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October 14, 1997

TO: Commissioners and Interested Persons

FROM: Tami Grove, District Director
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SUBJECT: **PWP 7-97 GRAY WHALE RANCH PUBLIC WORKS PLAN and PWP 7-97-1 GRAY WHALE RANCH PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS** For public hearing and Commission action at its meeting of November 4 -7, 1997, to be held at the Radisson Hotel, Agoura Hills.

SUMMARY OF STAFF REPORT**DESCRIPTION OF PUBLIC WORKS PLAN and PROJECT REQUESTS**

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has submitted a public works plan for Gray Whale Ranch. This is a 2,300 acre addition to Wilder Ranch State Park on the north coast of Santa Cruz County. Upon approval of the plan by the Commission, the Department would commence opening this newest addition to the State Parks system. The *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* lists the following specific projects which it would undertake:

- opening of eight miles of existing dirt roads to public access;
- trail and fence maintenance;
- elimination of unauthorized roads;
- entrance road gate and "stobbers" (a row of short posts) or fencing along entrance road;
- 10,000 square foot parking lot for 45 vehicles with barricades;
- two chemical toilets and two trash receptacles;
- information panel and informational and regulatory signs;
- stabilization devices, posting, and/or protective fencing at historic lime kiln.

In addition the *Plan* lists ongoing management measures that would be undertaken. This plan was submitted on September 23, 1997. The standard of review of this public works plan is that it must be consistent with Santa Cruz County's certified Local Coastal Program (Coastal Act Section 30605). The standard of review for public works projects is that they must be consistent with the public works plan (Coastal Act Section 30605). Projects contained in an approved public works plan can be conditionally approved, but can not be denied, by the Coastal Commission (California Code of Regulations Section 13358).

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve with conditions** the proposed Public Works Plan as submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation for the reasons given in this report. Staff also

recommends that the Commission **approve with conditions**, the specific project requests. The conditions require more detailed final plans and address sensitive habitat protection and recreational opportunities for various user groups.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND COMMENTS

There do not appear to be any unresolved Coastal Act issues associated with the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*. The County has found the *Plan* consistent with its certified local coastal program. The *Plan* contains measures to address environmentally sensitive habitat concerns. Although the proposed projects are listed in the *Plan*, conditions are required to address specific design issues related to habitat protection and potential use conflicts.

The majority of public comments have revolved around whether the eight miles of existing dirt and gravel roads proposed for public access should be used by mountain bicycles. The *Plan* provides for access by hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists on these existing ranch roads. The *Plan* prohibits motor vehicles except at the proposed trailhead parking area, does not allow off-road/trail bicycle use, defers decisions on opening other existing trails, and does not allow any new trails to be constructed. Testimony in favor of mountain bike use noted that the roads exist, that mountain biking is a very popular and legitimate recreational use, that impacts from cycling are not severe, and that bicyclists are responsible and cooperative. Contrary testimony claimed that mountain bicyclists would be a hazard and an irritant to hikers and would create erosion damage. The *Plan* contains management measures that address these concerns, including Department of Parks and Recreation discretion to restrict uses if found necessary. Recommended conditions would require that management, monitoring, and future planning undertaken by the Department ensure that public access opportunities are maximized, consistent with resource protection.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information about this report or the public works plan process, please contact Rick Hyman or Lee Otter, Coastal Commission, 725 Front Street, Suite 300, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; Tel. (408) 427-4863.

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ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS

- A. *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* (in Commissioner packets or available upon request)
- B. County Findings of LCP Consistency
- C. Selected Regulations Governing Public Works
- D. Correspondence

I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS**A. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC WORKS PLAN****MOTION:**

"I move that the Commission approve the Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan as submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation and as conditioned."

Staff recommends a "yes" vote which would result in approval of this plan as conditioned. An affirmative vote by a majority of the Commissioners present is needed to pass the motion.

RESOLUTION:

The Commission finds that the proposed *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*, as conditioned, is in conformity with Santa Cruz County's certified local coastal program; and that there are no feasible alternatives, or feasible mitigation measures available, as provided in the California Environmental Quality Act, which would lessen any significant adverse impact that the development as finally proposed and conditioned may have on the environment.

B. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS**MOTION:**

"I move that the Commission approve the projects contained in the Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan as submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation, and as conditioned."

Staff recommends a "yes" vote which would result in approval of the projects, as conditioned. An affirmative vote by a majority of the Commissioners present is needed to pass the motion.

RESOLUTION:

The Commission hereby approves the specific projects proposed to be undertaken at Gray Whale Ranch, on the grounds that the developments, as conditioned, will be in conformity with the provisions of the certified public works plan, as conditioned, and that there are no feasible alternatives, or feasible mitigation measures available, as provided in the California Environmental Quality Act, which would lessen any significant adverse impact that the development as finally proposed and conditioned may have on the environment.

II. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**A. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS FOR GRAY WHALE RANCH PUBLIC WORKS PLAN PWP-7-97****1. Natural Resource Management**

As part of the preparation of the General Plan update to incorporate Gray Whale Ranch (or comparable planning process), the Department of Parks and Recreation shall more fully develop the natural resource management provisions contained in the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*.

The planned inventory shall include an identification of the type, extent, and baseline condition of each significant habitat type (e.g., redwood forest, grasslands, sand parkland) and all other sensitive habitats identified in Santa Cruz County's *General Plan and Local Coastal Program* policy 5.1.2 and Appendix B.

Management measures shall be enumerated for each special habitat and species and for each planned activity and include those contained in the Santa Cruz County *General Plan*. The objective of the *General Plan and Local Coastal Program* to maximize public use and enjoyment of coastal recreational resources shall be addressed by including specific access management strategies necessary to address particular resource constraints, rather than blanket closures, wherever possible.

Specifically with regard to grasslands, the Department shall undertake (or participate in) a study of the desirability of restoring agricultural/grazing use of Gray Whale Ranch's grasslands. Such a study shall examine the benefits and drawbacks of re-establishing grazing from a resource and recreational perspective and shall include information about: historic conditions, alternatives for maintaining native grasslands and their special status plants, compatibility with planned recreational uses, potential resource impacts, State Park's policies and experiences elsewhere, and prospects for coordinated efforts with adjacent and nearby lands. The study results shall be factored into future submittals to the Coastal Commission (e.g., a future public works plan or amendment) concerning Gray Whale Ranch.

2. Trail Use Monitoring

In order to determine whether the management and monitoring measures included in the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* are effective, the Department of Parks and Recreation shall develop a formal trail use monitoring program. This program shall include periodic counts and observations of trail use; a publicized, designated contact for reporting complaints; and documentation of responses. The documentation shall be included in, and the results factored into, future submittals to the Coastal Commission (e.g., a future public works plan or amendment) concerning Gray Whale Ranch.

3. Additional Trail Opening Consideration

If the Department of Parks and Recreation has not completed and submitted a General Plan covering Gray Whale Ranch (or equivalent comprehensive planning document) within three years, then the Department shall submit to the Coastal Commission by November 7, 2000 the following items:

- the results of the required monitoring (Condition #2);
- a public works project request to open additional roads or trails that provide: vista points; opportunities to resolve any use conflicts, pursuant to *Public Works Plan* provisions (page 16); and connecting links, to further Santa Cruz County *General Plan* objective # 7.7.a;
- evidence of consultation with park user groups;
- any necessary environmental documentation;
- management measures to address use conflicts and resource protection;
- a timetable for completion of the planning process to provide for public recreational use throughout Gray Whale Ranch.

(The deadline of this condition may be extended by the Executive Director if requested by the Department's Director for reasons of budgetary constraints).

4. Entrance Road/Parking Lot

Add a notation to Figure 4 "Proposed Parking and Northern Access" of the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* to the effect: "Illustrative Only, Final Plans to Be Developed Pursuant to Specific Project Requirements."

B. RECOMMENDED PROJECT CONDITIONS; PWP 7-97-1

STANDARD CONDITIONS:

1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. This public works project approval is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the project authorization, signed by the applicant or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the project authorization and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the public works project approval will expire two years from the date this project is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the public works project approval must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. Compliance. All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth in the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*, subject to special conditions set forth below. Any deviation from the approved plans must be reviewed and approved by the staff and may require Commission approval.
4. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
5. Inspections. The Commission staff shall be allowed to inspect the site and the project during its development, subject to 24-hour advance notice.
6. Assignment. The public works project approval may be assigned to any agency qualified to undertake public works projects, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the public works project approval.
7. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS:

1. Opening Roads for Public Use: Approval to Open

- a. Immediately upon this Coastal Commission action, the two roads leading from Empire Grade to Wilder Ranch State Park may be opened for public use, as proposed. If public use of a connecting trail in Wilder Ranch is restricted in the future in order to protect resources, corresponding measures shall be taken on the Gray Whale connection (e.g., signing at the Empire Grade trailhead that there is no through use into Wilder).
- b. Prior to opening the road from Smith Grade to the parking area to equestrians and bicyclists, the Department of Parks and Recreation shall prepare and implement a short-term repair and maintenance plan to repair and stabilize eroded areas (e.g., with water bars, outsloping) and to remove hazardous debris.

2. Trail Maintenance: Plans

Any road/trail maintenance that requires the use of mechanized equipment to excavate for a culvert or to operate in riparian corridors or environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be performed in accordance with an approved plan. Prior to first conducting this activity, the Department shall submit for Executive Director review and approval a maintenance plan or plans showing methods and limits of work along with any necessary California Department of Fish and Game approval or consultation. In areas that contain federally protected species, evidence of consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service shall be provided where applicable.

3. Elimination of Unauthorized Roads: Plans

Prior to commencement of any road or trail removal or rehabilitation, the Department shall submit a plan identifying the segment to be eliminated, proposed techniques for closure and restoration, reasons for the closure, and any necessary California Department of Fish and Game approval or consultation. In areas that contain federally protected species, evidence of consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service shall be provided where applicable. Appropriate reasons for closure shall be limited to lack of recreational value, potential for unmitigatable resource damage, or unavoidable administrative reasons (e.g., inability to provide ranger patrols).

4. Entrance Road from Empire Grade and Parking Lot: Final Plans

Prior to commencement of construction of the parking lot, the Department of Parks and Recreation shall submit final, revised plans. These plans shall show:

- location of toilets outside of Empire Grade viewshed;
- log curbings (or similar measures) along the entire edge of the parking lot and road open to motor vehicles;
- new fencing, only pursuant to approval of UCSC's Natural Reserve manager;
- method of construction and temporary materials used;
- evidence of Department Fish and Game consultation for the San Francisco popcorn flower and of U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service consultation for Gairdner's yampa, if necessary, and incorporation of the agencies' recommendations into the final plans.

These plans may also show:

- proposed "stobbers," if consistent with resource agencies' consultations;
- an opening at the fork in the roads to allow non-motorized access to bypass the parking lot area;
- signing indicating narrow or one lane road and a pullout area at the fork.

5. Entrance Roads: County Approval

Prior to commencement of any work within the County right-of-way, the Department shall provide evidence of approval from Santa Cruz County.

6. Parking Lot: Temporary Facilities

As temporary facilities, the parking lot and toilets must be removed within one year of approval of the General Plan covering Gray Whale Ranch, unless specifically provided for in a subsequent Coastal Commission public works plan (amendment, or equivalent) approval.

7. Lime Kilns: Plan for Protection

Prior to commencement of any protective work constituting development at the lime kilns, the Department shall submit plans for such work for Executive Director review and approval to ensure consistency with the resource policies of the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*.

8. All Projects: Rare and Endangered Species Consultations

Prior to commencement of any work or activity that may impact a listed species, the Department shall provide evidence of its consultations with the State Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and incorporation of their recommendations into the project.

IV. RECOMMENDED FINDINGS

The Commission finds and declares as follows:

A. BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has submitted a public works plan for the Gray Whale Ranch (including an entrance road area under easement from the University of California). This 2,319 acre site was acquired by the State in May 1997 from the Save-the-Redwoods League, who purchased it from a private landowner. The property is located just north of the Santa Cruz City, adjacent to Wilder Ranch State Park. The subject property includes diverse natural features: streams, forests, meadows, chaparral, mima mounds, and limestone caves (see *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* page 5). It is habitat to some thirty plants and animal species of special concern. Existing developments include several miles of unpaved roads and trails, perimeter fencing, caretaker mobile home, and lime kiln remnants. Historic uses of the park have included recreation, mining, crop cultivation, grazing, and logging. Four recent timber harvests have occurred, which were exempt from coastal permit review (Coastal Act Section 30106). There was a recent development proposal submitted to the County for a 73 lot residential subdivision on an 811 acre portion of the site, which galvanized interest in public acquisition.

The *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* is designed to allow the park to be open to some public use until the Department prepares a General Plan. The *Public Works Plan* foresees the Department revising the existing *Wilder Ranch State Park General Plan* (and *Public Works Plan*) as the comprehensive planning mechanism for Gray Whale Ranch, but no timetable is advanced (page 5).

State law, as quoted in the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* (page 3), allows some use of existing and temporary facilities prior to completion of a General Plan. The proposed plan includes the following projects:

- opening of eight miles of existing dirt roads to public access;
- road/trail and fence maintenance;
- elimination of unauthorized roads;
- entrance road gate and "stobbers" (a row of short posts or bollards) or fencing along entrance road;
- 10,000 square foot parking lot for 45 vehicles with barricades;
- two chemical toilets and two trash receptacles;
- information panel and informational and regulatory signs;
- stabilization devices, posting, and/or protective fencing. at historic lime kiln.

The *Plan* contains eight Resource policies addressing special species and features. Associated with these policies are proposed management measures. These include research and education projects (under special permit), staff patrols for safety and resource protection, maintenance, further surveys and monitoring.

Under the Coastal Act agencies undertaking public works have the option of submitting public works plans to the Commission, as opposed to receiving coastal permits from local governments with certified local coastal programs (See Attachment C). The standard of review of this public works plan is that it must be consistent with Santa Cruz County's certified local coastal program (Coastal Act Section 30605). The standard of review for the public works projects is that they must be consistent with the Public Works Plan. Projects contained in an approved public works plan can be conditioned, but can not be denied, by the Coastal Commission (California Code of Regulations Section 13359b).

B. GENERAL CONSISTENCY WITH THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM

The Santa Cruz County local coastal program consists of a land use plan (*1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program for the County of Santa Cruz*) and implementation plan (selected sections of the County Code). Under the Coastal Act, the Commission must consult with and receive input from the local government to make a determination of public works plan consistency. The County Planning Director has submitted a letter dated September 29, 1997 indicating that the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* conforms to relevant County land use plan and implementation plan policies. The Commission concurs in this evaluation and incorporates by reference the September 29, 1997 letter (Attachment B) into these findings of approval.

C. NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* provides for natural resource management, including inventorying, monitoring, removing exotics, protecting special interest species, and maintaining ecosystems (page 11). The *Plan* lists and references some already documented habitats and species. In order to be consistent with the Local Coastal Program, it will be necessary for the Department to follow the County's definitions and lists of sensitive habitats (which are more inclusive than the State and Federal endangered species lists) in completing its resource inventory. The *Plan* also lists some preliminary management measures (e.g., removal of exotics, prescribed burning) and notes that ecological management planning is necessary. While there are different ways to present such management provisions (e.g., by species, by habitat, by activity, by watershed), it is important that all sensitive habitat types and all potential activities be covered. Where possible, specific access management strategies should be implemented with regard to particular resource constraints, as opposed to blanket closures (e.g., temporal, numerical, or specific user group restrictions; interpretation; facility design). This approach would carry out various provisions in the Santa Cruz

County *General Plan*, including Objective 7.7a "to maximize public use and enjoyment of coastal recreational resources... while protecting those resources from the adverse impacts of overuse." Resource management policies and programs from Chapter 5 of the County *General Plan* should be incorporated into the Department's plan.

With specific regard to grasslands, County findings indicate that the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan's* proposed limited public access use and associated facilities are consistent with the local coastal program. The Santa Cruz County *General Plan* has policies (#7.7.27 and 7.7.28) governing trails in and adjacent to agricultural areas. The land is currently not in any kind of agricultural use and the proposed use of existing trails will not harm the agricultural resource.

Nevertheless, with regard to long-term planning, parts of the property are mapped as grasslands and portions are designated for "Agriculture" in the County *General Plan*. Policy 5.15.18 states in part:

- (a) retain the maximum amount of commercial agricultural land in agricultural production within each state park unit;
- (b) require a site-specific justification demonstrating the overriding public access or recreational need, for removing agricultural lands from production or for not offering lands capable of farm production for lease.

Experience here and in other State and Federal park units shows that grazing helps maintain the native coastal prairie grasslands. It is believed that domestic cattle simulate the "mowing" effects that native grazing animals, such as Tule elk, have on the landscape. In the absence of continued grazing activity, invasion by brushy species is highly likely (as observed, for example, at Andrew Molera State Park in Big Sur). An increased proportion of brush both substantially reduces the area of habitat available to native wildflowers typical of coastal prairie grasslands and increases fire hazard.

At adjacent Wilder Ranch, the Commission in 1982 conditioned approval of the public works plan on the continuation of grazing leases. Under State Parks policy II.6, "generally, grazing or agricultural leasing is considered incompatible in units of the State Park System. However,... the Director may, with the concurrence of the [State Parks] Commission, permit grazing or agriculture where it is for the benefit of the unit" after careful consideration of the environmental consequences. Given the existence of mapped agricultural lands and grasslands on Gray Whale, the potential resource benefits of grazing, the presence of grasslands on adjacent properties (i.e., Wilder Ranch, University of California, and Younger), the cited *General Plan* policies, and State Parks' policy, the issue of reestablishing some grazing use deserves consideration in the Department's forthcoming planning process. What is needed is a study examining the benefits and drawbacks of re-establishing grazing from a resource and recreational perspective. Such a study would gather information about: historic conditions; alternatives for maintaining native grasslands and their special status plants; compatibility with planned recreational uses; potential resource impacts; State Park's policies and experiences elsewhere; and prospects for coordinated efforts with adjacent and nearby lands. The results of the study results would then be factored into the natural resource management decisions that the Department will be making in conjunction with preparing a Wilder Ranch State Park General Plan update incorporating Gray Whale Ranch.

In conclusion, as conditioned for future elaboration of natural resource management that accounts for County *General Plan* definitions and provisions and public access objectives, the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* is consistent with the Santa Cruz County Local Coastal Program's Conservation provisions.

