

Meeting of the
CALIFORNIA STATE PARK and RECREATION COMMISSION
Santa Clara County Government Center
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, California

Minutes of the Meeting - Friday, August 22, 2003

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Joseph Cotchett
Raquelle de la Rocha, Vice Chair
Clint Eastwood
Caryl Hart, Chair
Paul Junger Witt

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Bobby Shriver

STATE PARKS STAFF PRESENT

Bill Berry, Deputy Director, Park Operations
Ruth Coleman, Acting Director
Ralph Fairfield, Sector Superintendent, Pajaro Coast Sector
Dave Keck, Manager, General Planning Unit
Tim La Franchi, Chief Counsel
Kirk Lingenfelter, Park Maintenance Supervisor, The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park
Louis Nastro, Assistant to the State Park and Recreation Commission
Roy Stearns, Deputy Director, Communications
Ellie Wagner, Associate Park and Recreation Specialist

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ

Steve Hammack, Superintendent of Parks, City of Santa Cruz Parks & Recreation Department
Susan Harris, Associate Planner, City of Santa Cruz Parks & Recreation Department

SPEAKERS REGISTERED/REPRESENTING

Rich Apple/Individual
Kristi Bittner/Individual
Craig Breon, Executive Director/Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
Patty Ciesla/Stewards of Soquel Forest
Ed Davidson/Individual
Mark Farber/Individual
Aldo Giacchino/Individual
Sandy Henn/Citizens for the Preservation of Forest of Nisene Marks State Park
Sandy Lydon/Individual
Candice McLaren/Individual
Dan Miller/Individual
Peggy Pollard/Individual

Michael Tilson/Friends of Lighthouse Field
Beverly Tracey/Individual
Steve Tracey/Individual
Grant Weseman/Lighthouse Field Beach Rescue

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Prior to the public meeting the Commission met in closed session as permitted by Government Code Section 11126 (e) to discuss pending litigation in the matter of Lighthouse Field Beach Rescue vs. City of Santa Cruz and City of Santa Cruz City Council (County of Santa Cruz, California Department of Parks and Recreation, California Coastal Commission [Real Parties in Interest]) Superior Court of the State of California in and for the County of Santa Cruz, Case No. CV 146505. No action was taken during the Executive Session.

CALL TO ORDER

Legal notice having been given, the California State Park and Recreation Commission meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m. by Chair Caryl Hart. Chair Hart thanked those who had been waiting for their patience during the preceding closed session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 5, 2003 MEETING IN TAHOE CITY

Chair Hart asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the April 5, 2003 meeting in Tahoe City. There being no changes, Chair Hart asked for the motion to approve the minutes. Motion Commissioner Cotchett, second Commissioner de la Rocha. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the minutes as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chair Hart called on Acting Director Ruth Coleman to present the Director's Report.

Budget – Acting Director Coleman reported that State Parks was reducing expenditures as directed by the Budget Act of 2003 (which reduced State Parks' expenditure authority by \$15 million), and that the department was making further reductions in anticipation of additional decreases in funding. Acting Director Coleman stated that the Department of Finance had asked State Parks to develop proposals for an additional 16% reduction. She further explained that while a plan was being prepared it was not known at this time whether or not the plan would be implemented. Acting Director Coleman stated that State Parks was responding proactively to reduce expenditures as much as possible in the event of further cuts, but that this was having a significant impact on the operations in the field in the form of fewer staff, reduced services, and reduced hours of operation at some parks.

Cornfield and Taylor Yard Properties – Acting Director Coleman reported that at the Taylor Yard property in Los Angeles, an agreement had been reached to form a partnership with the City of Los Angeles. She added that State Parks had not entered into a partnership of this depth in the past. Under this arrangement, the state would lease about half of the 40-acre Taylor Yard site to the City of Los Angeles, which would then construct sports fields at the city's expense. State Parks would develop the other half of the site as a "traditional" state park, which would retain the link to the parcel that is immediately adjacent to the Los Angeles River. The objective being to have a park that seamlessly transitions from active recreation to more passive recreation to a riparian environment. State Parks hopes that this will eventually lead to the "greening" of the Los Angeles River in this area. Acting Director Coleman added that in this way State Parks is working proactively to meet the needs of urban residents in a way that hadn't been done in the past.

El Moro/Crystal Cove State Park – Acting Director Coleman reported that State Parks was now a step closer to development of its first new coastal campground in decades, in that State Parks recently prevailed in a lawsuit that had been brought against the department by the residents of the El Moro Village mobile home park, which is located on state property near Crystal Cove. Acting Director Coleman explained that though the state has owned this property since the 1970s, people have been living there in mobile homes, though they are now scheduled to vacate in December 2004. Acting Director Coleman further reported that State Parks was planning to make a funding request for the campground project in the forthcoming budget, and that once the residents had moved out in December 2004 the 260-odd mobile home sites would be replaced with approximately 60 campsites, a riparian corridor restoration project, and the general elimination of a considerable amount of asphalt. Acting Director Coleman stated that this was a very exciting project for State Parks, and that the department was looking forward to having all of Crystal Cove State Park open to the public.

Reopening of the Erman Mansion – Acting Director Coleman reported that this magnificent mansion, also known as Pine Lodge, at Ed Z'berg/Sugar Pine Point State Park, had recently been reopened to the public. The mansion had undergone a major renovation that included restoration of the park grounds, picnic areas, and lakeside historic boats. The house now has a new roof, and new authentic craftsman furniture modeled after the originals. Commission Chair Caryl Hart and several other officials from State Parks were on hand for a day-long celebration of the reopening.

Sutter Buttes Acquisition – Acting Director Coleman explained that the mountains known as the Sutter Buttes in the northern Sacramento Valley are the world's smallest mountain range and an extremely significant California natural feature that includes the heart of the Pacific Flyway. She further explained that the spot had been identified as a potential state park as early as 1902 or 1903. This information was provided as a backdrop to State Parks' potential acquisition of property in the Sutter Buttes. Acting Director Coleman explained that a willing seller, one of five property owners in the area, had been identified for approximately 1,700 acres, that negotiations had begun with the seller, and that the necessary discussions with the State Public Works Board were underway.

Attendance – Acting Director Coleman reported that attendance at state park units had dropped slightly since last year. Acting Director Coleman explained that during the previous year State Parks experienced record attendance of approximately 85 million visitors, and though final figures were not yet complete for fiscal year 2002/2003, indications were that there had been a reduction in attendance, particularly in camping. Acting Director Coleman stated that the reason for this was not known, but that variations in weather could be a big factor.

Official Number of State Park System Units – Acting Director Coleman reported that with the units added last year in Alameda, Santa Mateo, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties, the official number of State Park System units is now 277. These units encompass more than 1.4 million acres.

Acting Director Coleman concluded her report.

Chair Hart thanked Acting Director Coleman for her report.

RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE RETIREMENTS

Chair Hart announced that the next agenda item would be the Commission's recognition of retiring State Parks employees. Chair Hart asked State Parks Pajaro Coast Sector Superintendent Ralph Fairfield to read the list of retirees, but added that Commissioner Cotchett would first like to explain to those present the significance of recognizing retiring staff.

Commissioner Cotchett thanked Chair Hart and explained the importance of recognizing for the record the retirement of employees who had dedicated themselves to California State Parks. Commissioner Cotchett acknowledged Sector Superintendent Fairfield, who was in uniform, and explained that the ranger's uniform, hat, and the grizzly bear patch worn by so many State Parks em-

ployees signified the importance of State Parks to the State of California. Commissioner Cotchett stated that many State Parks employees, especially rangers working in the field, work for what he believed to be a substandard wage, and that the dedication of these employees, and their commitment to State Parks, should be recognized. Commissioner Cotchett stated that as the names of those retiring are read, it is to recognize the contributions of *all* State Parks employees. Commissioner Cotchett asked those present to consider the short time periods, often measured in months rather than years, that most people stay with a particular employer, and to keep this in mind as the years of service were read for the State Parks retirees. Commissioner Cotchett closed by saying that the very long careers of so many State Parks employees made a significant statement about the quality of those who dedicate themselves to California State Parks. Commissioner Cotchett then introduced Pajaro Coast Sector Superintendent Ralph Fairfield.

