bikers, I'm sorry, 65% are available to mountain bikers, only 45% of the trails are, and it's also important to note that within the Angeles District as a whole only approximately 10% of the total trails are available to mountain bikes. We are appreciative of the improvement within this general management plan of our position and we are appreciative of the fact that there's a significant percentage of trails open to mountain bikes, but we are very strongly in favor of all trails being individually analyzed to determine whether or not mountain bike use could be appropriate in those areas. The last thing that I just want to say is that we very strongly support the plan and we hope that the preferred alternative is adopted. Thank you.

**Don Wallace, Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation** – Good morning Commissioners. My name is Don Wallace. I live at 1710 North Cold Canyon Road, Calabasas, approximately three miles east of the park entrance. I'm here today representing the Los Virgenes Homeowners Federation, a coalition of 25 homeowner organizations surrounding Malibu Creek State Park on the east, north, and west of the park. The organization represents approximately 30,000 individual homeowners in the immediate area of the park. I'm here to strongly support the equestrian campground proposed for the Reagan Ranch Unit of Malibu Creek State Park and the trails system as depicted in Alternative Number 1. I also want to comment on two other issues in the plan. The removal of Ringe Dam to restore the upper watershed as habitat for the endangered Southern Steelhead Trout is a goal of our organization and we strongly support that, and hope that can move forward expeditiously. We also would like to encourage the Commission to do everything in its power to facilitate the purchase and integration of the 600-acre King Gillette/Soka University property into Malibu Creek State Park. We think that that's a vital element of the general management plan and hope that you can add your political weight to that purchase - it's probably being worked on. We understand that the seller is a willing seller and it's currently being negotiated by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. That property would be the perfect headquarters for both the State Park System and the National Park System. We strongly encourage your support for that proposal. Thank you.

**Jim Hasenauer, International Mountain Bicycling Association** – Good morning. Madam Chair, members of the Commission, Director Coleman. I am representing IMBA, the International Mountain Biking Association. It's the national association which deals with responsible mountain biking. I'm also a member of the California Recreational Trails Committee, the California Round Table on Recreation, Parks, and Tourism, and I was just recently appointed to the Board of the California Trails and Greenways Foundation. So I'm really going to talk about the trails element of the plan. I'm speaking on behalf of IMBA, not the other organizations. We support the Malibu Creek State Park general plan and want to compliment the park for both the process and the conclusions that were drawn. I actually went to the two public meetings, I submitted both oral and written testimony, and I think the planning process was really a testimony to the kind of iteration that you want to see in the public-process development of the plan. Initially, I have to say I had some very, very serious concerns about some of the assumptions that were made about Malibu Creek State Park, about the trail system, about the different kinds of uses and their impacts on the natural systems, and as we went through the planning process and as we worked through the workshops I came out very, very satisfied with the kind of responsiveness of the planning team and of the State Park people who were involved. Mountain bikers are the largest, or maybe the second largest users of the park. Mr. Goodman just spoke to the skewing of that small statistic of twenty percent. On trails that are really

open to us in the National Recreation Area we're like 48 to about 53%, and you don't find us on trails that are closed for the most part and that's a good thing. And really we have like fewer than half of the trails in the Santa Monica Mountain National Recreation Area open to us and by that I really mean the single track trails, not so much the fire road trail system which is generally open to us. And in some of the early iterations of the plan I had three big concerns, number one was the treatment of bikes and the natural preserves and what came to be called the core habitat zones, and through the planning process it was recognized that bikes in fact could be on trails perhaps in those zones, and that decision should be made on a case-by-case basis and that was fixed, and the process will be in the future and we look forward to that. That was just a great recognition. And one of the second concerns I had is that in early an iteration of the plan, talked about Malibu Creek State Park as wilderness, and while that word is evocative and powerful, and while in fact Malibu Creek has some of the most amazing kind of alpine terrain and viewsheds and a diversity of wildlife, it is not wilderness in the planning sense, in the designation sense - neither Federal nor California State Wilderness, and the term is really problematic for the mountain bike community because bikes are banned from designated wilderness in both California and national levels, and so if the park was characterized as a wilderness that would create a really aversive planning process for us. And that was kind of redefined small "W" wilderness - we're very, very satisfied with that. There's some significant missing links for mountain bicyclists and our ability to access the trails of Malibu Creek State Park, and mountain bikers really kind of travel, are longer-distance trail users perhaps than hikers and maybe even than most in the equestrian community. And so links are really important to us, and in early iterations of the plan it didn't even talk about the Backbone Trail which is our main recreational national trail corridor that connects Topanga State Park and Malibu Creek State Park. It's on State Park property, those particular sections of the trail are closed to bicycles. We're very, very concerned that the plan wasn't commenting on those, and in later iterations of the plan it in fact, they acknowledged that that was part of the planning area, that bicycle use should be considered on those trails, and as you heard from Melanie Beck, the planner from the National Park Service, the parks, both Malibu Creek State Park, all the State Park units, the Conservancy, the National Park Service are engaged in the trails management plan which is taking off. We actually need to acquire appropriations from a variety of sources to really complete this plan. All of the trail users in the Santa Monicas have been waiting for it for a long time. So we really look forward to that plan coming and the opportunity to really assess trail use and trail impacts and what's the best way to really make this work. So we support the preferred alternative. We think it gives the appropriate balance to recreation as well as to preserving the precious resources of the Santa Monicas. We look forward to working with the California Department of Parks and Recreation and Malibu Creek. There's great, great leadership there - we're going to miss Hayden Sohm terribly when he goes to Tahoe, but Tahoe will be better for it. And we pledge to assist the park and to continue to work with the park as good partners in every possible way. Thank you very much.