D. PUBLIC USE ISSUES

Two public comment opportunities have been available: one, on the environmental document (see Finding F) and one, on the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*. As required by California Code of Regulations Section 13353.5 (see Attachment C), a public hearing was held on September 12, 1997. The Department provided a summary of the testimony and its responses to the points raised (see *Plan* addendum pp. 16-18)

1. User Conflicts

The majority of public comments have revolved around whether the eight miles of existing dirt roads proposed for public access should be used by mountain bicycles. The *Plan* provides for road access by hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists. Testimony in favor of mountain bike use noted that the roads exist, that mountain biking is a very popular and legitimate recreational use, that impacts from cycling are not severe, and that bicyclists are responsible and cooperative. Contrary testimony claimed that mountain bicyclists would be a hazard and an irritant to hikers and would create erosion damage. Suggested solutions included designating some trails and/or some days for hikers only, speed limits, closure periods, enforcement, and bicycle prohibitions on (single-track) trails.

With regard to conflicts among user groups, the Santa Cruz County local coastal program is supportive of public access, as noted in the September 29, 1997 letter (Attachment 3). *General Plan* Objective 7.7a paraphrases Coastal Act Section 30210: "To maximize public use and enjoyment of coastal recreation resources for all people, including those with disabilities, while protecting those resources from the adverse impacts of overuse." Objective 7.6 is "to establish a countywide system of hiking, bicycling and equestrian trails..." Policy 7.7.6 calls for the establishment of a system of hiking and bicycle trails. Policy 7.7.8 calls for the establishment of equestrian trails "where use conflicts can be resolved." As noted, the County has indicated that the State's proposal to allow multiple uses is consistent with these policies. The *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* references State Parks Department policy that paved and unpaved roads (fire, dirt, and service) over 5 feet wide can be open to multiple user groups. In this case, the roads proposed to be open already exist, are wide (generally at least eight feet), have good sight distance, have been used by logging trucks and other motor vehicles, and have been maintained. Thus, they have been judged suitable for equestrian and bicycle use, as well as pedestrian use, by State Parks personnel.

It is possible that if mountain bike use is reckless or is so perceived, then hiking use will be effectively curtailed and, hence, the policy objective no longer achieved. The *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* has several provisions to address possible problems: daily staff patrolling for public safety and active enforcement, user group self-policing, establishment of a maximum speed limit, dissemination of public information including signs and literature, and, if necessary, instituting closures or alternative use days or times. The *Plan* also commits the Department to reexamining the multiple trail use on adjacent Wilder Ranch State Park for the possibility of restricting some trails to passive use. The *Plan* further states that there will be more opportunities to address use conflicts as more roads and trails in Gray Whale Ranch are opened.

These measures could be bolstered in two ways, to ensure long-term consistency with local coastal program objectives. One is to institute a formal monitoring procedure for assessing use conflicts. Aspects could include a publicized, designated contact for reporting complaints and periodic counts and observations of trail use.

A second measure could be to accelerate opening of additional accessways, which could either disperse use or potentially could be limited to certain user groups (e.g., narrower trail reserved for exclusive pedestrian use). As noted, the local coastal program's objective is to maximize public use. There are several miles of trails and roads on Wilder Ranch not proposed to be open at this time. Some provide links to the roads to be opened, scenic vistas of the coastline, or parallel routes to the roads to be opened. The *Plan* provides that additional trails can be opened after environmental review is undertaken. As noted, the Department will be preparing a General Plan for the Gray Whale Acquisition which will amend the existing *Wilder Ranch State Park General Plan* and Public Works Plan. If this General Plan planning process is prolonged, it would be desirable for the Department to consider opening additional existing roads or trails in the interim. The Commission urges the Department to pursue this approach in a timely manner.

2. User Impacts

Some testimony suggested that resource damage might result from public use, especially by mountain bicyclists. These included running over Ohlone tiger beetles on the trails, causing erosion (especially at wet times), and harming resources from riding elsewhere than the designated roads. All of the possibilities are addressed by management measures contained in the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*, including the ones mentioned above. Other measures offered include road maintenance with water bars or rolling dips, maintenance of the erosion control measures, opening of existing roads and trails only after thorough natural resource inventories have been completed and appropriate resource protection mitigations have been implemented, surveying areas within 25 feet of all areas proposed for public use for sensitive resources, posting warning to watch for Ohlone tiger beetles, and elimination of unauthorized trails. Again, these measures can be augmented by monitoring and possibly shifting trail or formalized use, as described above.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* provides for the use of some existing facilities and minimal temporary new facilities to enable the public to gain immediate access to Gray Whale Ranch. The bulk of concerned public testimony was directed at the potential impacts this recreational use could have on the users themselves and on the resources. Thus, the issue in this case is generally not the facility design, but management of the use of the facilities. The Commission recognizes the State Department of Parks and Recreation's authority and expertise to manage for both public use and resource protection, pursuant to Section 30401 of the Coastal Act. The Commission finds that the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* includes several management procedures to address any use conflicts and resource problems that develop and that the *Plan* has been revised based on public testimony. As further conditioned for monitoring and timely consideration of opening additional trails, the *Plan* is consistent with Santa Cruz County's Local Coastal Program's public access policies.

E. PROPOSED PROJECTS' CONSISTENCY WITH THE PLAN

The Department is requesting authorization to proceed with all of the proposed projects listed in the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan* (see bulleted items above). Under Section 13358 of the California Code of Regulations, the Commission may concurrently consider a plan and the project(s) associated with it (see Attachment C).

Since the projects are listed in the *Plan*, they are obviously consistent, at least conceptually, with the *Plan*. However, some details are lacking to ensure that the projects are executed in a manner consistent with all the *Plan* policies. More detail is necessary to ensure that sensitive resources are identified and protected when undertaking the proposed projects.

1. Trail Opening, Maintenance, and Elimination

The *Plan* provides that roads will be maintained, including adding water bars or rolling dips. The Commission notes that only certain maintenance activities are projects under the California Code of Regulations (Section 13252). These include culvert repair with mechanized equipment within 20 feet of a stream and other repairs in or within 50 feet of a sensitive habitat area involving mechanized equipment or rip rap. Staff field review indicates that some maintenance and repair will fall under the Commission's purview. Therefore, it will be necessary to have more detail about these proposed activities, such as methods and limits of work and any necessary California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service approval or consultation in order to ensure consistency with the *Plan's* resource protection policies.

The *Plan* provides that eight miles of existing roads will be open to public recreational use. This activity can be considered as a change in the intensity of use of land, defined as "development" that the Commission (or local government) must permit under Section 30106 of the Coastal Act. As noted, the roads proposed to be opened exist and have been maintained. However, one road, leading from Smith Grade, shows evidence of some recent neglect (e.g., eroded areas, debris) and, hence the need for some immediate maintenance. While it is passable for hikers, its condition should be improved before allowing cyclists and equestrians on it, both for their safety and to prevent further deterioration.

The *Plan* also provides for the elimination of unauthorized trails by various measures, including ripping, which may also fall under the Commission's purview under the circumstances noted above. The *Plan* provides that resource review will occur before any soil modifications. Again, plans detailing the proposed work will need to be prepared. Additionally, given that this *Plan* is only an interim blueprint prior to preparation of a General Plan and, hopefully, the opening of more existing trails (see above finding), it is important that access opportunities not be precluded by eliminating desirable recreational trails.

As conditioned for maintenance of the Smith Grade trail before it is opened to cyclists and equestrians, final plan review, and necessary resource agency consultation, the proposed trail opening, maintenance and elimination projects are consistent with the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*, as conditioned.

2. Entrance Road and New Parking Lot

The only significant new facility proposed is a temporary parking lot for approximately 45 cars (see *Plan* Figure 4). The proposed site is located adjacent to an oak grove off an existing road. The immediate area served as a horse corral, and the general vicinity had been used for logging operations. Nevertheless, sensitive resources are present, but not yet documented in an official printed survey. The access road is approximately 14 feet wide through University of California Natural Reserve property on a 30 foot easement purchased by the Department. Directly adjacent to the road within the easement area is sensitive mima mound and grassland habitat. Wetlands may be present, as well, depending, for example, on whether or not depressions such as those between mima mounds

meet "wetland" definition criteria. The *Plan* proposes to fence the easement area. Once within the park boundary, this main road continues straight, but the Department proposes to close it to motor vehicles. Instead traffic will be directed toward the proposed parking lot, located on a short branch of the road. This segment of the road borders disturbed grassland/ mima mounds and contains rare plants. These include San Francisco popcorn flower and Gairdner's yampa. The *Plan* proposes "stobbers" (a row of short posts) or fencing to be installed along one side of the road to prevent vehicles from entering this sensitive grassland. The parking lot is proposed in two sections. Detailed parking lot plans are not available, but minimal work is outlined including clearing vegetation, gravelling the lots, and placing low profile barricades at the perimeter. From the parking lot users would be on a trail at the edge of the grasslands connecting back to the main road. Two chemical toilets and trash receptacles are also proposed, but their location has not been pinpointed.

There are several potential issues with this proposal. Fencing the easement area over the mima mounds could conflict with *Plan* policy to protect the mima mounds. Where the fence is beyond the existing roadway or where fencing or stobbers are not proposed, passing vehicles could intrude on adjacent sensitive lands. Channeling users who enter the Park by non-motoring means to the parking lot on a fairly narrow road, may unnecessarily create user conflicts. Placing the fence at the easement line, installing stobbers, and other potential improvements may conflict with the *Plan's* provision that the new parking lot is only temporary, pending completion of a General Plan. Although the *Plan* examined and rejected two parking lot alternatives, further evaluation of parking is necessary as part of a comprehensive planning process for the entire park, given the sensitive adjacent resources and the potential for restoration at the proposed location.

In order to prevent resource damage and to not commit to permanent improvements, the entire area proposed to be open to motor vehicles should be demarcated with log curbing or similar materials, located along the current edge of the entrance road and the parking lot. This would allow pedestrians and large emergency vehicles (e.g., a fire truck) to leave the roadway if necessary. Installation of the proposed fence should not damage the mima mounds, if done carefully pursuant to the University's Natural Reserve Manager's concurrence. Final plans should show toilet locations tucked into the trees out of view of Empire Grade, a designated scenic road under the County LCP. With regard to state or federal protected plants in the adjacent grasslands, the Department can either prepare a survey or assume presence and incorporate any mitigation. Thus, final project plans should reflect the results of consultations with the California Department of Fish and Game and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Based on these parameters, the Department may wish to include in the final plans an opening in any fence installed at the fork in the roads to allow non-motorized access to bypass the parking lot area, signing indicating a narrow and/or one lane road, and a pullout area at the fork. As conditioned for final plans which incorporate the changes enumerated in this finding, the proposed parking lot and use of the entrance road are consistent with the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*, as conditioned.

3. Other Projects

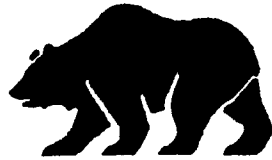
The *Plan* mentions that "No Parking" signs may be posted on Empire Grade, but the Department will need permission from Santa Cruz County before undertaking this work (as well as any work within the right of way of Smith Grade). The *Plan* notes that DPR may develop stabilization plans for the lime kilns, but details are not yet provided. The *Plan* notes that DPR will consult with the State Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding special status species. Informal discussions have occurred, but no formal consultations to date have been completed. As conditioned for approvals from Santa Cruz County where necessary, lime kiln stabilization plans, and resource

agency consultations where necessary, the other project proposals are consistent with the *Gray Whale Ranch Public Works Plan*, as conditioned.

F. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

The Department of Parks and Recreation issued a Negative Declaration for the proposed plan. Public comments were responded to and commensurate revisions to the Plan were made. Additional revisions were made in response to public hearing comments, as noted. By this action the Commission has imposed conditions to ensure that *Plan* policies are implemented in both the on-going park management and in the execution of the specific projects. The Commission notes that most facilities to be utilized already exist and the proposed new ones are of a temporary nature. There are no feasible alternatives, or feasible mitigation measures available, as provided in the California Environmental Quality Act, which would lessen any significant adverse impact that the *Plan* and its projects, as conditioned, may have on the environment.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

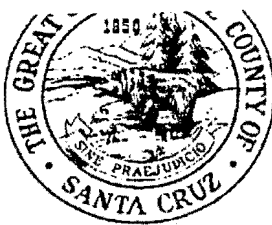


GRAY WHALE RANCH

PUBLIC WORKS PLAN

GRAY WHALE RANCH

Attachment A
PWP-7-97
-available upon request-



GOVERNMENTAL CENTER

701 OCEAN STREET - SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95060
FAX (408) 454-2131 TDD (408) 454-2123 PHONE (408) 454-2580Tom Burns
Interim Planning Director

September 29, 1997

Tami Groves, Deputy Director
California Coastal Commission
Central Coast Division
725 Front Street - Suite 300
Santa Cruz CA 95060**RECEIVED**

SEP 30 1997

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA**Subject: Gray Whale Ranch**

Dear Ms. Groves:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the State Department of Parks and Recreation's Public Works Plan and Project for Gray Whale Ranch. We understand that the purpose of this Public Works Plan and Project is to expand Wilder Ranch State Park to include the recently acquired Gray Whale Ranch property. In accordance with Section 13357(a)(3) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, our agency has been requested to comment on the Public Works Plan and Project for Gray Whale Ranch. Our role is to report on whether the Public Works Plan and Project, if approved, would be in conformity with the 1994 Santa Cruz County General Plan and Local Coastal Program.

Summary

Following a comprehensive examination of relevant County policies, regulations and ordinances, the Land Use designations and zoning of the property, and the Negative Declaration prepared for the acquisition of Gray Whale Ranch, it is the opinion of the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department that the activities and uses proposed in the Public Works Plan and Project prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation for Gray Whale Ranch are consistent with the Santa Cruz County General Plan and Local Coastal Program.

DiscussionGeneral Plan:

The General Plan Land Use designations for Gray Whale Ranch include Mountain Residential, Rural Residential, and Agriculture. The objective of Mountain and Rural residential designations is to provide for low and very low development densities to maintain large portions of the County in open space to retain its rural scenic character. Open space and recreational uses set forth in the Public Works Plan and Project are wholly consistent with these Land Use designations.

The southern portion of the Ranch is a mapped Agricultural Resource. The primary objective of the commercial agricultural resources policies in the General Plan are to maintain and preserve agricultural lands for the production of food, fiber, ornamental crops, and livestock. Historically, this area of the ranch was used for grazing but has not been so used for several years. The existing road proposed for trail use in the Public Works Plan and Project has also historically been used for agricultural equipment, a timber harvest haul route, and trail use. This road borders the edge of a large meadow that could conceivably still be used for livestock grazing. Proposed trail use does not impair agricultural use and the land is preserved for possible agricultural

EXHIBIT NO. B
APPLICATION NO. PWP-7-97 Gray Whale
County Findings of LCP Consistency

Tami Groves, Deputy Director
September 29, 1997

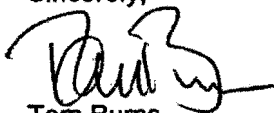
adversely impact environmentally sensitive habitats or cultural resources known to be present on the site. For the same reason, existing trails intended for use by hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians will not impact environmentally sensitive habitats or cultural resources. This facet of the project complies with Chapter 16.32 (Sensitive Habitat Protection), and Chapter 16.40 (Native American Cultural Sites), of the County Code.

The Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works has evaluated the location of the access road that extends west of Empire Grade Road. Adequate sight distances on Empire Grade Road provide for safe entering and exiting movements from the access road.

Other improvements proposed include the placement of trail identification, regulatory, and interpretive signs, construction of fencing, and placement of two above-ground chemical toilets at the parking lot. As proposed, none of these developments conflict with County policies or ordinances.

Please feel free to contact David Lee, Assistant Planning Director, at 454-3153, should you have any additional questions or comments concerning this matter.

Sincerely,



Tom Burns
Interim Planning Director

cc: David K. Vincent, District Superintendent
California State Parks, Santa Cruz District
600 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
Susan A. Mauriello, County Administrative Officer
Dwight Herr, County Counsel
David Lee, Assistant Planning Director

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government, shall be qualified to testify at the commission hearing at any stage of the appeal process. All other persons may submit comments in writing to the commission or executive director, copies or summaries of which shall be provided to all commissioners pursuant to Sections 13060-13061.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30600.5, 30602 and 30620.5, Public Resources Code.

13341. Evidence.

Evidence before the Commission shall be as provided for in Section 13118.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30600.5, 30602 and 30620.5, Public Resources Code.

§ 13342. Standard of Review.

The standard of review shall be whether the proposed development is in conformity with the certified land use plan portion of the local coastal program and PRC Section 30604(c).

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30600.5 and 30604, Public Resources Code.

§ 13343. Commission Notification of Final Action.

Within five (5) working days of a final commission action on an appeal from a local government decision, the commission shall transmit notice of the action taken to the local government, the applicant, the appellant and parties who testified or orally before or in writing to the commission.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30600.5 and 30604, Public Resources Code.

Subchapter 2. Public Works Plans

Article 1. Scope and Applicability of Subchapter

§ 13350. Scope of Subchapter.

This subchapter shall govern Commission review of plans for public works plans pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 30515 and 30605 to 30607.1.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30515 and 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. New subchapter 2 (Articles 1-5, Sections 13350-13361) filed 6-5-79 as an emergency; effective upon filing (Register 79, No. 23).
2. Certificate of Compliance filed 10-3-79 (Register 79, No. 40).
3. Editorial correction of History Note No. 2 (Register 80, No. 1).
4. Amendment filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).

§ 13351. Applicability of Subchapter.

This subchapter shall apply to plans for public works activity as defined in Public Resources Code Section 30114.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

Article 2. Application Requirements

§ 13352. Waiver of Preliminary Approvals.

The executive director may waive the requirements of Section 13052 for preliminary approval by federal, state or local government agencies for plans submitted pursuant to this subchapter; provided however that any plan submitted pursuant to this subchapter shall contain the information required pursuant to Section 13353.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

§ 13353. Information Requirements.

Any plan submitted pursuant to this subchapter shall contain sufficient information regarding the kind, size, intensity and location of develop-

ment activity intended to be undertaken pursuant to the plan to determine consistency with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act of 1976, including, but not limited to the following where applicable:

(1) the specific type of activity or activities proposed to be undertaken;

(2) the maximum and minimum intensity of activity or activities proposed to be undertaken (e.g., maximum number of recreational vehicle campsites, maximum treatment capacity for a sewage treatment plant, maximum traffic capacity of a road);

(3) maximum size of facilities proposed to be constructed pursuant to the plan (e.g., size of a treatment outfall, number of lanes of a road) and the proposed timetable for precise definition of all projects included in the plan and any phasing of development activity contemplated;

(4) the service area for the proposed activity or activities;

(5) the proposed method of financing the activity or activities including any direct or indirect means of obtaining or guaranteeing funds through the assessment or any other form of levy against lands located within the coastal zone and an estimate of the projected amount of revenues to be obtained from land or water areas located in the coastal zone over the useful life of the proposed development;

(6) the proposed location or alternative locations considered for any development activity or activities to be undertaken pursuant to the proposed plans. The executive director of the Commission may require the submission of any additional information the executive director deems necessary pursuant to the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 30605.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 10-3-79 as an emergency; effective upon filing. Certificate of Compliance included (Register 79, No. 40).
2. Amendment filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).

