

Meeting of the
CALIFORNIA STATE PARK and RECREATION COMMISSION
Palm Springs Riviera Resort
1600 North Indian Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, California

Minutes of the Meeting - Saturday, April 27, 2002

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Joseph Cotchett, Chairman
Caryl Hart, Vice Chair
Eugene La Pietra
Paul Junger Witt
Robert Shriver (Participating via teleconference as permitted by Govt. Code Section 11123)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Raquelle De La Rocha
Clint Eastwood

STAFF PRESENT

Bill Berry, Deputy Director, Park Operations
Brian Cahill, Regional Interpretive Specialist, Colorado Desert District
Rick Campbell, Superintendent, Mount San Jacinto State Park
Zack Chambers, Ranger, Inland Empire District
Ruth Coleman, Acting Director
Jeff David, Lifeguard, Inland Empire District
Jerry Frates, Supervising Ranger, Mount San Jacinto State Park
Eric Hanson, Ranger, Mount San Jacinto State Park
Tim La Franchi, Chief Council
Barney Matsumoto, Senior Associate Landscape Architect, Southern Service Center
Karen Miner, Associate Resource Ecologist, Southern Service Center
Louis Nastro, Assistant to the State Park and Recreation Commission
Clay Phillips, Chief, Southern Service Center
Roy Stearns, Deputy Director, Communications
Dave Van Cleve, District Superintendent, Colorado Desert District
Gary Watts, District Superintendent, Inland Empire District

VISITORS REGISTERED/REPRESENTING

Joyce Burk/Southern California Forests Committee-Sierra Club
Jim Derryberry/Big Sur Lodge
Gene Frick/Sierra Club
Bob Hargreaves/Boy Scout Troup 199
Sue Johnson/Desert Riders-Back Country Horsemen
James Lewis/Thousand Trails
George Meyer/Individual
Mary Ann Miller/Individual

Jeffrey Morgan/Individual
Rob Parkins/Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority
Murray Rosenthal/Sierra Club California
Pete Spencer/Back Country Horsemen
Joan Taylor/Individual
Randy Young/Will Rogers Cooperative Association

CALL TO ORDER

Legal notice having been given, the California State Park and Recreation Commission meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Chairman Joseph Cotchett. Chairman Cotchett asked each of the commissioners to introduce themselves. Chairman Cotchett then introduced Acting Director Ruth Coleman and Deputy Director of Park Operations Bill Berry.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 26, 2001 MEETING IN EUREKA

Chairman Cotchett asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the October 26, 2002 meeting. There being no changes, Chairman Cotchett asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion Commissioner Shriver, second Commissioner La Pietra. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Acting Director Ruth Coleman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked District staff for the outstanding site tour that took place the previous day.

Acting Director Coleman announced that the State Senate officially confirmed the appointment of commissioners Eugene La Pierta, Raquelle de la Rocha, Robert (Bobby) Shriver, and Clint Eastwood. Acting Director Coleman reported that California State Parks plans to continue the implementation of former Director Rusty Areias' initiatives, as Areias is on a leave of absence to pursue a state senate seat. Director Areias and Governor Gray Davis are dedicated to promoting urban parks and elevating cultural and historical resources within State Parks. Director Areias felt strongly that the department should let the public know what State Parks are all about. The department will continue to "get the word out" to the public.

Acting Director Coleman provided attendance and other related statistics. Attendance has continued to increase. In fiscal year 1999 there were 71 million visitors. Last year there were over 80 million visitors, and this year we expect to have over 90 million visitors. Many factors are contributing to the increase in the number of visitors, among them fee reductions, the events of September 11, 2001, and that fact that more people are "discovering" parks. Acting Director Coleman expressed excitement about more people discovering parks and enjoying parks. After 9/11 the State Department of Tourism collected anecdotal evidence that people are taking their vacations closer to home. People are doing less long distance traveling. The State Park System helps nurture our own citizens concurrent with our providing a place for people to enjoy close to home. The good news is that this 20 million increase in visitors is having a very important economic impact on the communities that where state parks exist. The department estimates that we've generated an additional \$800 million in added revenue to local communities surrounding state parks, and the yearly economic impact of the State Park System is about \$7 billion a year. The department believes it is providing a very important economic counter to the slight recession that the state has been in.