**Peter Heumann, Individual** – I'm Peter Heumann. I'm a former board member of CORBA, founding member of the MBU Mountain Bike Patrol, former board member of the Santa Monica Mountains Parklands Foundation, and Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council. I'm here to support the preferred alternative. This is a great example of a good public process. They had good public meetings. They listened to and they heard our concerns. We had some real concerns through the process and I think they were answered by the final plan and I want to thank them for that. It's the first time, and this is really important, that mountain bikes were incorporated into a plan as one of the responsible users. And I know it was touched on by earlier speakers, but now instead of being kind of separated out and managed totally separately we're a responsible user and we've shown to be responsible users in the mountains. We do want to have more trail opportunities and we do want to make sure that we protect the resources that are out there. It's important to have connectivity trail-wise which is the missing links that Jim talked about, to other trails and to the neighborhoods. I live just north of the park and there's ways for me to get into the park that are unavailable currently. It was mentioned

Tapia Spur, that it is a problem. I see it as a great victory for the parks in that it was a four-year public process to open that to bikes, and rather contentious as you might see, there was at least three public meetings that I'm aware of, and ultimately it involved an entire trail reroute to incorporate all the trail users' concerns, and there have been no accidents and there have been no problems on that trail as a result. Any duplicate trail or a parallel trail would be a really inefficient use of the resources. I want to finish by saying thank you to Hayden. We're really going to miss Hayden. I'd like you to rescind the transfer immediately (laughter). But we're going to miss some great barbecues and an incredible person who's done a great job with the public process and, you know, kind of managing some contentious public issues and moving them forward in a positive way. I also support the acquisition of Soka by the state. I think that would be a very important parkland acquisition. Thank you for coming down.

**Beth Caskie, California Wildlife Center** – Good morning. My name is Beth Caskie. I'm Executive Director of California Wildlife Center, which is located on Malibu Creek State Park property thanks to the generosity, support, and partnership of California State Parks. We've been here for six years and the services we provide to Southern California, to all of L.A. County, and in particular the Malibu/Calabasas/Santa Monica Mountains region is largely thanks to the support of California State Parks, and in particular Hayden and Suzanne Goode, and Ron Shafer and Lindsay Templeton, and the team at Malibu Creek State Park. They've done an exceptional job. And you might want to know, what is California Wildlife Center? You missed it on your tour - there was a lot to get in. We are a wildlife rehabilitation facility, and we rescue, rehabilitate, and release native California wildlife. So what we have in the hospital right now: about five fawns, several hawks, several owls, hundreds of opossums, squirrels, and songbirds every year and our center is really a tribute to the value that the local community puts on our local wildlife. We have 7,000 calls a year at least, on what do I do for this animal, what do I do about this animal. We have helped and treated 7,000 animals since we opened our doors. And the people in Malibu, Calabasas, and the Southern California area are passionate about wildlife, and I'd just like to point out that this plan which we wholeheartedly support and we support the recommended alternative. California Wildlife Center represents about 4,000 people who support our local habitat and our local wildlife, and people are passionate about doing the right thing for wildlife, living as a responsible neighbor with wildlife, and we're very lucky that these species have managed in the way they have to just keep a foothold in this area. Respect for wildlife is a local indigenous cultural value. From the Chumash people in original beginnings, you know, 10-13,000 years ago, to the little kids who call us today, the people who drop their entire schedule to take an injured skunk in their car for two hours to get to us. That's just one example of the incredible dedication (laughter), and this woman drove up to the center with a dog hanging out of the window apparently in agony having to share a car with this skunk. People have, I mean, done amazing things just to make sure we're doing right by our local wildlife. It is a passionate, passionate feeling among most of the residents and I'm a mother with two small kids who need to hike, I've got a dog that needs to roam, I appreciate the recreational needs we have in our state public lands, and it's very, very important we all get a crack at it. However, it is enlightened self-interest to preserve our wildlands and our habitat. It's incredibly important not to love it to death, and if we're not going to protect the state parks and take a very serious view on protecting our habitat then we're not going to get it. In the rest of L.A., we've sprawled that out already - this is an oasis that we must treasure and protect and I really appreciate the way that State Parks has gone through the process like the previous speaker said and very carefully gone through everyone's concerns and maintained the responsibility to all of us. So for the wildlife, I beg of you, make sure you take very serious consideration of what the Malibu State Park team has put together and we support the preferred alternative. Thank you.

**Sara Feldman, California State Parks Foundation** – I'm Sara Feldman, Southern California Director of the California State Parks Foundation, and I will be very brief. We would like to express our support for the preferred alternative for the Malibu Creek General Plan. We appreciate all of the

very hard work, and effort and study that has gone into this plan by State Park staff in the Angeles District. We feel it is a well-balanced plan that protects precious open space and wildlife, while still remaining accessible to the diverse population that surrounds it, which is an equally important priority. Malibu Creek is a magnificent state park and we feel that this plan serves it very well. Thank you.

**Kym Taborn, Malibu Creek Docents** – Good morning. My name is Kim Taborn. I'm President of the Malibu Creek Docents. The Malibu Creek Docents is a cooperative association and nonprofit corporation formed under the laws of the State of California. Their mission is to protect the natural and cultural resources found in Malibu Creek State Park, and also to assist the Department of State Parks and Recreation to interpret the park as well. Two years ago Sunset Magazine called Malibu Creek State Park the Yosemite of Southern California. Malibu Creek State Park represents one of the most ecologically and culturally diverse public properties in Southern California. Because of this it is imperative that this resource be protected. However, because the park is also located in one of the most populated areas on our planet, to deny access to this state treasure to our citizens would be a tremendous lost opportunity of serving and enhancing the quality of life of those same citizens. The plan that has been presented to this body in my opinion represents a good, practical, fair, and probably more importantly, doable compromise between demand for recreational enhancements and the duty of resource protection. I would like to thank the Commission for this opportunity to speak. Thank you.