Sector Superintendent Fairfield thanked Commissioner Cotchett for his comments. Sector Superintendent Fairfield added that he had often heard Deputy Director of Park Operations Bill Berry state that a ranger should stand tall when wearing their hat, adding that this was just one of many good reasons for State Parks staff to stand tall. Sector Superintendent Fairfield also pointed out that the grizzly bear is a powerful symbol, in that this animal no longer exists in California,. In this way the grizzly bear acts as a reminder that we must continually work to preserve our parks, and that this charge, preservation, was really what State Parks was about. Sector Superintendent Fairfield stated that he and other State Parks employees could stand tall because of the good work they do, and that it was now time to recognize those who had stood tall for a long time and were now standing down after years of faithful and solid service.

Sector Superintendent Fairfield read the list of retirees:

Richard Brown	28 years 5 months
Brooks Collom	22 years 3 months
George Cook	26 years 4 months
Dave Cox	30 years
Thomas Derryberry	20 years
James Fife	33 years 7 months
Cheryl Kilzer	37 years 4 months
John Kolb	32 years 6 months
Carolee Moore	35 years 2 months
Carol Nelson	28 years 4 months
Richard Sermon	29 years 5 months
Denzil Verardo	31 years 8 months

Sector Superintendent Fairfield noted that this coming Sunday there would be a memorial service for Carol Nelson, who recently passed away after years of battling cancer. Sector Superintendent Fairfield also noted that next Wednesday, during State Parks Director’s Award Ceremony, the Hill Award would be posthumously presented to Carol Nelson for the inspiration and vision that she provided during her over 28 years of service to California State Parks.

Chair Hart thanked Sector Superintendent Fairfield for his comments.

Commissioner Cotchett added that he had just calculated that among the twelve names that had just been read, the average service was 29 years, 5 months. Commissioner Cotchett asked those present to consider the commitment made by these individuals, and to compare it to the often short-term commitments of employees at other corporations, companies, and employers in California.

Sector Superintendent Fairfield stated that these employees had served proudly, and that the employees of State Parks were proud to serve the people of California. Sector Superintendent Fairfield thanked Commissioner Cotchett for his comments, and he thanked the commissioners for their important service to California State Parks.

Chair Hart thanked Superintendent Fairfield, and added that she had personally met several of the people who were retiring, and that her admiration for these individuals was immense. Chair Hart introduced Deputy Director of Park Operations Bill Berry, who wished to make additional comments with regard to the late Carol Nelson.

Deputy Director Berry stated that, for the record, Carol Nelson was the first African-American woman to reach a high-ranking position in California State Parks, and that she had been the first African-American woman to serve as a ranger for State Parks. Deputy Director Berry stated that Carol Nelson had made history at California State Parks. He explained that she was receiving the Hill Award not only because she persevered, but because she had set State Parks on courses that helped the organization to understand the importance of diversity and alternative points of view, and that she had helped the organization appreciate how courageous an individual can be. Deputy Director Berry stated that Carol Nelson had most recently served as State Parks Field Division Chief, and that her office had been next to his. He mentioned how Carol Nelson would come to work suffering in pain from bone cancer, and that her dedication was such that she refused to leave the office. Deputy Director Berry stated that he wished to publicly recognize the importance of this kind of commitment, and how much Carol Nelson's friends at State Parks cared about her.

Deputy Director Berry added that Ralph Fairfield had failed to include his own name in the list of retirees. Deputy Director Berry pointed out that at this Commission meeting Sector Superintendent Fairfield was performing some of his last duties as a State Parks employee. Deputy Director Berry explained to those present that he and Ralph Fairfield had served together as rangers at Big Sur almost 25 years ago, and that today could be the last opportunity to say goodbye.

Chair Hart thanked Deputy Director Berry for his comments, and added that while employees like Superintendent Fairfield were probably looking forward to retirement, the news of another ranger retiring that has contributed so much to State Parks causes her to become momentarily depressed.

APPROVAL OF MEMORIAL REDWOOD GROVES

Chair Hart asked Commission Vice Chair Raquelle de la Rocha to read the Memorial Groves as requested by Save-the-Redwoods League. Vice Chair de la Rocha read the following requests:

Rehmus Family Grove in Portola Redwoods State Park
Mr. Frederick P. Rehmus and Mr. Charles M. Rehmus, donors

James L. Boone & Joseph J. Bucuzzo Grove in Navarro River Redwoods State Park
James L. Boone, donor

The Straw Grove, Dolores and Howard in Humboldt Redwoods State Park
Mrs. Dolores Straw, donor

Bertella Kildow Skinner Grove in Humboldt Redwoods State Park
Bernice Kildow Skinner Trust and Jeanne Van Nostrand Trust, donors

Vice Chair de la Rocha made a motion that the resolutions establishing these groves be approved by the Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Witt. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolutions establishing these memorial redwood groves.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Hart opened the public portion of the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Chair Hart stated that the Commission welcomes public input on all issues that come before it. She then requested that those who wish to address the Commission please complete a speaker registration form. Chair Hart explained that the Commission's rules of order allow the Chair to limit speaking time to three minutes for individuals and five minutes for those representing groups. She respectfully requested that speakers adhere to the Chair's authority regarding time limits and conduct of the meeting.

Chair Hart noted that there had been changes to the originally published agenda, in that two of the announced Public Hearing agenda items had been cancelled. Item 5B, Determination of compatibility with unit classification and general plan requirements of Calafia State Beach (at San Clemente State Beach) with the Department's proposal to allow the on-site sale of beer and wine with bona-fide meals at the San Clemente State Beach restaurant/snack bar concession, had been cancelled because the local jurisdiction did not approve State Parks' proposal. Item 5D, Consideration and action on the Department's proposal to honor the late assemblyman and leading environmentalist Edwin L. Z'berg with the addition of his name to the name of Sugar Pine Point State Park was cancelled because of the passage of AB 1747, which had already made this action law.

Determination of compatibility with unit classification and general plan requirements of Pismo State Beach with State Parks' proposal to allow the on-site sale of alcoholic beverages with bona-fide meals at Pismo Golf Course Restaurant.

Deputy Director of Park Operations Bill Berry presented this agenda item. Deputy Director Berry explained that this was a matter of formality in that the Commission had in 1966 approved the on-site sale of alcoholic beverages at this park, but that distilled spirits had not been included at the time. State Parks is asking the Commission to approve the addition of distilled spirit sales with bona-fide meals at the restaurant that overlooks Pismo Beach as part of this contract. Deputy Director Berry explained that this is an amendment to an existing contract, and that State Parks has determined that this amendment is compatible with the unit's approved General Plan.

Chair Hart asked if there were any registered speakers on this agenda item. There being none, Chair Hart asked for a motion to adopt the resolution before the Commission agreeing with State Parks determination that the proposal to allow the on-site sale of alcoholic beverages with bona-fide meals at the Pismo Golf Course Restaurant concession is compatible with the unit classification and general plan requirements for Pismo State Beach. Motion Commissioner de la Rocha, second Commissioner Eastwood. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolution adopting State Parks' proposal to allow the on-site sale of alcoholic beverages with bona-fide meals at Pismo Golf Course Restaurant, and that this proposal was compatible with the unit classification and general plan requirements of Pismo State Beach.

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

Chair Hart asked if there were any registered speakers on this agenda item. There being none, Chair Hart asked for a motion to adopt the resolution before the Commission concurring with the Director of State Parks' appointments to the Board of Directors of the California Citrus State Historic Park Non-Profit Management Corporation. Motion Commissioner de la Rocha, second Commissioner Witt. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolution stating that the Commission concurred with the Director of State Parks' appointments to the Board of Directors of the California

Citrus State Historic Park Non-Profit Management Corporation. These appointments are as follows:

Charles W. Coggins, Jr., Ph.D

Jo D. Hord

Aleta J. Laurence, AICP

Lawrence E. Paulsen

Richard Paul Ramirez

Philipp A. Washburn

Cristine West

Consideration and action on the Department's recommendation for approval of the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park

Chair Hart stated that before this agenda item was introduced she wished to thank, on behalf of the Commission, those who were responsible for the Commission's site visits the previous day, and for the valuable information they provided about The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park and Lighthouse Field State Beach. Chair Hart specifically thanked Bobbie Haver for lunch at Wilder Ranch State Park and the reception at the Castro Adobe site, Randy Widera, Executive Director of Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks, Pat Clark, Chair of the Friends' Board, Kathryn Elliott from Trust for Public Land, and Susan Harris and Steve Hammack from the City of Santa Cruz. Chair Hart also recognized Ranger Chris Sanguino of The Forest of Nisene Marks. Chair Hart also thanked historian Sandy Lydon, who provided the Commission with a history of the Santa Cruz area, Sector Superintendent Ralph Fairfield, and Louis Nastro for his work on behalf of the Commission.

