

*AS***CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

South Coast Area Office  
200 Oceangate, 10th Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802-4302  
(562) 590-5071



Filed: August 3, 1998  
30th Working Day: September 15, 1998  
Staff Report: August 19, 1998 *RMRLB*  
Hearing Date: September 8-11, 1998

**STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION****PUBLIC WORKS PLAN SPECIFIC PROJECT**

APPLICATION NO.: PWP-4-82-12 (Crystal Cove State Park)

APPLICANT: California Department of Parks and Recreation

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Construction of six new vista point overlooks with benches and interpretive panels, crushed rock access trails to the overlooks, amphitheater improvements, and picnic area. The picnic area consists of 6 shaded ramadas with tables and benches. Amphitheater improvements consist of bench seating, demonstration tables and interpretive kiosks (approximately 7-8 feet high). Minor improvements to an existing restroom area are also proposed.

PROJECT LOCATION: The seaward side of Pacific Coast Highway within Crystal Cove State Park at the Pelican Point and Reef Point areas

**SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:**

1. Crystal Cove State Parks Public Works Plan, PWP-4-82 and Commission findings dated May 4, 1982.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

The Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

**I. Approval with Conditions**

The Commission hereby approves the specific project, subject to the conditions below, on the grounds that the development will be in conformity with the provisions of the certified public works plan and will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

II. Special Conditions

None

III. Findings and Declarations

The Commission finds and declares as follows:

A. Standard of Review

Section 30605 of the Coastal Act provides, in part, that:

Where a plan for a public works or state university or college or private university development project has been certified by the commission, any subsequent review by the commission of a specific project contained in the certified plan shall be limited to imposing conditions consistent with Sections 30607 and 30607.1.

Section 30606 of the Coastal Act states:

Prior to the commencement of any development pursuant to Section 30605, the public agency proposing the public works project, or state university or college or private university, shall notify the commission and other interested persons, organizations, and governmental agencies of the impending development and provide data to show that it is consistent with the certified public works plan or long-range development plan. No development shall take place within 30 working days after the notice.

Section 13359 of the Commission's administrative regulations states:

- (b) The Commission shall ... determine whether the proposed development is consistent with the certified public works plan.

The Crystal Cove Public Works Plan was approved with conditions on May 20, 1982. The conditions were met on August 26, 1982.

B. Project Description

The proposed development consists of improvements to public facilities in the coastal terrace portion of Crystal Cove State Park seaward of Pacific Coast Highway. These improvements include the installation of access paths to proposed new vista points, construction of six (6) new vista points or bluff overlooks, construction of an amphitheater and construction of six (6) shaded armadas with tables and benches for picnicking.

Five of the proposed vista point overlooks are located north of the Crystal Cove Historic District. The remaining proposed vista point overlook is located at Reef Point, south of the Historic District. The amphitheater and picnic facilities are located adjacent to an existing parking lot and restroom building. The picnic facilities consist of six shade ramadas with tables, benches and interpretive panels on a 3,000 square foot decomposed granite surface. The amphitheater improvements include bench seating stepped into an existing slope with a demonstration table on an existing concrete pad and an interpretive display kiosk.

Following is a detailed description of the proposed improvements. Exhibit 1 is the location map. Exhibit 3 is a map of the coastal terrace showing the location of sites P-1-a to R-2. There is a specific exhibit for each project site.

Site P-1-a (see Exhibit 4)

This site is located at the northwestern edge of Crystal Cove State Park on a descending ridgeline separating two coves. The site is accessible from an asphalt trail and pedestrian protective device overhang. The overhang protects pedestrians from errant golf balls from the adjacent golf course. The view from the proposed vista point is of the beach to the south and the rocky headlands and coves to the north. Improvements consist of a 60 foot long walkway and stairway, a circular crushed rock surface overlook with a railing and rock wall. The cable railing does not encircle the overlook so pedestrians can sit on the rock wall. An interpretive panel would be provided. A vista point at this location is consistent with the PWP. Due to the steep topography, the overlook is not wheelchair accessible, although the trail leading to the overlook is wheelchair accessible.

P-1-b (see Exhibit 5)

This vista point overlook is located where the trail splits, with one fork leading to P-1-a and the other fork leading to a beach access ramp. The improvements consist of a 40 foot walkway leading to a 12' by 12' wooden deck with bench and railing, and interpretive panel. It is common practice for beach-goers to walk to the bluff at this location and look out over the beach. An official vista point at this location may discourage people from creating their own overlooks and damaging sensitive coastal resources, i.e., bluff erosion and damage to native vegetation.

Site P-3 (see Exhibit 6)

This proposed site consists of a 300 foot long loop trail with overlook vista point and another separate vista point overlook with a 70 foot long trail. The loop trail is four (4) feet wide and wheelchair accessible. The overlook contains two benches, an interpretive panel and a low timber retaining wall at the bluff edge. The loop trail overlook is approximately 50 feet long. The second overlook includes two benches, a post and cable railing at the bluff edge, and an interpretive panel. The dimensions of the overlook are 20 feet by 20 feet. The trail to this overlook has timber steps and is not wheelchair accessible.

Site P-4-a (see Exhibits 7-9)

Site P-4-a includes the picnic area and the amphitheater. The picnic area is 3000 square feet and includes six (6) shaded armadas with tables and benches, a large central area with a decomposed granite surface and two interpretive panels. The tables will be situated on concrete pads. Details of the tables and the picnic area are included as Exhibit 8.

The amphitheater is approximately 50 feet by 50 feet and contains five rows of timber benches stepped into the existing slope. Amenities also include a circular concrete pad with 2 demonstration tables and an interpretive kiosk display. The amphitheater will contain a decomposed granite surface. Exhibit 9 shows what the amphitheater will look like.

P-4-b (see Exhibit 10)

This path and overlook is a spur off of the main beach access trail which connects the beach parking lot, the proposed picnic area and amphitheater and the beach. This overlook is four (4) feet wide and wheelchair accessible. The path to the overlook is 40 feet long. The overlook itself contains two benches and an interpretive panel, with a low timber retaining wall around the perimeter of the vista point overlook.

R-1 (see Exhibit 11)

This vista point overlook is approximately 60 feet long and includes two benches, an interpretive panel, existing rock benches, and a paved surface with a timber curb at the bluff. Trails leading to this site already exist.

Site R-2 (see Exhibit 12)

Development at this site consists of the widening of an existing path around existing restrooms, and construction of a 22 foot wide planter with a timber curb and benches. An interpretive panel will be added at an existing overlook.

C. Consistency with the Public Works Plan

The Crystal Cove Public Works Plan (PWP) was certified by the Commission in May of 1982. The PWP includes the Crystal Cove State Park General Plan, the On-Site Maintenance Plan and the Crystal Cove State Park Historic District Plan. Section 30605 of the Coastal Act, cited above, establishes the standard of review. The first threshold question is whether the specific project is contained in the Certified Public Works Plan. If it is, then the Commission's review is limited to the imposition of conditions. The Commission can not deny a project which it previously certified as part of the public works plan, however, the Commission can regulate the manner in which the project is carried out to bring it into conformance with the public works plan. Therefore, the first question is whether this project is contained in the Certified Public Works Plan.

Trails and Vista Point Overlooks

The PWP land use and facilities map (see Exhibit 2) identifies trails, roads, parking lots, beach access ramps, vista points and other park facilities. The map identifies seven (7) vista points and trails to these vista points from the historic district north to the park boundary. Five of the proposed vista point overlooks are located north of the historic district. The sixth vista point is located at Reef Point. All of these vista point overlooks are consistent with the Certified Public Works Plan.

Picnic Area

The land use and facilities plan does not identify specific locations for picnicking sites. However, under the heading of "Proposed Recreation" on page 35 of the General Plan there is a list of principal proposed recreation activities. Included in this list is picnicking. In addition, the text on page 35 includes the following statement regarding proposed recreation:

...Non-coastal related activities include picnicking, hiking and horseback riding.

On page 41 of the General Plan is the following statement concerning "Day-Use Facilities:"

Four picnic areas, each adjacent to a parking lot, will be located near natural drainage courses along the coastal strip. One of these areas will be designed to accommodate group use of up to 30 people on a reservation basis. Barbecue stoves, tables, and grassy areas will be arranged informally, taking maximum advantage of natural terrain.