**David Brown, Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, Sierra Club** – David Brown, Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, the Sierra Club. I go back to the beginning of this park and I'm going to sprinkle a little cold water on a couple of things based on that experience. You've had already the park described to you. And it's described in the general plan: "Area of outstanding natural and scenic beauty in the midst of a large metropolitan area." You have an enormous planning challenge as a result of that. I would almost say that you're sort of in the position of those folks sitting around that campfire in Yellowstone Park in 1871 and you're going to decide the direction this outstanding remnant of the natural landscape of Southern California is going to go. We have very few opportunities to preserve coastal and foothill landscapes in Southern California, and this is the one really great opportunity that we have and we have to do it right because if we mess it up we're not going to be able to go back and find someplace else. Let me, first of all, I'm not an overwhelming fan of commercial filmmaking in state parks. I watched - when this park was first established into state ownership and was still being operated by a film company - skip loaders take out a 5,000-year-old Chumash site. Just a hop and a skip from where you all were sitting yesterday, and used it for fill dirt for a set. And so I know if you're going to permit filming, and I know the legislature has made that decision and it's out of your hands, I was in the room where that decision was made in Sacramento and the cigar smoke was thick enough to cut with a knife, it was a very political decision but I understand the politics behind it. That means it's essential that you realize that filmmaking is not always an environmentally benign activity. Just a few weeks ago I drove past the park at ten o'clock at night. It was brightly lit by floodlights. Now don't tell me that floodlighting a natural area at night is beneficial to the wildlife. There's biologists who will come out of the woodwork to tell you all the damage that that does. It shouldn't be happening. This is not a movie set, and so you do need to recognize the potential negative impacts and the EIR does not do that. And therefore it doesn't tell us the citizenry how those impacts are going to be mitigated in the general plan. Because of the very close proximity of this park to Hollywood and the entertainment industry, it's going to get a lot of that kind of use. I think staff has generally tried their best to protect the resources but getting money to paint a building at the expense of park resources is not acceptable. We don't have enough places like this in the Los Angeles Region. We don't have dozens of state parks like may exist in some parts of the state that we could use to replace this place if we lose it. So, give a lot of thought to that. All right. And another thing that filmmaking does, that this park has a tremendous educational potential because it is within driving distance of most schools in the Los Angeles Region. School children



come out here in the daytime. If we buy Soka, there are dormitories there where children can stay overnight. We're taking children who grow up on asphalt and pavement and we're introducing them for the first time to their natural environment. That takes concentration. It takes concentration to get kids to look at things anyway, you know, I'm a teacher and I know. But it takes double concentration when this is an unfamiliar environment. When you have a film being made three hundred yards away, they're going to be focused on that. They're not going to be listening to the teacher telling them about the soaring hawks and the eagles and the other things that aren't as exciting as movies, okay? So, to some extent it damages the educational mission of the park. It makes it difficult for children to grasp that this is a real natural area. There are real cougars here, there are real deer here, etc. Okay. Now yes, the Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve has a lot of potential, we support it. The Malibu Canyon Trail I don't believe can safely go down the canyon, I've been telling staff, route it on state-owned lands, conservancy, and state park lands on the east rim of the canyon, and I describe this in more detail in my written submittal. Definitely continue to work to the removal of Ringe Dam. There is a small group in Malibu, and I respect them, I know some of them who have a sentimental attachment to this dam, that's not the general feeling of the community. It is presently blocking the southernmost run of the endangered Southern Steelhead, and what a fantastic educational opportunity we would have if we could restore a Steelhead run. By removing that dam, the Steelhead would then run up into Malibu Creek State Park where people could observe them and know that they were there. And that would be, you know, a great advantage to all concerned. That's why CalTrout and others are working toward this. Okay. The Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve - we generally would support the Alternative II with modifications. The Malibu Canyon Preserve and a somewhat expanded Liberty Canyon Preserve, and I won't go into great detail, but the east side of Liberty Canyon was left out of the preserve. This is a prime valley oak savannah habitat that you don't have protected very much in the State Park System. This is bottomland savannah. When I first saw it, it was supporting trees fifteen to eighteen feet in circumference. Some of those we've lost since then, but there's tremendous reproduction taking place and we will restore that savannah, and it's an area of statewide significance. It should be expanded to include the entire segment of the canyon from above the farm buildings that I think you saw, up to the north boundary. But one segment was left out because it was thought that there could be a campground at the time. That has fallen by the way-side and I think we need to add that to the preserve. It's got some prime oak specimens in it. The equestrian campground on Reagan Ranch, totally support the present plan, the present location. I've examined the area, it doesn't seem to have any significant natural flora, or habitat, or resources that would be damaged as long as it stays on the north side of the access road which is where it is now. So yes, we support that. I would also...

Chair Hart informed Mr. Brown that he had exceeded the allotted time limit for speakers.

**David Brown** – Yeah. One more point then. There is more Latino use of this park than I think the documents that you've received admit/acknowledge. You drove past a group of Latinos who were splashing in Las Virgenes Creek yesterday as you were driving into the park. That's one of their favorite areas. We ought to be considering this user group also. They're not here, they're probably not going to be here, they probably didn't know about this meeting. The Tapia Park, is, Tapia was one of the pioneer settlers of California...

Chair Hart informed Mr. Brown that she was going to have to ask him to conclude his comments.

**David Brown** – Yeah. You should have some kind of commemorative display in the Tapia Park for the heavy Latino users who have always made major use of that park. Yes. Thank you.

Chair Hart thanked Mr. Brown for his comments, and asked if there were any questions on the presentation or on the public comments. She then closed the public comment on this agenda item.

Commissioner Scherman noted that many of the speakers had stated that they represent specific groups, but that there was not necessarily any documentation presented to substantiate this. She sug-

gested that speakers should be very clear about whether they are representing themselves or a group or organization.

Commissioner Tagami asked Director Coleman if there was a policy in State Parks with regard to bilingual signage, especially as it relates to public safety.

Director Coleman asked Ron Brean, Deputy Director of Park Operations, to respond.

Deputy Director Brean replied that discussions had taken place in a number of venues in an attempt to identify ways of adequately communicating to park users what must do to be safe. He noted that signage is one way of doing this but that it can be problematic in that it is difficult to provide the message in the language that each user is most familiar with. He explained that this was an issue to which an adequate solution had not yet been identified.

Commissioner Tagami thanked Deputy Director Brean, noting that this communication issue was one that could be discussed at a later time. He then addressed the Chair, stating that he supported the General Plan for Malibu Creek State Park as proposed by staff and that he was prepared to vote his support when the Chair was ready.

Chair Hart recognized Commissioner de la Rocha.