Chair Hart then explained that in addition to the materials the Commission received prior to the meeting and during the previous day's on-site briefing, the Commission would now hear a presentation on this agenda item by Pajaro Coast Sector Superintendent Ralph Fairfield.

Sector Superintendent Fairfield again thanked the Commissioners for their participation. Sector Superintendent Fairfield narrated a slide presentation on the General Plan for the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, which included a brief history of the park. The presentation also included general information on state parks in the Santa Cruz area. Sector Superintendent Fairfield pointed out that State Parks' partnership with the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks makes these parks "come alive," and he again thanked the Friends for their involvement. He explained that while Santa Cruz is the second smallest county (after San Francisco) in California, it has 14 state parks – more than any other county in the state. Sector Superintendent Fairfield also noted that State Parks is the largest landowner in Santa Cruz County, having about 50,000 acres of park lands that are open to the public. Sector Superintendent Fairfield also acknowledged the California State Parks Foundation as another extremely valuable partner to State Parks, and he pointed out that it was an effort by the California State Parks Foundation that resulted in an anonymous donor providing the necessary funding to develop this general plan for The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park.

Chair Hart thanked Sector Superintendent Fairfield for his presentation, and additionally thanked Park Maintenance Supervisor Kirk Lingenfelter for his participation in today's meeting, yesterday's on-site briefing, and his ongoing responsibility for the Trails Plan at the Forest of Nisene Marks. Chair Hart then asked if any of the commissioners had questions on the presentation. There being none, Chair Hart reminded those present that time limits would be imposed and asked that speakers please respect those limits, She then called the first registered speaker on this agenda item:

Sandy Henn/Citizens for the Preservation of Forest of Nisene Marks State Park – Thank you. First of all for the record, I would like to submit these documents from our legal counsel to go to the

record, as well as a letter for each of the Commissioners from our legal counsel. My name is Sandy Henn and I am a member of the Citizens for the Preservation of The Forest of Nisene Marks Park. Our group does oppose the Preliminary General Plan, for several reasons. Hopefully I will have time to cover those, but I would like to comment on some of the responses that were made by State Parks to the comments on the Preliminary General Plan. And I will just try to go over those briefly. Response number four, regarding the Marks deed, states that although mountain biking did not exist at the time of the deed, at the time the deed was developed, it has become a legitimate and popular form of outdoor recreation. And we believe that because mountain biking may be a legitimate and popular form of outdoor recreation, it doesn't signify that it's appropriate for the trails in this deeded portion of the park. If you get on the Internet now, you'll find that mountain skate boarding and all-terrain skateboards are the latest popular form of outdoor recreation. And we're entering an age where we're going to see many new forms of mechanical transport used for the purpose of outdoor recreation. And one would have to wonder, how would State Parks preserve and protect natural resources if they permit these new forms of mechanized recreation? And I have the feeling that this is kind of the tip of the iceberg. It's kind of where we're in a real technological, mechanical sort of age, and who knows what will be on the horizon. And, in this regard, response number four by State Parks says that, quote, "deed restrictions were interpreted so as to achieve the ultimate purpose for the gift, and not limit uses of the property." Well, the purpose of the deed restrictions is to limit uses of the property, and according to a 1980s map and handout from State Parks, it was the Marks family's intention that the park remain, quote, "intention that the park remain largely undeveloped, offering a place of refuge and solitude for hikers in an essentially primitive redwood landscape" unquote. As Mr. Vincent is aware, I have had conversations with a Marks family member who is opposed to any type of mechanical transport on trails in the deeded portion of the park. Because of the reversionary language in the deed, a violation of deed restrictions could revert the property to Marks family heirs. In response number 45, State Parks states that there was not a no-bike interpretation of the deed. And I would like to say that I've been a frequent visitor of the forest of Nisene Marks for more than 30 years, and was told by rangers and park personnel during that time that bikes were not permitted on trails above the steel bridge because of deed restrictions. Also, in response number 45, State Parks states that mountain bikes were not an issue in the mid-1980s and therefore, not addressed. This is not true. As demonstrated in an article written in August 1989, in the local newspaper, the *Sentinel*, the article makes reference to hiker-biker conflicts as early as 1985. And I will submit these articles in a packet of information basically verifying what I am saying. And I guess, this says zero, am I out of time?

Chair Hart stated that the commissioners had received the comments that were submitted, and that she and the other commissioners had reviewed them. Chair Hart stated that although those addressing the Commission receive five minutes to speak, the commission members were already very familiar with the issue of mountain biking and the deed restrictions at The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Chair Hart assured Ms. Henn that all of this would be considered in making a decision on the General Plan.

Sandy Henn – Okay, I would like to say one other thing regarding the preliminary plan, and that is that it doesn't address user conflicts. And many who commented on this plan voiced concerns that they would no longer be able to enjoy the experience the Marks family intended for park visitors. That of hiking, and a peaceful place of refuge and solitude. Hikers have legitimate concerns that this experience would no longer be available to them should they be required to share trails with mountain bikes. Apprehension and fear are very real to anyone who has ever been on foot on a trail when faced with a speeding mountain bike in your path. Many seniors and young children who lack the agility to jump out of the way of a bike are vulnerable to accident and injury with mountain bikes on shared trails. And I think too that State Parks hasn't really addressed the damage that's already been done. I'd like to also submit some photographs of damage that has already occurred in the lower

reaches of the park. And it isn't damage from overuse. It's damage from misuse. It's damage from mountain bikers going in and creating their own trails, which it makes no sense to me. If it were just from overuse, I could see some legitimacy in opening the upper reaches to mountain bikes, but because it is misuse, it makes no sense to our group to permit this sort of misuse to occur in the deeded portion of the park.

Chair Hart explained that the Commission was considering a broad General Plan today, and that decisions were not being made with regard to specific uses, the location of trails, or trail uses. Chair Hart explained that a comprehensive trails plan would be developed for the park, and that there would be significant opportunities to comment on the trails plan. Chair Hart thanked Ms. Henn for her comments and recommended that she involve herself in the development of the trails plan.

Dan Miller/Individual – Thank you very much. I have to go real brief. I'm a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, Wild Life Conservation, with a minor in Forestry. I've been 34 years with the Department of Fish and Game as a Marine Biologist, and I retired 20 years ago, and over the last 10 years I've been working with the Mangles Ranch area of The Forest of Nisene Marks. I won't go into all of the details about that. Bill Berry, every once in a while, he gets a thing sent up to him. I keep back all the way from top to bottom of what I'm doing. I'm helping, I'm almost a member of the State Parks, as far as I'm concerned, I work for myself, helping them out. I have submitted, I guess you all have a copy of the report on the petition survey I did.

Chair Hart confirmed that each of the commissioners had a copy of the documents Mr. Miller had submitted

Dan Miller – Okay. The reason I did that, and, but you were just saying, this happens to do with, even though it's a specific area, we're talking about in a general sense of low intensity and high intensity. And this is a very, very important ecosystem situation. There is three very, very vital plant communities, and I think it deserves a low-intensity use because of that. Because high-intensity infers higher recreation, and this kind of thing which would destroy the basic ecosystems we have in there that need protection. I won't go over that, that's in some of the documents I've already submitted to the state. The reason I did this petition is that it's been suggested if we're going to get support from the people who want to bike in there, horse and do other things, that we better get sort of an idea of what the local community thinks and that's what I set out to do. I was a member of, the Chair of the Friends for Nisene Marks State Park, who actually helped get this land into the state, through the Trust for Public Land. And after that we sort of faded away. We never did spend entirely, but then I started working and in other words, the people that helped out, there's two parts of this document. One of them is, we had about 30 members of that organization that went out and saw what the neighborhood wanted. And I think we got 125 things that we're saying. I'll just read basically, what, I got 485 to sign the petition in the park, and when they signed it, those that didn't want to sign it I said, look, I want you to know exactly what you're signing. This is the basic thing it's down to. This is the Mangles Ranch area now, not for the whole park. It's purpose is for contemplative natural enjoyment and the scientific value of this rare plant community. Fragile soil conditions preclude horse and bicycle use. And the need for uninterrupted and safe nature study and enjoyment precludes the use of bicycles. And, as you probably read this, it turns out 88% of the bicyclers that signed that are for precluding horses and bikes. 98% of the runners and the walkers. So this was new to me. Because I had done a census in this park. Oh, my God, I had done a census in the park over the last couple of years. 160,000 user days, 50% walkers, 30% runners, and 20% bikers. I didn't realize it was such a high percent. The bikers will say, half of them will say, I never go on a hiking trail because it's unethical. This is the kind that we're dealing with. And when we get into the plan, can I have one more minute? Well, could I go back to my old organization to get one more?