The proposed picnic area includes the tables but not the other amenities described above. Otherwise, the picnic area is consistent with the PWP policies in that it is situated adjacent to a parking lot, restroom area, and is located near a natural drainage. The text of the General Plan clearly provides for day use picnic areas, including tables. Therefore, the proposed tables and ramadas are consistent with the Certified Public Works Plan.

#### Interpretive Panels and Amphitheater

An important mission of Crystal Cove State Park is to inform the public as to the cultural and natural history of the park.

Page 61 of the General Plan states the following:

The beach, bluff and terrace portion of the park are expected to be the destination of most visitors to Crystal Cove State Park. To take advantage of the presence of large numbers of people in these areas, and to interpret the natural and cultural history of the park, most interpretive panels should be located in the coastal terrace day-use areas and at the proposed viewsites. The themes of recreation growth on the Southern California coast, Native Americans' use of the beaches and bluffs, and the importance of the marine preserve area can be covered on these panels. Kiosk-type panel arrangements should be used to shelter the panels from the weather, and to act as focal points for visitors.

Although the General Plan does not specifically call for an amphitheater, it clearly falls within the educational mission of the park and is consistent with development at other state parks. The proposed amphitheater will be not be constructed of permanent materials but will be benched into an existing slope and provided with timbers for seating. The amphitheater will be located adjacent to the picnic area and restrooms. The amphitheater will be provided with demonstration tables and interpretive panels and will allow park rangers to address groups of visitors and students.

Portions of the General Plan text focus on general education and the need for interpretive facilities.

Page 65 of the General Plan includes this statement:

Formal environmental education, environmental living, and other programs: Although it is expected that environmental education in the form of guided walks, campfire programs, Junior Rangers, and other similar programs will take place at Crystal Cove State Park during the first phases of interpretive development, formal programs will require more planning and development of contacts with school groups in the surrounding communities. Because of the staff time involved, this item is low on the interpretive development priority list.

Page 67 of the General Plan includes this statement:

Visitor Services and Visitor Control

In addition to basic services provided at similar coastal park units, emphasis will be placed on interpretive services and programs. Guided tours, nature walks and lectures, and operation of interpretive facilities will require trained personnel.

In its submittal the Department of Parks and Recreation included a letter from the Crystal Cove Interpretive Association. This letter supports the proposed development and states in part:

The proposed improvements proposal will include picnic facilities for the Pelican Point area and additional improvements to enhance current park interpretive tours for school groups.

The submittal also included a letter from the Orange County Department of Education, describing their field site school study program, "Inside the Outdoors", which serves approximately 30,000 preschool through eighth grade students each year. A copy of this letter is included as Exhibit 13.

Crystal Cove State Park is one of the favorite field sites for students throughout Orange County. One educational activity introduces the students to the coastal sage scrub ecosystem located along the bluffs, where they also enjoy their lunch. Last year, approximately 2,600 students enjoyed Crystal Cove State Park through "Inside the Outdoors."

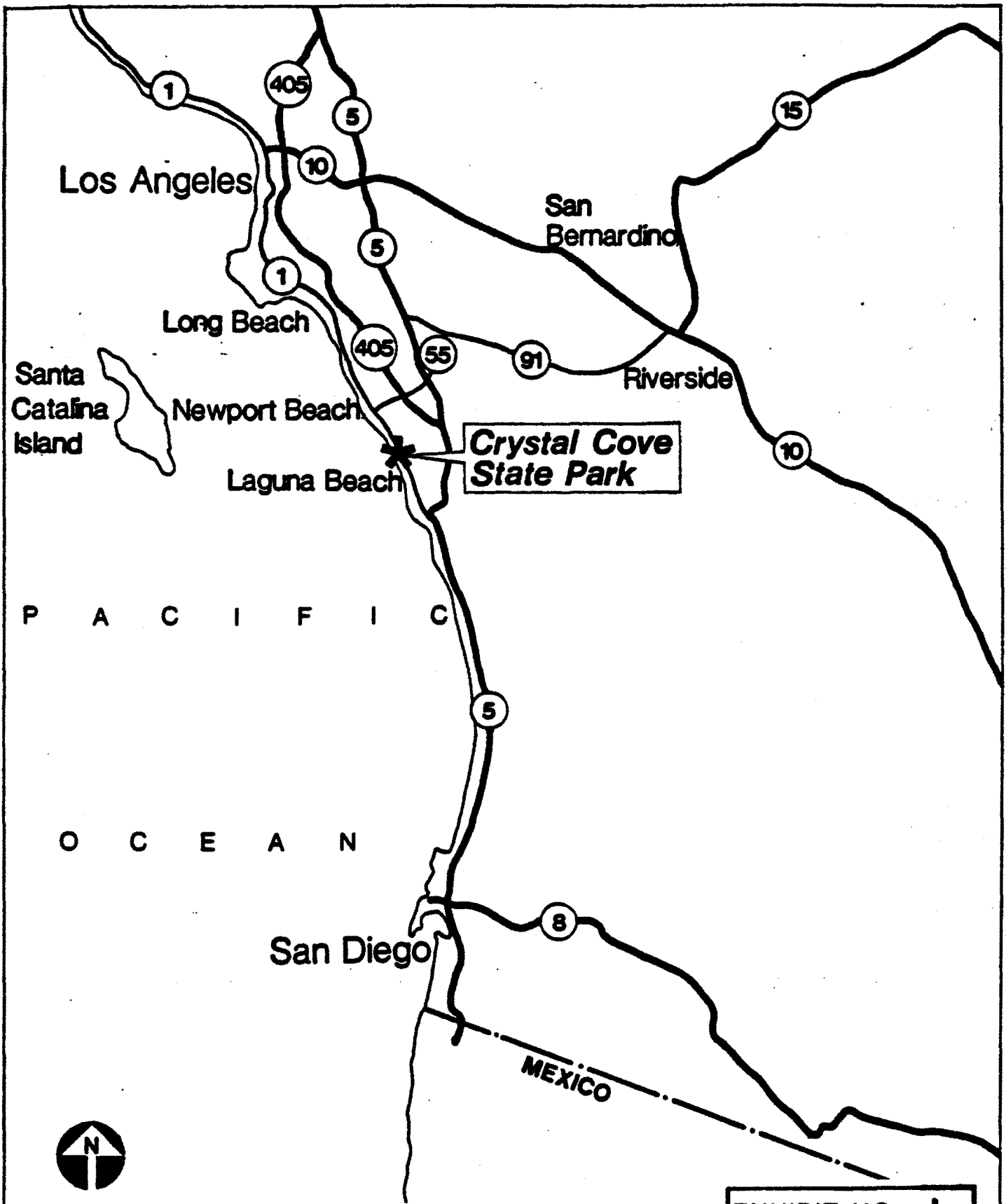
Finding of Consistency

The Commission finds that the propose park improvements consisting of the new vista point overlooks and trails, new interpretive panels, picnic area with tables and ramadas, and the amphitheater are consistent with the policies, the facilities plan and land uses of the Certified Public Works Plan.

D. Public Comments

On August 20, 1998 the Department of Parks and Recreation mailed out notices to the public informing them of and requesting their comments on the proposed project. No letters have been received. Any letters which arrive concerning this development will be included in the addendum.