§ 13353.5. Public Hearing Prior to Filing of Public Works Plan.

Prior to the filing of a public works plan, the submitting agency or local government shall hold a public hearing at the local level on the proposed public works plan. The public hearing shall be held within a reasonable time prior to submission of the plan (as determined by the executive director) such that the public is afforded an adequate and timely comment period on the proposed plan. In determining the reasonableness of the time of the prior public hearing(s) the executive director shall consider the scope or size of the project, the progress of the originating agency toward obtaining all funding and governmental approvals, and the development of projects under the proposed plan. A steady progression of the originating agency toward development of the plan in this manner, after holding public hearings on the plan, shall constitute evidence of the reasonableness of the time of the prior public hearing.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. New section filed 10-3-79 as an emergency; effective upon filing. Certificate of Compliance included (Register 79, No. 40).

§ 13354. Filing of a Plan.

The executive director of the Commission shall deem an application filed only at such time as the executive director determines that the information required pursuant to Section 13353 has been received at the appropriate Commission office and that all other requirements of law, and of these regulations, for a valid plan application have been met. Said review shall be completed within a reasonable time but unless there are unusual circumstances, no later than five (5) working days after the date it is received in the district office of the Commission during normal business hours of the said office. Immediately upon making such determination, the executive director shall affix the date of filing to the application file and so notify the applicant.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

EXHIBIT NO.	C
APPLICATION NO.	PWP-7-97 Gray Whale
Public Works	
Regulations	

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).
2. Amendment filed 6-16-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 25).

§ 13355. Environmental Information.

(a) The executive director shall provide, make available to the public, or demonstrate that such information has been made available in accordance with these regulations, detailed environmental information on the plan sufficient to enable the Commission to determine the consistency of the plan with the policies of the Coastal Act.

(b) Where the executive director determines that it is not feasible to distribute environmental information due to the size or volume of the documents, or because of the costs of such distribution, the executive director shall provide notice to interested persons of the location of the environmental documents which are available for review, and a list of those documents.

(c) The environmental information shall be distributed or made available to the public prior to public hearing on the plan.

(d) The Commission shall provide the opportunity for public comment in response to the environmental information prior to the close of the public hearing on the plan.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

Article 3. Plan Review, Procedures and Findings

§ 13356. Procedures for Plan Review Prior to Certification of Local Coastal Program(s) In the Affected Area.

(a) Except as provided below, for that portion or aspect of a plan submitted pursuant to this subchapter that affects a geographic area for which a local coastal program has not yet been certified by the Commission, all hearing requirements and procedures shall be the same as provided for the review of a long-range development plan as set forth in Sections 13518 to 13528.

(b) Approval of a public works plan by the Commission shall be accompanied by specific written findings that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of the California Coastal Act of 1976 and that required mitigation will be implemented prior to or concurrent with the development causing the impact including specific factual findings supporting the following legal conclusions:

(1) that the development is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976 (commencing with Public Resources Code, Section 30200);

(2) that there are no feasible alternatives, or feasible mitigation measures, as provided in the California Environmental Quality Act, available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact that the development as finally proposed may have on the environment.

(c) The executive director of the Commission shall set the plan filed for public hearing no later than the 60th day following the date on which the application was filed. All dates for public hearing shall be set with a view toward allowing adequate public dissemination of the information and toward allowing public participation and attendance at the hearing while affording the applicants expeditious consideration of the plan.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).
2. Amendment of subsection (b) filed 6-16-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 25).

§ 13357. Procedure for Plan Review Following Certification of a Local Coastal Program(s) in the Affected Area.

(a) Plan does not require amendment to local coastal program.

(1) If, after certification of local coastal program, a proposed public works plan does not require an amendment to the local coastal program pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 30515, the person authorized to undertake the plan may submit the plan to the Commission for review and certification. The purpose of the Commission review of the plan shall be to define the scope of review of any subsequent project contained in the plan.

(2) The Commission review shall be undertaken only after consultation with the affected local government who may recommend modifications necessary for the proposed plan to adequately carry out the certified local coastal program.

(3) The notice and hearing requirements of Sections 13354-13356 shall also apply to any public works plan that affects directly a portion of the coastal zone for which a local coastal program has been certified by the Commission. In addition, at least ten (10) working days prior to the first public hearing on a proposed plan directly affecting such an area, the executive director of the Commission shall direct the Commission staff to consult with the affected local government with respect to the impact of the proposed plan on the coastal zone and on the certified local coastal program; the results of such consultation shall be reported to the Commission at the first public hearing on the proposed plan. At least five (5) working days prior to transmitting a written recommendation on the proposed plan to the Commission, the executive director shall request that the affected local government(s) transmit to the Commission its recommendations.

(4) Approval of a public works plan by the Commission shall be accompanied by specific factual findings supporting the conclusion that the public works plan, as approved, is in conformity with the certified local coastal program in jurisdictions affected by the proposed public works plan.

(5) Following Commission certification of a public works plan, any review of a specific project contained in the plan shall be to determine the conformity of the project with the certified public works plan, as provided in Sections 13358 and 13359.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30515 and 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 10-3-79 as an emergency; effective upon filing. Certificate of Compliance included (Register 79, No. 40).
2. Amendment filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).

Article 4. Project Review

§ 13358. Coastal Development Permit Review Concurrent with Public Works Plan Review.

(a) If a proposed project intended to be undertaken pursuant to a public works plan is submitted to the Commission for a development permit concurrent with the submittal of a public works plan, the Commission shall review the project and the plan concurrently, and shall, if the project meets the requirements of the Coastal Act, approve the project as an integral component of the public works plan. The Commission shall require conditions, where necessary, to bring the project into conformance with the Coastal Act.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).

§ 13359. Specific Project Review Following Certification of Public Works Plan.

The following requirements shall govern projects submitted after a public works plan is approved:

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(a) If a proposed project intended to be undertaken pursuant to an approved public works plan is the subject of a coastal development permit application prior to the certification of a local coastal program, the legal entity responsible for the project shall submit the notice and information regarding the proposed development pursuant to the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 30606. Such notice shall be reviewed and deemed filed by the Executive Director of the Commission only if it complies with the provisions of Sections 13353 and 13354, and only if the Executive Director determines that the information supplied is sufficient to allow the Commission to determine whether the proposed project is consistent with the certified public works plan.

(b) The Commission shall, within thirty (30) working days of filing of such notice, by a majority of the members present with a quorum present determine whether the proposed development is consistent with the certified public works plan. If the Commission determines that the project is not consistent with the approved plan and that conditions may be required in accordance with the provisions of Public Resources Code Sections 30605-30607.1, in order to bring the project into conformance with the approved plan, the Commission shall vote on the proposed conditions at the next scheduled public hearing (generally no later than twenty-one (21) days after the close of the hearing that determined inconsistency with the approved public works plan.) The conditions imposed upon a project in accordance with the provisions of Public Resources Code Sections 30605-30607.1 shall be approved by a majority of the members present with a quorum present. If the Commission is unable to agree, by a majority of its members present, upon conditions, the project shall be deemed approved as proposed.

(c) The hearing procedures governing the Commission's determination of consistency and action on proposed conditions shall be the same as those set forth in Section 13356.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).
2. Amendment of subsection (b) filed 6-16-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 25).

Article 5. Project Review After Certification of Local Coastal Program

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 10-3-79 as an emergency; effective upon filing. Certificate of Compliance included (Register 79, No. 40).
2. Repealer of Article 5 (Sections 13360 and 13361) filed 3-12-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 11).

Article 6. Amendment of Public Works Plan

§ 13365. Application for Amendment to Public Works Plan.

An application for an amendment to a certified public works plan shall be submitted to the executive director of the Commission and shall contain information which meets the requirements for submittal of public works plans in Sections 13353 and 13354.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. New Article 6 (Sections 13365-13371) filed 10-3-79 as an emergency; effective upon filing. Certificate of Compliance included (Register 79, No. 40).

§ 13366. Public Hearings Prior to Submission of Application for Amendment to Public Works Plan.

Prior to the submission of an application for an amendment to a certified public works plan, the applicant shall demonstrate that a public hearing at the local level has been held on the proposed amendment within a reasonable time prior to submission of the amendment application to the Commission. The reasonableness of the time of the prior public hearing shall be measured by the same standards as applied in Section 13353.5.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

§ 13367. Rejection of an Application for Amendment.

An application for an amendment to a public works plan shall be rejected if, in the opinion of the Executive Director of the Commission, the proposed public works plan amendment would lessen or avoid the intended effect, or any conditions, of a certified public works plan. The determination by the Executive Director to reject an amendment application shall be transmitted, in writing, to the applicant with an explanation of the reasons for such rejection.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

§ 13368. Acceptance of Application for Amendment—Minor Amendment.

Where an application for an amendment to a public works plan is accepted, the Executive Director shall determine whether the proposed amendment is minor in nature. If the Executive Director determines that the proposed amendment is minor in nature, notice of such determination, including a summary of the procedures set forth in this Article shall be mailed to the Commission and to all parties the Executive Director knows or has reason to know may be interested in the amendment. If no written objection to the proposed amendment is received in the Commission office within fifteen (15) working days of published notice, the proposed amendment shall be deemed minor in nature, and shall be approved. The Executive Director shall notify the Commission of the approved minor amendment at the next regular meeting of the Commission.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

§ 13369. Acceptance of Application for Amendment—Regular Amendment.

If the Executive Director determines that the proposed amendment is not minor, or if objection is made to the Executive Director's determination, or if the proposed amendment affects conditions required in the certified plan for purposes of protecting a coastal resource or coastal access consistent with the findings required in Section 13356, the amendment application shall be processed in accordance with Sections 13370 to 13371 below.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

§ 13370. Notice of Proposed Public Works Plan Amendment.

The Executive Director shall notify the Commission, the applicant, any persons who participated in the Commission hearings for review of the public works plan, and any other persons known or thought to be interested in the proposed public works plan amendment of the acceptance of the amendment application. This notice shall be provided in the same manner and shall contain the same type of information as required for processing permit applications in Section 13057 and as required for the processing of public works plans in Section 13355.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

§ 13371. Procedure for Review of Public Works Plan Amendment.

The hearing requirements and procedures for review of a public works plan amendment shall be the same as provided for the review of public

works plans as provided in Section 13356, provided however, that where a public works plan amendment is submitted for a public works plan that was approved prior to the certification of a local coastal program, the following procedures shall apply:

(1) At least 10 working days prior to the first public hearing on a proposed plan amendment directly affecting a portion of the coastal zone for which a local coastal program has been certified by the Commission, the Executive Director of the Commission shall direct the Commission staff to consult with the affected local government with respect to the impact of the proposed plan amendment on the coastal zone and on the certified local coastal program; the results of such consultation shall be reported to the Commission at the first public hearing on the proposed amendment.

(2) At least five (5) working days prior to transmitting a written recommendation on the proposed plan amendment to the Commission, the Executive Director shall request that the affected local government(s) transmit to the Commission its determination as to whether the proposed plan amendment is in conformity with the certified local coastal program(s) in the jurisdiction(s) affected by the proposed plan amendment.

(3) The affected local government may, within its discretion, transmit its determination as to the conformity of the proposed plan amendment with the local coastal program, in writing to the Commission prior to the Commission's vote on the proposed plan amendment, and may include any recommended modifications of the proposed plan amendment that would conform it to the local coastal program; a local government may also indicate any proposed amendments to its local coastal program that would be necessary to accommodate the proposed public works plan amendment.

(4) Approval of a public works plan amendment by the Commission shall be accompanied by specific factual findings supporting the conclusion that the public works plan amendment, as approved, is in conformity with the certified local coastal program in jurisdictions affected by the proposed public works plan amendment.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 30333, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 30605, Public Resources Code.

Chapter 8. Implementation Plans

Subchapter 2. Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) and State University or College Long Range Development Plans (LRDPs)

Article 1. Scope and Definitions

§ 13500. Scope.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 30550, 30605 and 30606, this subchapter shall govern the submission, review, certification and amendment of local coastal programs (LCPs) and state university or college long range land use development plans (LRDPs) and the procedures for review of developments in accordance with such plans and programs.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 30333, 30501 and 30605, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30605 and 30606, Public Resources Code.

HISTORY

1. Redesignation of Subchapter 2 (Sections 13600-13648, not consecutive) to Subchapter 6 (Sections 13600-13648, not consecutive) filed 6-21-78; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 78, No. 25).
2. New Subchapter 2 (Sections 13500-13546, not consecutive) filed 6-21-78; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 78, No. 25).
3. Repealer of Subchapter 2 (Articles 1-15, Sections 13500-13546, not consecutive) and new subchapter 2 (Articles 1-18, Sections 13500-13577, not consecutive) filed 6-4-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 23).

* The reorganization of Subchapter 2 is printed as a repealer and adoption for clarity.

§ 13502. Definitions.

(a) "Governing Authority" means the Board of Regents of the University of California or the Board of Trustees of the California State University and Colleges or their designated representatives.

(b) "Long Range Development Plan" hereinafter referred to as "LRDP" means the relevant portions of the land use plans and policies for the physical development of campuses and educational facilities of the University of California or the California State University and Colleges, which are sufficiently detailed to indicate the kinds, location and intensity of land uses, the applicable resource protection and development policies and, where necessary, a listing of other implementing actions.

(c) "Educational Facility" means any real property owned or controlled by the University of California or the California State University and Colleges, and used or contemplated for use for educational, residential, recreational or research purposes related to the purposes of the University of California or the California State University and Colleges. This shall not include properties owned by the state university or college systems held for investment purposes only.

(d) "Local Coastal Program" hereinafter referred to as "LCP" means a local government's program as defined in Public Resources Code Section 30108.6.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 30333, 30501 and 30605, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 30500 and 30605, Public Resources Code.

Article 2. Issue Identification

§ 13503. Methodology for Identifying Issues.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 30500(c) and 30501(a), an identification of coastal conservation and development issues shall be made as the first step in the preparation of an LCP or LRDP. For LCPs and LRDPs, the purpose of the "issue identification" is to: (1) determine the policies of the Coastal Act that apply in each jurisdiction; (2) determine the extent to which existing local plans are adequate to meet Coastal Act requirements; and (3) delineate any potential conflicts between existing plans and development proposals and the policies of the Coastal Act.

(a) Local government or the governing authority, in consultation with the Commission and with opportunity for full public participation, shall review the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act to determine which are applicable to the particular portion of the coastal zone under consideration. A review shall be made to determine the extent of analysis needed to address the applicable policies in the preparation of the LCP or LRDP. In addition, pursuant to Section 13513, identification shall be made with respect to uses, existing or anticipated, of more than local significance which must be addressed in the LRDP or LCP. Existing or potential conflicts shall be identified between the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and (1) existing conditions in the coastal zone, (2) the kinds, location and intensity of development proposed by existing policies or development plans, and (3) major developments proposed by any port or harbor district, special district, state or federal agency or public utility that are made known to the local government. Where the local government or the governing authority proposes to revise substantially its current plans or regulations, this identification of conflicts should be based on a general assessment of areas needing revision rather than a detailed analysis of the current plans. Substantial existing or potential conflicts shall be set forth as coastal planning issues for specific geographic areas that are to be addressed in the LCP or LRDP.

(b) The local government or governing authority may use an alternative methodology for issue identification if the Commission reviews the alternative methodology and, after a public hearing, finds that it is adequate to address the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act of 1976, will insure the maximum degree of public participation and will insure consultation and coordination with the local coastal programs of contiguous local governments.

W I R E D

520 Third Street, 4th Floor San Francisco, CA 94107

RECEIVED
NOV 5 1996

Rick Hayman
Coastal Commission
725 Front Street, 3rd Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

Dear Mr. Hayman,

My family and I have lived in Santa Cruz for many years. Recently, I was very happy to read about the purchase of Gray Whale Ranch by the Redwoods League, and its addition to the State Park System.

I hope that you will show your support for the addition of Gray Whale Ranch to Wilder Ranch without restrictions. That is to say, that it will become part of Wilder Ranch and follow the current Wilder Ranch General Plan. It is the State Parks system plan that Wilder is now and will remain a FULLY multi-use trail system, with all trails open to all users (hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians). When trails are occasionally closed there temporarily, it is for erosion or habitat reasons, and they are closed to all until the situation is rectified.

It has recently come to my attention that some parties have been attempting to change the "no restrictions" classification to prohibit bicycles on the trails within Gray Whale Ranch. This follows on the heels of a very disappointing failure of the City of Santa Cruz to open the fireroads in Pogonip to bicycles as was agreed by the city council in late 1994 (?). Pogonip fireroads were supposed to become multi-use to allow bicycles in January of 1995, according to the article I read in the Sentinel at the time. That still has not happened, and I understand that certain members of the city council actively opposed the Pogonip opening.

I am asking you to support the very fair and open policy that currently exists at Wilder Ranch, and stop personal interests backed by "donations" from destroying the very positive progress that has been made in bridging the differences between user groups at Wilder Ranch. Over the years since this policy was established, hikers, bikers and equestrians have come together for many functions from trailbuilding to the raising of money to support the parks activities. Conflicts between users have never been lower, and I'm sure you would like this to continue to move forward as much as I.

A greenbelt like this, united from end to end through common goals, would be a major coup for all of Santa Cruz. There is no better way to unify support for this kind of greenbelt than to unite ALL the users of the trails to the same goal. I ask you again to help make this goal a reality in any way you can.

EXHIBIT NO.	D
APPLICATION NO.	PWP-7-97 Gray Whale
Correspondence	

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristine Kern', written in a cursive style.

Kristine Kern
185 14th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

September 19, 1997

RECEIVED

California Coastal Commission
Tami Grove, District Director
725 Front Street, Suite 300
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

SEP 23 1997

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

Dear Ms. Grove,

I write concerning the Gray Whale ranch that is in the process of being added to Wilder State Park. I feel that the process is being rushed into without proper considerations for the environment.