Commissioner de la Rocha stated that she wished to specifically thank the State Parks Angeles District staff who worked on the plan. She named Hayden Sohm, Malibu Sector Superintendent, Dennis Dolinar, Maintenance Supervisor, Suzanne Goode, the Senior Resource Ecologist, Lynette Hernandez, Events Manager, Lindsay Templeton, State Park Ranger, and Frank Padilla, Jr., Trails Supervisor. Commissioner de la Rocha then made a motion that the Commission approve the resolution adopting the Department's proposal for approval of the Preliminary General Plan and Environmental Impact Report for Malibu Creek State Park.

Chair Hart asked if there was to be any discussion. There being none, Chair Hart asked for a second to the motion, which was provided by Commissioner Scherman. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolution adopting the Preliminary General Plan and Environmental Impact Report for Malibu Creek State Park.

Chair Hart expressed the Commission's thanks to all of those who spoke regarding the Malibu Creek State Park General Plan. She further stated that it was her hope that each of these people would continue to remain involved in the planning process.

### **Informational Report:**

#### **Update on the Morro Bay State Park campground rehabilitation project**

Chair Hart noted that San Luis Obispo Coast District Superintendent Nick Franco and California State Historic Preservation Officer Wayne Donaldson were present to provide the Commission with an update on the Morro Bay State Park campground rehabilitation project.

Director Coleman explained that this agenda item was in response to the request made at the May 14th Commission meeting that State Parks provide a formal update on the campground project. Director Coleman noted that the project to rehabilitate this 70-year-old campground, which requires closing the campground for several months, illustrated the difficult that existed between the needs of park users and those of the local community. Director Coleman then introduced Superintendent Nick Franco and State Historic Preservation Officer Wayne Donaldson.

Superintendent Franco and Mr. Donaldson each narrated a slide show providing the history of the Morro Bay State Park Campground, its construction, subsequent renovations, the park's cultural resources, and extensive details of the current rehabilitation project. Superintendent Franco also noted that the best way to gain an understanding of the project was to see it in person, and he invited the commissioners to visit the park if an opportunity arose for them to do so.

Superintendent Franco concluded the report by describing the public process that was employed in the design of the project and the subsequent changes and compromises that had been made as the result of public comment. He noted that many public comments had been received and that some of those who objected to the plan were not satisfied with the project's final form.

Chair Hart thanked Superintendent Franco and Mr. Donaldson for their presentations. She also welcomed Mr. Donaldson to State Parks as this was his first opportunity to address the Commission.

Chair Hart stated that there were several registered speakers for this agenda item, noting that many had registered as part of a Morro Bay citizen's group, but that it was unclear as to whether or not this was a formal organization of some kind. She then called the first registered speaker:

**Nancy Bast, Individual** – Good afternoon Commissioners. Thank you for agendaizing this, it's real important to the community. A year and a half ago I appealed to the Morro Bay City Council to deny the planning commission permit for this fifteen-year-old plan to renovate the Morro Bay State Park campers' campground. The room was filled to capacity. Over 40 people spoke in outrage, none in favor of the destruction of healthy mature old pines and eucalyptus trees and the transformation of the entrance and campground to accommodate more and larger RVs. We presented a petition signed by hundreds of people. The council members strongly and unanimously upheld the appeal to deny the permit at which time the park management promised to work with the community to resolve the issues. Instead DPR appealed to the Coastal Commission using misinformation and deceit to have community concerns overturned, overridden. On the morning of construction start-up it took a public demonstration to protect the active Monarch Butterfly habitat. Later we had to appeal to the Coastal Commission to protect disruption of two active hawk nests despite the testimony by Coastal Sector Superintendent Greg Smith, who's a master birder, that no raptor nests existed within the campground. A hundred years ago the California School of Impressionist Painters made blue gum eucalyptus trees a representation of the beauty of the southern and central California coastal area. Yet DPR is aggressively eliminating this historical species from our landscape by surreptitiously destroying eighty year old, hundred year old eucs. Hundreds of diseased Monterey Pines have also been removed from the park and no replacement planting has been done. DPR has expressed no intention in the future to retain the historic forest setting and its cathedral-like canopy. Morro Bay State Park comprises one-third of our small town's approximately six square miles and thus has a significant impact on the city's economy and character, yet DPR continues to ignore, defy, and lie to us. Nothing has worked with these people and now we can't trust a word they say. We have exhausted all avenues of democratic recourse. This body is our last hope to influence DPR's mantra-like unyielding policy of implementing, of eliminating non-native species regardless of their historic or purposeful value.

Chair Hart informed Ms. Bast that three minutes had passed. She also thanked Ms. Bast for her comments and added that additional details on these same issues would no doubt be addressed by other speakers.

**Will Slavin, Individual** – I'm Will Slavin. I'm from Morro Bay and I'm going to be reading an excerpt from a letter by Phil Ashley from Canyons & Streams Alliance: Dear California State Park Commissioners. As State Parks staff should recognize, but unwisely do not, the extremely tall, fast growing non-native eucalyptus, pine, and cypress trees provide a safe vertical buffer, especially for large birds that will otherwise not exist in the park campground with a much shorter native trees and shrubs that State Parks propose to replace these tall and long native trees with. Whatever else their merits, these native coastal oaks, etc., will never develop the fifty feet to a hundred feet-plus height the non-native trees have reached. It is this fifty to a hundred-plus height that these non-native trees have attained that is the only reason the native birds such as hawks, falcons, owls, eagles, and herons exist, permanently and/or periodically in the park campground. Without the fifty to one hundred-plus safe vertical buffer these non-native trees provide from the hustle and bustle of human activity in the

campground below, these big birds will lose this critical nesting and roosting habitat and like these tall trees they will disappear from earth forever. Park staff apparently would like you to erroneously believe that these big native birds will not die but are just being displaced by this campground's modernization project and can go elsewhere to live. Park staff should know that such a myth violates the ecological principle that overall wildlife habitat is occupied at or near its carrying capacity by wildlife. Therefore, any wildlife that are displaced by the destruction of their campground habitat are forced to seek habitat already occupied at wildlife carrying capacity and they will enter into intense competition with wildlife already living there and because of nature there are no safety nets to plunge. This competition for habitat in short supply leads to starvation, disease, and then the inevitable terrible death for the displaced wildlife. One final point. Park staff have focused only on nesting Red Tail and Red-Shouldered Hawks. There are also Western Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Barn Owl, and many others. California State Parks should not accelerate the loss of habitat for birds, and as others have addressed, the Monarch Butterflies. This modernization plan is in violation of the State Park's General Plan. Please tell the DPR staff to stop it and to save the project what remains of historically ecologically rich Morro Bay State Park Campground.