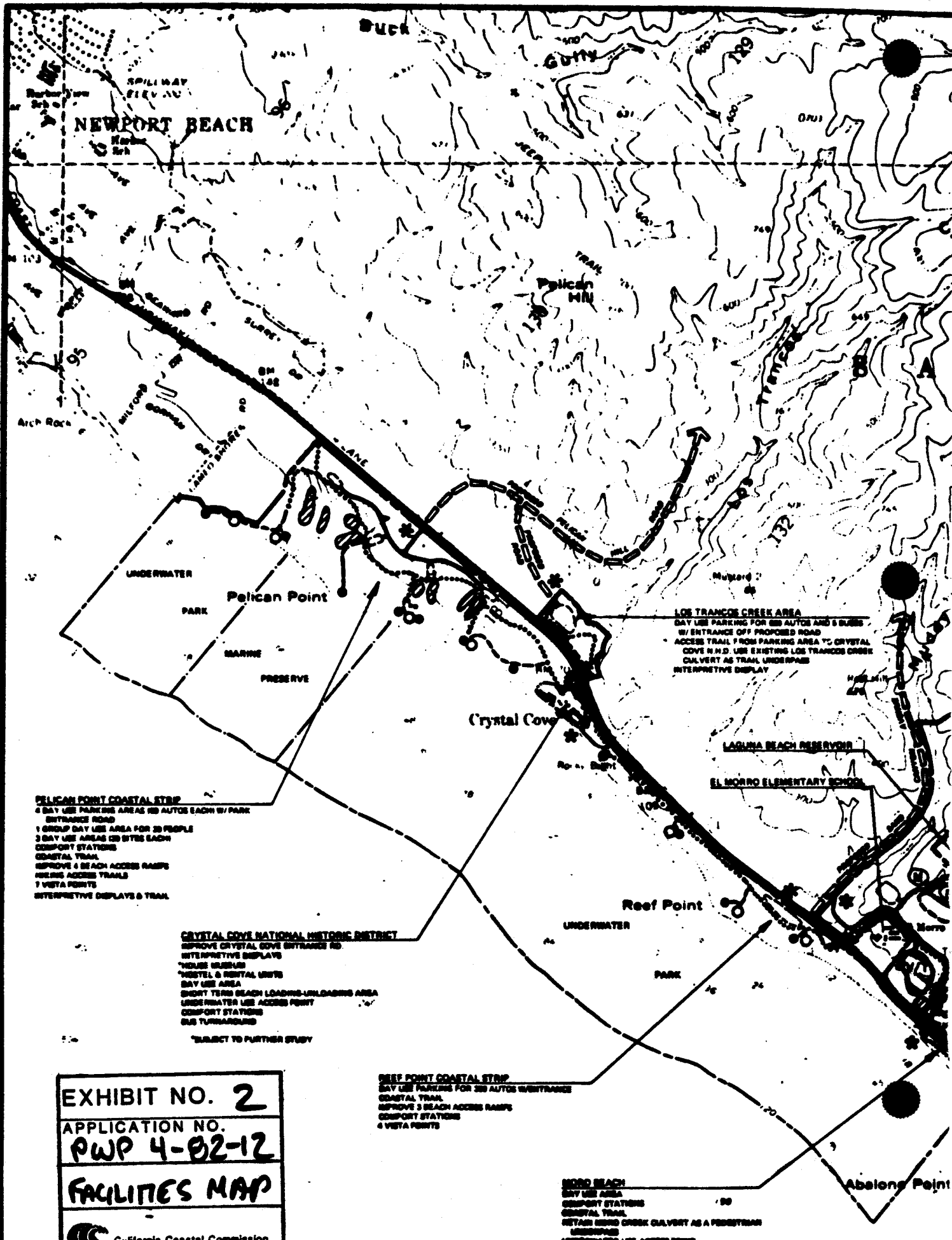
0952G



NO SCALE

# LOCATION MAP

EXHIBIT NO. 1
APPLICATION NO. PWP 4-02-12
LOCATION



**NEWPORT BEACH**

**PELICAN POINT COASTAL STRIP**  
 4 DAY USE PARKING AREAS (NO AUTOS EACH W/ PARK ENTRANCE ROAD)  
 1 GROUP DAY USE AREA FOR 20 PEOPLE  
 3 DAY USE AREAS (20 BIKES EACH)  
 COMFORT STATIONS  
 COASTAL TRAIL  
 IMPROVE 4 BEACH ACCESS RAMPS  
 WALKING ACCESS TRAILS  
 7 VISTA POINTS  
 INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS & TRAIL

**CRYSTAL COVE NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
 IMPROVE CRYSTAL COVE ENTRANCE RD.  
 INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS  
 \*HOUSE MUSEUM  
 \*HOSTEL & RENTAL UNITS  
 DAY USE AREA  
 SHORT TERM BEACH LOADING-UNLOADING AREA  
 UNDERWATER USE ACCESS POINT  
 COMFORT STATIONS  
 BUS TURNAROUND  
 \*SUBJECT TO FURTHER STUDY

**LOS TRANCOS CREEK AREA**  
 DAY USE PARKING FOR 200 AUTOS AND 5 BUSES  
 W/ ENTRANCE OFF PROPOSED ROAD  
 ACCESS TRAIL FROM PARKING AREA TO CRYSTAL COVE N.H.D. USE EXISTING LOS TRANCOS CREEK CULVERT AS TRAIL UNDERPASS  
 INTERPRETIVE DISPLAY

**LAGUNA BEACH RESERVOIR**  
**EL MORRO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**REEF POINT COASTAL STRIP**  
 DAY USE PARKING FOR 200 AUTOS (ENTRANCE)  
 COASTAL TRAIL  
 IMPROVE 3 BEACH ACCESS RAMPS  
 COMFORT STATIONS  
 4 VISTA POINTS

**ABALONE POINT**  
 DAY USE AREA  
 COMFORT STATIONS  
 COASTAL TRAIL  
 RETAIN HOND CREEK CULVERT AS A PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS  
 UNDERWATER USE ACCESS POINT

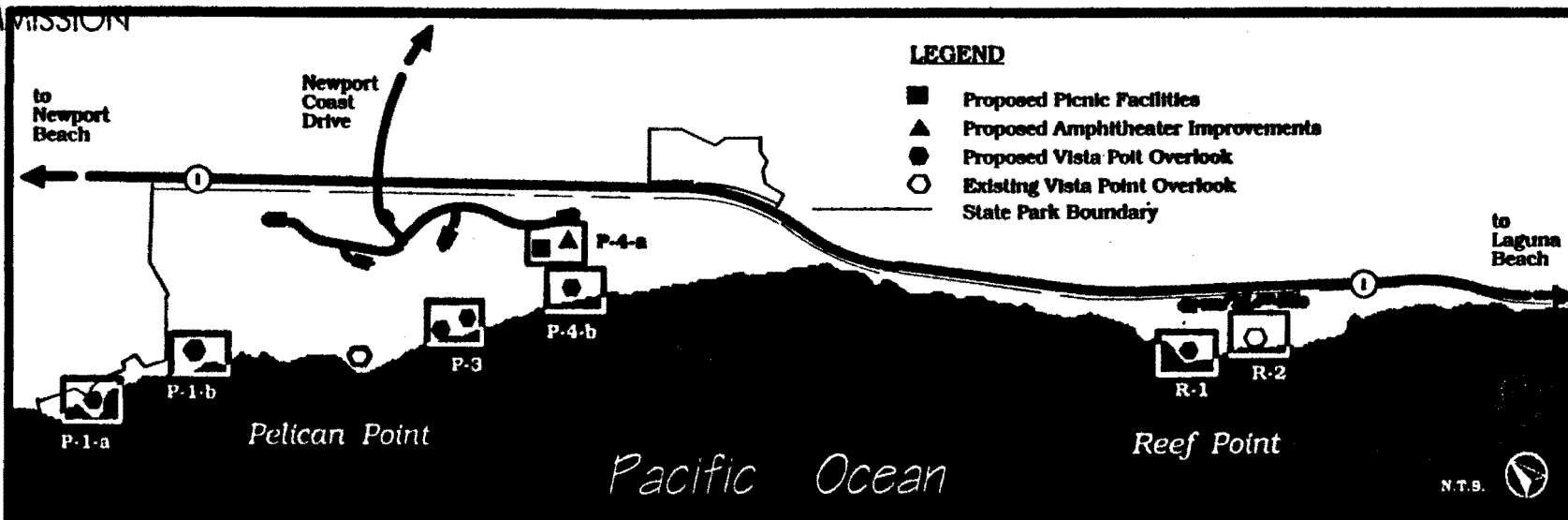
**EXHIBIT NO. 2**  
**APPLICATION NO.**  
**PWP 4-02-12**  
**FACILITIES MAP**



# CRYSTAL COVE STATE PARK COASTAL DAY USE IMPROVEMENTS

RECEIVED  
AUG 3 1998

CALIFORNIA  
COASTAL COMMISSION



## PROJECT SITES

### SYMBOLS

- ① Detail Number
- ①/18 Detail Number
- ①/18 Sheet Reference
- ⊕ Center Line

California Coastal Commission	SITE PLAN	EXHIBIT NO. 3
	APPLICATION NO.	PWP 4-82-12