Chair Hart informed Mr. Miller that it was alright to continue even though his time had expired.

Dan Miller – The 30 I said that were helping me to do this, what it is, is that, if we're going into the trail plan, we're going to, as it was mentioned by Kirk yesterday, that we're going to go into, we're going to have organization people there, we're going to have this thing, we're going to have sort of a committee going. It's been very nebulous to me so far, and are we going to go back to what we've had all the time. The General Plan really has not done anything to really help us out, how we're going to, how to get together. So, what I did, what we did in this thing, is to find out what local people think around. And I've got all the people in the Mangles, they have relatives, and all the many relatives have signed this, what they think. And also after we started that I said, look I'm going to go in and see what the people using this park want. And that's what I did. The petition was very objective. I didn't make any value judgments. I just handed it to them. And I had this tremendous, I didn't expect, I expected from the work I did before in the censuses, that about half of the bikers were, they were getting on, would never get on a hiking trail. I was wrong, and in this case the Mangles Ranch it was 88%. Okay, well thank you very much.

Chair Hart thanked Mr. Miller, and stated that the Commission would review and consider the documents he'd submitted.

Mark Farber/Individual – Good morning. I'm a little bit taller, so, I'll stand here. Put my glasses on before the clock starts running. Okay, my name is Mark Farber. I'm a resident of Aptos. I live about three miles from the park. I am a frequent hiker and jogger in the forest, and I'm speaking today just as a concerned citizen, not identified with any group or political lobbies or lawyers. This is my, actually my first appearance before the Commission. Two things I want to bring up. One is that, based on my reading of the report, designating Mangles Ranch as a high-intensity use area is a bad mistake. I believe it should be classified as a low-intensity use area. I support Mr. Miller's contentions on that, and will provide a little more detail. Secondly, I would urge the Commission to require a more substantial analysis than exists in this report. And I will point out a couple of areas where I believe a more substantial analysis should be done. Mangles Ranch, with all due respect, Mr. Fairfield's photographs do not represent Mangles Ranch. There is no horseback riding, that I believe is legal today in the Ranch, and there's no roads. It's narrow trails right now. This 90-acre area is different than the rest of the park. It's a rare and marginal habitat where redwoods are mixed among other plant species and are adapted to varied ecological conditions. There is 860 redwood trees in the area, 49% were old growth, I'm drawing on Dan Miller's analysis here. Most, 49%, over 200 years old, some are over 500 years old in this area. There are open fields of purple needle grass, which the state has deemed rare, dense, near-pristine forest of Santa Cruz Oak, over 50 bird species, and wild flowers not found in other parts of the park. With Mr. Miller I've walked through this area. There are slopes with very fragile soil. And my favorite thing there is the Nursery Tree, where six new redwoods are growing on top of a horizontal trunk of a tree that fell over 50 years ago. The report says the reason, the only reason, that I could find for designating Mangles Ranch as a high allowable use area in this thick report, there's one line in comment number 64 which reads, "to minimize intense use of the Rancho Aptos Trail, and entrance area." Why destroy a fragile environment for that? The entrance area is a paved road. It should have intense use. Why would they want to minimize that? Plus the entrance road is closer to the freeway offramp on State Park Drive, and more visitors are going to use the entrance road than the Mangles Ranch area, no matter what, just because it's closer to the freeway. In response to my comment, comment number 84, the report claims that they're going to minimize impact to the sensitive resources at Mangles Ranch using, quote, "using signs, fencing, walls, and other features, to direct visitors away from sensitive resources." Well this, to do that, in a fragile area, doesn't make sense to me. Who wants to walk or ride a bike through an area filled with signs, fences, and walls. Plus, let's look at what the maintenance costs of designating this as a high-intensity area. Fences, walls, and other features, whatever they may be, cost a lot of money. Maintaining that as a low-intensity area, similar to the higher areas within Nisene Parks makes a lot

more sense to me. Well, I didn't get to point number two, unfortunately, but, I think you get my idea of advocating this be low-intensity area.

Chair Hart thanked Mr. Farber, and reminded him of what she had told Mr. Miller, that uses within the park would be subject to intensive discussion and analysis once the trails plan moves forward.

Mark Farber – Correct, but designating it as high-intensity in the preliminary part is a mistake. Thank you. And I want to support Director Coleman's acquisition of Sutter Buttes, since I've been critical of the park service. That sounds like a really good idea.

Sandy Lydon/Individual – Thank you. Like many of the people in the room, my relationship with the park goes back, actually 35 years. One never thinks they're going to become history, but I think a lot of us are history in a lot of ways. The park is 40 years old this year, and I was involved in the Citizens Advisory Committee for 25 years before we disbanded, and the Citizens Advisory and chaired that frequently, and the mantra we always heard was, when we made suggestions was, well, we can't do that, because we don't have a General Plan. Everything from realigning trails after the flood of 1982, after the earthquake of 1989 – we wanted to put in bridges – restrooms, water systems, and the mantra always came back from the Department, that we don't have a General Plan, we really can't move forward. Finally, the donor comes, provides the funding, and I attended all the hearings, as most of the people here did, and I believe that the process was open and public, and I also believe that, and I agree, that there have been some misuses in the park. No question about it. I'm a neighbor, I live next door. I see it. But I honestly believe that this General Plan will allow us, if adopted, to move forward and address some of the more pressing issues having to do with enforcement with the trail plan. In other words, I think it will clear the air so that on some of the other projects, the Department can move forward and begin to do some of the improvements that are necessary. Some of the basic things. But on the other hand, also, in the future, be able to address the trails issue. I think the public input was excellent, was extremely civilized. Santa Cruz County is not always noted for its civilized discords, and I have to tell you, everybody, it was wonderful to watch and listen to. I honestly believe that within the context of the way the Plan is currently written, that there haven't been any decisions made about uses on specific trails and I would venture to say that there will be conversations about that in the future. I would urge the Commission to adopt the Plan as it is written.

Patty Ciesla/Stewards of Soquel Forest – Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm Patty Ciesla. I'm the President of the Stewards of Soquel Forest. I'm also on the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Commission and we meet in this building once a month. So, I appreciate all the hard work that you folks do on the State Parks Commission. I understand what's involved when you read all those plans and all the paperwork and everything. And I want to thank you for your contributions to the state. The Soquel Forest is the largest adjoining property to Nisene Marks and the Stewards of Soquel Forest is a non-profit organization and we support the land manager, which is CDF, California Department of Forestry, in their recreation and education components, and we submitted comments on the Nisene Marks General Plan and in general we support the plan. I want to second everything that Sandy Lydon just said. I think that it was a really good process. Everybody had a chance to comment, and I think that staff has done a really good job in incorporating responses to comments in the final Plan. And I do think that it provides a really good framework for the staff to move forward in planning for this park unit. I look forward to the trails plan moving forward. I think that you've got some really good professional people that will help make sure that natural resource protection will be balanced with user access to ensure that the park is not abused, that the resources are protected, and yet the public is allowed access into the forest. I think it's really important that public access, for as many uses as is reasonable, be allowed in, in state parks, and I think that the issue of cycling in the upper portions of Nisene being permitted by the deed is correct. I use my bicycle for camping. We have a trailer that we put on the back and put all our gear, tents and sleeping bags and everything

in that, and that allows me to go backpacking because I can't carry a pack because of back and knee injuries. So I use my bicycle to go backpacking and camping. And Nisene has a really nice, remote camp site where you can't hear generators running, the phone doesn't ring, it's lovely. And I look forward to the opportunity to camp in there again. So I would just like to encourage you to approve this Plan. I think it's a good document. I think you have an excellent staff, that will help take this document and move it forward into the future, and help develop a trails plan and other plans in the future. So, thank you very much.