**Ray McKelligot, Individual** – (Mr. McKelligot handed photographs to the commissioners before speaking) Ray McKelligot, resident of Morro Bay. You can keep the pictures. The first picture is a shot of the Morro Bay Park as of March of this year showing that a lot of trees have already been removed and now they want to remove many, many more. This second picture is a picture of San Simeon, the state park just up the road thirty miles from Morro Bay and that park has from my perspective been ruined. It has no trees, it's just out in the open. And then the third picture is Gaviota. Now I parked, camped in Gaviota many years ago. It had a lot of trees, but now it has none and I can't understand what's happening in the State Parks. I'm an RV-er, and I camped in most of the parks up and down this coast over the years, and I'd like to read you a statement from Carol Chapman and this will be put into record: I want to be able to bring my children here in the future and have them experience the Morro Bay State Park experience as I did when I was growing up. I will never forget in my nephew's eyes when he saw the trees being chopped down and sent through a chipper. He was crying and said "I don't want the trees to go away." Morro Bay will become a desert. While I do understand and appreciate the desire to return this area to this original habitat for coastal state, mainly shrubs and short trees, I wish that this would happen by attrition. Each time a tree dies naturally it should be replaced with a native tree. This way the change can happen gradually over time instead of so quickly. Thank you.

**Alice Bailey, Individual** – Good morning, afternoon - excuse me. Hello, my name is Alice Bailey. I've lived in Morro Bay my whole life, and I just wanted to comment that the State Park is beautiful and why mess up a good thing if it's working, keep it that way. I have also had 39 other comments from other residents of the area and I'd like to just turn them into you.

Chair Hart thanked Ms. Bailey for the written comments.

**Louise Barcus, Individual** – Good morning. I'm Louise Barcus and I'm also a resident from Morro Bay. The majority of Morro Bay citizens are not experts. We just know that we live and love to live in Morro Bay because the natural beauty of the coast mixed with the forest parks as Morro Bay State Park. We don't want changes into this park into an asphalt camping parking lot. We love those trees. Obviously you know that from all the other people. We love those trees. And as we speak of the small natural park, quiet beauty, campers pitching their tents and little boy scouts doing Indian dances, that's what we love about our parks, and that is compatible with the habitat there. So I come to plead my case. I've lived in Los Angeles. I know Malibu State Park, it's large beautiful trees and we don't want that. We want a small rustic habitat comparable and compatible with Morro Bay. So I'm pleading today, please halt this project until a thorough investigation takes place, and compare what was promised with what was actually done. Please save our trees.

**Lily Stewart, Individual** – Hello. My name is Lily Stewart and I live in Morro Bay, and after the last meeting Patti Dunton, who was representing the Salinan Nation, asked Mr. Rayburn to update the DPR's procedure on selection of Native American monitors, and although he agreed Mr. Rayburn did not correct this slight toward the Salinans. At a tour given by Mr. Franco last month at the campground, John Birch was up representing the Salinans asked again to be included in the process. Mr. Franco agreed. I think that it is important for the staff to keep their promises. Since you are the public representative, perhaps you are going to have to make sure that the staff do in fact follow up on them. Thank you.

**Dr. David Dubbink, Individual** – Thank you. First I just wanted to express my appreciation to you, being here right now and listening to this group of people who feel somewhat frustrated in that they've not been able to be heard. And I also want to express my appreciation to Mr. Donaldson for representing the historic issues which are a great concern to people in the community. And prior to your arrival, I can show you photographs, the removal work was being done with sledge hammers and breakers, and I think since you have come onto the scene that there is a decided lift in what is going on. I live actually in Los Osos. I camped in the place when I was a grad student. I have a doctorate in environmental planning, former Chief Planner, Executive Director of the Coastal Commission, Executive Officer of the California Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and a Professor at Cal Poly. I also am a consultant in this area and yesterday was consulting to the National Park Service and we were talking about issues like this, the balance problem. You've already seen a copy of the plan, unfortunately our graphics are not as grand because we were not exactly permitted the same thing. I was wondering if someone could hand these up to save me the walk (Superintendent Franco distributed Dr. Dubbink's handouts to the commissioners). Thank you Nick. There's several things that just weren't mentioned was the pines and cypress that are in the park were planted from seedlings that were donated by Cal Poly in the 1930s and are very, very much part of the historic landscape. And the other thing, I would invite to Mr. Donaldson who's done some, I might add, excellent work, Will Rogers and La Purísima Mission, we're aware of what's going on. We want to see that here and anything you can do to help the Parks Department find their way would be much appreciated. The thing I did want to say was, quickly, that there's a notion that somehow what's being done really represents the will of the people of California and it's the locals verses, filling in the natural thing, demand verses duty on this. They did a survey with the 1988 master plan, and you should feel very worried about what they're doing to this master plan because you've just passed a master plan and maybe, you know, five, eight years from now someone's actually going to be carrying that thing out. They did a survey and the survey said, they asked, what's your general philosophy of land use of this park? Provide more recreations 6%, maximum development 15%, minimum development 27% leave it as it is 36%. That's 63%, thank you, for keeping it pretty much the same, 21% for changing. What new or improved facilities are needed at Morro Bay? None 53%. So that's the state view and you're also hearing the local view. The other thing I would note was the EIR did not include plans for the campgrounds. So no one really was able to comment on this even though it was going through the process. The thing that I would ask you to do is perhaps reassess your policy on this. There were policies that were adopted then to protect the campground. I show what they're...

Chair Hart noted that Dr. Dubbink's three minutes had elapsed.