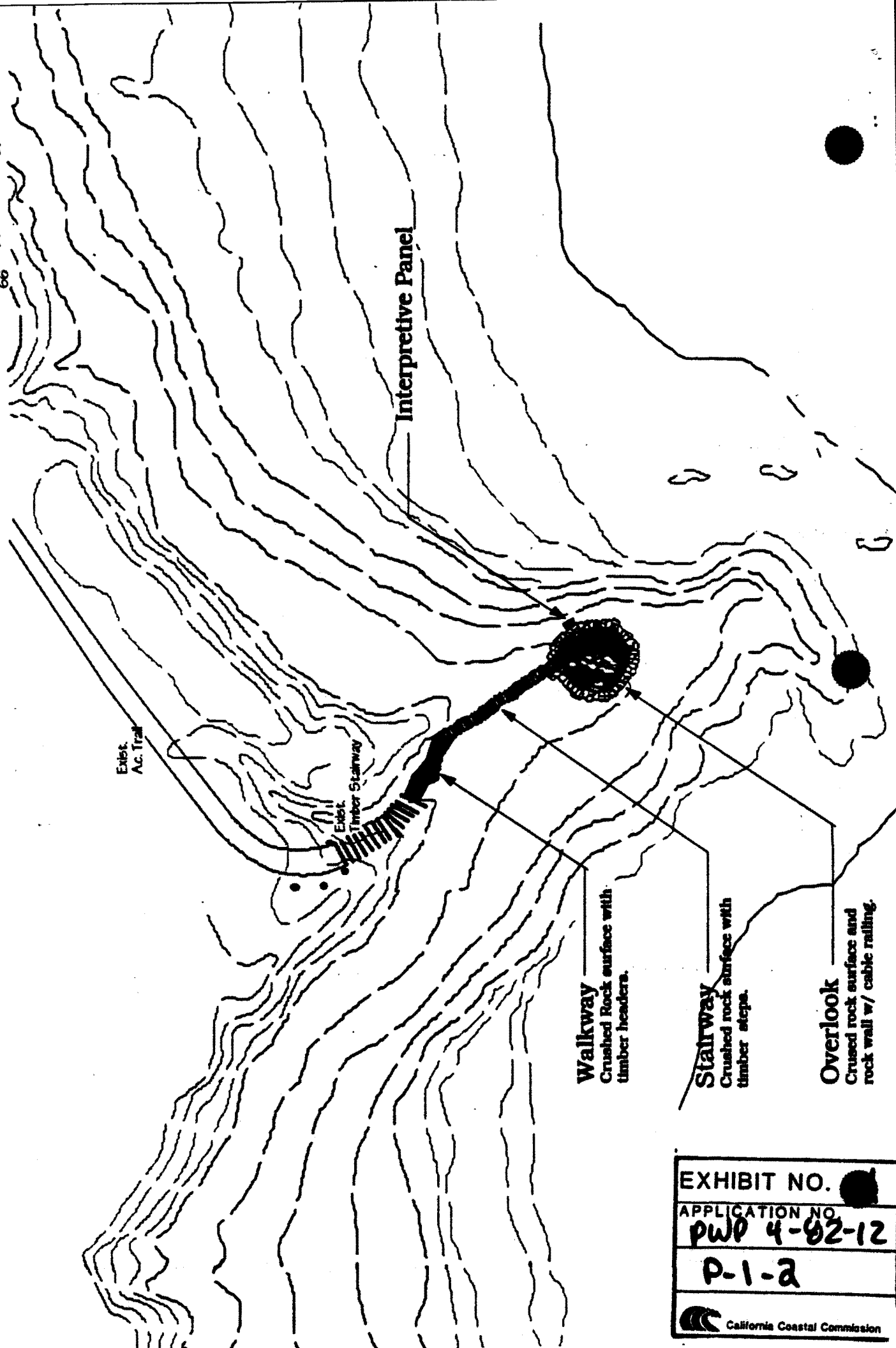
### DRAWING LIST

1	Title Sheet	11	Details	P-3
2	Site Plan	12	Details	P-3
3	Site Plan	13	Details	P-4-a
4	Site Plan	14	Details	P-4-a
5	Site Plan	15	Details	P-4-b
6	Site Plan	16	Details	R-1
7	Site Plan	17	Details	R-2
8	Site Plan	18	Details	Typical
9	Details	19	Details	Typical
10	Details	20	Details	Typical

REVISIONS  
RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CRYSTAL COVE STATE PARK  
DRA

50  
60  
62  
64  
66



Interpretive Panel


Exist.  
Ac. Trail

Exist.  
Inner Stairway

**Walkway**  
Crushed Rock surface with  
timber headers.

**Stairway**  
Crushed rock surface with  
timber steps.

**Overlook**  
Crused rock surface and  
rock wall w/ cable railing.

EXHIBIT NO.	
APPLICATION NO.	PWP 4-02-12
	P-1-2
 California Coastal Commission	

72

74

72

70

68


**Walkway**  
3" Road Oyl paving  
w/ timber headers.

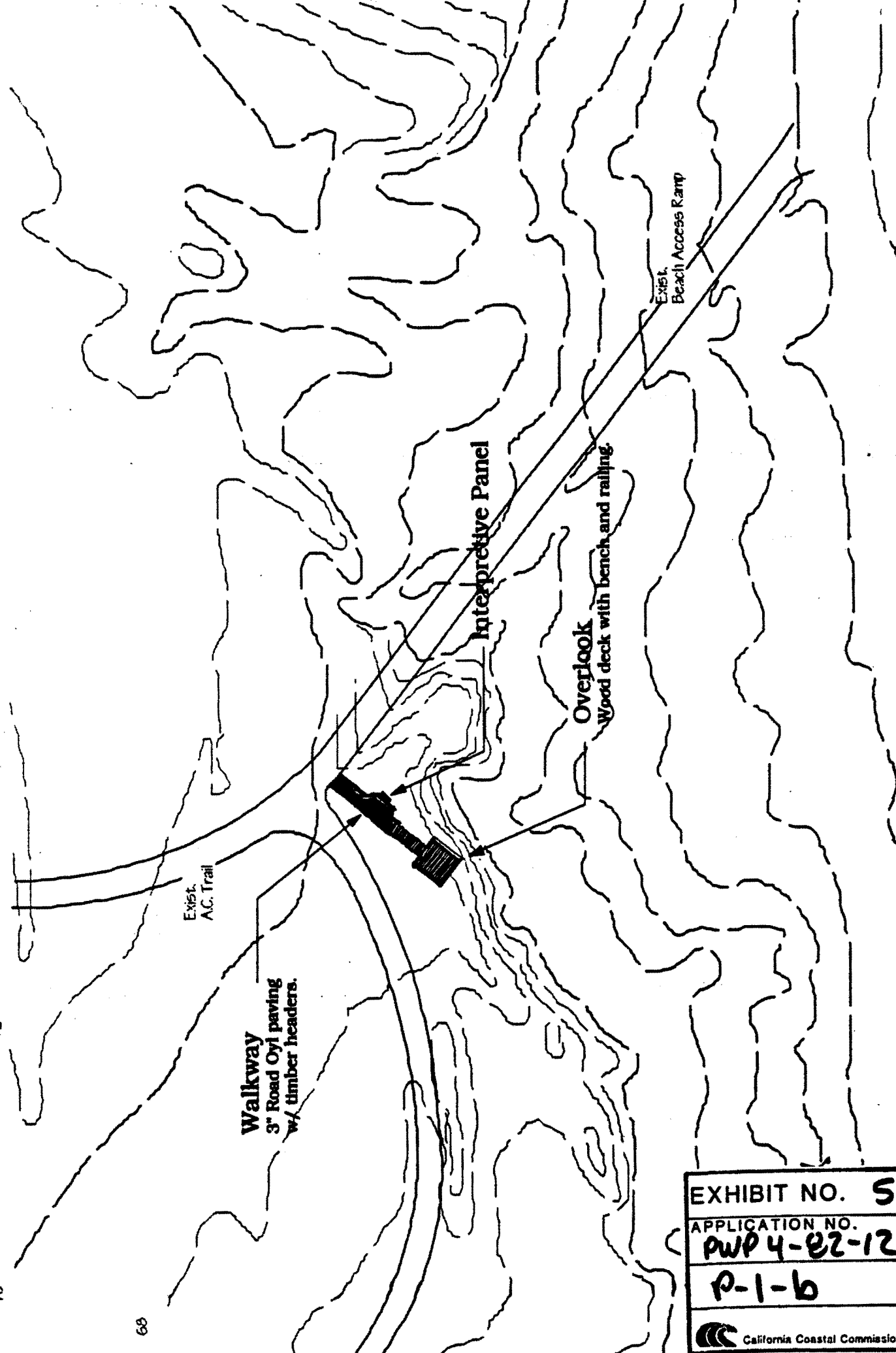
Exist.  
A.C. Trail

**Interpretive Panel**

**Overlook**  
Wood deck with bench and railing.

Exist.  
Beach Access Ramp

<b>EXHIBIT NO. 5</b>
<b>APPLICATION NO.</b> PWP 4-02-12
P-1-b
 California Coastal Commission