I understand that the State intends to open 8 miles of trails, put in an entrance on Empire Grade, and put in a parking lot off that entrance for some 50 cars. At a recent Rural Bonny Doon Association meeting, it was noted by Grey, the biologist, that the road and parking lot are being sited right in amongst endangered plants and rare minna mounds. We learned that Santa Cruz county and Refugio Rancho, (of which Gray Whale is a part) has been identified as a 'hot spot' within a hot spot for rare environments in the entire United States. It would seem that a more rational process of deciding where to place proposed facilities be undertaken BEFORE siting facilities, even on a temporary basis. Can there not be a public process whereby the environment is considered along with demands for roads and trails?

As I have heard from many people, Wilder trails are in poor shape. The use, mainly by mountain bikes, is already outstripping the ability for park personnel to maintain them. Erosion is occurring that is not being tended to. Trails are being used on an ad hoc basis with little planning and understanding of the damage that is occurring. Opening Wilder was a 14 year process. And yet we are being told that Grey Whale will be open soon to more trails, with little study, and little public input.

Please consider that there be a process that takes into account the plants and animal needs as well as demand for recreation. As we recently learned, even the park rangers assigned to the area are not fully conversant with the rare special spot that they are entrusted

PWP-7-97

with protecting. We need to study and decide as a people how the park can be developed and used without harming the environment.

In my opinion, there should be a connection from Wilder through Gray Whale to the University for horse and bike trails. I am not convinced of the need of a parking lot off Empire Grade or the use of a road to Smith Grade. Trail traffic can pass through this area to allow a loop trail system from the coast, through the University, on to Cowell State Park or the City of Santa Cruz. It would seem that this should surely be enough usage, so that some of the land could remain in peace, protected and preserved for the seven generations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Banghart". The signature is fluid and extends to the right.

David Banghart

RECEIVED

Grey Hayes
President
Santa Cruz County Chapter
California Native Plant Society
2817 Smith Grade Road
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

OCT 01 1997

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

George Gray
Resource Ecologist
California Department of Parks and Recreation
600 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

9-29-97

Dear George,

→ MONDAY 22 September, 9 AM.

I would like to take this opportunity to summarize the results of our field survey of the proposed parking lot area near Empire Grade at Gray Whale Ranch. I thank you for taking the time to tour the site with me. I had expressed concern about the location of the entrance road and stubbers leading into the proposed parking lot due to the sensitive species and habitats in the proximity of the roadway. You met with me in order to clarify the location of the San Francisco Popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys diffusus*) which your aid, Tim Hyland, Randy Morgan, and I had surveyed earlier this year.

We toured the area and were able to locate the habitat where the popcorn flower was found and clarified my suspicions that stubber placement would indeed encroach upon the habitat. We also discussed implications of changed hydrology that is inevitable with the proposed road improvements. As we discussed, careful grading of the roadbed is necessary to ensure continued drainage into the popcorn flower habitat. The popcorn flower seems to require areas of moisture and inundation. I would like to add at this time my concern that silt and rock dust from the road improvements may cause degradation of the habitat. As we discussed, it is evident that the location of the popcorn flower does not afford it the usual required 100' setback called for by the Department of Fish and Game for its listed species. The impacts to the changes in hydrology and erosional deposition are just some of the impacts that could be better controlled with the legally mandated setback.

On our tour, we also noted locations of the sensitive species Gairdner's Yampah (*Perideridia Gairdneri*) and Santa Cruz Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos Andersonii*). Locations of both of these species is of concern with regards to the road and parking lot improvements. The Yampah I pointed out grew directly in the proposed pathway leading to the south of the proposed parking lot, and the manzanita we found grew in the area proposed to be cleared for the parking lot. Both of these species, as you know, are CEQA species which have not been addressed to date in the environmental review documents prepared for opening the park.

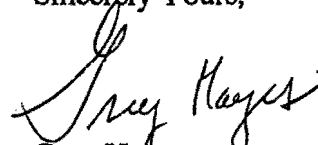
We also looked carefully another issue which I had raised during the public comment period for the IUP: the impacts of widening the road. As you clarified in the field, the present road width is around 16 feet, necessitating the use of road side areas for passing by the horse trailers, cars, bicycles and pedestrians using the road. As you pointed out, the full width of the right of way- 30 feet- was likely to be used for the entrance road. The impacts of this road widening were not addressed during the IUP process. Of concern to the Society are the impacts to the wetland and coastal prairie grassland resources on either side of the road. Both of these community types are sensitive habitats to the Department of Fish and Game and to the California Coastal Commission. Impacts to these habitats should be addressed before opening the road access.

PWP-7-97

Overall, I again implore you and your department to have a more serious look at the proposal to allow vehicular access and parking within this sensitive habitat area. A more careful, seasonal survey of the habitats are called for as is a wetlands delineation. Your suggestion that the opening of the parking lot and vehicular access might be delayed until next summer is an excellent one, allowing time for this analysis; however, the environmental laws of our state require that impacts be analyzed during the initial planning stages of such activities as may impact sensitive resources.

I look forward to working with you further on these important issues. Again, thank you for your time in clarifying these matters in the field.

Sincerely Yours,



Grey Hayes

cc: Deborah Hillyard, CDFG
Rick Hyman, Coastal Commission

Grey
2817 Smith Grade Road
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
429-7487

RECEIVED

JUN 25 1997

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

David Vincent
Superintendent
California Department of Parks and Recreation
600 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

6-18-97

Dear Mr. Vincent,

This letter responds to the Interim Use Plan issued by your department for the opening of Gray Whale Ranch State Park. Specifically, I would like to respond to the potential impacts of opening the park on the Ohlone Tiger Beetle (*Cicendella Ohlone*).

The Ohlone Tiger Beetle was discovered on a grassy knoll in Soquel in the early 1990's by local naturalist Randall Morgan. Since the species discovery, there have been five locations found of populations of the species, all within a short distance of the City of Santa Cruz. Although much of the initial survey work was performed by Mr. Morgan, I have been responsible for orchestrating surveys to detect any additional populations covering numerous locations in San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties. In addition to these surveys, I have gathered information about the beetle from experts at The California Academy of Sciences and with agencies throughout the west. With this information, in late April I petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for an emergency listing of the beetle as Endangered under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act. The Service is reviewing this petition at this time and should come forward with a ruling within the next two months.

In addition to my experience with the beetle, I am knowledgeable about ecological land stewardship through my 6 years of experience as steward of the University of California at Santa Cruz's Natural Reserves (1,000 acres) and, for 10 years, have experimented on many acres with methods of prairie management.

Having stated my familiarity with the Ohlone Tiger Beetle and the local coastal prairie ecosystem, I make the following recommendations for management of Gray Whale State Park in order to maintain the habitat to support the beetle:

- 1) maintain roads and trails in ways that do not harm beetle adults or larval burrows;
- 2) disallow vehicular access (including non-motorized vehicles) during the winter;
- 3) control prairie weeds, and;
- 4) maintain the prairie ecosystem to prevent succession into scrub or forest.

PLWP-7-97

The previous subjects are addressed in detail as follows.

1) Maintain roads and trails in ways that do not harm beetle adults or larval burrows. I have expressed my concern about the Parks' Department status quo method of road and trail management to George Gray and yourself and remain unsatisfied that this concern is being addressed sufficiently. The roads at Wilder Ranch State Park are maintained through the use of a grading machine which blades the roads to mineral soil. In addition, infrequent, undersized water bars are placed at intervals. I have been assured that the same operators with the same methodology will be maintaining the roads at Gray Whale. This type of operation gravely impacts the Tiger Beetle which requires open, un-"improved" roadways and trails for foraging as adults as well as for larval habitat.

A time-tested, viable alternative is available. I suggest maintaining permanent, reinforced waterbars with individual sediment detention basins. Sediment trapped in these basins can be excavated to fill in ruts, removing the necessity for blading roads deeper each year. Roads maintained with this method on steep hillsides, with highly erosive soils and vehicular traffic in Big Sur at the University of California Natural Reserve Systems' Big Creek Reserve are vegetated and without significant erosion.

The statement in the IUP about not grading the roads when adult beetles are present does not sufficiently address the situation as grading the roads at any time will destroy larval burrows.

2) Disallow vehicular access (including non-motorized vehicles) during the winter. A major threat to the beetle are high speed, wheeled vehicles- motorized and unmotorized. During the months of February through May, the adult beetles are seen foraging on roads and trails. Although the beetles move rapidly when approached by walking or jogging people, many beetle carcasses have been observed smashed into vehicle tire tracks.

Limiting motorized and non-motorized vehicular access to prairie areas of the park during February through May will avoid impacts to the beetle while protecting roads and trails from erosive impacts worsened by the soil saturation typical of those months, thus saving park maintenance costs and impacts to streams.

3) Control prairie weeds. The ongoing influx of weedy species in prairies threatens to eliminate the openings between grasses and trails through meadows necessary for beetle habitat. Beetle populations are most healthy where there is an ongoing grazing regime or heavy human foot traffic. Beetles are absent from the prairie area between Gray Whale and Empire Grade at Marshall Fields' Twin Gates; however, they reappear on trails on the east side of Empire Grade. The lack of management for thatch and weed reduction precludes this beetle's populations. The change in management of Gray Whale's prairie areas to exclude grazing animals will deleteriously affect the beetle.

The two methods necessary for weed reduction are fire and grazing. Used correctly and in conjunction with one another, these methods will sustain areas with reduced weed infestations and increased native biodiversity. The trails made by grazing animals serve as additional habitat for the beetle.

4) Maintain the prairie ecosystem to prevent succession into scrub or forest. In the absence of evolutionarily present disturbance regimes of periodic, catastrophic fire and large herds of native grazing animals, succession occurs rapidly in prairie habitat. In many areas, coyote brush, pines, and oaks can be seen to be moving into prairie areas. The increased leaf litter, decreased sun, and loss of other elements of prairie habitat associated with this succession, threaten populations of the tiger beetle.

The aforementioned regimes of fire used in conjunction with grazing can help halt this succession, maintaining the Ohlone tiger beetle and a diverse assemblage of native prairie species.

In conclusion, I urge your department to adopt these recommendations in order to protect this rare species prior to its listing with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Even without listing, it is necessary to address the potential impacts to this species under CESA. I do not believe the latter has been done satisfactorily given the information available about the species at this time. It is far better to act on these recommendations now, as part of the IUP, than as an afterthought when political and social pressures preclude some of these measures.

I would be glad to discuss any parts of these recommendations with you or your staff. I look forward to meeting with you in the near future as part of US Fish and Wildlife Service's review of present threats to the species during their listing process. If you or your staff would like a tour of UC's Big Creek Reserve roads and road maintenance procedures, please feel free to contact me to schedule this. Thank you very much for considering these comments.

Very Sincerely Yours,

(signed)

Grey

cc: Celia Scott, esq.

Bernie Tercey, Sierra Club Ventana Chapter Executive Committee

Carl Benz, USFWS

Bruce Elliot, CDFG

✓ Rick Hyman, California Coastal Commission

Kim Tschantz, County of Santa Cruz Environmental Coordinator

Randall Morgan

Mark Woodhead
112 Storey Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
426-6612 H

Rick Hayman, Coastal Commission:

I've been a local resident since 1983, living in Santa Cruz. I was very happy to read about the purchase of Gray Whale Ranch by the Redwoods League, and its addition to the State Park System. I have supported the goals of the Coastal Commission for some time now, and appreciate everything your efforts have achieved for the coastal environment.

I hope that you will show your support for the addition of Gray Whale Ranch to Wilder Ranch without restrictions. That is to say, that it will become part of Wilder Ranch and follow the current Wilder Ranch General Plan. It is the State Parks system plan that Wilder is now and will remain a FULLY multi-use trail system, with all trails open to all users (hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians). When trails are occasionally closed there temporarily, it is for erosion or habitat reasons, and they are closed to all until the situation is rectified.

It has recently come to my attention that councilwoman Celia Scott, who is affiliated with Save the Redwoods, is attempting to change the "no restrictions" classification to prohibit bicycles on the trails within Gray Whale Ranch. She is apparently trying to make their pledged \$100,000 for the Gray Whale Ranch purchase contingent on that limitation. This follows on the heels of a very disappointing failure of the City of Santa Cruz to open the fireroads in Pogonip to bicycles as was agreed by the city council in late 1994 (?). Pogonip fireroads were supposed to become multi-use to allow bicycles in January of 1995, according to the article I read in the Sentinel at the time. That still has not happened, and I understand that certain members of the city council actively opposed the Pogonip opening.

I am asking you to support the very fair and open policy that currently exists at Wilder Ranch, and stop personal interests backed by "donations" from destroying the very positive progress that has been made in bridging the differences between user groups at Wilder Ranch. Over the years since this policy was established, hikers, bikers and equestrians have come together for many functions from trailbuilding to the raising of money to support the parks activities. Conflicts between users have never been lower, and I'm sure you would like this to continue to move forward as much as I.

In talking with the rangers at Wilder Ranch, I have learned that they (as well as I) would like to see a continuous multi-use corridor from Pogonip on Highway 9 through UCSC and Gray Whale, and Wilder to the coast. A greenbelt like this, united from end to end through common goals, would be a major coup for all of Santa Cruz. There is no better way to unify support for this kind of greenbelt than to unite ALL the users of the trails to the same goal. I ask you again to help make this goal a reality in any way you can, and let me know if there is anything I can do to help.

Thank you for your efforts.

Mark G. Woodhead

Mark Woodhead

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NOV 4 1996

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COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

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OCT 06 1997

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

1520 Escalona Drive
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
October 2, 1997

Mr. David Vincent
District Superintendent
California State Parks and Recreation
600 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Mr. Vincent:

Perhaps you have seen the enclosed story by Doug Wright that recently appeared in the Fall 1997 issue of "PRIMER", a publication produced each September by City-on-a-Hill Press.

Among the rides described by Doug is the so-called "lock-em-ups" trail (although he omits reference to this name) as a "white-knuckle descent [that] features hairpin switchbacks and two steeps where you'll find yourself 'falling' more than 'riding'", a ride whose latter half "is marred with ugly rocks and roots that you'd swear are trying to jump in your way just so they can see you bail."

Both yourself and Jeff Jones recently told us that there was no interest by State Parks in maintaining this route. In fact Jeff mentioned at a meeting about two months ago that he would like to see this trail closed off. Yet it remains, apparently as a prime attractor to mountain bikers.

This was confirmed last Sunday by us. We had walked down the Rincon Road on the Pogonip, then along the Limekiln trail, and finally along the "Cowell connector" that provides the good link to Henry Cowell State Park. As we came within view of the bottom of the "lock-em-ups" trail at around 11:15 am, we heard the shouting of what turned out to be about a dozen mountain bikers just coming down, clearly enjoying themselves, with lots of adrenaline and energy as they stopped to re-group.

After they left we walked up the steep route to Chinquapin Road at the top, meeting two more descending bikers during the climb. We subsequently continued up Chinquapin Road to the "twin gates" at Empire Grade.

The "lock-em-ups" "trail" is actually a network of routes that extends over the slope, and is severely marred, especially in its lower reaches, by very deep muddy ruts where water from a spring flows in a branch of the trail. There is also evidence here of recent extensive intrusion by four-wheel-drive vehicles that appear to be roaming at will over the hillside.

We would be very interested to know what restoration plans exist for this section of Henry Cowell State Park, and what the likely timetable for such restoration might be. It is distressing to see such wanton damage to our parkland continuing unchecked.

PWP-7-97

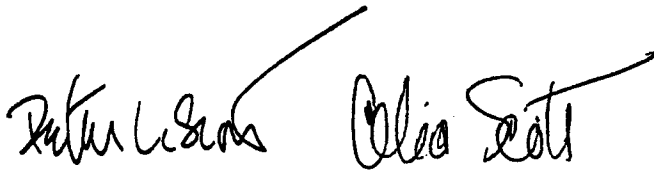
Furthermore, we found, when we reached the "twin gates" at Empire Grade around 12:45 pm, that mountain bikers were entering the UCSC Reserve strip and continuing on to the Gray Whale Ranch. A Cabrillo archaeology class was engaged in field trip activities in the UCSC grassland burn area to the east of Empire Grade; the instructor of that class told us that during the morning they had observed perhaps 30 to 50 mountain bikers headed similarly on to the Gray Whale Ranch. It was his assumption that this activity was legal, and he was surprised when we mentioned to him that we thought it not legal. We then checked out the situation, to find that (a) the fence between Empire Grade and the UCSC reserve lying to the west of Empire Grade had been cut to allow passage, (b) the only sign indicating that the route was closed was not prominently displayed, and (c) there was no sign at all and an open route on the actual entrance to Gray Whale on the west boundary of the UCSC reserve.

Having looked at these two areas, we have a deep concern about resource management practices on those State Park lands. Some of the actions that would seem possible right away include the following:

- To block off vehicle access from Highway 9 onto the lower "lock-em-ups" slope and to post this area appropriately;
- To work with the UCSC reserve coordinators to ensure that relevant fencing is kept intact and that appropriate notice is provided in the vicinity of the "twin gates";
- To begin an educational program that involves the relevant parties, including, in particular, the mountain biking community.

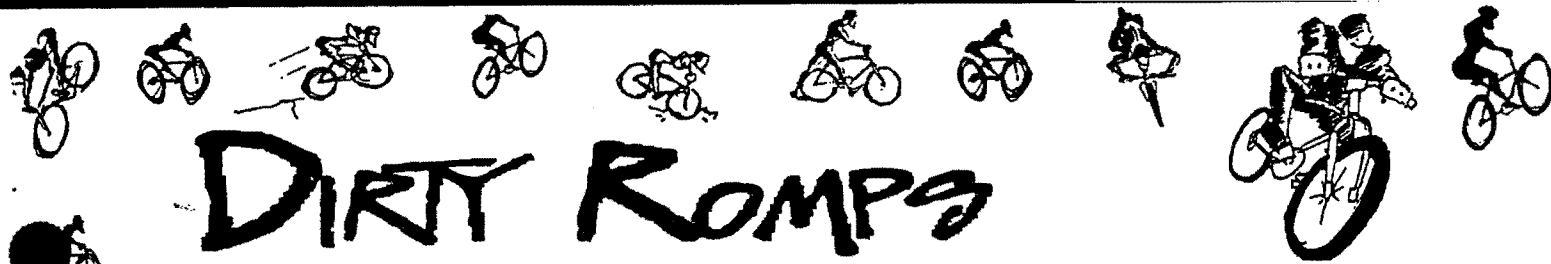
We would be willing to volunteer help in any way we can, and look forward to hearing your response to this letter.

Sincerely,

The block contains two handwritten signatures. The first signature, on the left, is written in dark ink and appears to be 'Peter L. Scott'. The second signature, on the right, is also in dark ink and appears to be 'Celia Scott'. Both signatures are fluid and cursive.