**Dr. Dubbink** – I, could very quickly... just mention the display here. We're showing the giant spaces that are being put in in the present for asphalt, and the reason that they're having to move and change the furniture is they're changing the scale of what's going on in the historic landscaping and Mr. Donaldson was saying how this landscaping goes back to the '30s and is part of the scene. And certainly should demarche sites but I'm looking at one that's 24 feet wide by 80 feet long here. I'm looking at tandem spaces that are 45 feet deep with 20 foot wide car parking next to it. Up at the top of the diagram there's a trio of spaces that are 35 feet long. These are issues, I'm not sure how it could be solved in three and now approaching four minutes, but somehow we would like to have a

forum to discuss this with the park planners.

Commissioner Cotchett asked Dr. Dubbink to repeat what he had said about something not being included in the EIR.

**Dr. Dubbink** – The EIR for the project. I would say it was 2001 as I recall. It does not include a project plan. There is not a project plan diagram in the EIR.

Commissioner Cotchett repeated Dr. Dubbink's statement and asked if he was positive of this.

**Dr. Dubbink** – I am completely positive.

Commissioner Cotchett noted that he was not doubting Dr. Dubbink, but rather ensuring that everyone present understood what had been said.

**Dr. Dubbink** – It is a relatively remarkable thing. If you read the California Environmental Quality Act, it does not require that you have it. You put in a project description, which they do in words, but they do not include something that would be known as a plan document. So if you're looking at the effect on historic resources you're completely unable to see it at the micro scale of what you're holding in your hand.

A dialog ensued during which Commissioner Cotchett asked Dr. Dubbink several questions: What courses the Doctor taught at Cal Poly, if had spoken with anyone in State Parks regarding the information he presented today, if he received replies to his written inquiries to State Parks, whether or not the replies were responsive to his concerns, and if he had approached his State Senator with his concerns:

**Dr. Dubbink** – I teach environmental planning and I also have a course in CEQA (the California Environmental Quality Act). I have talked with Mr. Franco, shortly after he took his position. I have written enumerable emails to people in the Parks Department and the Historic Preservation Office. I would say I get one response for maybe ten, or maybe two responses for ten comments. No (the replies are not responsive). I have not myself (taken these issues to his State Senator). I believe, though, Betty Winholtz had that discussion. If you're not Malibu Creek, it just seems like a golden thing... Listen to me on this. We're the other side. This is the wrong way to do it.

Commissioner Cotchett asked if the Commission had received anything in writing from Dr. Dubbink, and asked if the Doctor would provide this information in writing personally to Commissioner Cotchett.

**Dr. Dubbink** – You have nothing in writing from me. I would be more than willing to give you a collection of (inaudible)... I will send it to you sir.

Commissioner Cotchett thanked Dr. Dubbink.

Commissioner Shriver addressed Dr. Dubbink, noting that the Doctor had stated that he would like to have a public forum for discussing these issues. Commissioner Shriver stated that as the Commission had no action item today on this subject, the Commission would be pleased to receive from Dr. Dubbink or others information that could be discussed in this forum at another time.

**Dr. Dubbink** – Well early in the process of discussions with Nick, I could share with you requests that were articulated by the community and the things that they wished to see done.

Commissioner Shriver thanked Dr. Dubbink.

**Mandy Davis, Individual** – Hi, my name is Mandy Davis. I am a biologist, a naturalist, and environmental educator in the town of Morro Bay, and I have the privilege to educate children and their parents about their environmental responsibility, and in a relationship of all the critters and creatures and the habitats in our environment, which happens to be the estuary and the surrounding areas of the watershed including the state campground and I'm here in that capacity. I have watched the State

Parks staff make their studies and they have been peremptory to say the least, and they have been incomplete, and people have made their decisions based on these. So I've come to ask you three things, actually four. One of them is to, because those studies were peremptory when it comes to the Monarch Butterflies, the raptors, and the Shoulderband Snails, I would like to ask that other staff members from other entities in the state go in there and revisit the studies. Because you guys have a policy of having only State Parks staff be your experts, this has created a real problem and we haven't had full studies and we have not had complete information going out to the people. So if you could revisit the grove, because what they have done is they've actually reduced the size grove. It's much larger than what they say it is. They've also talked about removing some of the trees around the raptors' nest and unfortunately they're leaving those particular trees but what they have not addressed is the fact that the branching trees, the trees that surround, the ones that are really necessary for the viability of those species, they're going to be removing a good portion of those and they haven't even addressed that and they've showed you pictures that were very, very narrow in focus. The other is what I would like to see is some mitigation measures being looked for the Shoulderband Snail, because they have inappropriately used heavy equipment in some already sited Shoulderband Snail sites and they have also destroyed definite habitat that they have. The fourth thing I want to ask you is I wouldn't be standing here and I don't believe any of these people would be standing here, is if you guys would look at a policy of when you go into a state park and it's adjacent to a town or adjacent to a community, that you would consider not only using your own experts but allowing those communities to get together with the State Parks staff, provide their own experts when they're doing the environmental impact reports, and to come together and provide a complete report which you are not getting right now. So if you could possibly look into changing your policies, and not just having the State Park staff give you the reports, but the communities which they're in allow to give you their reports from their experts, this would be really helpful. And maybe this won't have to happen again. Thanks.

**Joe Lawson, Individual** – Hi. I'm Joe Lawson, and I live in Morro Bay. 60 years ago, the grandfathers of my generation built this campsite with intentions of having their families and their children and their children's children, myself, spend time at these sites and enjoy them, and it seems a shame that people would modify these campsites when it's really defacing what it really is. When someone goes to a campsite to camp, they usually have the intention of spending time in a natural environment and to modify a natural environment is missing the point. So, I think it takes away character from our state parks and it just seems a bit odd to take trees out of a forest that is perfectly healthy where it stands. Thank you.

