

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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Th3a

CD-0006-20 (National Parks Service)

UPDATED APRIL 19, 2021

EX PARTE

Received 11/20/2020

Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

Filed by: Commissioner Katie Rice

Re: USNPS General Management Plan Amendment EIR

Day/time: November 13, 2020 2 p.m.

Type of communication/Location: Zoom meeting

Initiator of communication: Jenny Calloway, Staff to Congressman Huffman

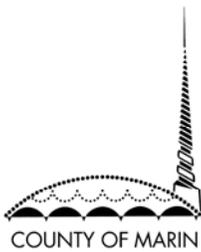
Identity of all persons present during communication: Katie Rice, Congressman Jared Huffman, Jenny Calloway

Comprehensive Description of communication content:

Congressman Huffman touching base with me in my capacity as Marin County Supervisor and as Coastal Commissioner with regards to if/how each respective agency will be processing the USNPS General Management Plan Final EIS. I explained that the Board of Supervisors has submitted multiple comment letters on the draft EIS, with the last in fall of 2019 specific to the Draft EIS (see attached.) I explained that there is no intention at this time on part of Board of Supervisors to provide further comment on the Final EIS. With regards to the Coastal Commission review for Federal Consistency, I communicated that it was my understanding that it would be coming before the Commission in January during a special all day hearing. We discussed at a high level the primary issues being raised by the public around the plan. I shared that the commission has been receiving public comment at recent commission hearings regarding Elk range and management, water quality, ranching impacts, and ranching in the seashore in context of Marin agricultural industry/economy generally. The congressman also inquired about commission meeting process/protocol.

Date: Nov 20, 2020

Signature: 



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GMP Amendment
c/o Superintendent Cecily Muldoon
Point Reyes National Seashore
1 Bear Valley Road
Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Subject: Review Comments on the Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan Amendment and Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Superintendent Muldoon,

Introduction

The release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) for the Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) and North District of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) General Management Plan Amendment (GMP Amendment) is a significant milestone for the evolving and successful partnership to secure an open and connected landscape throughout west Marin. Sharing again our sentiments from our scoping comments letter (attached), submitted in November 2018:

“The Marin County Board of Supervisors considers it a privilege to continue the legacy of our predecessor, Peter Behr. Through his leadership and collaboration with many instrumental partners, PRNS and GGNRA came into existence. Paralleling the steps and actions taken to make this possible are Marin County’s precedent setting land use policy actions to preserve Marin’s complementing private agricultural lands and strategically support their viability through diversification in agricultural production in our Countywide Plan. We have put these policies in place for the same purpose and goal that there is ranching on PRNS and GGNRA – that is, to support and embrace sustainable, viable, and environmentally friendly farming that protects West Marin’s land and water endowment and the history of its agricultural community.”

The County of Marin is also in complete agreement with the Joint Explanatory Statement regarding House Joint Resolution 31 (the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019) that stated “multi-generational ranching and dairying is important both ecologically and economically” and is “consistent with Congress’s intent for the management of Point Reyes National Seashore.”

In keeping with these actions and policies, and with the following specific comments on the Draft EIS considered, the County of Marin is in support of the preferred alternative identified in the Draft EIS – Alternative B. This alternative, by providing long-term leases to all currently active farm families on the maximum

extent of ranch land, embraces the connection of cultural and ecological resources that exists on Marin's working agricultural landscape. Specifically, Marin County recognizes the purposeful approach and significant detail to natural resource preservation and protection proposed in Appendix D and the draft PRNS and North District GGNRA Agricultural Lease/Permit and Ranch Operating Agreement template.

With that support stated, the County of Marin offers the following specific comments for completing the GMP Amendment and EIS.