Craig Breon, Executive Director/Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society – Good morning. I'm the Executive Director of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. We have about 4,000 members and since Santa Cruz doesn't have a chapter of the Audubon Society, sometimes people over there join our group instead and we then do some work in the Santa Cruz County as well. We are in general the oldest conservation organization in the South Bay, founded in 1926. I have three or four comments and each one is followed by a specific request for direction from you to your staff. We are not challenging the Environmental Impact Report that one of my board members has been commenting on for some time. It is difficult when looking at the draft EIR like this, and clearly what you're hearing is some concern about additional trails and the usage of those trails into the more wild areas of the park. It's difficult without a inventory of sensitive resources or the trails plan to know really what the impacts will be and so my first recommendation really is one of timing. I would request that there are a number of things to come, as you've mentioned, Ms. Hart, it calls for a watershed management plan, which specifically is about erosion, sedimentation issues, geology of the site. It calls for some sort of a resource inventory, which would be probably more plant community and animal community-oriented. And it calls for the unit trails plan. I think it's very important, the process by which those plans get done. Essentially, the first two there should inform the third. And so, I would request that you direct staff, as they're moving forward with implementation of the General Plan, to complete an inventory of sensitive resources on the site, and the watershed management plan before adopting the unit trails plan. Essentially, those first two craft a context for the latter. And we know that there will be considerably more trails in here and more users of different types on those trails. And by completing the watershed management plan and the sensitive resource inventory prior to the unit trail plan, you don't end up looking later at the impacts, you build those impacts, and which areas should be impacted and which should not into the Plan itself. So that would be our first request. Secondly, in the section entitled Access and Trails, there's language that we feel is out of balance and could misdirect future staff decisions. It says, to quote, "all possible opportunities for trail accessibility will be examined and given a high priority." And that statement is one of the major goals of that section, we believe just is out of balance. Like I say, not that it shouldn't be there, but it should be coupled with another phrase. A phrase like, "all possible opportunities for trail accessibility will be examined and given priority along with parameters of sensitive habitats, risk of erosion, and sedimentation, et cetera." Essentially a statement that is more balanced. If your staff came to that statement or advocates for lots of trails and lots of bikes, et cetera, came to that statement, "all possible opportunities for trail accessibility will be examined and given a high priority," they could really argue that this General Plan designates that they have to consider *all* opportunities, which is a tremendous amount, to the exclusion given the "high priority" language, to the exclusion of some of the resource issues. So, I would request that you ask your staff to simply craft a more balanced phrase for that, which I think could be done fairly easily. And finally, this is a really odd issue that one of my board members has brought forward, but I'm going to go with it anyway. She knows a lot more about this stuff than I do. And it would seem odd for somebody from Audubon to be complaining about native birds, but that's what this is about. Up until about 10 years ago, certain types of corvids, which are jays, crows, and ravens, did not exist in the forests of the Santa Cruz County. They exist now there, and are increasing in number. Humans subsidize these typically with food waste, of various sorts, at picnic areas, et cetera. That increases the density of these type of birds in

those human areas. And these birds also, in turn, predate on nests and chicks of native, migratory songbirds, or resident songbirds. That sort of thing. So, in response to a comment, your staff did a good job and said that they would have education about not feeding the wildlife. The point I would like to make is that most people think that's raccoons and bears, and have learned to understand why feeding raccoons and bears is a difficulty. We would like you to ask your staff specifically to say part of that wildlife education program would be a discussion in some of the interpretive areas, or some of the signage near camping or picnic areas of why these corvids, even though they are native, can be subsidized by people and predate on other local wildlife. So that's just a slight amendment to the existing language that your staff did add regarding not feeding wildlife, et cetera. My time is up, and I hope what I said there, is I'm trying to link the issues with a specific action that we would like you to be able to take today to direct staff as they move forward with this. Otherwise, we think staff has done quite a good job, and we look forward to additional use of this park in appropriate ways. Thanks.

Commissioner Cotchett asked Mr. Breon where the language he had quoted pertaining to "all possible opportunities for trail accessibility" appeared in the General Plan.

Craig Breon – It's in the goals of the Access and Trails Section.

Dave Keck, Manager of State Parks' General Planning Unit, clarified that the statement in question appeared on page 93 of the General Plan.

Rich Apple/Individual – Hi, my name is Rich Apple. I'm here as just an individual concerned citizen. I really was stopping by just to drop off some comments because I'm petrified of public speaking, and I really have to get back to my job, and I'm probably getting a parking ticket right now. But I'd like to submit these to Mr. Nastro, and ask you to pay attention to the attachment that is my responses to State Parks responses to my comments. And I'm a hiker in Nisene Marks, and on the single track trail, yesterday I'm not sure you got up on to any of those trails, they're very windy, they're very steep, and it's the nature of it that bikes and hikers just don't mix. And I'd like to, some of the early plan versions did have, in the early public hearings did have a lot of wilderness, a lot more restrictive, throughout the process it opened up more and more, and I realize that it's got it to the point where it said, oh, for trails, individual, we're going to work on that later, I don't think the door should be open because I think that goes against the deed restrictions. So if I could submit these, I only have three copies. There's five of you. I don't know what I did wrong with my math, but...

Chair Hart asked Mr. Apple to give his documents to Mr. Nastro, and she pointed out that while the commissioners would review this material, she believed it was more important for State Parks staff to review this information in the process of preparing the Trails Plan. Chair Hart stated that she hoped Mr. Apple had not received a parking ticket.

Commissioner Cotchett stated that for or someone who was petrified of public speaking, Mr. Apple had done a better job than some of the 135 people running for Governor of the State of California (laughter).

Chair Hart announced that there were no other registered speakers on this agenda item. She then asked if there were any speakers that were not registered who would like to speak on this topic. There being no additional speakers, Chair Hart asked staff to respond to the comments that had been made.

Acting Director Ruth Coleman asked Park Maintenance Supervisor Kirk Lingenfelter to respond to the suggestion of conducting a resource inventory and water use management plan in advance of the Trail Plan.

Kirk Lingenfelter stated that resource inventories were an integral part of the Trail Plan, and that one

really does set up the other. He explained that two inventories were underway in The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, a plant communities inventory and an aquatic life inventory. Mr. Lingenfelter explained that a road-based sedimentation analysis was also being conducted using California Department of Fish and Game grant monies, and that this would provide direction for the future of road maintenance in the park.

Chair Hart asked if there were any other questions or comments.

Commissioner Cotchett expressed his concern for speaker Craig Breon's suggestion that clarifying language should be added to the statement regarding "all possible opportunities for trail accessibility" on page 93 of the Access and Trails Section of The Forest of Nisene Marks General Plan.

Commissioner Cotchett, Deputy Director of Park Operations Bill Berry, Chair Hart, and General Planning Manager Dave Keck discussed the need for clarifying this language and how that could best be accomplished. General Planning Manager Keck explained that "accessibility" in this case meant accessibility for persons with disabilities. Mr. Keck suggested that as this subject was fully addressed in other sections of the General Plan, this line could be removed from page 93. Chair Hart agreed that the language used here was confusing and suggested it be removed from page 93. The other commissioners agreed that this change should be incorporated into the Plan.

Commissioner Cotchett stated that the public input on this General plan had been phenomenal, and the comments received exceptionally valuable. Chair Hart agreed.

Chair Hart asked for a motion to adopt the resolution before the Commission to approve the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report for The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, including the noted changes on page 93. Motion Commissioner Cotchett, second Commissioner de la Rocha. The commissioners voted unanimously to adopt the resolution to approve the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report for The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park.

Consideration and action on the Department's recommendation for conditional approval of the Initial Study/Negative Declaration and Draft Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan

Chair Hart explained that in addition to the materials the Commission received prior to the meeting and during the previous day's on-site briefing, the Commission would now hear a presentation on this agenda item by Steve Hammock, Superintendent of Parks for the City of Santa Cruz.

Superintendent Hammock stated that the City of Santa Cruz was grateful to the Commissioners for visiting Lighthouse Field State Beach the previous day, and that the City was proud of the General Plan that was being presented this day. Superintendent Hammock then made a presentation of the key elements of the revised General Plan, including a summary of changes from the existing General Plan approved in 1984, and an explanation of the need for a updated plan. Superintendent Hammock's presentation also provided historical information on the cooperative agreement between State Parks and the City of Santa Cruz that allows the City to operate this park, as well as details of operational issues at the park since it was purchased by the state in 1978.