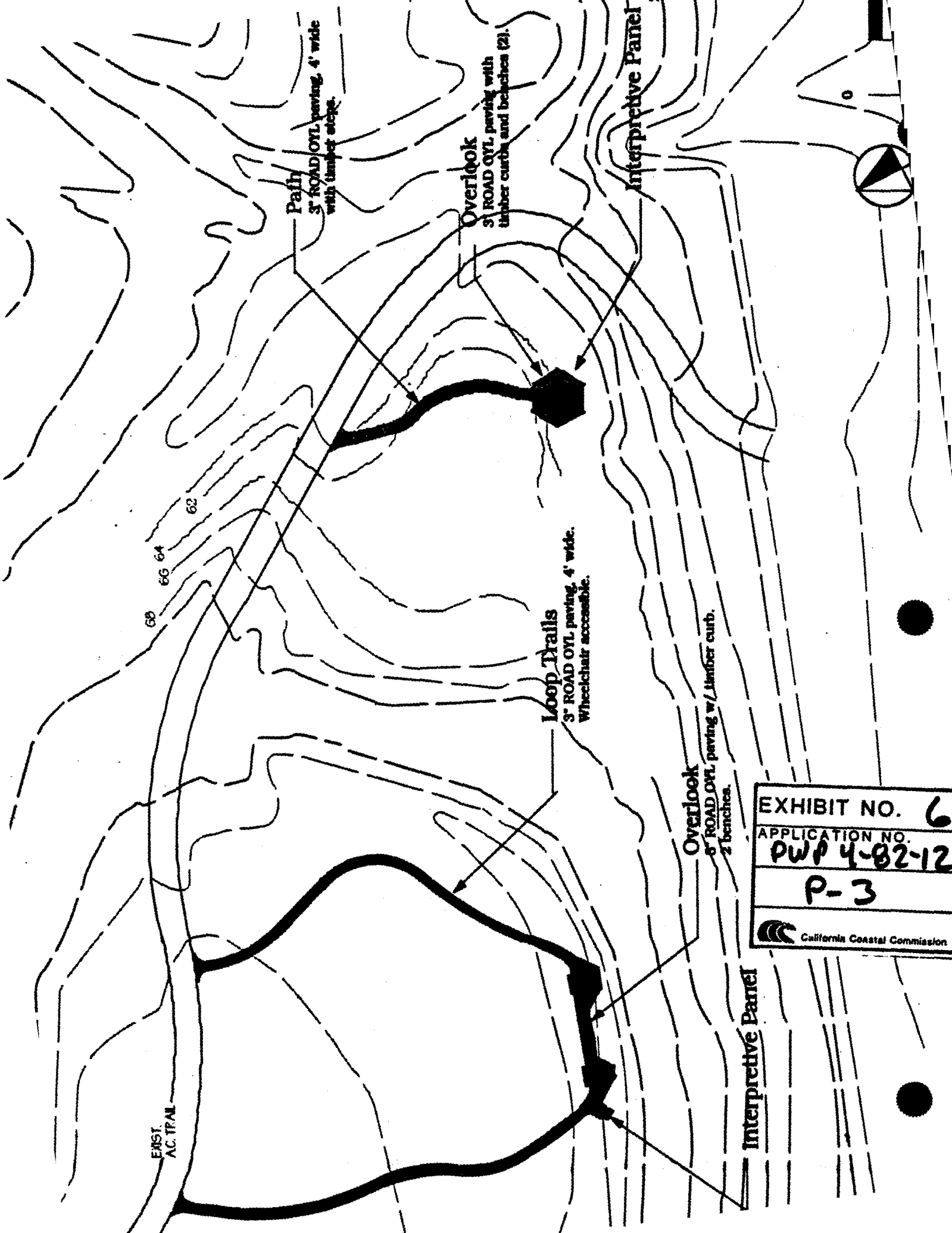



EXHIBIT NO. 6
APPLICATION NO. PWP 4-82-12
P-3
 California Coastal Commission

EXISTING PARKING

108

**Amphitheater Improvements**  
Bench seating and demonstration tables  
Decomposed Granite surface  
Interpretive display kiosk

EXISTING TRAIL

EXIST.  
D.G. SURFACE

EXIST.  
CONC. PAD

**Pathway**  
5 ft. wide, 3" ROAD OYL paving with  
timber steps to restrooms.

EXISTING  
RESTROOMS

**Pathway**  
10 ft. wide  
4" ROAD OYL PAVING  
99.5

40 FT.


EXISTING TRAIL

**Group Picnic Area**  
14 Shade Recessed w/ Tables.  
3,900 sq.ft. Decomposed Granite Surface.  
2 Interpretive Panels

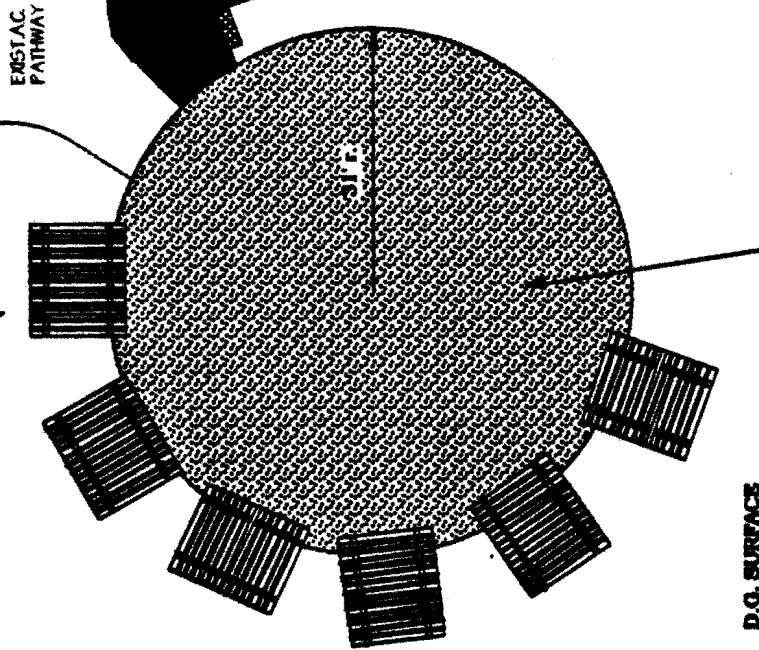
108

106

102

EXHIBIT NO. 7
APPLICATION NO.
PWP 4-02-12
P-4-2
 California Coastal Commission

RAMADA W/PICNIC TABLE (TYPICAL)



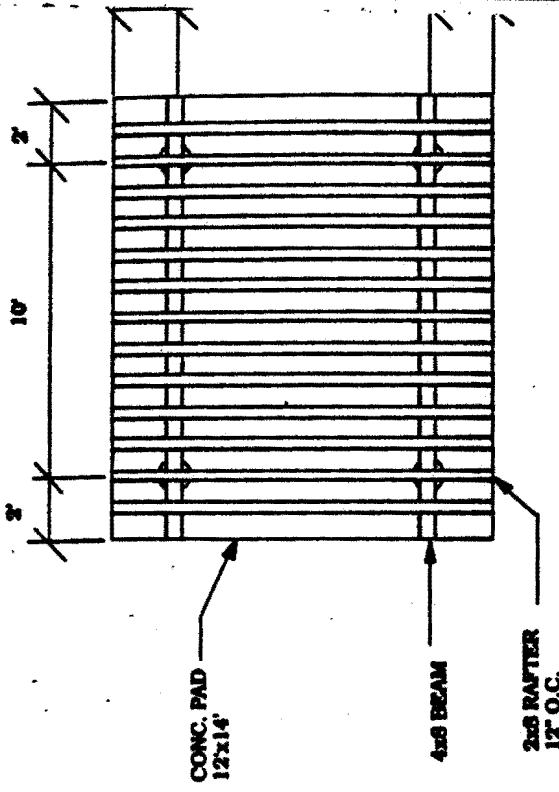
EXIST'G. PATHWAY

INTERPRETIVE PANELS

D.G. SURFACE  
5000 SQ. FT.