Peter and Celia Scott

cc: Senator Bruce McPherson
Assemblyman Fred Keeley
Supervisor Mardi Wormhoudt
Supervisor Jeff Almquist
Mayor Cynthia Mathews
Jeff Jones
Rick Hyman
Maggie Fusari
Dean Fitch
Ted Benhari
Barney Elders



DIRTY ROMPS IN THE MOUNTAINS

Prime Locales for Feeding the Fat-Tire Beast

By DOUG WRIGHT

Students at UC Santa Cruz have the good fortune to live near scenic wildlands which have become some of California's premier mountain biking territory. To make sure off-road riders get the most out of their steeds, City on a Hill Press takes a look at some of the region's best trails.

UC Trails

Returning UC Santa Cruz students know that living on campus is a kind of self-inflicted exile. And freshfolks might as well learn the truth now: campus is essentially an island, separated from the rest of civilization by the inconvenience that comes with most public transportation. More than likely, on the weekends when you're fiending to get out of those God-awful shoeboxes the University calls "rooms," even if only for a day, you'll find the semi-cosmopolitan distractions of this town just beyond reach.

Which is a hassle and a shame, but it does not mean the campus-bound are out of luck entirely. A whole maze of trails crisscross the wilderness immediately north of the University, making a convenient haven where fat-tire bikers can find respite from academia. And best of all, it's free. The trails are short, not much for endurance riding, but perfect for a milk run into the backwoods to clear the brain.

The two main entrances to the trails are behind the campus, one where Chiquapin Road turns to dirt just past the fire station by Crown College, and the other at the end of Heller Drive. Beyond the gates, reasonably steep inclines guard the rest of the area. The climbs are brief, but enough to get you up on the pedals early in the game. Shortly, though, you'll be in a labyrinthine network of double-tracks that mix level cruising ground, moderate climbs, and downhill that can get the adrenaline pumping for a little while, at least. And what's more, the established trails are connected with dozens of unnamed singletracks—great for



Soaring through the redwoods on campus.

whimsical exploration.

If a short, meandering foray into the woods isn't enough for you and you don't mind pavement beneath your knobbies, the campus trails can be stretched into something resembling a cross-country ride. Chiquapin Road loops north and then westward in a steady climb that eventually reaches Empire Grade. A left turn on Empire puts you on a blaster of a downhill which can take you straight to the west entrance of campus. Then you're set for another climb up Heller Drive and back to your cell, wherever it is.

More advanced riders should check out the mean singletrack that begins behind the graffiti-covered water tanks about halfway along Chiquapin Road and dumps you onto Route 9. This white-knuckle descent features hairpin switchbacks and two steeps where you'll find yourself "falling," more than "riding." The latter half of the ride is marred with ugly rocks and roots that you'd swear are trying to jump in your way just so they can see you bail. If they get you, seize the opportunity to take in some of the beauty afforded by the lush forest while you're spitting out the dirt. If not, don't bother looking—you'll be too busy trying not to kill yourself.

Once you hit Route 9, take a right and you'll head back into Santa Cruz. Of course, you'll have to drag yourself up Bay Street to get back to campus. But what goes down, must come up.

The Forest Of Nisene Marks State Park/ Soquel Demonstration State Forest

Named after a prosperous Danish landowner, Nisene Marks State Park has some of the most impressive woodlands in the Santa Cruz area. Over 30 miles of trails snake through the park. But don't get too excited—only one of them, Aptos Creek Road, is open to mountain bikes. Still, it makes for an excellent ride for folks who need to get away when Santa Cruz feels too small.

The park is located in the neighboring borough of Aptos, just off Soquel Drive. If the sacrilege of driving doesn't bother you, you can be there in minutes (but you should be ashamed of yourself). Otherwise, an easy but lengthy road ride will get you there in a half hour or so. Think of it as a warm-up.

But don't burn yourself out.

Once you reach the park's main gate, Aptos Creek Road hits you with a nine-mile climb, winding into the mountains under a canopy of redwoods that keeps the air cool. Deep ravines on the road's edge make for lovely mini-vistas. It's not too tough, just long. The bulk of the ride can be done in the saddle, and you can enjoy the scenery as it rolls past. Only in a few places is it really necessary to get up and mash on the pedals. And if you do need to take a breather, the park offers plenty of gorgeous locales to do so, including the epicenter of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake that flattened downtown Santa Cruz.

Eventually, Aptos Creek will bring you to Sand Point Overlook, 1,500 feet above the Monterey Bay. In good weather, you can see clear down the mountain over the thick green carpet of treetops to Capitola and the ocean beyond. In winter, when haze and fog sock the region in, it's just as good—the thick atmosphere swallows the trees as they march down the hillside into the gray void. It's like standing at the edge of

This white-knuckle descent features hairpin switchbacks and two steeps where you'll find yourself "falling" more than "riding."

the world staring into a timeless, mesmerizing infinity.

Once you've had your fill of the view and the company of other hikers, bikers, and joggers, turning around and heading back the way you came should get you home in time for lunch. Be careful when you're downhill, as Nisene Marks draws a lot of foot traffic. It would be a shame if mountain bikers lost access to their only legal trail in the park because some bonthead packing full suspension mowed down a hiking nun or something at 90 mph.

Nisene Marks' lack of singletrack is its one shortcoming, but there is another option for those seeking a longer ride. Aptos Creek Road con-



tinues past Sand Point, climbing some more before dropping down the backside of the mountain and into Soquel Demonstration State Forest. There you'll find a handful of challenging singletrack runs, particularly Ridge and Saw Pit Trails. Both of these will throw harrowing technical downhill at you with no mercy at all. Rocky steep rattle your eyeballs inside your skull, and ugly roots reach for your tires like menacing, goulsh claws. After a crack at the Ridge-Saw Pit loop, riders equipped with a suspension fork will find their money well-spent. Those without, on the other hand, may be ready to ambush the next passing biker, beat him senseless, and make off with his RockShox to avoid repeating the ordeal.

Wilder Ranch State Park and Cultural Preserve

Ask any veteran off-roader in Santa Cruz where the best riding is, and nine times out of ten you'll hear "Wilder Ranch." Just two miles past Western Drive up Highway 1, Wilder boasts 3,900 acres of coastal wilderness preserve and 28 awesome miles of multi-use trails which have made it the mountain biking Mecca of the Monterey Bay area. Local folklore says the trail system at Wilder is so extensive, you could ride there every weekend for a year and never do the same route twice. And chances are, it's not far from the truth.

From the parking lot, Old Cove Landing Trail leads to the oceanfront where it connects with Ohlone Bluff Trail and follows the cliffs westward all the way to Four Mile Beach—a scenic pedal along the oceanfront. The serious terrain, though, lies in the hills to the north. To get there, cut through the visitor center to the tunnel that takes you under Highway 1. A large map of the area greets you at the mouth of the trails, providing an opportunity to plan a route you will invariably forget about later (better to carry a trail map).

Then it's off into the hills with nothing at all to stop you. Wilder can be roughly divided into two main fire road loops with dozens of tributary singletracks that wander down into gulches and creeks, past redwood and eucalyptus groves. The sweeping panoramas of rolling hills and elevated ocean views are to die for. You might want to bring some light reading along, like, say, *War and Peace*, just

for an excuse to stay a while.

Riders of all skill levels should be able to find something at Wilder to suit their fancy, but the best of the landscape lends itself better to more seasoned troops. Tight descents into the many gulches vary from smooth, undulating earth that makes you feel like you're flying, to screaming steep slopes with jagged rocks and ugly ruts that require quick reflexes and good bike handling. When you're cranking back up to high ground, be ready for staircases of gnarled roots that sap momentum. If you get stuck in too high a gear and stall on some climbs, not only will you feel stupid for running out of juice and tipping over most un-gracefully, you may also have to hike to flatter ground so you can get rolling again.

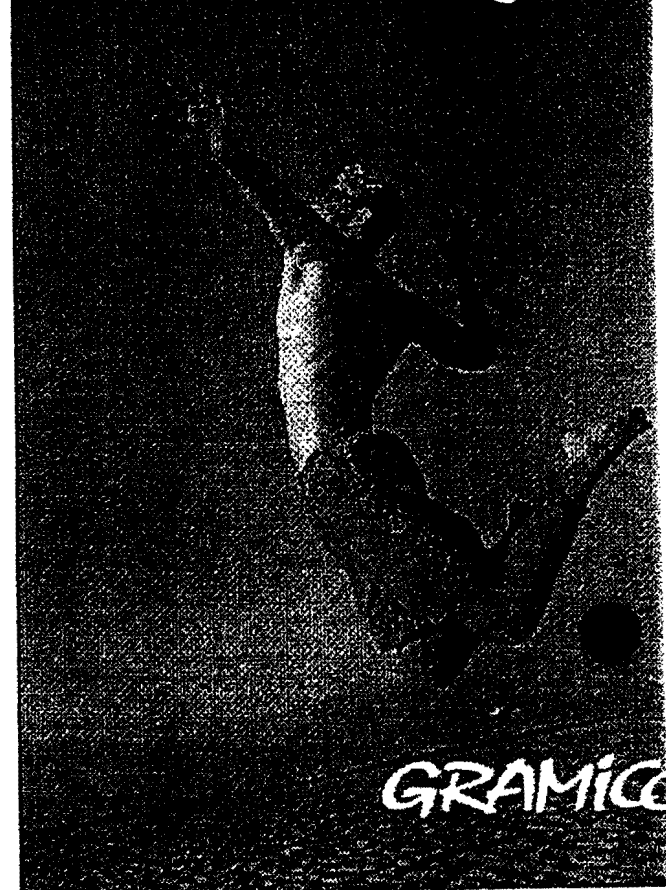
For a good cross-country pull around the perimeter of the ranch, try taking Engelsman Loop Trail up to Old Cabin Trail (it's the first singletrack on the right). Old Cabin crosses a ravine, starting with a sweet downhill which leads to a creek bed (an honest-to-God creek in rainy season) then bounces back up the far side where a right turn onto Eucalyptus Loop Trail will bring you to the highest elevation of the ranch. At the end of Eucalyptus, you can either bomb down Wilder Ridge Loop Trail back to the main entrance, or explore more woodsy singletracks like Enchanted and Baldwin Loops.

On a cautionary note, mountain bikers should watch for the many hikers and equestrians Wilder attracts. Weekends can be ridiculously crowded, with foot, hoof, and pedal traffic on the same trails. As relative newcomers to the land, mountain bikers are required to yield to, well, everybody. Bear in mind that one screaming, nappy-haired, barely-in-control yahoo on wheels can (and often does) stick the whole mountain biking community with a bad name. And while the "No Fear" eco-rebel image goes well with bikes, it also makes it easier to get booted from idyllic places like Wilder. If you have to drop the hammer, make sure you at least *look* like you know what you're doing—don't lock up the brakes on the corners and dig furrows into the trails. Not where anyone can see you, anyway.



Doug Wright was the National Affairs Desk editor at City on a Hill Press in 1997. He graduated UCSC in the spring of that year with a BA in American history. Currently, he is seeking his fortune and committing general mayhem in the San Francisco Bay Area.

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18 September 1997

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

Dave Vincent, District Superintendent
California State Department of Parks and Recreation, Central Coast District
600 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

RE: Gray Whale Ranch

COPY

Dear Mr. Vincent -

Since the RBDA received no notice of the negative dec or commentary thereon (as it has requested) and thus cannot now comment, I would like to at least enter my personal thoughts into the record.

The negative dec makes scant, if any, reference to the extensive illegal trail use and off-trail riding. It is common knowledge, for example, that there exists an extensive trail system in the north (of Smith Grade) section of the park. Part of this trail system is logging roads left from timber harvests done under the previous ownership. The rest are single-track trails constructed by equestrians who did so with permission of the previous property owner. These trails are in continuous and heavy use, not only by hikers and equestrians but particularly by cyclists and off-road motorbikes. Users enter the park via roads from Pine Ridge and Empire Grade and via trails and logging roads off Smith Grade, not to mention from the part of the park south of Smith Grade.

As I and many other people have noted in numerous communications to your department, written and oral, these users also enter and exit via private property. This has become a matter of extreme concern to people who live adjacent to the park, whose privacy has been repeatedly and increasingly violated, primarily by cyclists and off-road motorbikes, and whose concerns have generally been ignored or downplayed by park officials.

Moreover the neg dec also ignores the extensive trail use that has existed and has been increasing almost exponentially in the core part of the park adjacent to Wilder. Even though the park is not open to the public, bike rallies have been held there, the new University student guide extols mountain biking on Gray Whale thus: "...Tight descents into the many gulches...screaming steepes with jagged rocks and ugly ruts that require quick reflexes...". On any day one can see flocks of cyclists hoisting their bikes over the fence at Twin Gates to go riding inside the ranch. Every bike shop in town offers copious advice about park access and the best single-track trails.

The neg dec also ignores prevailing, known traffic conditions on Empire Grade where a parking lot is proposed. This is the worst place on Empire Grade to put such an access road.

PWP-7-97

The neg dec also ignores emergency service considerations and has never even contacted the one local agency that repeatedly rescues injured trespassing cyclists off the ranch.

In its letter dated 1 May 1997, the RBDA brought these issues to the attention of Assemblyman Keeley, CC'd to the DPR. Yet the RBDA was never given notice of the negative dec or any meeting, or of any comment period. Personal phone requests have gone unheeded as well.

Meanwhile, if you ask certain park officials if there are problems at the ranch, they claim they've received no letters and things are moving along. If you ask certain park officials, they claim the north part of the park is to remain permanently closed to public use, while another park official says it is only a matter of time before there will be trails all the way up to the Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve. Who is telling the truth? I think something is very deficient in the process of evaluating what has happened thus far and what it portends for the future.

Like many people, I feel the DPR has not taken into account - among many significant issues - illegal trail use and the creation of new trails - a very significant problem most associated with mountain bike use.

Because the DPR has not analyzed the impact of the extensive illegal and off-trail riding adequately, I strongly feel that this calls for a full EIR, not a neg dec, and that the IUP must be shelved until major considerations for opening the park are properly evaluated.

For a multitude of reasons, this piece of property is too precious, and took too much time and effort to preserve, to allow it to be swept through an Interim Use Plan and into ill-considered sanctioned uses when unsanctioned ones have already been so destructive and such a cause for concern.

Thanks very much for listening.

Sincerely,



CC: Assemblymember Fred Keeley, Supervisor Mardi Wormhoudt, DPR Office of Resource Management, California Coastal Commission, Save Gray Whale Parklands, Sierra Club

John J. Gardiner
304 Pine Street
Millbrae, CA 94030
(650) 794-9809

Coastal Commission
Lee Otter
Rick Hyman
725 Front Street Suite 300
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
427-4863

September 15, 1997

Dear Sirs,

Please do not allow a few people to hoard public land.

I am speaking in regards to the Gray Whale Ranch. Please discount the small minority who selfishly demand that Gray Whale to be closed to cyclists.

A recent count of trail users at the adjacent Wilder Ranch showed that 500 cyclists, 100 hikers and 25 equestrians used the park. Assuming a similar usage pattern, closing the Gray Whale to cyclists is essentially closing it to over 80% of potential users. Obviously, this is not fair.

Public land should be shared to maximize the enjoyment of all, not to satisfy the interests of a select few.

Thank you for your consideration

Truly,



John J. Gardiner

PWP-7-97

12 September 1997

TO: California State Department of Parks and Recreation
RE: Gray Whale Ranch/Wilder Ranch State Park

To Whom It May Concern -

As a 27-year resident of Bonny Doon whose property borders Gray Whale Ranch, I would like to comment on a few aspects of the park planning at this point in time.

I am deeply concerned about trail use, particularly how the burgeoning trail system of single-track trails is already affecting both the environment of the park itself and how the trails in the park are impacting the private lands around the park.

1) With all due respects to the conscientious cyclists who have worked hard to treat the park and its many users with kindness and respect, the fact remains that cyclists in Wilder and other parks in the area, not to mention the yet-to-be-opened Gray Whale portion, degrade the trails terribly and, inadvertently or not, harass other non-cycling trail users into simply not using the park trails. Bike users vastly outnumber hikers at Wilder Ranch already, due to the way cyclists use the trails. I worked hard to keep that property from becoming another city neighborhood years ago, now I can't walk there safely. I have been struck and strafed by inconsiderate cyclists too many times.

Numerous emergency calls have been made to local fire and rescue crews to find and extricate cyclists who have injured themselves in reckless riding accidents on Gray Whale. And the park isn't even open yet.

2) With all due respects to the conscientious equestrians who have worked so hard to promote trail maintenance and etiquette, it is a fact that numerous members of the Horseman's Association have been actively building a trail network in the portion of Gray Whale north of Smith Grade, the northern part of the park that is not slated to be opened to public use even under the IUP. All my equestrian neighbors are participating in this effort with Bud McCrary as their leader and advisor. They contend (with, I suspect, no real justification) that because they were allowed to ride there by Ron Yanke, their privileges have been "grandfathered" into the new park. So they're working (and riding) on the rather extensive trails in that part of the park.

Moreover, one of the regrettable side-effects of the equestrian trails is their extensive use by cyclists. Thanks to the illegal trails in the upper section of Gray Whale, our neighborhood's private drive now has flocks of cyclists roaring through at 30-40 mph - too fast to stop them and take them to task for their trespassing. Ours is one of many situations like it that ring the park property.

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CENTRAL COAST AREA

0110-7-87

3) The plan for the parking lot at Twin Gates is extremely ill-advised for several reasons:

One is the certain impact traffic will have on the mima mound area there.

- Another is the very shortsighted plan to put in a single-lane road to a parking lot intended for horse trailers. Trailers don't back up well, particularly to make way for yet other trucks pulling trailers. The meadow area is extremely sensitive habitat for certain endangered plants and insects and cannot possibly bear the pressure of such a facility even if it was done in a minimally adequate way. The current plan is not even minimally adequate.

- Several years ago, the CHP did a speed and traffic study of Empire Grade to reevaluate the speed limit. They posted surveillance equipment along that stretch of the road by Twin Gates and found the average driver travels that stretch at 63 mph. This is not the high end of speed traveled there, it is the average speed for that stretch of road! It is also perhaps the only place on Empire Grade where it is possible to safely pass the myriad gravel trucks that travel between the Felton Quarry and town - along the only designated route that type of traffic is allowed to use. To put an intersection for a parking lot into the stretch of Empire Grade that bears the most and the fastest traffic is an invitation to a catastrophe.