Chair Hart asked if there were any questions on Superintendent Hammock's presentation. There being none, Chair Hart called the first public speaker:

Kristi Bittner/Individual – Hello, members of the Commission, Chair, Director Coleman, staff. Thank you for your time today. I'm here in support of the proposed updates to the General Plan for Lighthouse Field State Beach as presented. I live and work in Santa Cruz, several miles from Lighthouse Field State Beach, and like many Santa Cruz residents, I love this wonderful park. It's really a neat place. I'm glad you got to go visit. I think it's astonishing that you can have surfing events that

draw hundreds of thousands of people a year and then walk just to the interior park and it's really pretty serene and quiet. It's open, in an undeveloped park. And that's really important to me. I love the outdoors. I've been, you know, folks started dragging me camping all over the U.S. starting at about the age of two. So, I consider myself an environmentalist, and I just love living, you know, I live in a suburban setting, but we've got this place right in the heart of our town and it's just so open and wonderful. So I got really interested and involved in the process, you know, over two years ago when they started, as Steve said, there were a lot of public hearings, and I was very impressed with the staff. They did a lot of public education about the issues. They brought in erosion experts to say, you know, what, what can we do about the Point, can we save it, can we not, rip-rap, you know, what are the issues there. They've done some surveys of the plants that are there. It's a heavily impacted area, and actually most of the native, what's there that's native has been restored, the vegetation, and they're continuing to focus on ways to continue to restore that and make it as nice a park as possible. They've done surveys of the animal life, the bird life, I was really impressed with all the work they've done. Every time I had a question about, gosh, is this the right thing to do, they got data to back it up, and in light of that, when questions started coming up, and more recently dog owners, and yes, the policy of allowing dogs off-leash is very controversial, and it has been probably the biggest arguing point. And in light of that, I was one of the people that helped. You have in your packet a paper written by a group calling themselves Friends of Lighthouse Field, a spontaneous outgrowth of community people who just love and spend a lot of time at the Field. And I helped write the environmental section, because I wanted to see there were a lot of charges. There's a lot of misinformation about targeting dogs, and I really think that it's people who would like to ban dogs looking for reasons to get rid of them. Because if you go through point by point, the types of resources at Lighthouse Field State Beach, there's no evidence that dogs have a particular impact. I've listened to hours of testimony by butterfly experts saying what's best for the monarchs. When asked directly the dogs aren't a problem. The areas that they're restricting, will be restricted to dog and human activity, and in fact, that's already working in the monarch area. The staff has gone through all the issues. People try to bring up safety issues. There just is, we have a record that the system, the policy as it stands works and it's good: shared usage of the park. I'd like to support that continued usage and that would be done by supporting the Plan as is. So thank you very much for your time.

Grant Weseman/Lighthouse Field Beach Rescue – Hi, thanks for being here. I want to thank you for donating your time. I'm glad you were able to see Santa Cruz County yesterday under such favorable conditions. And I wanted to say at this time that you probably saw Lighthouse Field State Beach at its most pristine yesterday. And this is how I would like to see it in perpetuity. Unfortunately, I also want to tell you that what you saw was not the reality of what Lighthouse Field State Beach is. During off-leash hours at Lighthouse Field State Beach the dominant use of the field and beach is by dogs and their owners. I have witnessed as many as 60 dogs on the beach at one time. And I'm going to leave it to your imagination to imagine, to visualize what the impact on other users would be. It's not peaceful, it's not quiet, it's not relaxing, it's not a beautiful thing. And I would encourage you to visit this park during the on- or the off-leash hours just before 10 and after 4, so that you can actually get a feeling for what is taking place there day in and day out. It would show you the reality of what's happening there. Also you should know about the number of citations that have been issued since May 2003 for non-compliance with the off-leash hours regulations. I have asked Steve Hammock, I asked the ranger, and the ranger's supervisor, Mr. Lang, and I was unable to get a clear, a distinct number. However, the best number I could get from City staff was triple digits. This is for citations issued to people who are either ignoring the regulations or who, you know, can't read or I don't know what, they're down there, they're running their dogs off leash, and this is triple digits since May so what you saw was complete compliance. I didn't see any dog feces. I didn't see any dogs off leash, that is not a typical scenario. You also had half of State Parks' ranger staff out there, and that might have had something to do with it. Okay, that, all those citations were issued by the one ranger that the city has in the field who, according to him, has 2,500 other acres to patrol. So,

I'll just leave that at that. Okay. I understand that dogs need exercise, and apparently socialization, I'm sympathetic to this need, and I think that's fine, it's a given. I like dogs, people that are in my group like dogs, but that is not the issue here. The city has a responsibility to provide for this need in an appropriate way. And by appropriate I mean in a manner that respects existing established recreational activities. Beach-going, surfing, all the activities that take place on a sunny, sandy beach such as this beach, which is, gets exceptionally larger than what you saw yesterday, contrary to what staff informed you. So when it involves a state park, or beach, use changes should be studied, not ignored. CEQA requires this. When the use change involves the coastal zone, the Coastal Commission needs to certify the change to the local coastal program. The certification has not been sought or given. This General Plan revision has consistently sought to favor an activity in our state park that has been specifically prohibited in the General Plan in effect since 1984. The intensity of use guidelines in the '84 General Plan also were ignored by the City in establishing this use, and basically the '84 General Plan has not been the guiding light that city staff claims. Rather the '84 General Plan was more like an obstacle to be overcome by the City of Santa Cruz. And Santa Cruz's own Planning Commission was unable to approve this General Plan revision. Had there been an EIR done on this project prior to establishing it, many of the problems that we are facing today would not exist. But the city chose to ignore the process. The council empowered the City Parks and Rec. Director, Mr. Lang, to locate off-leash dog parks wherever he chose, and no consideration for compatibility, no consideration for alternative location, no consideration for negative impacts. Other cities such as Santa Barbara and Santa Rosa routinely conduct EIRs for dog parks prior to setting them up. Other cities routinely include fencing around off-leash recreation areas as well as licensing supervision. Santa Cruz has chosen to ignore this, all these precedents. Please send this General Plan draft back to the city, and require that they conform to CEQA and measure the impacts of the off-leash dog use. Thank you very much.

Chair Hart called Michael Tilson of Friends of Lighthouse Field, asking for clarification that Friends of Lighthouse Field is a group separate and apart from Lighthouse Field Beach Rescue. Mr. Tilson stated that the two groups were absolutely separate.

Michael Tilson/Friends of Lighthouse Field – Thank you. I'd like to thank the Commission for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Michael Tilson. I visit Lighthouse Field State Beach nearly every day. And today I am speaking on behalf of Friends of Lighthouse Field. We're a community organization in Santa Cruz and we support the preservation of the beauty and recreation opportunities for people and dogs off-leash at Lighthouse Field and Its Beach. I'm here today to support approval of the draft Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan. The Plan was created as a result of a year and a half of careful work and voluminous public comment. In summary it gives the city reasonable flexibility to act as a park manager and addresses some important issues that needed addressing. The important issue to me personally, and to thousands of others, is that it continues and clarifies a policy regarding recreation for people with dogs. 2,500 mostly-local residents as well as some regional and out-of-state visitors have signed petitions in support of the policy. I'm not going to submit them but here is, here is a stack. The city review process was an open process, and it was a thorough process. The city council, after careful consideration, unanimously approved the plan and every issue that's been raised was thoroughly considered in my opinion. You received as part of your packets a detailed document that was produced by hundreds of hours of volunteer work – one of them spoke earlier – which covers these issues. You should have that already. In the City of Santa Cruz, we have a long and successful history of sharing a small but really beautiful open space. And it's shared to meet a critical open-space requirement for thousands of residents and visitors. It's estimated that 36% of U.S. households have dogs, and in most places there is very little or no open space to serve their needs. The situation at Lighthouse Field could be a model for elsewhere. And by the way, I will support our opponents, I would urge you to come during the off-leash hours. I really welcome that. I think you would see an excellent situation. Around this park, a community of users

has formed, and that community has organized itself, and it protects and cherishes the park. And I think that's the kind of thing you would like to see at almost any park. Driving them out would be wrong. Figuring out how to copy the success of what's happening there would be the right thing, and we think one positive step you could take would be to approve today the draft General Plan. So thank you, and once again, I really would invite you to come and visit us during the other hours. Thanks.