### GROUP PICNIC AREA

1" = 20'



### RAMADA - PLAN

1" = 5'

CONC. PAD  
12x14'

4x8 BEAM

2x8 RAFTER  
12" O.C.

2x8 RAFTER  
12" O.C.

4x8 BEAM

12" DIA.  
CONC. COLUMN

CONC. PAD  
MIN. 5'

EXIST.  
GRADE

### RAMADA - ELEVATION

1" = 5'

#### NOTES:

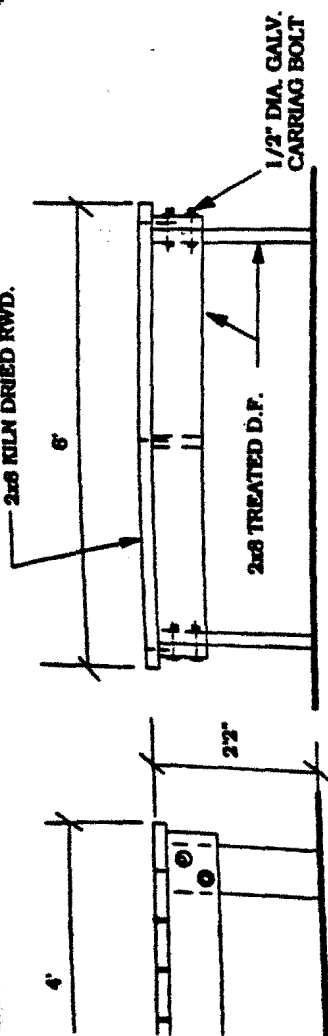
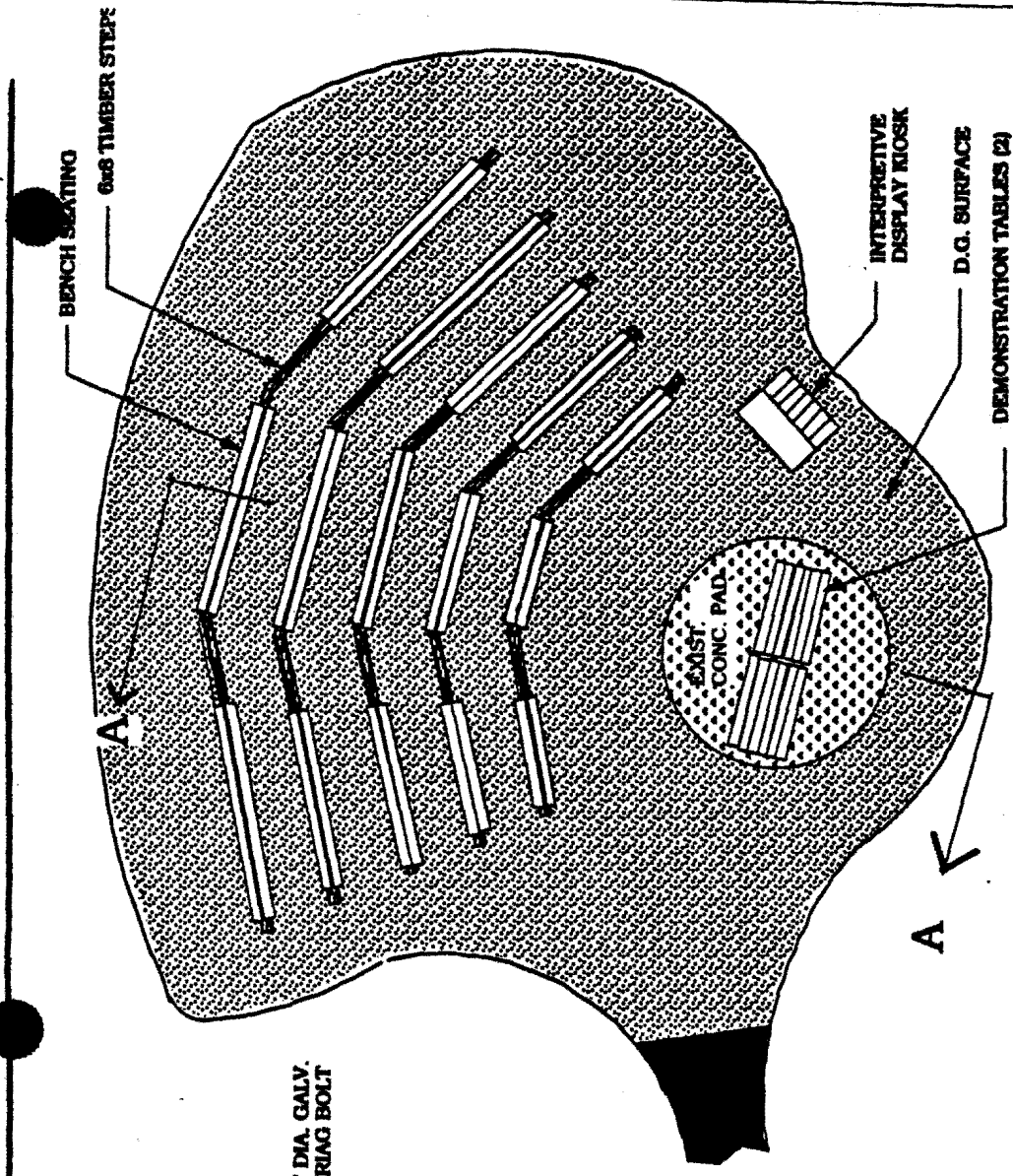
1. All wood member to be nominal size and shall be pressure treated D.F.
2. All hardware- nail, bolt; washer, nut, flat washer and other connectors shall

EXHIBIT NO.	62
APPLICATION NO.	PWP 4-82-12
PICNICK	

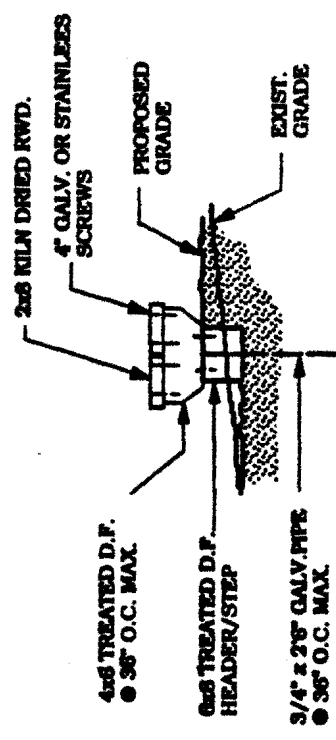
EXHIBIT NO. 9  
 APPLICATION NO.  
 PWP 4-82-12  
 Amphitheater  
 California Coastal Commission