**Betty Winholtz, Individual** – Commissioners. As a City Council member of Morro Bay, our council would like you to know that they still maintain a concern about this campground, that rather than send a letter because our meeting Monday night ran past eleven o'clock at night, that to carry with you our unanimous vote against this project that we did earlier. And on behalf of the local Sierra Club and our environmental center in the City of San Luis that they also have been very supportive of our position. I would like to read for you a quote out of our local newspaper, *The Tribune*, that was in there last week and it's just very short, it says "State Park's spokesman Joe Rosato said though the Commission can ratify general plans and name and classify parks it's function is mainly advisory. Quote, "There's no requirement that you follow their recommendations" he says. "In items such as the Morro Bay Rehabilitation Project, they provide guidance." Unquote. And, if State Parks had, in good faith, I think, acted on your directive, or on your strong suggestion two months ago to work with us, that we would have taken this as it was, maybe as meant, as simply instructional that this is your job. However, because they haven't in good faith worked with us and followed your intent that they be cooperative then we feel it's more, almost maybe shining you on, which then shines us on because you're our public representatives. You're the public, we're the public, and you're here to speak for us when we're not here. And so we feel that we wanted you to be aware of this and feel that maybe you have a concern with this particular unit, and maybe it goes beyond that. And so for

you to be aware of that quote and I will give you that article. Several of the things that Mr. Franco said and/or took credit for, I would suggest that they did out of duress, not because they wanted to or because we asked them to, but in a sense that they were forced into a corner, and that is having done the correct Shoulderband Snail protocols which were done after the fact, after the construction project was awarded. Doing the historic listing, which was supposed to have been done many years ago, now they're saying they're going to do it. It hasn't been done. The raptors, that was only protected because we said, you know, they're there. So we want you to be aware of this and I guess what we're asking is if they're going to take the attitude that they don't have to listen to you, then as individuals we know that you're each actually very powerful people and very influential in the State of California, even nationally, and as a group, I think you're even stronger. So we would encourage you to actually communicate perhaps with Mr. Mike Chrisman who's the Secretary of the Natural Resources for the state and if he needs to hear from you and find out that there's a problem in his staff, that we would encourage you and support you to let him know that. Thank you.

Commissioner Scherman stated that she had a question for the speaker, and asked the speaker to repeat her name. Commissioner Scherman then stated that it was her understanding that the Morro Bay City Council had met and voted four-to-one not to do anything about the campground project. She asked for clarification from Ms. Winholtz why she was now informing the Commission that the City Council is still concerned about the project. Commissioner Scherman noted that Ms. Winholtz allowed the commissioners to assume that the Morro Bay City Council still supported the opposition of the campground project, but that if this was the case Commissioner Scherman suggested that the Council should have sent a letter stating this. Commissioner Scherman also noted that she is a city councilmember herself, and as such she was aware that the City of Morro Bay does not own Morro Bay State Park. Commissioner Scherman asked for clarification from Ms. Winholtz as to why the City of Morro Bay would be making decisions about a property they did not own.

**Ms. Winholtz** – Okay. The whole campground is within our city limits, and they have to get permits from us. And that's where we have our involvement. We have a very strong docent program in our community, and we have a lot of people that are concerned about what's going on there, and in our museum. Thank you for saying that. Let me clarify that in expressing the concern, my strong encouragement to you to deal with Mr. Chrisman or however you feel you can best be effective, is personal and I apologize for not clarifying that. What did happen Monday night at the City Council meeting was that I had written a letter that was of a tone that the council was not willing to approve, because it was after 11:00 p.m., they were not willing to stay and rewrite the letter and so one of the council members suggested that I bring with me some of our old letters of correspondence that showed dissatisfaction with the campground program as proposed, and share those with you, and what I did was walk away from my home without another binder that I intended to bring, so I don't have those letters to give you. I'd be glad to send them.

Commissioner Scherman stated that it would not be necessary to send the letters, but that they could be sent to Director Coleman at State Parks if Ms. Winholtz wished. Commissioner Scherman further stated that she was concerned that Ms. Winholtz gave the appearance of speaking for the Morro Bay City Council. She asked that Ms. Winholtz please preface her comments that include the City Council to note that she does not represent the Council.

**Ms. Winholtz** – It would be more honest. Exactly. And I apologize because I did mean to do that after my initial comment which was to let you know we did discuss it this week and they wanted you to know that we were still concerned. After that it was me.

Commissioner Scherman thanked Ms. Winholtz.

Commissioner Cotchett asked Ms. Winholtz if the City of Morro Bay had ever exercised any control over the permits she mentioned. Commissioner Cotchett noted that Commissioner Scherman was well aware of this process given her role as a city mayor. He asked Ms. Winholtz if it was true that



the in fact the city could not exercise any control over the permits.

**Ms. Winholtz** – We can say yes or no, and we did say no.

Commissioner Cotchett thanked Ms. Winholtz. Commissioner Scherman noted that such decisions could also be appealed.

**Ms. Winholtz** – And we did. The City actually did a revocation hearing with the Coastal Commission.

Chair Hart noted that the revocation was denied by the Coastal Commission with a vote of three to four.

**Ms. Winholtz** – And it was denied three to four. It was one vote off.

Chair Hart introduced Lenny Koepsell as the last registered speaker:

**Lenny Koepsell, Individual** – I'm a resident and a student in Morro Bay, and I wanted to speak on the issue of pavement and trees, etc. Camping is being outdoors and being with family, and it's getting out of the tent in the morning and exploring amongst the trees and collecting feathers and such things. And most importantly it's being somewhere different than your own home, not an over civilized paved setting. And I believe that maintaining the feeling of being outdoors is not quite there, and I've explored the campground and I believe that the construction is being a little too much on the pavement and the trees, and I wanted to voice my opinion on that and that's it. Thank you.

Chair Hart asked if there were any unregistered speakers on this agenda item. There being none, Chair Hart closed public comment on this item and asked if there were any comments from the commissioners.

Commissioner Witt expressed his thanks to the speakers for their interest and passion with regard to Morro Bay State Park. Commissioner Witt noted that the speakers' message had been heard and that this input is important to the commissioners. He also noted that one way to preserve the greatness of the State Park System is through the cooperation and passion of concerned citizens like the ones who spoke today.

Commissioner Cotchett stated that he joined Commissioner Witt in his comments, noting the exceptional value of standing up to be heard.

Chair Hart stated that she also wished to join Commissioners Cotchett and Witt in their comments, and she expressed Commissions' appreciation for the speakers' efforts. Chair Hart also apologized for the necessity of enforcing time limits, noting that she hoped this had not been misunderstood.