Proposition 40 Update – Proposition 40 is a \$2.6 billion bond, available for parks and open space projects throughout the state. \$225 million dollars is allocated from Proposition 40 to the State Park

System. Governor Davis will be releasing a list of initiatives for the first year's spending at the end of this month. The Legislature will be deliberating over the prioritization of Proposition 40 spending over the next few months. The Legislature hopes to spend the money over a period of three to four years, rather than spending the Proposition 40 money all in one year. Proposition 40 provides a very important opportunity to continue to build on what was started with Proposition 12. As there was really no money appropriated for parks in the 90s, Proposition 12 (passed in 2000) funds are now all spent. Proposition 40 will provide an opportunity to grow the State Park System and move it forward.

Earth Day – This year's Earth Day was a very exciting day for State Parks. The California State Park Foundation donated \$96 thousand in grants for Earth day events. There were 48 events in 23 counties. More than four thousand volunteers participated. They were able to plant 900 trees, 2,300 native plants, and 200 pounds of native grass seed. There was a lot of trash to clean up, and 127 new recycling bins were installed. It was a terrific day across the State of California with thousands of families rediscovering parks and the California State Parks foundation was a very vital partner for us. The California State Parks Foundation also brought in many additional private sector partners that helped with funding the event, resulting in events that were more fun for the public.

Big Basin Redwoods State Park – The 100th Anniversary of Big Basin occurs this September. Big Basin is our oldest State Park, established in 1902. June 8 will start with a 100-day countdown kickoff event. There will be 100 days of celebrations that will culminate on September 13th with the Anniversary Celebration.

Marketing – The latest *Sunset* Magazine highlights "Great Escapes" in an article on the west's 28 best state parks. Out of the 28 parks featured, 16 are California State Parks. This illustrates how significant California State Parks are. In other marketing news we have conducted some consumer research with very interesting results. We discovered that much of the public does not know that state parks can be beaches or historic sites. The surveys and focus groups were largely funded by the California State Park Foundation. A new improved version of California Escapes, the State Parks' guide, will soon appear in grocery stores, funded by the private sector.

Proposition 12 – The department has acquired a great deal of property in the last 12 months, including Mill Creek and 25,000 acres of redwoods. While the department is excited about expanding the state park system, we also recognize that we are going to need more staff to address public safety and resource protection. The department will be working on this. We also have a lot of development projects in the works, including the rehabilitation of Bolsa Chica State Beach and building new visitor centers. At Crystal Cove State Park we are investing in the restoration of the historic cottages and building a new campground where the mobile park is now.

Deferred Maintenance – One of the major initiatives that Governor Davis created about three years ago was addressing the deferred maintenance backlog in the state system. \$157 million of general fund money was appropriated to State Parks for this purpose. We have spent all the money in three years. We have well over 500 projects in the works, which will be completed this year. A backlog still exists, and we have a lot of work left to go. In the current budget we are planning to spend \$10 million out of Proposition 40 to continue addressing our backlog of deferred maintenance.

Budget – State Parks will have to make cuts in the current year. This will primarily manifest itself as a hiring freeze. We have a 1.7 % cut in our baseline budget but this will be manageable. Three budget hearings have so far taken place. The legislature is pleased with State Parks performance.