Ed Davidson/Individual – Good morning, Commissioners. Your staff is handing out letters that I faxed up to Sacramento yesterday, which was unfortunately too late to get to you. It may be interesting that there is an attachment about West Cliff Drive's multi-use path which was recently denied by the Coastal Commission. And the issues are sort of inter-tied. I hope that you people have in your trip yesterday looked at the entirety of the West Cliff Drive scenic drive, and all of the recreation facilities available. And with apologies to Commissioner Eastwood, I would have to say that compared to 17 Mile Drive, that in my mind, there are several aspects that make West Cliff Drive superior in that, among other things, there is no admission. It's free to the public. There are no meters on the parking spaces. The amount of activities especially along the pocket beaches, the surfing, but also on the multi-use path we have joggers, and we have people walking their dogs, and we have all the kinds of activities that belong in a park. And as it turns out, Lighthouse Field, which I think should be the kind of the centerpiece of this entire facility, if you will, has kind of, in my mind, not lived up to what I think is the level of my expectations for what should have happened. There are, and I do, first of all, support the removal of exotics, but we didn't get very much into how it's going to be done, what the direction is, are we going to return to the native Chaparral that might have been on that property. So we have a lot of issues that haven't been discussed in terms of what is going to replace the exotics. I would include in those exotics, the eucalyptus trees. They need to be gone. They need to be replaced with natives. The monarch butterflies, with hundreds of thousands of years, have migrated to the coast. They had all kinds of opportunities in forming that. They did not need eucalyptus. The eucalyptus are a tree which crowds out all other plants, which is part of the food chain for the native plants, and birds feeding, et cetera. Once you do that, you've eliminated the rest. So it's two words on the off-leash dogs issue. I'm only concerned that this was an entitlement in 1990, in 1993, that required CEQA review and now they say that since it's been established, it doesn't require CEQA review. So it's an illegal use under CEQA. And I also, you'll see, I oppose removing parking spaces. We're going to need that parking because the facility is so popular. Thank you.

Beverly Tracey/Individual – Good morning. My name is Beverly Tracey. I'm a third generation Californian, and I am honored to be speaking to you today. And thank you for the opportunity. I'm in support of the city's plan for Lighthouse Field as written, and I urge you to approve it. There, as been stated, there has been a year, well over a year and a half of public meetings, studies, reports, and review. I trust that the commitment of our City Parks staff to care for this park and plan for its future. And again, I urge you to support their vision by approving the plan. I also will tell you that I'm a regular user of the field, daily with my family, my friends, my off-leash dog. This is my high quality outdoor recreation as stated in your mission statement today. It's the only accessible place for people with disabilities to come with their dogs off-leash. For elderly people and others, sometimes it's dangerous for them to walk with a dog on leash. They can be pulled down. This is a flat area, there's no cliffs. There is nice flat trails, and there is usually people there to help them if need be. I'd like to respond in support of what Mr. Weseman just said, in that the evidence that there is a need for a beach where we can take our dogs off-leash is exactly what he said. And that, I would propose that, in fact, this is an acceptable use of a beach. Evidently there are a lot of people who enjoy it. Having dogs on the beach, if it was not a fun and safe place, people wouldn't be there. I wouldn't be there. That would be unsafe for me, it would be unsafe for my dog. But I go there because I do feel comfortable and I do feel safe, in the presence of the responsible people that share it. I'd also like to

mention that the Coastal Commission has also stated in writing that they do not oppose off-leash dog policies. At the May 22nd meeting of our city council, even our mayor suggested, and I'm not quoting, but sort of paraphrasing, I don't want to quote her, but she suggested that perhaps the time has come when we need to begin to recognize the type of recreation and the importance of dogs in our lives, as a community and as individuals. I'd also like to ask that you vigorously defend the lawsuit that's been brought against us. You are our only voice. Thank you.

Steve Tracey/Individual – My name is Steve Tracey. I live probably less than a block from Lighthouse Field, and I'm here in support of the City of Santa Cruz and the decision to approve the Lighthouse Field General Plan and the Negative Declarations. I, like hundreds of other people in Santa Cruz, visit Lighthouse Field nearly every day, and walk my dog off-leash. And I just want to thank you for supporting this city's vision, and the off-leash access for my dog and my daily exercise. Thank you.

Candice McLaren/Individual – Hi, I'm Candace McLaren. I'm a resident of Santa Cruz. And I live about a half a block from Lighthouse Field, and I walk my dog off-leash at Lighthouse Field and the surrounding perimeter pathway almost every day. And I would really like to see you support the City of Santa Cruz in the General Plan. So, thank you very much.

Aldo Giacchino/Individual – Thank you. My name is Aldo Giacchino, good morning. I would like to suggest to you that the Plan that has been submitted is inadequate because it does not have the sufficient environmental analysis of key factors. Two in particular. One of them is the dog/human interaction. It just needs to be studied instead of just having spontaneous reactions to it. There are mitigating positions that can be reached through study and analysis of how to separate humans from dogs, either by partitioning the park, or some other means. It is a very important environmental concern. That needs to be addressed and a plan that just skirts the issue completely is just inadequate. And there is no reason for having such an inadequate plan. These plans are not done every year they're done a decade apart, and this is the time when a new plan, when the plan is being redone to really do it thoroughly. The second issue, that is of equal importance from an environmental point of view is the coastal erosion. Now, Lighthouse Point is the signature feature of this park, of Santa Cruz in fact. The Plan, the staff report this morning to you was that coastal erosion is acknowledged, and the response to it is that they have identified a new site for the lighthouse when the Lighthouse Point crumbles. Again, there is no reason whatever to take a position like that. Lighthouse Point most likely can be saved through some erosion protection measures before it crumbles. To arrive at the conclusion that the lighthouse should be moved to another site when the point collapses, and that that is a planned action is absurd. There is no planning to that. It is merely a reflection of an approach to this park which is do nothing, do as little as possible. Don't tackle the heavy issues. Don't tackle the controversial issues. And let the cliffs crumble if the waves will make them crumble. Let the dogs do whatever they want. Let people just fend for themselves. It is a most inadequate plan. It needs to have an Environmental Impact Report, and I strongly urge you to send it back to have that kind of analysis done. Thank you.

Chair Hart stated that at the conclusion of the public comments she would like to have staff address the issue of erosion mitigation at Lighthouse Point, and clarify whether or not the approval of the Revised General Plan would mean a decision with regard to the moving of the lighthouse.

Peggy Pollard/Individual – Hi. I live about three blocks from Lighthouse Field, and I have been going down to that area for about 10 years. My main point is there's a lot of dogs that use Lighthouse Field. It's not just a few local dogs. As they said, there's 2,500 members of the Friends of Lighthouse Field whose main purpose now is to advocate for off-leash dog use. That's a lot of dogs. They come from all over the area because the city has allowed this area, both Lighthouse Field and the next city beach, Mitchell's Cove, to be off-leash dogs, so it has become a dog Disneyland. There is no other place like it. Many of the dog owners say that. No other place like it anywhere in the area, and I

know some people said, anywhere in the world. No other countries allow their, you know, such, to take their nicest parks and have them be for the dogs. To have the dogs be allowed there twice a day, for half the daylight hours, to me is not a fair sharing of the park. If only a third of the population owns dogs, and I've talked with many dog owners who did not want their dogs around other dogs off-leash. It's a minority, but they are using it half the time, and it has developed a reputation as a dog area, so that a lot of people don't use the park because of the dogs. They don't feel comfortable, they don't feel safe, it's not enjoyable. It's not compatible with the public use of a state park. I, with the little time I had – I work part time and I have three children – here is (hands-out photographs), within one hour, this is what dog poop I found in Lighthouse Field in the field itself. This is dog poop on West Cliff Drive, and it's become a heavy-used dog area. If you want to look at them closer, you're welcome to but, I don't think you do. And some of the pictures that are up there, this was one Sunday, I took a videotape of, I've left a copy of it there, I don't have a way to show it here. But it's an overwhelming feeling of the heavy dog use there. These are, this was one Sunday afternoon. I was guesstimating about 50 dogs on the beach, running around. I mean, the people who are there are enjoying it, but there's a lot of other people who want to use the beaches who don't enjoy that. It's not safe. People do get bothered by dogs. People do get bit by dogs. My daughter's friend was walking her dog in Lighthouse Field and a dog ran out of the bushes and bit her on the leg. Another of my friends was bit by a dog who was on a leash on West Cliff Drive. He had a big gash in his shoulder that required a lot of stitches. Our neighbor got knocked over by a dog and has scars on her knees and her hands from where she fell down. Older people, if they get knocked over by a dog, they can break bones. A lot of little kids are afraid of dogs for good reason. Dogs can bite. If there's off-leash dogs in public, you're going to have conflict. Even though their owners say they're all perfectly well behaved, all the owners think their dogs are well behaved, but they bother people. So it's not compatible with the general public use of the park. So if you give it to the dogs half the time, then a lot of the people don't even use it the rest of the time because it's just known as a dog park. I have talked with a lot of people, some friends of mine who are surfers said they knew of one lady who had her towel on the beach, and a dog came up and peed on her towel, there. There's another guy whose son was eating a sandwich and a dog came and ate the sandwich out of his hand. That's not fun. And as I gather petition signatures on our petition, and from talking with people, there's a lot of, basically about a third of the people I talked to said they've had bad experiences with dogs, either at that park or elsewhere, and even a lot of dog owners say a dog should always be on a leash in the public. It's just not compatible with general public use. So if you want to have a dog park, you need to choose the right place. Just because they allowed it, started allowing it 10 years ago, does not mean this is the right place for a dog park. There's other city property that's underused that would be fine for dog parks – open areas for dogs to run. Dogs don't have to have a beach. They can have open land. So thank you for considering this. I don't believe that the city really put a lot of thought into this. When I talked to one of the city council members who was about to vote on this issue, she had no idea that the next beach was also a dog off-leash beach. So that's a huge amount of area. Thank you.