**AMPHITHEATER**

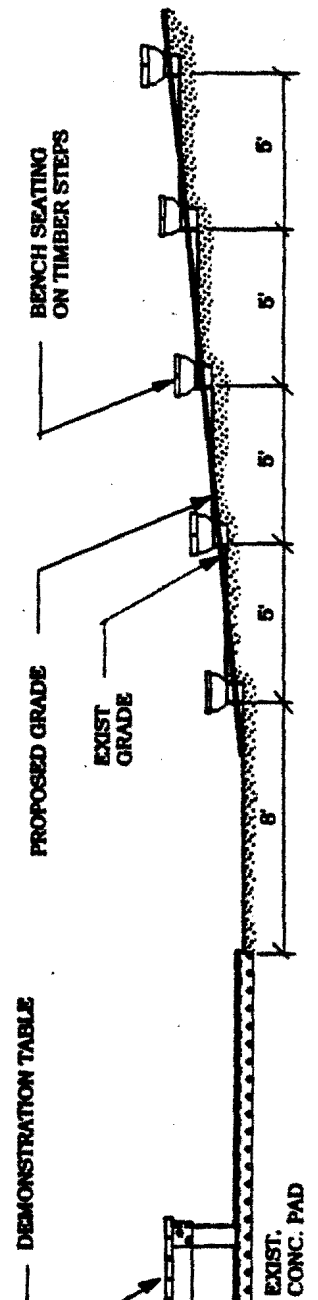
1" = 10'



**DEMONSTRATION TABLE**  
1/2" = 1'



**BENCH SEATING**  
1/2" = 1'



**SECTION A A**

DESIGNED  
G. DONG  
DRAWN  
G. DONG  
CHECKED  
A. YANG

REVISIONS  
DATE

RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
APPROVED  
DATE

VE STATE PARK  
E PLAN  
USE IMPROVEMENTS

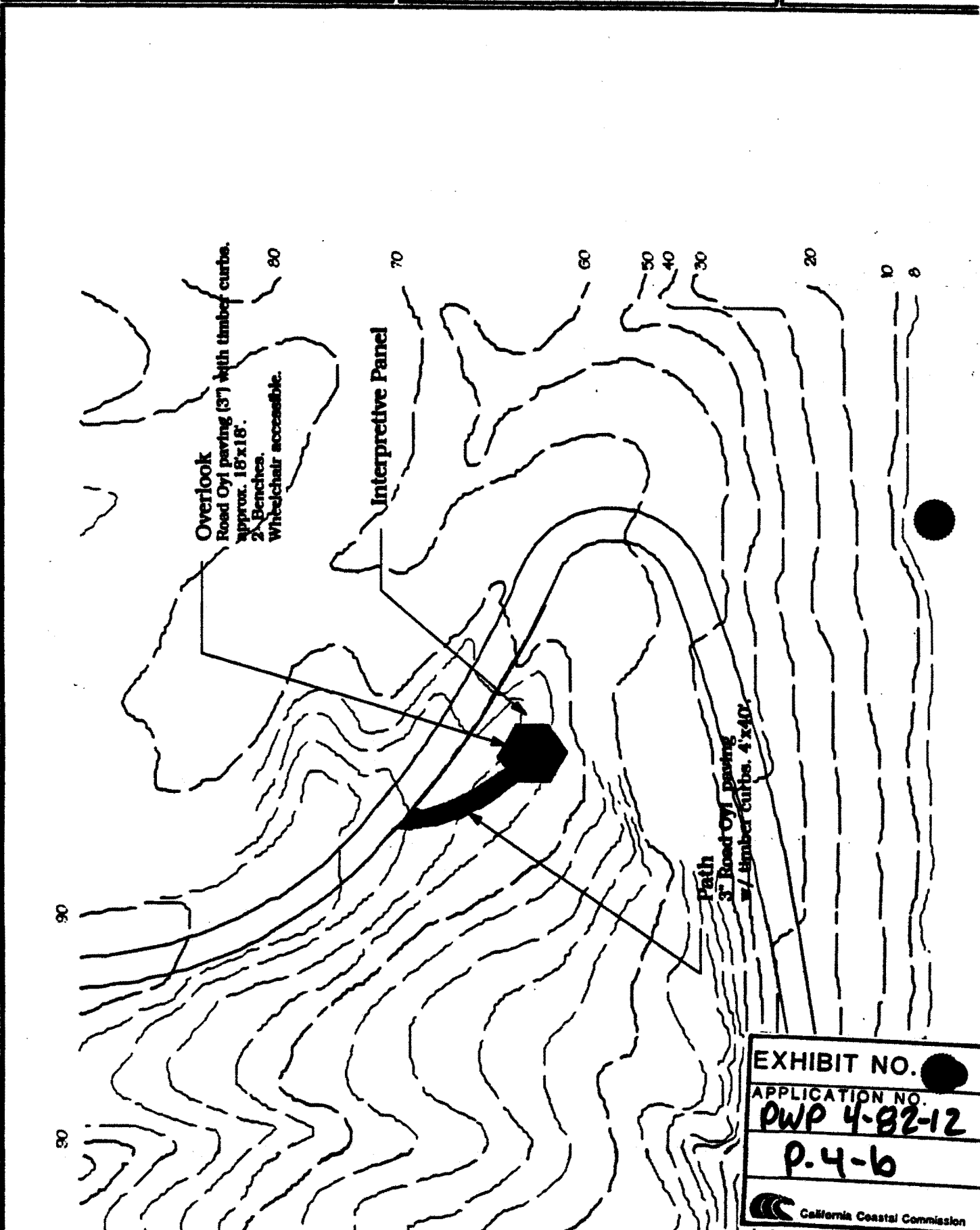


EXHIBIT NO. ●  
APPLICATION NO.  
PWP 4-82-12  
P.4-6  
California Coastal Commission