I offer two suggestions:

1) Adopt the trail use plan currently in use at the East Bay Regional Parks (copy enclosed). It has been in use there for some years. It is reviewed annually by their park board and it is an acknowledged successful working trail policy. Please: simply adopt it as closely as possible to the way it is written in their policy. It's a win-win for all potential trail users, be they equestrians, cyclists or walkers. It designates certain trails for certain types of use and engages the users themselves to help keep it orderly and in good shape.

2) Completely scrap the plans for the parking lot at Twin Gates and move the lot to another site on Empire Grade that will not have the inevitable potential for environmental degradation and damage to human life and property. The current plan is extremely imprudent.

A great deal of this park is much too precious to squander as recreational real estate, and deserves to be designated as a preserve. There is still enough of it left however to provide ample opportunities for recreational use by one and all without injuring the land - but only if proper planning takes place.

Please start this park out with an enlightened trail policy and please start over with the idea of a parking lot. Human health and safety are at stake. The health of the land itself is at stake too.

Thank you for your consideration.



CC: Coastal Commission, SC County Board of Supervisors, Assemblyman Fred Keeley

Coastal Commission
Lee Otter
Rick Hyman
725 Front Street Suite 300
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
427-4863

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SEP 19 1997

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

October 15, 1997

Dear Lee Otter,

I would like to voice my support for Multi Use at Grey Whale Ranch

A recent Labor Day count of trail users at Wilder State Park, showed 500 mountain bikers, 100 hikers and 25 equestrians.

These numbers show us two things:

- 1) Multi use is working
- 2) For the type and length of trails at Wilder (and by extension neighboring Grey Whale) that bicycles are the public's five to one choice as a way to enjoy the park lands.

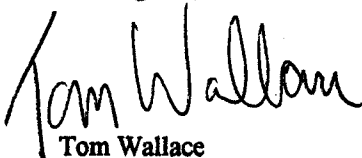
Some people will claim that bicycles should be banned because of erosion. I have two points to make about this

- 1) We are talking about former logging roads. The impact of a 25 pound bicycle on a road that was made by a several ton bull dozer is minimal.
- 2) Surprising as it sounds, it turns out that a hikers boots actually make as much erosion as a bicycle tire, because you have the whole weight of a person dug in with the heel of a shoe, versus weight distributed over a pair of tires rolling over an area. I have included the full report on Mountain bikes from the Department of Conservation in New Zeland to support this statement. I think that you will find it interesting reading. The exact quote is "*The impact effects of hikers and mountain bikers could not be distinguished.*"

My suggestion to hikers concerns is an extension of the "Horses yield to hikers, cyclists yield to hikers and horses" policy in place at Wilder State Park.

If you wish to discuss these issues I am available at 408-460-1266.

Best regards,



Tom Wallace
173 Hollywood Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

PWP-7-97

ltr bikes on park

1

997 SMITH GRADE,
SANTA CRUZ,
CA 95061

SEPTEMBER 26TH 1997

TO TAMI GROVE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

Dear Ms Grove,

As someone who has worked diligently with Save the Gray Whale Parklands for eight years to acquire Gray Whale Ranch as an extension of Wilder Park, I am anxious that the experience with mountain bikes on Wilder Park will not be repeated on Gray Whale Ranch.

I am enclosing a letter sent a year and a half ago to Mr Bob Culbertson, Chief Ranger of the area of Wilder Park. The letter(to which I received no acknowledgement), regards the problems caused by mountain bikes in Wilder Park.

Not only have the trails been severely eroded by the sheer numbers of bicycles pouring in, but the speed and consequent hard braking around bends and down steep inclines has ruined many of the trails for hiking and horse riding.

In fact, for many the speed of a many bikes has made hiking or horseback riding in Wilder park, far too stressful to be enjoyed. Because of this, many avid hikers and horseback riders can no longer use the park. The Sierra Club has abandoned leading hikes out there for the same reason.

As you are probably aware, because of the explosion of mountain biking popularity, there are diminishing trails in the county where hikers, birdwatchers, horse riders, (including children on ponies), can enjoy a safe relaxing day in nature. The sad fact is that throughout the state bikes rule the nature trails by intimidating speed and sheer numbers.

To illustrate my point, I quote an article in the latest UC student primer. On mountain biking in Wilder Park:

"Tight descents into the many gulches. . . feel like your flying, to screaming steepes with jagged rocks and ugly ruts that require quick reflexes. . . the 'No Fear' eco-rebel image goes well with bikes."

Imagine now strolling up a narrow trail with your children pointing out birds and ferns when suddenly a pack of bicyclists come tearing down the trail "stump-jumping" at break-neck speed towards you!

This is a common Wilder Park experience.

When offering your input to the trails system for Gray Whale Ranch which is currently being considered, I respectfully ask to do what you can to preserve the peace and beauty of this exquisite land for us all. Thank you

Ray Gwyn Smith

PWP-7-97

Bob Culbertson
Chief Ranger

997 Smith Grade,
Santa Cruz
CA 95060

May 13 1995

Dear Mr Culbertson,

I would like to bring your attention to two problems caused by mountain bikes in Wilder State Park. One is the danger of speeding bicycles. The other is erosion.

Erosion of trails is evident in many areas of the park but is increasing alarmingly on narrow trails in steep, wooded areas. In places, tree roots and large rocks are becoming very exposed making the paths dangerous for horses. Also, because woodland paths are narrow, bike traffic erosion is concentrated into narrow paths which become deepening narrow gullies making some trails near impossible to negotiate on horseback. In fact over this wet winter and spring, several trails have been so degraded that they have become impassable to horses. (They are very unpleasant to hike also).

The other problem caused by bikes in the park is speeding. Many cyclists do not realise that they share the trails with hikers and horses. They fly around blind bends regardless. Bikes on hills are sometimes travelling at speeds around 40 m.p.h.. ..often in groups of three or four. Speeding bikes are an especially serious hazard on the narrow trails through the woods where visibility is reduced. I have had many close calls with cyclists almost running into my horse, the horse leaping off the edge of a trail in dangerously steep terrain to avoid speeding bikes. I have been thrown more than once. What we have here is a serious liability problem.

Unfortunately these kinds of experiences are common for riders of horses in Wilder Ranch. Riding a horse or hiking quietly through the wide splendour of the park is no longer a peaceful, renewing experience because much of the time we must be straining to hear if bikes are about to fly round the bend ahead or behind us, or compelled to stare at the ground so that we can negotiate the erosion on the trails.

Because of this many horse owners are abandoning Wilder Park. I find this deeply saddening because historically Wilder Ranch was a working cattle ranch. Horses were ridden on this land a century before mountain bikes even existed.

PWP-7-97

2

I would like to offer some ideas I've had that might help mitigate these problems:

To improve hiker and horse/bike safety, place signs on blind bends on the fire roads and at both ends of narrow stretches of trail with poor visibility warning bikers to watch for hikers and horses. Signs such as :
CYCLISTS WATCH FOR HORSES AND HIKERS. BICYCLE SPEED LIMIT 10 M.P.H.

HIGH HAZARD AREA..NO BIKE RIDING (with emblem of person pushing a bike).

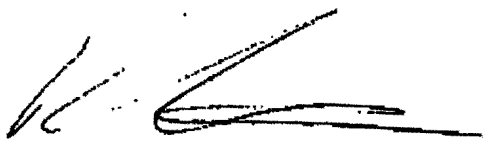
NARROW TRAIL. BICYCLISTS DISMOUNT WHEN PASSING HORSES AND HIKERS .

It might be wise to place signs in prominent places such as at the entrance to the park with some cycling rules such as a speed limit of 15 m.p.h.. Requiring cyclists to dismount on trails when passing horses or hikers on the trails etc..(a few considerate cyclists already do this voluntarily.)

If these measures don't help, another remedy for the safety problem /liability problem might be to open the park to horses or to bicycles on alternate days at high use times such as weekends, holidays and throughout the summer months. For example : bikes on even dates, horses on odd days of the month.

To prevent erosion caused by mountain bikes, restricting bicycles to the fireroads, making single path trails off limit to bikes would reduce the problem . Alternatively closing the park to bicycles in wet weather would be helpful. (closing the narrow woodland paths in wet weather would be a compromise).

Thank you for your time. I am enclosing copies of articles that adress these problems in other natural areas. I can be reached at 425-1146 if I can be of any help.



Rey Gwyn Smith

DAVID GREEN BASKIN

633 Highland Avenue
Santa Cruz, Ca 95060-2035

September 10, 1997

Rick Hyman
California Coastal Commission
Central Coast Area Office
725 Front Street, Suite 300
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Gray Whale Ranch Opening

Dear Mr. Hyman:

I have been informed that you are the person to whom communications concerning the referenced matter should be sent.

This letter is to unqualifiedly support the approval of the negative declaration for the State Park's plans for opening Gray Whale Ranch as an addition to the Wilder Ranch State Park and the granting of all necessary permits & approvals so the opening of this addition to the park can be expedited.

I have been informed that the Coastal Commission is requiring that the State Parks and Recreation comply with Santa Cruz County Zoning laws related to the opening of the park. This does not seem to be a reasonable requirement, as the State is the superior jurisdiction and is therefore usually exempt from compliance with such rules.

As a local hiker and bicyclist, I would like see the Ranch opened to multi-use as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,



DAVID GREEN BASKIN

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CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

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Douglas Blaisdell
2041 Edmund Lane
Capitola, CA. 95010
408-479-0156

Coastal Commission
Lee Otter
Rick Hyman
725 Front Street Suite 300
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
427-4863

October 14, 1997

Dear Lee Otter,

I would like to voice my support for Multi Use at Grey Whale Ranch. My wife and two children have enjoyed Wilder State Park both on our mountain bikes and while hiking and would like to see access for all at Grey Whale Ranch. I see Grey Whale Ranch as a critical link between Wilder and UCSC for cycles and hikers.

A recent Labor Day count of trail users at Wilder State Park, showed 500 mountain bikers, 100 hikers and 25 equestrians.

These numbers show us two things:

- 1) Multi use is working
- 2) For the type and length of trails at Wilder/Gray Whale that bicycles are the public's five to one choice as a way to enjoy the park lands.

Banning cyclist from Grey Whale would be a knee jerk reaction from extreme environmentalist that feel in some way that a bicycle is going to do damage to a fireroad that is graded annually.

Again, please put my family of four down on the side for Multi Use at Grey Whale Ranch.

Take Care,

Douglas Blaisdell

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OCT 15 1997

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COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COAST AREA

PWP-7-97

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS



GRAY WHALE RANCH

PUBLIC WORKS PLAN

GRAY WHALE RANCH

Attachment A
PWP-7-97

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
GRAY WHALE ACQUISITION PUBLIC WORKS PLAN
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- Figure 4: Parking Detail

References (available upon request from Department of Parks and Recreation, 600 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060, 408-429-2850)

- I. Cultural Resources Overview Study, LSA Associates, February 1992
- II. Raptor Survey, Brian Walton, 1990-1991
- III. Special Status Plant Species, LSA Associates, September 1991
- IV. Biological Assessment, LSA Associates, May 1992
- V. Special Status Amphibians and Reptiles, LSA Associates, July 1991
- VI. Departmental Directives on Resource Management for the California State Park System
- VII. Draft Recovery Plan for the Santa Cruz Cypress, U.S. Dept. of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, April, 1997
- VIII. Traffic Impact Analysis, Ifland Engineers, Inc., October 1991
- IX. Mountain Bike Use Policy for the California State Park System

SUMMARY

The 2300-acre Gray Whale Ranch property was acquired by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in May 1997. It will be operated as an extension of Wilder Ranch State Park.

Issues addressed in the Public Works Plan to open the Gray Whale property to public use include: park staffing, patrol, hours of operation, education and research, natural resource management, cave management, fire protection, closed areas, search and rescue, elimination of unauthorized trails and visitor trespass on private land, parking area operation, maintenance of perimeter fence, maintenance of roads, authorized entrances, and traffic considerations for Empire Grade. This Public Works Plan supersedes the previously issued Interim Use Plan.

Types of Activity

Following Coastal Commission review of the Public Works Project authorized by this Public Works Plan, DPR will open a temporary gravel parking area and eight miles of existing dirt road to hiking, equestrian and bicycle use. Management of cultural and natural resources will include maintenance and enhancement of special interest species and special interest habitats, removal of nonnative plants, and protection of a historic lime kiln. Research and education projects will be coordinated by special permit, as will access to limestone caves. Staff patrol for public safety and resource protection will involve both perimeter and interior patrol on foot, bicycle, horseback and by enforcement vehicle. Maintenance of erosion controls, signs and fencing will be accomplished by park staff and volunteers.

There are no other activities or uses permitted under this Public Works Plan.

Intensity of Activity

Visitation is not expected to exceed 50 persons on weekdays and 500 persons on the busiest weekends. Traffic using the parking area off Empire Grade will not coincide with the current busiest traffic hours of 7:30A.M.-8:30A.M. or 5:00P.M.-6:00P.M.. Trail access will be from the above parking area, two existing trails in Wilder Ranch and the existing trailhead on Smith Grade.

Maximum Size of Facilities

Until the *General Plan* process is completed only existing facilities will be utilized, with the exception of the 45-vehicle temporary gravel parking area, two portable toilets, and signs or other public safety features.

Service Area

The service area for Gray Whale will be Wilder Ranch State Park.

Financing

The 1997/98 DPR Budget includes funding for staff and equipment for the Gray Whale Acquisition. It will be a permanent augmentation to the Santa Cruz District annual allocation. Additional funding will be requested as permanent development is approved. Volunteer and community support has already been received and committed for future public safety and resource projects.

Alternative Locations

An alternative for the entrance to the Parking Area was considered. (approximately one mile up Empire Grade from the existing "twin gates" entrance) It was rejected for three reasons. First, a new road access would have to be constructed between the existing dirt road and Empire Grade. Second, the visibility for northbound traffic to observe a vehicle signaling a left turn would not be as good. Third, the existing "twin gates" access currently links easily to an existing UCSC dirt road, avoiding visitor travel on Empire Grade for visitors using the two roads.

An alternative of no parking area was considered. This alternative was rejected because it would create unnecessary hazards by encouraging parking on Empire Grade, with a corresponding increase in pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian traffic on Empire Grade itself. It would severely limit site accessibility, contrary to DPR's mandate for public use.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Plan

This Public Works Plan is submitted to comply with California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14 Section 13353 and also addresses other law and policy related to opening the recent Gray Whale Acquisition to public use.

This Public Works Plan provides for the operation and management of the Gray Whale Acquisition until a General Plan for the property is prepared and approved. This is authorized under Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5002.2(e):

Public Resources Code (Div. 5, Chapter 1, Article 1) 5002.2.(e)

Consistent with good planning and sound resource management, the department shall, in discharging its responsibilities under this section, attempt to make units of the state park system accessible and usable by the general public at the earliest opportunity.

Utilization of the property by the general public prior to the preparation of a General Plan is authorized if there is no permanent commitment of the unit's resources as provided in Public Resource Code Section 5002.2(c):

Public Resources Code (Div. 5, Chapter 1, Article 1) 5002.2. (c)

Notwithstanding the requirements of subdivision (a), the department is not required to prepare a general plan for a unit that has no general plan or to revise an existing plan, as the case may be, if the only development contemplated by the department consists of the repair, replacement, or rehabilitation of an existing facility; the construction of a temporary facility, so long as such construction does not result in the permanent commitment of a resource of the unit; any undertaking necessary for the protection of public health or safety; or any emergency measure necessary for the immediate protection of natural or cultural resources; or any combination thereof at a single unit. Any such development shall be subject to requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13) (commencing with Section 21000)).

PRC Section 5002.2(c) permits the Department to construct a temporary facility without the completion of a General Plan where such construction does not result in a permanent commitment of a resource of the unit or is necessary for the protection of public health and safety. DPR will comply with PRC Section 5002.2 (c) and (e), by activities described in this project; placing gravel over an existing disturbed area for use as a parking area, installation of signing, installation of fencing, protection of the resource and safety of the public, etc.

Planning and Regulatory Process

DPR submitted an Interim Use Plan in June of 1997, having completed a CEQA review, with the intention of opening Gray Whale to public use in July 1997. We received several responses to our negative CEQA declaration. One of these suggested we submit either a Coastal Development Permit application or a Public Works Plan to meet state Coastal Act requirements. To insure full compliance with this state law, we have revised the previously circulated Interim Use Plan and are now following the process required for a Public Works Plan by submitting this document to the Coastal Commission.

DPR will host a Public Hearing will be held in Santa Cruz in September 1997 to satisfy CCR13353.5 and address County of Santa Cruz General Plan Policy 7.8.2.

After the *Public Hearing*, DPR will review comments, and file a Public Works Plan/Project application with the Coastal Commission designed to allow Gray Whale to be open to the public. The *Plan* will be reviewed by staff and scheduled before the *Coastal Commission*, following their own public hearing the Coastal Commission will determine if any further actions are needed to comply with the California Coastal Act. Any opening of additional existing facilities would require the approval of an additional *Public Works Project* by the Coastal Commission.

Environmental information was made available to the public through the notice and distribution of the Gray Whale Ranch Interim Use Plan in June 1997. The environmental reference documents remain available for review at the State Parks Santa Cruz District office at 600 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz; in compliance with CCR 13355. The references used by DPR are also available at the Santa Cruz Coastal Commission Office and the Santa Cruz County Planning Department prior to the DPR sponsored public hearing. The environmental information is referred to in the Public Works Plan text, which has been updated in response to comments and Public Works Plan submittal requirements.

Other Policy relevant to opening Gray Whale includes, but may not be limited to, Santa Cruz County Local Coastal Plan Policies; 7.6.3, 7.7.6, 7.7.8, 7.8.4 (f), 7.8.5(a), and 7.8.15(e).

This Public Works Plan includes the Public Works Project request to install facilities noted in this document.

The Public Works Plan governs any future "development" (as defined by PRC 30106) of the Gray Whale property shown on Figure 1, including DPR activity on the easement from UCSC. Any such development must be consistent with this Public Works Plan, except that any proposed development on any easements, leases, etc. of this land by other than DPR will still require approval of a Coastal Development Permit from the County of Santa Cruz.

In the future a *General Plan* will be completed for the Gray Whale Acquisition which will amend the existing Wilder Ranch State Park General Plan and Public Works Plan. Consistent with Public Resources Code Section 5002.2, any permanent development of new facilities will take place on the Gray Whale Acquisition only after final approval of a General Plan by the State Park and Recreation Commission and acceptance, subject to PRC 30605, of an amended Public Works Plan and Public Works Project by the Coastal Commission. Any proposed use of *existing* facilities not detailed in this Public Works Project will require the approval of an additional Public Works Project, with public comment prior to permit approval by the California Coastal Commission.