Legislation – State Parks is sponsoring a bill this year to initiate many reforms to the off highway vehicle program, continuing a remarkable process that our Division Chief for OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) started three years ago. Division Chief Dave Widell put the environmentalists and off-roaders in the same room with equestrians and trail advocates. The environmentalists and the off-road advocates had never sat together before. For the past three years they have been meeting every other month. A party was held to celebrate passage of legislation that they jointly worked on, and many relationships were forged. This process was a testimonial to the success of bringing parties together and working through very difficult issues. This year we have a very substantive reform bill which both sides are endorsing, and they have all agreed not to jam each other with hostile amendments. A bill that is reforming the OHV program was put on the consent calendar in the first policy committee meeting. Every member was hearing from both sides that they are working on the bill together. We are proud to bring the OHV program into compliance with environmental law.

Chairman Cotchett thanked Acting Director Coleman. Chairman Cotchett commented on the exceptionally fine California State Park system, and praised the magic of Mount San Jacinto State Park. He further commented that it is people that really make the system what it is. Chairman Cotchett stated that he was amazed at these employees that had to work in the snow, in all sorts of conditions, even being shot at at times. Chairman Cotchett concluded that it is not a square foot of ground that makes a park, it is the employees that make that square foot of ground available to the public. He asked that everyone present thank these folks for their work.

RETIREMENT CERTIFICATES

Chairman Cotchett asked Colorado Desert District Superintendent Dave Van Cleve to read the names of the State Parks employees who had recently retired.

Superintendent Van Cleve read the retirement certificates for the following department employees:

Daniel Abeyta	26 Years 1 Month
Alan F. Beilharz	29 Years 2 Months
Glenn E. Burch	34 Years 10 Months
Ronald Carrillo	26 Years 7 Months
Robert C. Doyle	23 Years
Lawrence E. Ferri	23 Years 9 Months
Marcia Lines Flohaug	32 Years 7 Months
Esther J. Goodhue	9 Years 9 Months
Dale L. Hinkle	10 Years 11 Months
Toki M. Hipner	15 Years 7 Months
Edwin J. Howe	11 Years
John W. Jones	28 Years 10 Months
Ronald L. Jones	3 Months
Douglas K. Kauffman	29 Years 6 Months
Lorraine Lima	38 Years 9 Months
Pedro Lomosad	35 Years 10 Months
Richard T. Miller	20 Years 10 Months
Shirley M. Moody	39 Years 10 Months
Penelope J. O’Halloran	41 Years 2 Months
David W. Schmid	5 Years
Tully B. Van Slyke	5 Years 11 Months
Judith A. Whitcomb	16 Years 7 Months
Mary R. Wright	28 Years 6 Months

Chairman Cotchett thanked Superintendent Van Cleve, and stated that he could think of no other state agency with more committed people, where employees stay for 25 to 30 years and more. Chairman Cotchett stated that this was truly extraordinary.

APPROVAL OF MEMORIAL REDWOOD GROVES

Chairman Cotchett called on Commission Vice Chair Caryl Hart to make this presentation. Vice Chair Hart explained that California's redwoods extend from the Santa Cruz mountains to the Oregon border. She further explained that Save-the-Redwoods League and Sempervirens Fund request the establishment of these groves, which are named at the request of individuals who have made significant contributions to Save-the-Redwoods League and Sempervirens Fund. Vice Chair Hart read the names and locations of the groves.

As requested by Save-the-Redwoods League:

Gwendolyn Winifred De Camp Memorial Grove at Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park
Ewald-King Grove at Navarro River Redwoods State Park
Paulina June and George Pollak Grove at Limekiln State Park
Eleanor Vernon Hamilton Grove at Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park
Fernandez McMillen Family Grove at Navarro River Redwoods State Park

As requested by Sempervirens Fund:

Ellie Mansfield Redwood Grove at Big Basin Redwoods State Park

Vice Chair Hart read the resolution to establish these groves. She then asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Motion Commissioner La Pietra, second Commissioner Witt. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the establishment of these memorial redwood groves.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Cotchett opened the public meeting 10:29 a.m.

Approval of the General Plan for Mount San Jacinto State Park

Chairman Cotchett provided a definition of a general plan for the members of the public in attendance. Chairman Cotchett then asked Colorado Desert District Superintendent Dave Van Cleve to present the Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan.