Specific Comments to Draft EIS Adequacy in Analysis and Mitigation

While supporting Alternative B, we do have comments for additional analyses and inclusion in the Final GMP Amendment and EIS. We are requesting again the consideration of our scoping comments as submitted in their entirety on November 26, 2018 by attaching that letter to this submission. Addressing these points in the Final GMP Amendment and EIS will insure adequacy in mitigation measures, achievement of the GMP Amendment goals, and implementation of the PRNS/GGNRA enabling legislation intent. Regarding a select number of these we provide the following specific comments and rationale:

1. Strategies for the Preservation of Area Resources and inclusion of management and/or preservation strategy for ranch viability (Table 2, pages 27-30): The working landscape and agricultural viability is missing as a cultural resource in this table and throughout the Draft EIS. Marin County has long recognized the contribution of Marin's operating farms and ranches and the importance of a critical mass of these for the viability of Marin's food system.¹ Stemming from this local policy recognition, the Marin Economic Forum has recognized agriculture as a targeted industry² and is including agriculture in its ongoing business retention and expansion campaign³. The EIS must include an agricultural viability strategy in its analysis to achieve its cultural preservation goals and strategies.
2. Planning beyond the 20-year lease terms: In our scoping comments dated November 26, 2018 we recommended that the GMP Amendment should include a "...plan for continuation after the proposed 20-year leases through lease extensions or renewals." The GMP Amendment will be inadequate to achieve its stated strategies and the intent of the enabling legislation without this plan because it will create uncertainty for the preservation of PRNS/GGNRA's recognized working landscape as a cultural resource. By including an option for extending or continuing the leases beyond the 20-year terms, with a longer time period than the proposed 6-months prior to lease termination, NPS will avoid the need to again initiate and implement a lengthy and conflict-ridden planning process.
3. Viability of diversification – Marin County holds that "diversification has strengthened Marin's local family farms, local economy, and local food system (Scoping comments dated November 28, 2018)." Unfortunately, the Draft EIS presented options for diversification with constraints that render them inviable. For example, 2.5 unirrigated acres for row cropping is too small and misses opportunities for crop production using irrigation that will allow for year-round

¹ Marin Countywide Plan and Agriculture and Food Chapter -

https://www.marincounty.org/-/media/files/departments/cd/he/cwp_cd2.pdf

² Marin Economic Targeted Industry Studies, Marin Economic Forum, 2004.

³ Marin County Business Retention and Expansion Project, Marin Economic Forum

diversification. Similarly, the limiting of multi-species grazing to only the pasture subzones misses important and integrated natural resource management and agricultural diversification objectives in the range and resource protection subzones. Revising the EIS diversification options with analysis of their viability will advance achievement of the GMP Amendment goals and strategies.

4. Ranch Operating Agreement and real-time decision making: In our scoping comments of November 26, 2018 (attached) we emphasized the importance of real-time decision making for agricultural and natural resource management objectives. We are concerned that the only opportunity to make management decision changes is during the 30-day review period proposed as part of the annual Ranch Operating Agreement renewal process. The GMP Amendment and Final EIS must include a process for NPS staff and leasing agricultural operators to make needed and timely adjustments on at least a weekly and monthly basis to agricultural operations and mitigation measure implementation. This will provide the necessary adaptive management that is accepted and part of existing ranch and farm lease operations outside the Planning Area.
5. Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions and Carbon Offset potential: Through our updated Climate Action Plan⁴ (CAP), we have set a path for partnering with west Marin agricultural operators in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the realization of offsets through carbon sequestration. This effort, and that of Drawdown Marin to do comprehensive action planning for the built and unbuilt environment that realizes significant and real change to Marin's carbon footprint, were recommended to the NPS in our scoping comments. The adequacy of the GMP Amendment and EIS will be improved by reconciling its GHG emissions inventory with that in Marin CAP and integrating with the opportunities for carbon offsets laid out in the Marin CAP and Drawdown Marin planning efforts, including carbon farm plans.
6. Ranch Zone and Subzoning Framework: Marin County is in general support of the proposed Ranch Zone and Subzoning Framework proposed in the Draft EIS. However, in keeping with our scoping comments, the County of Marin also holds that the final GMP Amendment and EIS will be inadequate until clarity for how the subzones will be determined, in concert with the leasing rancher, and the flexibility necessary for addressing resource management objectives across subzones are included. Where subzones are delineated and how to manage within each subzone will benefit from the long-term intimate knowledge of the landscape that each rancher has. Similarly, some agricultural and natural resource objectives will cross subzone boundaries and, unless considered in the final GMP Amendment and EIS, NPS staff and leasing ranchers will not be able to address them effectively.
7. Elk management plan and impacts to agriculture: The County of Marin supports the science-based wildlife management approach proposed within the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS is, however, missing analyses and mitigation of impacts from competition between grazing livestock and elk. This includes compensation for losses of silage, improved pasture, supplemental feed and costs for fence and infrastructure repair resulting from elk consumption and damage. Additionally, the Draft EIS will present a more comprehensive management plan by including the analyses and option of elk relocation and