Commissioner Shriver asked Director Coleman if there was a next step for the Commission to take on this issue.

Director Coleman replied that the campground project had been approved by the California Coastal Commission, and that the necessary permits had been obtained from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game. She explained that State Parks was required to consult with these agencies regarding endangered species on the campground site. Director Coleman further noted that the project had been funded and that construction was currently underway. She explained the certain aspects of the construction, such as the paving, had to be completed in specific months, that the paving would be completed within the next few months, and that construction should be completed by March 2005. Director Coleman stated that any changes to the project at this time would require renegotiation of the construction contract.

Commissioner Shriver asked for clarification that there was no potential action of the Commission that could address the concerns raised by today's speakers. Director Coleman replied that this topic was not a decision-making item for the Commission, and that this agenda item was informational.

Commissioner Shriver stated that he wished to make it clear to those present that the Commission had no power to make changes to the campground project beyond activities that individual commissioners may undertake personally.

Commissioner de la Rocha stated that she wished to join the other commissioners in thanking the speakers, particularly the younger speakers who addressed the Commission today. She added that she enjoyed seeing young people taking an interest in local politics, and that it was her hope that these young people would continue to voice their interests.

Commissioner Shriver noted that he agreed with the comments made by Commissioner de la Rocha, adding that the people who spoke today should not be satisfied with just having expressed their opinions in this venue; he suggested they should also contact their state legislators. Commissioner Shriver then reiterated that the Commission had no actual legal power to address the concerns that had been raised regarding the Morro Bay State Park campground rehabilitation project.

#### **OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT** (on subjects other than those listed on the agenda)

Chair Hart announced that there was one registered speaker for the Open Public Comment portion of the meeting. She then called this speaker:

**Robin Mitchell, Individual** – This is on Soka University, which was not on the agenda but some people have referred to it. I wish to protest the insidious racial policies of those who are encouraging the State Parks to purchase Soka University. The first that I was aware of this was at a Cold Creek Canyon Property Association potluck in October of 1990, and one of the members got up and said, “We have got to stop those Japanese they bought the property for cash.” And I’m also friends with an employee of Soka University, who at the time that she was considering employment was told not to get mixed up with those slant-eyed people. I have, in the 62 years that I’ve been in the Calabasas area, Soka University is the first property owner of that property to open their property to the public. They have bent over backwards to get along with the people in the area, and yes?

Commissioner Shriver asked Ms. Mitchell for clarification that she was not implying that any members of the State Parks’ Commission staff, nor the commissioners themselves shared these sentiments.

**Robin Mitchell** – No. This is, this is the sentiment of that massive avalanche of humanity that tumbled into the Santa Monica Mountains the last half of the 20th Century. Not state, nothing from the State Parks, and in fact on the side the people that I know in the State Parks say they like Soka.

Commissioner Shriver pointed out to Ms. Mitchell that her subject was not one that the Commission had any jurisdiction over. He asked Ms. Mitchell if she could please allow the Commission to move on to its next agenda item.

**Robin Mitchell** – Okay. Because people want the State Parks to purchase Soka. That’s the point and I’m saying please take this into consideration before you purchase it. The landscaping is high intensive maintenance. The purchase price is just a small amount of it. So why I’m saying this is, please take this into consideration when people approach you on purchasing Soka University for State Parks.

Commissioner Shriver and Chair Hart thanked Ms. Mitchell for her comments.

**Ruth Gerson, California Equestrian Trails & Lands Coalition** – Okay. Number one, Commissioner Scherman I agree with you. I should have you given you credibility for when I spoke about the organizations. And the only other thing is, on the paper that I gave you, at the bottom section where it says State Park Trails Policy, if you will look at the criteria which I wrote before you, I won’t repeat them because of the time frame but I would appreciate it if you would read it. Thank you very kindly.

Chair Hart thanked the speakers and closed the open public comment period.

### **Discussion and action to establish Commission committees**

Chair Hart introduced this last agenda item. She explained that at the May 14th Commission meeting it was determined that the Chair would establish and appoint members to three committees. Chair Hart announced that these committees would be the Program and Policy Committee, the Concessions, Enterprise, and Fiscal Committee, and the Executive Committee. Chair Hart clarified that the commissioners had each received descriptions of these committees. The Chair explained that in making assignments to the committees she paired a newer member of the Commission with a member who had served on the Commission for some time, while adhering as best she could to the individual commissioners' desires. She then announced her proposed committee assignments and asked if there would be any discussion regarding the committees or the appointments.

A discussion took place during which Commissioner Shriver, Chair Hart, and Commissioner Witt agreed to make one change to the committee assignments so that the final assignments read as follows:

Program & Policy Committee - Commissioner Hart and Commissioner Kautz.

Concession, Enterprise, & Fiscal Committee - Commissioner Cotchett and Commissioner Tagami.

Executive Committee - Commissioner Scherman and Commissioner Witt.

Chair Hart noted that the Commission's newly-elected Chair and Vice-Chair, Commissioners Shriver and Eastwood, and were not assigned to committees and would therefore serve as alternates to each committee as necessary.

Chair Hart asked for a motion to establish these committees and their membership as described. Motion Commissioner Cotchett, second Commissioner Kautz. The commissioners voted unanimously to establish the three committees and the committee membership as described.

A brief dialogue took place during which Commissioner Cotchett and Chief Counsel La Franchi discussed the open meeting requirements for the committees. Chief Counsel La Franchi clarified that the presence of two or more commissioners at a committee meeting would require that meeting to be publicly-noticed and open to the public.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Hart asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cotchett made a motion that the meeting be adjourned in the name of Commissioner Phillip Tagami's father, as Commissioner Tagami had received word during the meeting that his father had passed away. Chair Hart adjourned the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Newly-elected Chair Bobby Shriver expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Hart for her service as Chair. Commissioner Hart thanked him for his comments.

ATTEST: These minutes were approved by the California State Park and Recreation Commission on July 16, 2004, at its duly noticed public meeting in Los Angeles, California.

By: ORIGINAL SIGNED BY Date: 9-17-04

Louis Nastro  
Assistant to the Commission  
For Ruth Coleman, Director  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Secretary to the Commission