Superintendent Van Cleve thanked the commissioners and members of the public for coming to Palm Springs. Superintendent Van Cleve then thanked the staff and members of the public who contributed to the general plan project and worked so hard on it for three and a half years. Superintendent Van Cleve provided some historical information on Mount San Jacinto State Park and then introduced general plan project leader Barney Matsumoto.

Barney Matsumoto gave a slide presentation that highlighted the elements of the general plan, and provided details of the general plan process that began in 1998. Essential components of the general plan process included four public meetings and numerous other meeting with stakeholder organizations and public agencies. Over 3,000 hours of staff time were invested in the collection and analysis of resource data for the plan. Mr. Matsumoto also presented the numerous issues and challenges that arose during the planning process, and how stakeholders played a role in resolving these issues.

Public Comment on the General Plan for Mount San Jacinto State Park

Assistant to the Commission Louis Nastro called the speakers in the order they had registered:

Gene Frick, Sierra Club – The speaker stated a concern that intrusions on the mountain that had already taken their toll will be intensified. These concerns are heightened by statements within the preliminary general plan. The speaker objects to adopting this general plan, believing that the plan fails to give a compelling business plan for obtaining its goals. Some of the goals are stated in the context that they are for remedial or rehabilitation purposes. This is an indirect acknowledgement of the inability of State Parks to effectively manage the visitors that are already using the park. Many of the goals are simply statements about what State Parks is already mandated to do, and a general plan is not required for their execution. The speaker called attention to a letter of November 25, 2000, in which the San Geronio Chapter of the Sierra Club explicitly raised the issue of the necessity for a carrying capacity survey. Section 501.96 sets a boundary on alternatives to this. It prohibits any alternative which permits or facilitates usage beyond carrying capacity. This plan ignores (VERP) NPRA Act 95-625, which requires each park's general management plan to include identification and implementation commitments for visitor carrying capacities for all areas of the unit. Whereas State Parks would postpone general capacity surveys, this requires that they first be included in the general plan as does Section 5019.5.

Chairman Cotchett called on Southern Service Center Chief Clay Phillips to respond.

Clay Phillips – In the 1930s and 1940s when carrying capacity came into play it pertained to the number of cattle grazing the land. However, this has proven over the last 20 years to be a too-simplistic approach when it comes to managing park units. The U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and California State Parks have been working to develop a practical concept for identifying the appropriate degree of usage within the world of park management. There are two aspects to the current thinking regarding carrying capacity. There is a social carrying capacity which relates to the number of people and how it affects the visitor's experience of a park. There is also a resource carrying capacity. In both of cases you have to establish what is the desired condition as a baseline. It has to be determined what the desired visitor experience is, and what is the desired condition of the natural and cultural resources. Page 56 in the plan *does* address carrying capacity. This general plan is the first step in a big picture of how carrying capacity is managed. It is the first step in which we are identifying the vision for both resource condition and visitor experience. Subsequent steps will actually identify more specific numbers of people, and will measure and monitor those affects on both the resources and the visitor experience. It is an ongoing, dynamic process. The general plan is not a development plan as identified in the Public Resources Code.

Gene Frick – We ask that the Commission not accept any part of the plan.

Chairman Cotchett asked Gene Frick if the Sierra Club has a written substitution for the plan.

Gene Frick – I am not aware that we have a written plan. We certainly would be willing to cooperate and help with a new plan.

Rob Parkins, General Manager of the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority – Mr. Parkins stated that the Winter Park Authority views their relationship with State Parks as a partnership. He thanked District Superintendents Dave Van Cleve and Gary Watts for fostering an outstanding relationship, and he thanked State Parks staff members Jerry Fratas, Eric Hanson, Brian Cahill, and Barney Matsumoto for their help during the planning process. Mr. Parkins stated that as operator of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, the Winter Park Authority (WPA) is a significant portal to Mount San Jacinto State Park. The speaker concluded by saying that the WPA looks forward to continuing its partnership with State Parks, and that WPA supports the general plan and looks forward to working with State Parks on a management plan for Mount San Jacinto State Park.