⁴ Marin Climate Action Plan Update 2015 -

https://www.marincounty.org/~media/files/departments/cd/planning/sustainability/climate-and-adaptation/execsummarymarincapupdate_final_20150731.pdf

PG. 4 OF 4

separation through fencing. Lastly, providing clearer definitions of what constitutes a new herd and the process and methods for preventing their development is required in the Draft EIS. The EIS will not be adequate until it includes these approaches and mitigates these impacts.

8. **Quality and Quantity of Housing:** Providing enough quality housing is of critical importance for the County of Marin and its communities, including west Marin. Housing on-farm is central to this community need and the integrity of the community fabric in supporting farm employees and families, including reduced labor force road miles and increased school enrollment. The GMP Amendment and DEIS will become a strong partner for secure housing by integrating with the Marin Housing Task Force and federal housing programs. This should include clarity in the Ranch Lease Template and Ranch Core subzone of the process for adding new housing and improving existing homes.

Closure

Main County commends NPS for releasing a well presented Draft EIS. Including the research and public participation from the start of the original Ranch Comprehensive Management Plan, this Draft EIS review period marks nearly five long years of effort to create a management plan and process to continue the mutual benefits of working ranches and dairies on the PRNS and GGNRA. The County of Marin is ready to work with NPS to resolve the remaining details, analyses and mitigation needed to arrive at a Final GMP Amendment and EIS that can accomplish the cultural and ecological mission and goals held on these NPS lands.

Respectfully,



Kathrin Sears, President
Marin County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Kamala Harris
Congressman Jared Huffman

Attachment: Scoping Comment Letter dated November 26, 2018

Received on January 07, 2021

EX PARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURE FORMFiled by Commissioner: Steve Padilla

- 1) Name or description of project: CD-0006-20 (National Park Service, Marin County)
- 2) Date and time of receipt of communication: 1/7/2021, 1:35pm
- 3) Location of communication: Web Conference
(If not in person, include the means of communication, e.g., telephone, e-mail, etc.)
- 4) Identity of person(s) initiating communication: Morgan Patton
- 5) Identity of person(s) on whose behalf communication was made: National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and Environmental Action Committee of West Marin (EAC)
- 6) Identity of persons(s) receiving communication:
Commissioner Steve Padilla
- 7) Identity of all person(s) present during the communication: Neal Desai, Morgan Patton, Commissioner Padilla, Tony Cruz.

Complete, comprehensive description of communication content (attach complete set of any text or graphic material presented):

The representatives from EAC and NPCA provided brief personal and organizational backgrounds. Their primary concern related to the concurrence recommendation was that in this case, the NPS has not resolved to provide maximum amount of time necessary to adequately review their operational viability of mitigation measures. They indicated that with respect to other NPS planning and operational initiatives, this particular amendment and the associated EIS findings lack sufficient detail to determine whether in fact the mitigations identified are actually viable. They indicated that given the lack of detail it is hard to know whether in fact the suggested management practices could be improved upon given the length of the term of the program. They believed that the CCC should object based on these process grounds and lack of detail.

1-7-2021



Date

Signature of Commissioner

TIMING FOR FILING OF DISCLOSURE FORM: File this form with the Executive Director within seven (7) days of the ex parte communication, if the communication occurred seven or more days in advance of the Commission hearing on the item that was the subject of the communication. If the communication occurred within seven (7) days of the hearing, provide the information orally on the record of the proceeding and provide the Executive Director with a copy of any written material that was part of the communication. This form may be filed with the Executive Director in addition to the oral disclosure.