RESOURCE ELEMENT

Resource Summary

The Gray Whale Acquisition encompasses approximately 2,300 acres in Santa Cruz County, located northwest of the City of Santa Cruz. The southern and western boundaries of the property adjoin Wilder Ranch State Park. A portion of its eastern boundary borders the lands of the University of California, Santa Cruz.

The southern end of the acquisition is located on coastal marine terraces characterized by deep, stream-cut canyons that contain second growth stands of coastal redwood and Douglas-fir. Several of these streams have surface water flowing all year. Limestone caves are located in Cave Gulch, a tributary of Wilder Creek which drains the southern end of the property. Long open meadows located on the upland portions of the marine terraces offer sweeping panoramic vistas of Monterey Bay and the Pacific Ocean. During the past 100 years, the area has been used for a variety of purposes including farming, timber harvesting, mining, and cattle grazing. The last active timber harvest and cattle grazing was concluded in the summer of 1996. In recent years, four timber harvests were conducted which removed trees on approximately 557 acres. CDF has completed the regulatory process and is requiring no further mitigation or monitoring for two of the Timber Harvests. CDF is in the process of clearing the last two; agreeing that the erosion controls are in place, and DPR standards will satisfy CDF monitoring requirements. There are no buildings on the property, though there are remnants of lime kilns and other buildings related to the old farming and mining operations. These are located near the southern property line adjacent to Wilder Ranch State Park. Existing facilities include over twelve miles of roads, seven miles of trails, a caretaker/office modular structure and several miles of fencing with gates.

Elevation levels of the property range from 300 to 1,200 feet above sea level. The property contains approximately 1,600 acres of mixed conifers, which include coast redwood and Douglas fir; and mixed evergreen forest including coast live oak, madrone and tan oak. The remainder of the property consists of grassland (also known as coastal prairie), northern maritime chaparral, northern interior cypress forest, and knobcone pine (sandhills community). The resulting habitats support wildlife typical of the central California coast, including at least 22 species of amphibians and reptiles, 31 species of mammals, and 115 species of birds.

One unique feature of the landscape is an area with small natural mounds known as mima mounds. The evenly-spaced mounds are separated by low, moist depressions. The flora of these mima mounds is diverse, unique, and contains several species of special concern.

Nonnative plants are found throughout the Gray Whale Acquisition. Some of these, such as Scotch broom and acacia, have the potential to invade native plant habitats.

Thirty plant and animal species of special concern are discussed in the References. Of these, the California red-legged frog has recently been listed as 'Threatened' by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The California red-legged frog has been identified in most of the watercourses and moist areas of the property. Townsend's big-eared bats, Doloff cave spiders, Empire Cave pseudoscorpions, and Mackenzies cave amphipods are found in the four limestone caves in Cave Gulch. The 'sandhills community' found on the northern part of the property provides habitat for at least ten species of special concern. In this Public Works Project, areas with sandhills community will be closed to the general public.

Approximately 218 acres of the property have ocean views. Throughout the area are numerous trails, dirt roads, and old logging roads that make it very accessible by hiking, horseback, and vehicles.

Because of the large adjoining tracts of wildlands surrounding the property, including the University of California Santa Cruz campus, Wilder Ranch State Park, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, and the Bonnie Doon Ecological Preserve, this Gray Whale property serves as an important connector to maintain biodiversity in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The property directly connects 13,000 acres of existing publicly-owned wildlands, and also borders an additional 30,000 acres of private land which support significant biological resources. The abundance of wildlife in the area can be attributed to the existence of wildlife corridors found on the Gray Whale Acquisition. One of the most important attributes of this area is its value in providing continuity of plant and animal habitat.

Resource Policy

General Resource Management Directives and Policy for the California Department of Parks and Recreation can be found in a variety of documents available at DPR District Offices. Policies specific to this project follow.

Cultural and Natural Resource Protection

The California Department of Parks and Recreation recognizes that good planning and sound resource management require that a more thorough cultural and natural resource inventory be conducted before opening more extensive areas of the park to the public. Immediate public use is restricted to areas where the limited time frame allowed for adequate resource inventories.

POLICY: On the Gray Whale Acquisition, additional existing roads and trails will be opened for public use only after thorough cultural and natural resource inventories of the proposed use area have been completed, and appropriate resource protection mitigations have been implemented.

Areas within 25 feet of all areas proposed to be open to the public (eight miles of road and the parking area) have been surveyed for sensitive resources. Roads with known conflicts (such as creek crossings) will not be open to the public under this Public Works Project.

California Red-legged Frog

California red-legged frogs are found in many of the watercourses and moist areas of the property. They are federally listed as "Threatened". Increased visitor use, particularly by bicyclists and equestrians, has the potential to reduce California red-legged frog populations and degrade their habitat.

POLICY: No roads, trails, or other public use routes will be opened for use until red-legged frog habitat on the route has been protected. Existing red-legged frog barricades near the mima mound area will be maintained.

DPR has consulted with the United State Fish and Wildlife Service regarding red-legged frogs. For the interim use plan, they recommend that existing barricades near the mima mound area be maintained, and the roads be frequently monitored for new populations.

Mima Mounds

The mima mound areas are of special concern because of their limited distribution in California and their unique assemblage of associated plants and animals. The mima mounds of this area are more coastal prairie, rather than wetlands, due to the soil type and drainage characteristics. 'Vernal pool' characteristics are not evident in the mima mounds found on the property.

POLICY: The mima mounds and nearby grasslands will be protected and managed to maximize their biological values. Facilities will be placed to minimize the impact on this area.

The proposed gravel parking area has been moved back from the original design proposal of roadside (head-in) parking, to move use away from the mima mounds.

Limestone Caves

The limestone caves of Cave Gulch have unique biological and geological values which require protection. Dolloff Cave contains one of two known populations of the Dolloff cave spider. Bat Cave occasionally provides habitat for Townsend's big-eared bat. IXL (Hell Hole) Cave does not provide habitat for bats.

POLICY: The limestone caves and the area around the limestone caves will be closed to the public except with a permit and by guided tour. IXL Cave will be closed with a locked gate.

Santa Cruz Cypress

Santa Cruz cypress is listed both by the State of California and the federal government as "Endangered". According to the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base, the 140-acre population of Santa Cruz cypress on the property is the only one in the world considered as "excellent" in terms of quality of site.

POLICY: The Santa Cruz cypress forest on the property will be managed (see Draft Recovery Plan for the Santa Cruz Cypress in Reference section) to enhance and perpetuate the population. Under this Public Works Project, no trails or public use are proposed for the Santa Cruz cypress area.

Lime Kiln

The lime kiln found on the property is a unique structure which has important values in interpreting the lime industry in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

POLICY: The lime kiln and immediate area will be managed to maximize its value in researching and interpreting the lime industry. Under this Public Works Plan, the lime kiln and immediate area will be posted closed to the public and patrolled. If trespass or deterioration in the area becomes a concern, a DPR Historian and/or Archeologist will develop stabilization devices, protective fencing plans, and interpretive material to protect the area.

Ohlone Tiger Beetle

The Ohlone tiger beetle is found on the coastal terrace prairie of the mima mound area and adjacent grasslands. The species is not presently listed but a request is pending. A previous request for listing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was denied, due to lack of information on habitat needs of - and threats to - the species. Little is known about the size and other characteristics of the population on the Gray Whale Acquisition. A January 23, 1997 letter from Grey (UCSC Natural Reserve Steward) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported a population of Ohlone tiger beetle across Empire Grade from the Gray Whale Acquisition, but did not report a population on the Acquisition. In this letter, Grey did state that habitat is present on the Gray Whale Acquisition.

Impacts to the Ohlone tiger beetle could result from (1) road grading in the spring when the beetles are active, (2) dust from vehicles on roads, (3) removal of disturbances from grazing animals and other sources, (4) loss of open areas needed for stalking prey, and (5) running over individuals with bicycles and motor vehicles. All impacts will be monitored to determine appropriate mitigation, if necessary.

POLICY: Surveys will be conducted to further determine the characteristics of the Ohlone tiger beetle population. Road maintenance or other activities will be scheduled to minimize impact on burrows, larval habitat, foraging activity, or other aspects of the population. The area will be posted warning visitors to watch for Ohlone tiger beetles in the road.

San Francisco Popcorn Flower

The San Francisco popcorn flower, Plagiobothrys diffusus, is found in the coastal prairie of the mima mounds and adjacent areas. It is listed by the State as Endangered. Populations of this species may be enhanced by mechanical and fire disturbances.

POLICY: Surveys will be conducted to identify the extent of the population of San Francisco popcorn flower. Facilities will not be located where they will negatively impact the population. Management actions to enhance populations will be developed.

INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

Interpretive activities will be coordinated by Wilder Ranch SP interpretive staff and will be added to the existing interpretive program. Docent-led natural and cultural history tours will allow visitors to become acquainted with the varied resources of the Gray Whale Acquisition. Interpretation will also focus on responsible use of this new public land, including trail etiquette for different user groups. Programs will be publicized, along with other District activities, through monthly news releases. It is anticipated that an interpretive trail map will be installed in an outdoor shelter in the vicinity of the Empire Grade entrance.

OPERATIONS ELEMENT

The Gray Whale Acquisition will be operated as an extension of Wilder Ranch State Park. Anticipated operational concerns include: lost visitors, illegal campers, illegal entry into closed areas, injuries to visitors, and response to criminal activity by visitors. Park staff will coordinate volunteers and interns who will assist with patrol, interpretation, and resource management. The proximity of the property to the Santa Cruz urban area and the UC Santa Cruz campus makes it readily available to local users. Based on visitor attendance at other nearby similar parklands, attendance is anticipated not to exceed 50 persons on weekdays and rarely reach 500 persons on weekends. A park entrance similar to the one proposed at Empire Grade exists along Felton Empire Road for the Fall Creek subunit of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park. Attendance through that entrance rarely exceeds 100 persons per day.

Operational plan includes the following:

Park Staffing - The Northern Sector of the Santa Cruz District of California State Parks employs one Ranger Supervisor, one Maintenance Supervisor, six permanent Rangers, one part-time Ranger, one Park Maintenance Worker II, two Park Maintenance Worker I's, one Park Maintenance Assistant, one Park Interpretive Specialist, and several Park Aids. In addition, the Santa Cruz District employs one Resource Ecologist, one Assistant Ecologist, one Land Agent, and two Interpreters who will devote a portion of their time to this acquisition.

Patrol - Daily patrol of the property will be by vehicle, horse, bicycle, and/or foot. The parking area will be locked at night. Unauthorized entrances across private land will be patrolled. Parking laws along Empire Grade at unauthorized access points will be enforced.

Hours of Operation - The property will generally be open during daylight hours, as established by Superintendent Order. The specific hours may change as environmental and operational conditions warrant. Signs will be posted informing visitors of these times.

Education and Research - The many natural and cultural resources that exist in the Gray Whale Acquisition will provide opportunities to educate students and the public. Interpretive and educational activities will be coordinated by the State Park staff at Wilder Ranch. Research activities will be conducted by DPR staff, educational institutions and by private sponsorship. All research activities will be coordinated by DPR staff at the Santa Cruz District Office.

Natural Resource Management - Management of natural resources will be guided by 'Departmental Directives for Resource Management for the California State Park System' (Reference VI). The first and most important action will be to inventory natural resources (soil, geology, plants, animals, hydrologic features, climate) and threats to these natural resources (abandoned roads and trails, exotic plants). The second action will be to institute monitoring systems to document changes in these natural resources. Other management activities will include:

Nonnative Plant Management - Nonnative plants in the acquisition have the potential to rapidly invade unique resources. Nonnative plants, with an emphasis on French broom, pampas grass, German ivy, velvet grass, tall fescue, and acacia, will be removed from the area. An existing restoration group, which uses local volunteers, is available to do this work.

Special Interest Species and Special Interest Habitat Management - A 1991 discussion of special interest species is found in the Reference section. Some additional information is also included in this document. Information and classification of special interest species is constantly changing. The areas within 25 feet of the areas to be open for public use have been surveyed for sensitive species. Surveys for the remainder of the property will be completed and appropriate management actions taken.

Enhancement and Maintenance of Natural Ecosystems - Ecological management planning is necessary to determine what management actions will take place under this Public Works Plan. Resource management activities will include research, inventory, removal of abandoned roads and trails, prescribed fire, and others. These activities will occur in a manner to not harm sensitive species.

Cave Management - The limestone caves will be closed to public use except with a permit and guided tour. Permits will be available from the DPR District Office in Santa Cruz. The caves will be monitored for public safety concerns and resource protection. The permit and guided tour system will be discontinued and the caves will be entirely closed to public access if conditions warrant this action.

Fire Protection - The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection will continue to be the fire agency responsible for fire protection at the Gray Whale Acquisition. Fire Management Compartments are shown in Figure 2. The boundaries of the compartments are designed to be defensible during wildfires, and consist of roads and creeks. Public use of wildlands can increase the possibility of wildfire. However, a survey of wildfire records for Wilder Ranch State Park to the south shows no large human-caused wildfires since the park was opened in the 1970s. Should a wildfire occur, evacuation of park visitors will be a concern. This will be conducted by park rangers.

Closed Areas - When the Public Works Plan is approved for the Gray Whale Acquisition, only the parking area and eight miles of interior dirt roads (Figure 1) will be opened for public use. A closure order will be prepared for the remainder of the property. In addition, seasonal closures for portions of the eight miles of roads and the parking area may be enforced, primarily to prevent soil erosion or biotic impacts. Posting of notices will comply with CCR4301(i). Posting, education, enforcement, and patrol will be used to limit use and impact in closed areas.

Search and Rescue - State Parks has acquired rescue equipment to accommodate this acquisition. A slight increase in the need for County ambulance and search services may result when the property is opened, but it is not anticipated that additional staff or equipment will be needed on a County-wide basis. The rock climbing areas in Cave Gulch are not large enough to require technical cliff rescues, but carrying an injured climber from the site may be necessary. Search and rescue of the IXL (Hell Hole) Cave should be guided or led by personnel who are familiar with the cave. This will be coordinated with the County of Santa Cruz.

Elimination of Unauthorized Trails and Visitor Trespass on Private Land - Unauthorized trails increase safety risks, cause resource damage, and promote trespass on private land. Unauthorized trails will be identified by enforcement patrol, posted closed, and physically closed as conditions warrant. Any soil modification, such as ripping, will occur only after resource review.

Parking Area Operation - The parking area will be secured by a gate that will be locked nightly and opened each morning. The site will be supplied with animal-proof garbage receptacles and two chemical toilets which will be serviced out of the Wilder Ranch Sector Operation.

Maintenance of Perimeter Fence - Much of the property is surrounded by a perimeter fence which helps prevent visitor trespass, discourages unauthorized trails, and prevents trespass of cattle. When appropriate, DPR will cooperate with neighboring landowners to maintain this fence. Fences that are replaced or repaired will be designed to have minimal impacts on the movement of wildlife.

Maintenance of Roads - The dirt road system on the property will be maintained by DPR. The Empire Grade entrance road will be maintained in compliance with the existing University of California, Santa Cruz easement. Gravel will be maintained to mitigate any dust impact on mima mounds. If either dust or vehicular byproducts impact the mima mounds permanent improvements (such as paving and drainage) will be included in the *General Plan*. Interior roads to be utilized (Figure 1) will be maintained as necessary with water bars or rolling dips.

Authorized Entrances - As mapped in Figure 1, the four authorized entrances to the property are (1) the Empire Grade parking area, (2) the Smith Grade gate, (3) Wilder Ranch State Park northern connection, and (4) Wilder Ranch State Park Engelsman Loop Trail connection.

Traffic Considerations for Empire Grade - The intersection of Empire Grade and the parking lot entrance road will be posted with "No Parking" signs to provide for good visibility for those making left and right turns. County Public Works will install a double yellow center line (no passing) on Empire Grade, on either side of the intersection with the parking lot entrance road, to provide safety for vehicles making left and right turns. The 1991 Traffic Impact Analysis of Empire Grade indicated a low volume of traffic that would not require a left hand turn lane. Consultations will continue with the County of Santa Cruz Public Works and further analysis can be done if conditions require it.

Parking at unauthorized access points along Smith Grade and Empire Grade will be monitored by patrol personnel and posted "NO PARKING" if necessary, in cooperation with County of Santa Cruz Public Works Department, UCSC, and CHP.

LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

Proposed Land Use - Public land use allowed will be hiking, bicycling, and equestrian use of existing roadway shown in Figure 1. Some of the compatible additional activities will include photography and nature study. The property will be closed at night.

Proposed Facilities - In compliance with Public Resource Code Section 5002.2(e) (see Introduction), only existing or temporary facilities will be utilized as follows:

A. Existing Facilities

1. A 30-foot wide road easement through University of California, Santa Cruz property which leads from Empire Grade to a parking lot. This road easement will be fenced and roadbed kept covered with gravel to limit dust on the adjacent coastal prairie.
2. Eight miles of dirt roads, which will be open to State Park patrol vehicles, hikers, bicycles, and equestrians. Multi-use trails will concentrate use and its attendant impacts to preserve and protect the remaining natural areas and wildlife corridors. Water bars and culverts are components of these roads.
3. Undetermined lengths of dirt roads with associated culverts and trails will not be utilized by the public pending additional environmental and public review. These roads and trails will be monitored and maintained for erosion control.
4. Perimeter fence
5. Caretaker/office modular structure
6. Red-legged frog barricades at two locations

B. Proposed Temporary Facilities

1. One parking area (Figure 4) 100 feet by 100 feet, intended for 45 vehicles, covered with gravel. This parking area is located on an area used as a parking lot, equipment storage lot, and corral by the previous landowner.
2. Low profile barricades around parking area.
3. Entrance road gate with locking system.
4. Two above-ground chemical toilets at the parking area.
5. Informational panel at the parking area.
6. Two animal-proof garbage receptacles at the parking area.
7. Low profile protective fencing along both sides of the UC Santa Cruz access road, with a 10' gate on each side to provide the University of California access to their property.
8. Stobbers or fencing between the UC Santa Cruz access road and the parking area to protect the mima mound area and direct vehicles toward the parking.
9. Lime kiln stabilization devices, posting, and/or protective fencing.