Vice Chair Caryl Hart made a suggestion to Mr. Parkins that the tram should better identify Mount San Jacinto as a state park. Vice Chair Hart also suggested that the Winter Park Authority develop something on the order of a tram discount for State Parks annual pass holders, to encourage use of the park by those who already visit and support California State Parks.

Mr. Parkins informed the Commission that the Winter Park Authority was already in the process of obtaining a new sign designed to help visitors recognize that they are in a state park. The new sign will state: "Palm Springs Aerial Tramway - Mount San Jacinto State Park."

Mary Ann Miller – The speaker stated that she was concerned about the number of international visitors not having sufficient signs in languages other than English. Ms. Miller also stated that she wanted the wilderness areas of the park to stay as they were, and that she was concerned about the impact of the visitors on the park's resources. Ms. Miller stated that she believed it would be destructive to the wilderness to expand the Winter Park Authority facility.

George Meyer – Mr. Meyer stated that he was a professor of Geology and Environmental Science at the College of the Desert. Mr. Meyer stated that as those who spoke before, he too has concerns about the problems caused by the tramway and any expansion of the tramway. He said he feels as though all the interpretation should be done before people are allowed to leave the Mountain Station. He wants to see interpretation for the public in the Valley Station. He believes the public needs to be educated prior to taking the tram. He also let the Commission know that there is a septic problem at the Mountain Station. Mr. Meyer stated that the basic consideration must be the sustainability of the natural resources at Mount San Jacinto State Park. He doesn't think this can be accomplished with the potential of greatly increased usage in the future.

Colorado Desert District Superintendent Dave Van Cleve was recognized by Chairman Cotchett. Superintendent Van Cleve made a statement that education and interpretation are key goals of California State Parks and at Mount San Jacinto State Park.

Jeffrey Morgan – Mr. Morgan stated that he was a frequent user of Mount San Jacinto Park. He said that the ranger station should be moved from Long Valley up to the existing buildings at the head of the tram to lessen the effects of everything that goes on around them. He is also concerned that the trails are crowded. He wants to see the trail through Tamarack Valley to Mount San Jacinto reopened to split the user load. Mr. Morgan informed the Commission that the U.S. Forest Service limits permits on holidays and Sundays to 25 permits to try to address the overcrowding on trails and suggests that California State Parks may want to look at doing this as a way to disburse visitors to other trails.

Chairman Cotchett stated that splitting the user load on the trails is a very good suggestion.

Joyce Burk, Southern California Forests Committee-Sierra Club – Ms. Burk stated that she was the Southern California Forest Committee Chair for the Sierra Club, and that she had worked with the U.S. Forest Service on their Jacinto Wilderness Management Plan and had also commented for the Sierra Club on the Regional State Park Wilderness Management Plan that created in the 1980s. She is currently working with Senator Boxer on a future bill called the California Wilderness Campaign. Ms. Burk stated that the Sierra Club is suspicious of the Mount San Jacinto General Plan. She said that the title to Mount San Jacinto State Park was received in February 1933 by the California State Park Commission, and that a statement of purpose for the park was received in 1959. The declaration of purpose for the park was made in 1966. Ms. Burk stated that in the past 69 years there was no general plan for the entire park, and it is long over due.

Ms. Burk further stated that in 1945 the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority (WPA) was established by special state legislation for the purpose of constructing, operating and maintaining a system of transportation that would allow the public access to the park and for the improvement and the operation of the recreational facilities within their jurisdiction. The WPA has had two operating agreements during its history, the most recent agreement was entered into between WPA and the State Parks in 1996. This agreement stipulates that no additional permanent development can occur within Mount San Jacinto State Park until a general plan has been completed and approved. Ms. Burk stated that she believes this is why the WPA is interested in financing this management plan.