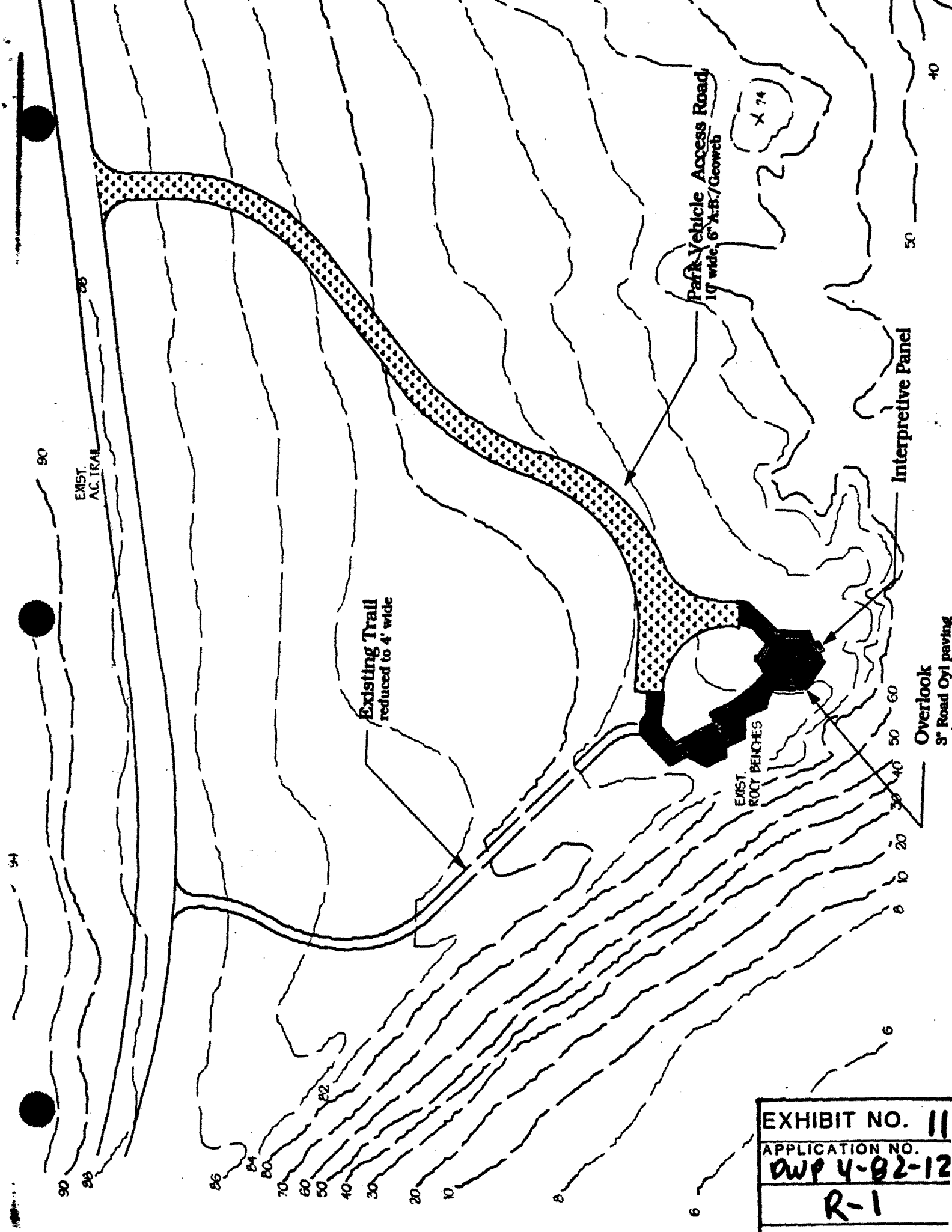
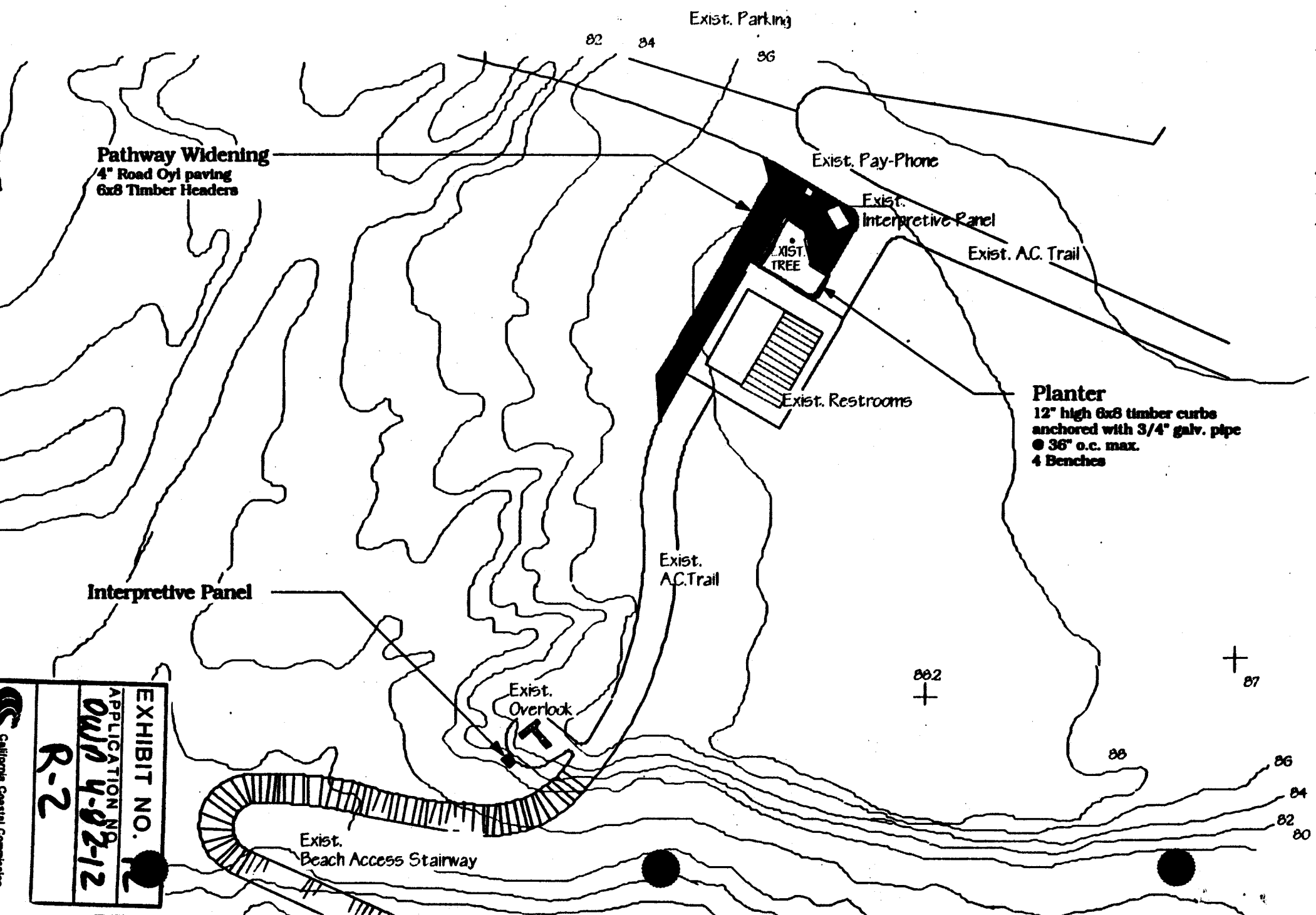


EXHIBIT NO. 11
APPLICATION NO.
DWP 4-82-12
R-1

California Coastal Commission

EXHIBIT NO. 2
APPLICATION NO. 0010 4-02-12
R-2



**Pathway Widening**  
4" Road Oyl paving  
6x8 Timber Headers

Exist. Parking

82 84 86

Exist. Pay-Phone

Exist. Interpretive Panel

Exist. AC Trail

EXIST. TREE

Exist. Restrooms

**Planter**  
12" high 6x8 timber curbs  
anchored with 3/4" galv. pipe  
● 36" o.c. max.  
4 Benches

Interpretive Panel

Exist. AC Trail

Exist. Overlook

862 +

+ 87

88

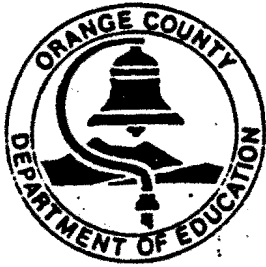
86

84

82

80

Exist. Beach Access Stairway



October 16, 1996

Mr. Alan K. Tang  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Planning Acquisition, and Environmental Design Division  
P. O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

ORANGE COUNTY  
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COSTA MESA, CA  
92628-9050  
(714) 966-4000  
FAX (714) 562-3570

JOHN F. DEAN, Ed.D.  
County Superintendent  
of Schools

LYNN APRIL HARTLINE  
Deputy Superintendent  
Administration and Human  
Resource Services

WILLIAM M. HABERMEHL  
Associate Superintendent  
Instruction and Alternative  
Education Services

JOHN L. NELSON, Ed.D.  
Associate Superintendent  
Business, Child Development  
and Special Education Services

ORANGE COUNTY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

SHEILA MEYERS

ELIZABETH PARKER

FELIX ROCHA, JR.

DR. KEN L. WILLIAMS

ERIC WOOLERY

Dear Mr. Tang:

I am writing to express my support for the California Department of Parks and Recreation's application for funding for Crystal Cove State Park through an Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant. The funds will be used to provide needed public day use recreation, park interpretation, and access improvements along the coastal portions of the park.

The proposed improvements proposal will include picnic facilities for the Pelican Point area and additional improvements to enhance the current park interpretive tours for school groups. The proposed bluff top overlook and trail access improvements will serve a current park visitor needs in a manner that is more compatible with the Department's coastal revegetation and habitat restoration objectives.

Currently, I manage an environmental education program for the Orange County Department of Education. Within the framework, *Inside the Outdoors*, a package of science instruction is presented. Each program in this framework correlates to the *Science Framework for California Public Schools* and ensures that when a school participates at each grade level, instruction progresses in a logical manner. These unique hands-on experiences are available at either a school or a field site. This program began with one field program in 1981 and has expanded to seven field sites which serve the school districts of Orange County, outlying districts, and private schools. Approximately 30,000 preschool through eighth grade students benefit from these experiences each year.

Crystal Cove State Park is one of the favorite field sites for students throughout Orange County. One educational activity introduces the students to the coastal sage scrub ecosystem located along the bluffs, where they also enjoy their lunch. Last year, approximately 2,600 students enjoyed Crystal Cove State Park through *Inside the Outdoors*.

I believe that this proposed grant project is worthwhile and I support the Department's grant request. Contact me at (714) 548-1562 if I can provide further information.

Sincerely,

Pam Johnson, Program Manager  
Inside the Outdoors

EXHIBIT NO. 13
APPLICATION NO. PWP 4-82-12
Letter
California Coastal Commission