10. Informational and regulatory signs which include, but are not limited to:
- a. Informational panel at the parking area
 - b. 'Park Hours _____' sign at the Empire Grade and Smith Grade entrances
 - c. Mountain lion warning sign
 - d. Closure sign and gate for IXL Cave
 - e. Park route signs at all road intersections open for visitor use
 - f. Closure signs for existing roads and trails not open for visitor use
 - g. 'Area' closed signs to protect the U.C. Preserve

FIGURES

- Figure 1. Project Detail
- Figure 2. Wildfire Management Compartments
- Figure 3. Regional Location
- Figure 4. Parking Detail

REFERENCES

(Available by request from Department of Parks and Recreation, 600 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060, 408-429-2850)

- I. Cultural Resources Overview Study, LSA Associates, February 1992
- II. Raptor Survey, Brian Walton, 1990-1991
- III. Special Status Plant Species, LSA Associates, September 1991
- IV. Biological Assessment, LSA Associates, May 1992
- V. Special Status Amphibians and Reptiles, LSA Associates, July 1991
- VI. Directives on Resource Management for the California State Park System
- VII. Draft Recovery Plan for the Santa Cruz Cypress, U.S. Dept. of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, April, 1997
- VIII. Traffic Impact Analysis, Ifland Engineers, Inc., October 1991
- IX. Mountain Bike Use Policy for the California State Policy System

GRAY WHALE RANCH PUBLIC WORKS PLAN ADDENDUM

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) conducted a public hearing on the Public Works Plan for Gray Whale Ranch (per CCR 13353.5) on 9/12/97 in the city of Santa Cruz. As a result of this hearing CDPR has reviewed the plan, consulted with appropriate agencies, accepted written comments and prepared this response. The purpose of this addendum is to provide CDPR's response to the public hearing and written comments received subsequent to this meeting. Additionally, the department has responded to public comments through the CEQA process.

Considerable public testimony centered on the potential conflict resulting from the proposed use of the eight miles of ranch road by equestrians, hikers and mountain bikers. CDPR recognizes that there is a potential for conflicts when a variety of user groups are restricted to the same trail system. As CDPR is able to open more areas of Gray Whale Ranch to the public, it will be possible to explore ways that are environmentally appropriate to resolve this issue. The emphasis of this Public Works Plan is to make the unit accessible and usable by the general public at the earliest opportunity (PRC 5002.2e). More study and research on the natural and cultural values of the unit is necessary before CDPR is prepared to open more of the park.

As the plan develops, there will be opportunities to take a more comprehensive look at how the trail/road systems of Gray Whale Ranch and Wilder Ranch State Park can be integrated to maximize the benefits to all potential user groups. In the meantime, CDPR is committed to reexamining trail/road use in the adjacent Wilder Ranch. It may be possible to provide for the passive use of some trails within Wilder Ranch. CDPR recognizes that parks can provide for inspiration and quiet reflection. It is important that users seeking this experience have a place to go without interference from more active forms of recreation. CDPR will assess possible ways to accommodate this need within Wilder Ranch immediately and look for similar opportunities in Gray Whale Ranch when more of the park is opened to public use. However, it is not appropriate to restrict any user group within Gray Whale Ranch at present when such limited access is being proposed. The eight miles of existing road were selected specifically due to their ability to handle multiple use without causing significant resource damage.

CDPR will consider and implement appropriate strategies to resolve user conflicts. Once the park is opened and use levels established, park staff will assess the types and frequency of conflicts. District staff plans to use several methods to reduce these potential conflicts. Public information will be a key component. Each user group will need to understand how to use the park responsibly and how to minimize their impact on other users. Some signage and literature is already available in this regard. Active enforcement of the park regulations will be another critical component. State Park Rangers will patrol the park, particularly during peak times, and enforce regulations on non-compliant users. If these methods are not effective in reducing conflicts the District Superintendent can exercise his/her operational authority and either restrict use or, if

necessary, close portions of the park entirely. The Superintendent can also, if warranted, explore the option of alternate use days or times. Finally, the various user groups will be expected to "police" themselves. Gaining compliance of park regulations is often more successful when peers explain the necessity for them and encourage responsible use so that the image of that particular user group is not compromised. All of these options will be explored to reduce the potential for user conflict.

Of particular concern to a number of people providing testimony is the speed of mountain bikes in relation to other forms of recreation. The District will assess the ranch roads according to the determination criteria in the department's "Mountain Bike Use Policy" (see appendices), and establish and enforce a maximum speed limit. A suggestion for speed bumps will not be implemented. Speed bumps could be hazardous to cyclists and would require constant maintenance. The underlying principle for use of mountain bikes in state parks is that they are a means of accessing and enjoying the resources of the park. CDPR does not encourage the use of mountain bikes to test limits of speed and endurance; these activities are more appropriate in units classified as State Recreation Areas.

Another concern raised during the meeting was the impact of various users and park staff during certain times of the year. It is well documented that impacts to trails/roads are much greater immediately following significant rainfall. The District Superintendent will, when warranted, post closure orders to Gray Whale Ranch due to the potential damage to the ranch roads during inclement weather. Similarly, the District may restrict use of these roads if there is a significant resource concern, such as the impact on a certain species of concern (flora and/or fauna), during certain seasons. Park patrol and maintenance work will similarly be restricted during these times. Road maintenance is of particular concern. The District will restrict road maintenance to only that which is necessary.

CDPR recognizes that there are resource sensitivities associated with the proposed parking lot near Twin Gates. This area was used as a lay down yard for many years during timber harvests. Due to the proximity of the caretaker's home, the mima mound area was used for parking heavy equipment and storage. The San Francisco popcorn flower, Gairdner's yampah, the Ohlone tiger beetle and the mima mounds themselves are of concern in this area. This issue is addressed in the Public Works Plan under the "Resource Element" as a result of on-site visits with both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). District staff will request formal consultations as necessary and continue to work with these regulatory agencies, as new information becomes available. In terms of resource management in general, District staff will monitor various sensitive resources and, if protection is inadequate, implement a variety of programs to address the particular situation. Resource

Gray Whale Ranch – Public Works Plan
Attachment

management alternatives include revegetation/restoration, the development and distribution of informational brochures, the posting of informational signs, the posting of law enforcement signs, and the construction of barriers such as log barriers, fences and stobbers. As mentioned above, closure of access routes leading to sensitive areas, either seasonally or year-around may occur as warranted.

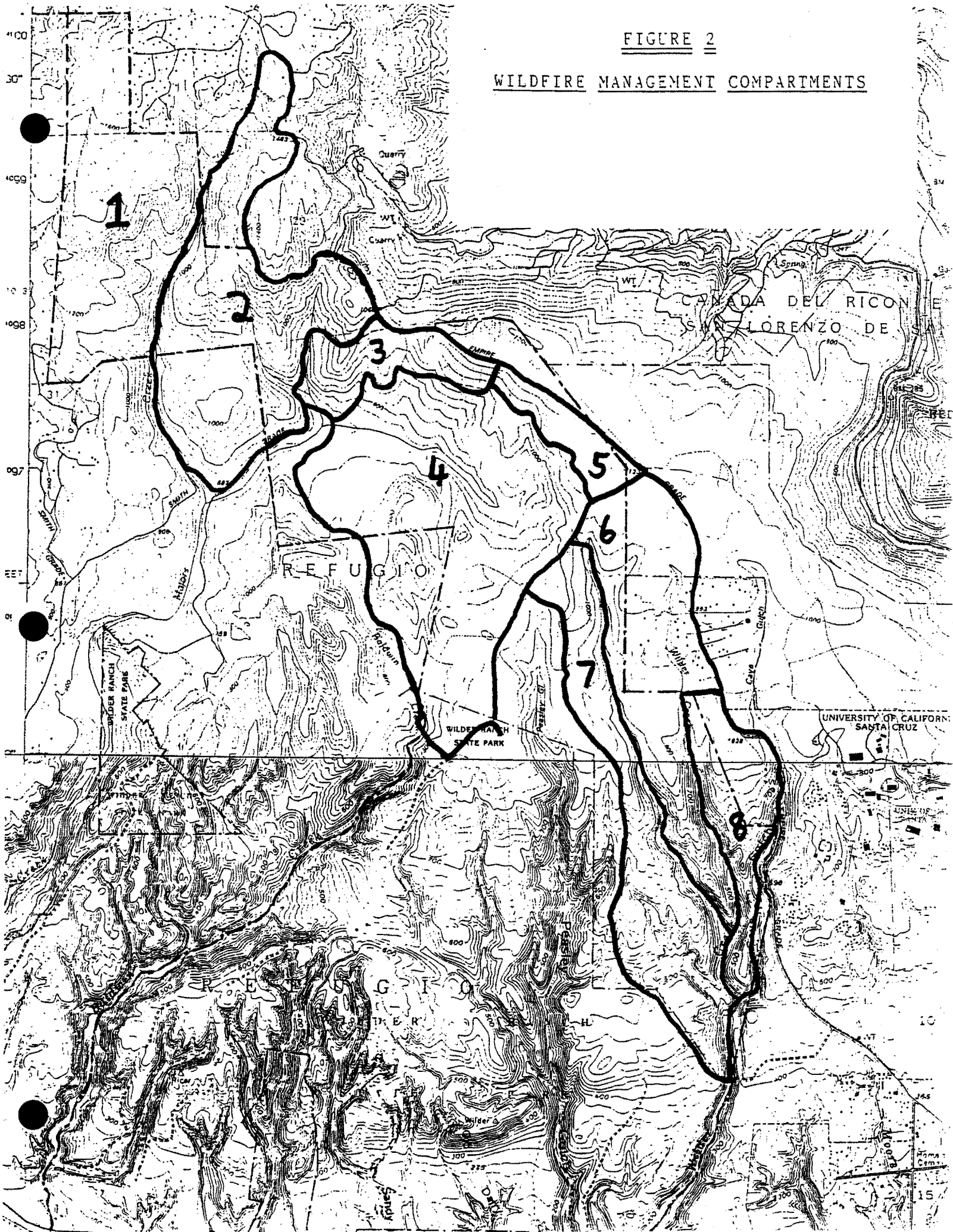
Another concern regarding the Twin Gates parking lot centers on circulation issues off of Empire Grade. District staff has met with the County's Public Works Department, the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) and the California Highway Patrol regarding this matter. Due to the relatively light traffic on Empire Grade, the fact that use will be at non-peak times, and the anticipated low use of the temporary lot, there was consensus that our proposed plan as submitted adequately addresses this issue. CDPR recognizes that UCSC has concerns with the potential for dust generation and possible drainage issues as a result of the parking lot. District staff will work closely with UCSC reserve managers to monitor potential impacts to the university land bordering the parking lot entry road and will take the necessary measures to mitigate for these potential concerns.

Several individuals commented on the safety of the proposed trail connection with Smith Grade. This location is not intended to be a major entrance into the property, and there is parking at the site for relatively few vehicles. CDPR re-investigated this location and concluded that there is adequate visibility along the road for vehicles to make turns to and from the parking spots. This location will be monitored. If parking at the site exceeds capacity, possible mitigation includes eliminating all parking at the site, or closing the connection of the trail with the road.

The issue of the classification of the unit was raised during public testimony. The District will submit a letter to the department's General Plan Policy Committee requesting that this unit classification issue be addressed. In addition, the District will request that the establishment of natural and cultural preserves be considered where appropriate. At this point however, it is assumed that Gray Whale Ranch is an extension of Wilder Ranch State Park. Since access is limited to eight miles of existing dirt road, there should be no unacceptable resource impacts regardless of classification. Consequently, classification is not necessary for the opening of the park as proposed in the Public Works Plan.

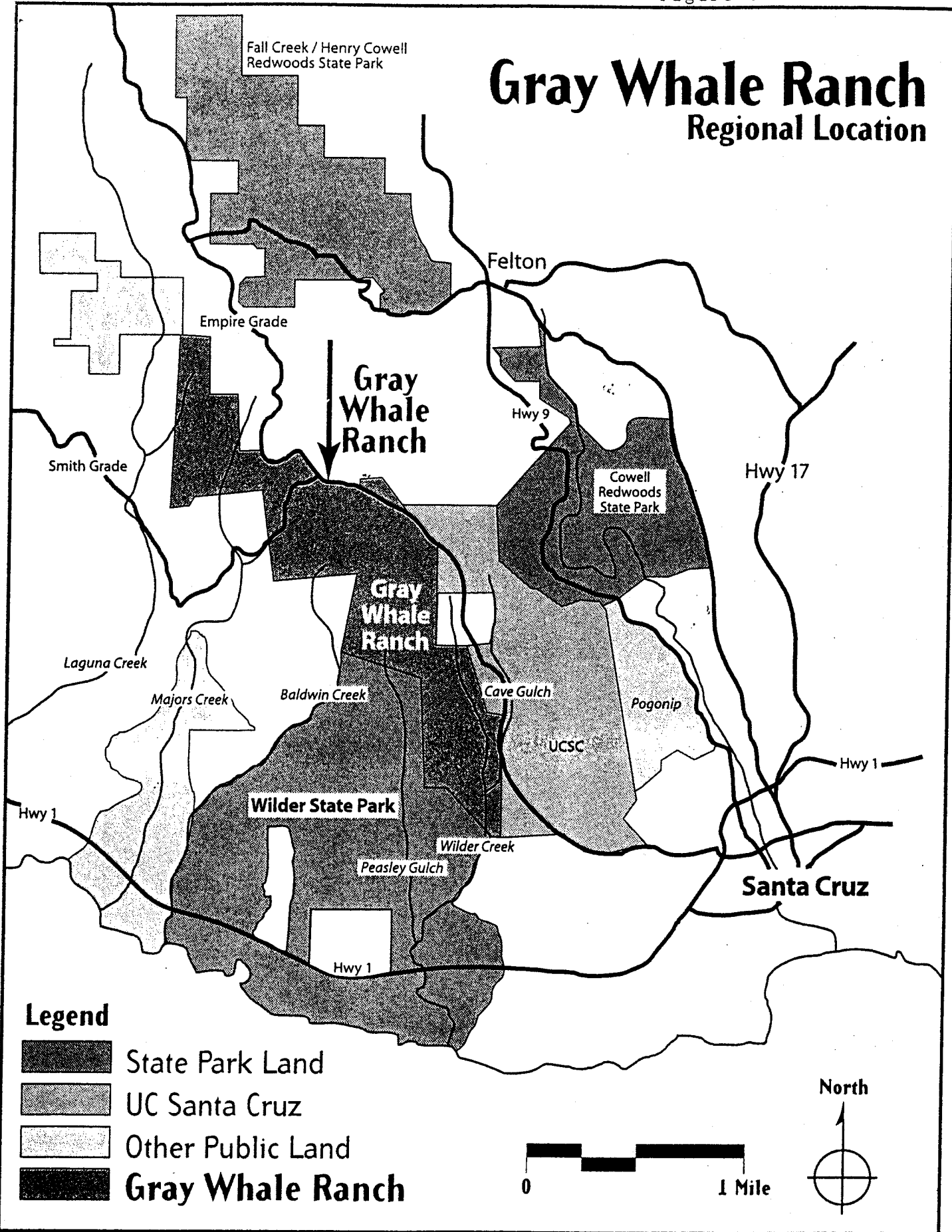
FIGURE 2

WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT COMPARTMENTS



Gray Whale Ranch

Regional Location



Gray Whale Public Works Plan

Proposed Parking and Northern Access

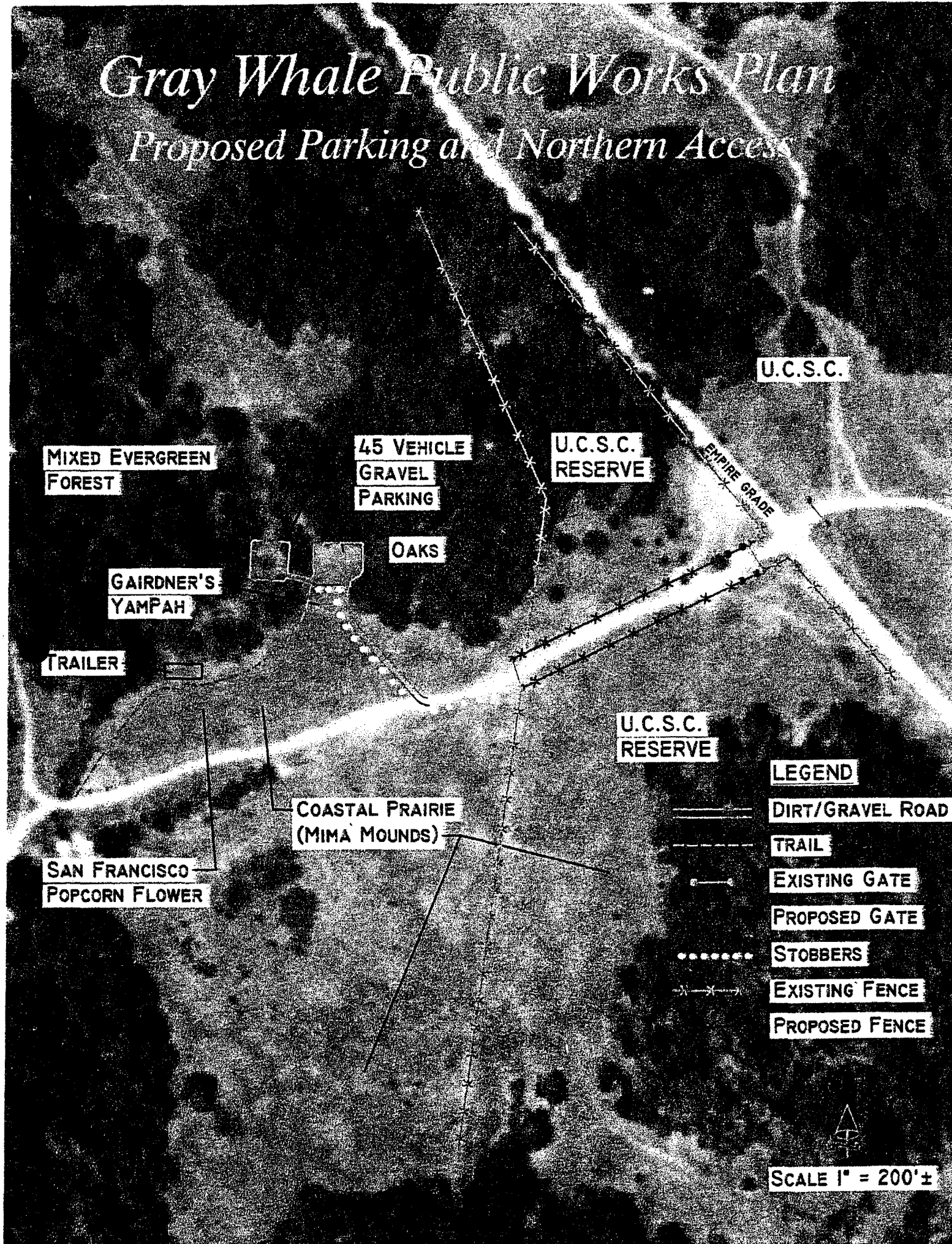


Figure 4