Ms. Burk stated that the Sierra Club has been traditionally opposed to the construction of the tramway, and that the Sierra Club wishes to reaffirm its opposition to any further intrusions into Mount San Jacinto State Park. Ms. Burk stated that the Sierra Club is opposed to the tram bringing more visitors to the park, and she stated that the tramway is not an E Ticket ride at Disneyland. She stated that the mountain station interpretive exhibits are out of date, and that visitors must usually travel to the Ranger Station to talk to a State Park employee. There is no geologic interpretation for visitors traveling from the desert floor to the mountain meadow, which would add much to the visitor's experience. State Parks and the WPA should work together to develop a joint use visitor center as the centerpiece of the Long Valley Development Plan. The Sierra Club plans to be vigilant in seeing that future management planning addresses the long overdue management problems in Long Valley. Ms. Burk said she thinks the saddest part of the entire planning effort for Mount San Jacinto State Park is that this general plan is greatly inadequate in that it lacks a carrying capacity study, it lacks a full resource element, and instead it has a resource overview. There is no timeline in the final plan for a future development plan. She urged the State Park Commission to do their best to see that State Parks obtains the funding to complete this long overdue development plan and the Long Valley Plan.

Commission Vice Chair Caryl Hart responded to Joyce Burk by acknowledging that her presentation was very good. Vice Chair Hart stated that she takes exception to the idea that the Mount San Jacinto General Plan is somehow linked to the WPA. She said the partnership with State Parks and WPA has not influenced the plan, and that Ms. Burk's assumption was is not an accurate one. Vice Chair Hart stated that the preparation of this general plan had nothing to do with WPA, and that the Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan was prepared without any pressure from the WPA.

Chairman Cotchett stated that he was delighted to see Sierra Club representatives stepping up and taking California State Parks to task. Chairman Cotchett said he would like to address the concern that the mountain had been blasted to make way for larger tram cars. He said there are laws outside State Parks' control, pertaining to the accessibility of the tram, and the necessity for a wider path for the tram cars. He stated that this work was done: (a) pursuant to state law, and (b) pursuant to safety laws that had to be met. Chairman Cotchett then acknowledged that there had been much discussion of an interpretive center down at the foot of Highway 111. He said he thought this was a phenomenal idea, and he recommended that those who supported this idea contact their local legislators and suggest that Proposition 40 money be allocated for an interpretive center.

Murray Rosenthal, Sierra Club California – Mr. Rosenthal stated that he serves on a Sierra Club committee that deals primarily with statewide issues pertaining to the State Park System; his comments on the Mount San Jacinto State Park general plan were from a system-wide point of view. He stated that he found the tiered approach used in this general plan and throughout the system to be inadequate. He stated that there were a number of reasons for this, among which that the approach does not conform to the requirements of the Public Resources Code.

Chairman Cotchett asked Mr. Rosenthal how his position differed from that of Gene Frick of the Sierra Club, who spoke earlier.

Mr. Rosenthal replied that he wanted to deal with a broader point of view than that presented by Gene Frick. He said his committee is asking that the Commission reject the Mount San Jacinto State Park general plan. He stated that his committee had been told that the Long Valley Management Plan is scheduled for completion approximately one year from now. He suggested that if the Commission does adopt this plan, then they should mandate a prompt completion of the Long Valley and Wilderness Management Plans, along with a requirement for periodic reports to the Commission on the status of these plans. Mr. Rosenthal stated that too many of these plans delay the completion of the planning process, as they are drawn out over a very long period of time, which the Sierra Club find undesirable. Mr. Rosenthal urged State Parks to restore detailed planning as specified in the Public Resources Code and return to the use of the planning process that was in place before the adoption of the tiered process.