Chair Hart asked Ms. Pollard if she wanted her photographs returned.

Peggy Pollard – You can keep them as part of the record.

Chair Hart announced that this concluded the registered speakers, and asked if there were any unregistered speakers on this agenda item. She then asked staff to respond to the comments that had been made.

Chair Hart recognized Commission Vice Chair Raquelle de la Rocha.

Vice Chair de la Rocha stated that the common themes of today's public comments led her to believe that many individuals had misunderstood what it was the Commission was doing today in considering the approval of the Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan. Vice Chair de la Rocha stated that the General Plan did not make any direction pertaining to the moving of the lighthouse or of the

dog leash policy, but that the Plan delegated these decisions to operations management. Vice Chair de la Rocha clarified that the Commission was not making a decision about what would be done to prevent the lighthouse from being destroyed by storms, but that the Revised General Plan allowed, in the event of a storm or erosion threatening the lighthouse, it could be moved, and that it allowed for the consideration of a new location should moving the lighthouse become necessary. Vice Chair de la Rocha asked staff to concur that she was correct in this.

Commissioner Cotchett requested clarification from staff regarding what would result should the Commission approve the Revised General Plan.

Acting Director Coleman asked City of Santa Cruz staff to respond.

Susan Harris, Associate Planner at the Santa Cruz Parks & Recreation Department, explained that the Commission was being asked to approve the environmental document and the General Plan Revision. Ms. Harris further clarified that the General Plan Revision does not state that the lighthouse will be moved, though it does state that as an alternative to attempting erosion control on the bluffs, an alternate site could be selected. Ms. Harris also described other means of controlling erosion on Lighthouse Point that had been considered, including the placement of “rip-rap” in the surf zone, and a sea wall. She stated that such projects would be entirely separate from the Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan, and that any such project would require detailed environmental review. Ms. Harris stated that the proposals of the Revised General Plan had been devised to provide a variety of options so the community could select the best solution.

Regarding dogs off-leash, Ms. Harris explained that the 1984 General Plan included a policy that stated that natural wildlife populations would be protected and perpetuated, and that the leash policies in that Plan had been placed there with the specific goal of protecting wildlife. She further stated that restricting pets to leashes was consistent with the general policy of both the City of Santa Cruz and of California State Parks. Ms. Harris noted that the director of the City of Santa Cruz and the local park superintendent were given the authority to designate specific areas for off-leash use, and that this had been the case since 1993.

Ms. Harris stated that human and dog use are prohibited in the sensitive resource areas of the park, and that human/dog interactions, including incident reports, had been thoroughly studied during the development of the Revised General Plan, and that public safety issues had been carefully considered. Ms. Harris noted that the City of Santa Cruz environmental coordinator and city attorney were present to address additional CEQA questions if necessary.

Ms. Harris concluded by stating that the document before the Commission did not state specific leash policy, nor did it state that the lighthouse would be moved. Ms. Harris stated that the Revised General Plan does offer options when considering these issues.

Vice Chair de la Rocha asked for clarification regarding whether there had or had not been dog bite incidents in the park.

Ms. Harris stated that city records, including park ranger records and those of county animal control services, had been reviewed. She further stated that there had been no reported incidents of dog bites, clarifying that this was not to say that there had never been an incident, but only that there had not been any reported incidents. Ms. Harris noted that county animal control records are such that all incidents along West Cliff Pathway and the beach areas had been considered, and that there was nothing that could be considered a public health issue.

Commissioner Eastwood asked Ms. Harris if the County Health Department had any concerns about dog use on the beach, noting that the photographs provided by Ms. Pollard illustrated a great number of dogs off-leash.

Ms. Harris stated that off-leash dogs at the beach were generally considered a positive thing, in that

dogs and dog owners learn to be around each other, and that while people who don't feel comfortable around dogs probably don't use this beach, people who do enjoy being around dogs appreciate the environment. Ms. Harris reiterated that this was not to say that there had not been any negative incidents, but rather that there had not been any reported incidents, and that in terms of a risk management issue for the City of Santa Cruz, there had been no reason for concern.

Vice Chair de la Rocha, Ms. Harris, and Mr. Hammack engaged in a brief discussion of off-leash dog areas in the City of Santa Cruz. Mr. Hammack explained that the small, contained beach, Its Beach, was chosen for off-leash dog use, during specific hours, because it is small and contained. He explained that dogs were not allowed at all on the city's nearby Cowell Beach and Main Beach, though there were two other locations in the city where dogs were permitted off-leash.

Commissioner Cotchett addressed the Chair, stating that it was his belief that issues like this should be left to the local agency, in this case the City of Santa Cruz, to manage. Commissioner Cotchett stated that the original General Plan designated the city as lead agency, responsible for the planning, development, and operation of this state beach. Commissioner Cotchett stated that the city had conducted numerous public meetings on the subject of dogs in the park, which were attended by pro- and anti-dog advocates. Commissioner Cotchett stated that the Commission had been asked to review and consider for conditional approval the Initial Study/Negative Declaration and Draft Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan. He asked for confirmation that this was correct.

Chair Hart stated that this was correct, and that she was asking for a motion to approve the Initial Study/Negative Declaration and Draft Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan.

Chair Hart, Commissioner Cotchett, and Commissioner Eastwood engaged in a brief discussion wherein it was noted that the City of Santa Cruz had conducted extensive public hearings on the subject of dogs off-leash, and that while some members of the public may have approached the State Park and Recreation Commission in the hope of altering the city's decision, the Commissioners present generally agreed that while they were not unsympathetic to those who objected to off-leash dogs, they did not feel that the State Park and Recreation Commission should attempt to intrude on the authority of the City of Santa Cruz in the operation of Lighthouse Field State Beach.

Vice Chair de la Rocha made a motion to adopt the resolution before the Commission to approve the Initial Study/Negative Declaration and Draft Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan. Commissioner Witt seconded the motion.

Chair Hart asked if there was any further discussion on this subject. There being none, Chair Hart called for a vote. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the Initial Study/Negative Declaration and Draft Lighthouse Field State Beach Revised General Plan.

Commissioner Cotchett addressed the Chair, referring to the photographs that had been provided by Ms. Pollard. Commissioner Cotchett pointed out that in the photographs, Its Beach appears to be much larger than it appeared during the Commission's site visit on the previous day. Mr. Hammack confirmed that the difference was caused by the tides, it having been high tide during the Commission's visit. Commissioner Cotchett stated for clarification that Its Beach is considered self-contained, in that dogs can't get from Its Beach to the other, nearby beaches where dogs are prohibited. Mr. Hammack confirmed that this was correct.

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

Chair Hart announced that the final agenda item was open public comment on items other than those on the agenda. Chair Hart asked if there were any registered speakers, there were none. Chair Hart asked if there were any unregistered speakers:

Ed Davidson/Individual – I'm Edward Davidson. I live in Santa Cruz, and I just wanted to make a comment about Wilder Ranch State Park, which is seven square miles, just up the coast from Santa

Cruz. It was bought about the same time as Lighthouse Field and because there was a proposed twenty-five-hundred house development being prepared there, and so the state bought it up, and the reason that the state put money into buying up this property was so, it was sold to the State Parks to the state, to the legislature, and, about the need for camp sites, tent camp sites between San Francisco and Big Sur. There was a particular shortage of that, those kinds of facilities. The state bought this as I say, seven square miles and the general plan that was adopted back around 1980 shows three tent camp facilities on that park. Here we are in 2003 we do not have it. I think this is sort of bait and switch. Tell the legislature we gotta have, we gotta have more camp grounds, where are they, when will we get them? That was my comment, thank you.

Chair Hart thanked Mr. Davidson for his comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other agenda items, Chair Hart asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion Commissioner Cotchett, second Commissioner Eastwood. Chair Hart adjourned the meeting at 12:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Coleman, Secretary