Bob Hargreaves, Boy Scout Troup 199 – Mr. Hargreaves stated that he was a resident of the Coachella Valley, and that he served as the attorney for the Palm Springs Ariel Tram. He stated that the number one criterion (of the general plan) should be the long-term sustainability of the resources. Giving people the opportunity to experience and enjoy the enrichment that comes from a wilderness experience is one of the most important priorities that we need to have. Mr. Hargreaves stated that this park offers a unique opportunity and we should get as many people in the park that we can without damaging the resources. He believes that the WPA understands and appreciates its mission as being a portal to the wilderness.

Commission Vice Chair Caryl Hart asked State Park Staff about the 250-acre Natural Preserve area designated in the general plan. She asked about the plan for signing and protecting this area. Vice Chair Caryl Hart was concerned that there didn't appear to be anything in the plan that addressed this issue, and she asked if there was going to be a separate plan that would address it.

Deputy Director of Park Operations Bill Berry responded. Deputy Director Berry told Commissioner Hart that the natural preserve designation for the 250 acres gives State Parks greater legal authority to provide and enforce protection in that area. Deputy Director Berry stated that there was no requirement to advertise or promote this area. He said part of the process will be to create opportunities to view the Wilderness from a distance and trails will be based on the protection of the land. The Natural Preserve designation provides greater protections than the Wilderness designation.

Pete Spencer, Back Country Horsemen – Mr. Spencer stated that he had some concerns about the plan. One of Back Country Horsemen's concerns is the reference to equine spreading of weeds throughout the park. Mr. Spencer stated that there was no evidence of this happening. He said the Mount San Jacinto General Plan makes no reference to the California Riding and Hiking trail. The Back Country Horsemen want to make sure that this trail goes through the Mount San Jacinto State Park as it was originally designated.

Chairman Cotchett recognized Southern Service Center Chief Clay Phillips. Chief Phillips stated that State Parks is not aware that the California Riding and Hiking Trail goes through Mount San Jacinto State Park. He said that he would research this and that if the trail does go through the park the final plan will be revised accordingly.

Joan Taylor – Ms. Taylor suggested that as State Parks develops a new interpretive center for Mount San Jacinto State Park they should also make it a goal to try to coordinate and join in with the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountain National Scenic Area. She said Santa Rosa and the San Jacinto Mountain National Scenic Area are looking at a couple of sites for an interpretive center including Wendi Point, Palm Desert, and Idyllwild.

Chairman Cotchett called on Inland Empire District Superintendent Gary Watts to respond. Superintendent Watts stated that this is a marvelous collaborative opportunity and that he planned to take Ms. Taylor's suggestion through the public scoping process and to the committee hearings to pursue this idea of a joint facility in that location that would serve the needs of Mount San Jacinto State Park, the WPA, and the National Monument.

Sue Johnson, Desert Riders-Back Country Horsemen – Ms. Johnson thanked general plan project leader Barney Matsumoto for listening to the Back Country Horsemen. She stated that Mr. Matsumoto included their group in the plan, and that the wilderness is here for everyone to enjoy. Ms. Johnson stated that she led groups of horseback riders into Mount San Jacinto State Park several times every summer, and that she would like to see more of the groups attending this meeting up on the mountain helping to educate, and maybe leading similar groups. She stated that it would be time better spent than trying to squash a plan that is here to help everyone enjoy the wilderness together. She said that she was sad to see the mule train gone, as it decreased accessibility to the wilderness by those who are disabled or elderly or unable to walk, but that she understood this was a sacrifice that had to be made. She reaffirmed the earlier comment that the U.S. Forest Service has done a good job in limiting the number of people on the trails by requiring a permit. Ms. Johnson commended California State Parks for their efforts and expressed her hope that these efforts would continue.

Chairman Cotchett recognized Commissioner Eugene La Pietra. Commissioner La Pietra stated that he felt his trip up Mount San Jacinto was magic and wonderful. He stated that the key to the success of the general plan is in how we make it happen and how we mitigate the impacts to preserve what's there for the future. Commissioner La Pietra stated that he had been excited by his experience in the park, and that it was his wish that everyone work together. He suggested to the Chairman that the Commission ask the Director to take into consideration all the comments that were heard today.

Chairman Cotchett and the other commissioners thanked Commissioner La Pietra for his comments.

Chairman Cotchett stated that the law mandates that the Commission take action. He asked if other commissioners wished to make comments before he called for a vote. Chairman Cotchett asked for a motion on the Mount San Jacinto General Plan, to either approve it or reject it. Motion to approve Commissioner Shriver, second Commissioner La Pietra. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the general plan for Mount San Jacinto State Park.

Chairman Cotchett stated that he would like to introduce two people before moving to the next item of business. He asked Lifeguard Jeff David and Ranger Zack Chambers to stand. Chairman Cotchett announced that Lifeguard David had been with State Parks for 12 years, and that Ranger Chambers had graduated from the academy just three months ago. Chairman Cotchett stated that these individuals represented the best of the best at California State Parks.

CONCESSION AGENDA ITEMS

Chairman Cotchett called on Deputy Director of Park Operations Bill Berry to present the concessions agenda items.

Retail Business at Old Sacramento State Historic Park

Deputy Director Berry stated that this is a longstanding concession in Old Sacramento State Historic Park. He explained that this concession is now going to be put out to bid to ensure that State Parks gets the best service possible from the concessionaire. He stated that the department had determined

that this concession was compatible with the unit's classification and general plan, and that the department recommends the Commission approve this proposal.

There being no further comments on this agenda item, Chairman Cotchett asked for a motion to approve the proposal. Motion Commissioner La Pietra, second Commissioner Hart. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve this concession proposal.

Lodging, Restaurant, and Retail Sales at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park

Deputy Director Berry stated that this is an existing concession at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, and that the department had determined that this concession proposal was compatible with the unit's classification and the recently-completed Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park general plan. He further stated that the department recommends the Commission approve this proposal.

There being no further comments on this agenda item, Chairman Cotchett asked for a motion to approve the proposal. Motion Commissioner La Pietra, second Commissioner Witt. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve this concession proposal.

Restaurant, Retail, and Gift Sales at Hearst San Simeon State Historic Monument

Deputy Director Berry stated that this concession proposal had been before the Commission before, but that it had been revised. It is being brought before the Commission again incorporating an improved opportunity for capital investment and improvement at Hearst San Simeon State Historic Monument, and to improve the services offered as well. The proposal incorporates a request to approve on-site sale of wine and beer at the proposed restaurant, and beer, wine, and mineral spirits at the top of the hill during special events only. Deputy Director Berry stated that the department had determined that this concession proposal was compatible with the unit's classification and general plan. He further stated that the department recommends the Commission approve this proposal.

There being no further comments on this agenda item, Chairman Cotchett asked for a motion to approve the proposal. Motion Commissioner La Pietra, second Commissioner Hart. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve this concession proposal.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Randy Young, Will Rogers Cooperative Association – Mr. Young stated that he had come before the Commission four years ago to tell them that there was something rotten in at Will Rogers State Historic Park. Since then \$1 million dollars in subsidies were provided given to special interests at that park. Mr. Young thanked Rusty Arieas and Cheryl Lyles for appreciating that the Will Rogers Cooperative Association was not the enemy. The Association is here to help State Parks. The Association offers their assistance and looks forward to restoring the park to the satisfaction of all parties. Mr. Young is here representing the Association to thank the Commission and State Parks for stepping up to the plate. Mr. Young concluded by stating that the Commission was doing a great job.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other speakers, Chairman Cotchett thanked the commissioners and the members of the public who attended the meeting. Chairman Cotchett then asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion Commissioner La Pietra, second Commissioner Hart. The commissioners voted unanimously to adjourn. Chairman Cotchett adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Coleman, Secretary