Received on January 7, 2021

Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

Filed by: Commissioner Katie Rice

Re: Point Reyes National Seashore GMP

Day/time: Jan 4, 2021 2pm

Type of communication/Location: voicemail message

Initiator of communication: Albert Straus

Participants in communication: Albert Straus

Comprehensive Description of communication content:

Brief voicemail message expressing his support for the GMP and urging Commission to adopt consistency determination.

Date:

Jan 7, 2021

Signature:



EX PARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURE FORM

Filed by Commissioner: Caryl Hart

1) Name or description of project: Pt Reyes Seashore Federal Consistency

2) Date and time of receipt of communication: February 1, 2021

3) Location of communication: Telephone

(If not in person, include the means of communication, e.g., telephone, e-mail, etc.)

4) Identity of person(s) initiating communication: Rep Jared Huffman, US House of Rep

5) Identity of person(s) on whose behalf communication was made: Rep. Jared Huffman

6) Identity of persons(s) receiving communication: Caryl Hart

7) Identity of all person(s) present during the communication: Rep.Huffman, staff Jenny Calloway, Caryl Hart

Complete, comprehensive description of communication content (attach complete set of any text or graphic material presented):

Discussion regarding the Pt. Reyes management plan which Rep. Huffman strongly supports. Included impacts on water resources from dairy farming in the park and mitigations, and elk management issues, as well as possible solutions including relocation of part of the herd.

2/3/21
Date


Signature of Commissioner

TIMING FOR FILING OF DISCLOSURE FORM: File this form with the Executive Director within seven (7) days of the ex parte communication, if the communication occurred seven or more days in advance of the Commission hearing on the item that was the subject of the communication. If the communication occurred within seven (7) days of the hearing, provide the information orally on the record of the proceeding and provide the Executive Director with a copy of any written material that was part of the communication. This form may be filed with the Executive Director in addition to the oral disclosure.

Ex Parte Communication Disclosure Form
Filed by Commissioner Caryl Hart
April 11, 2021

1. Name or Description of Project: Consistency Determination by National Park Service for the 2020 General Management Plan Amendment for Point Reyes National Seashore and the north district of Golden Gate National Recreation Area
2. Date and time of reported communication: April 5, 2021
3. Location of communication: By zoom call
4. Identity of person(s) initiating: Greg Sarris, Tribal Chair Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
5. Identity of person(s) on whose behalf communication was made: Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
6. Identity of all persons present during the communication: Caryl Hart, Commissioner; Chairman Greg Sarris; Vice Chair Lonelle Ross; Tribal Attorney Maureen Geary; Tribal Heritage Preservation Officer Buffy McQuillen
7. Complete, comprehensive description of communication content and complete set of any text or graphic material presented.

Discussion regarding the interest of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria in sacred sites and animals at the Pt Reyes Seashore, and specifically their discussions with the National Park Service regarding their role in consulting on any development or management decisions at the National Park. Further conversation confirming that they submitted letters indicating their concerns regarding the management plan, and their desire for continuing input on actions by the National Park Service at the park.

Date: April 11, 2021



Signature of Commissioner Caryl Hart

EXPARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURE FORM
Filed by Commissioner Donne Brownsey

1) Name or description of project: Special Hearing on the National Park service Golden Gate National Recreation Area, CD -0006-20 on Thurs April 22, 2021

2) Date and time of receipt of communication:
April 15, 2021, 3:10-3:20pm

3) Location of communication
By Phone

4) Identity of person(s) initiating communication:
Congressmember Jared Huffman

5) Identity of person(s) on whose behalf communication was made:
himself

6) Identity of persons(s) receiving communication:
Donne Brownsey

7) Identity of all person(s) present during the communication:
Brownsey and Huffman

Complete, comprehensive description of communication content:

Huffman supports the General Management Plan Amendment for the Point Reyes National Seashore and the north District of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. He stated that the Commission has a piece of this for federal consistency and that he wanted me to know that he thought staff "got it right" by recommending conditional approval with the additional conditions for increased water quality monitoring.

Date April 16, 2021



Signature of Commissioner Donne Brownsey

EX PARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURE FORM

Filed by Commissioner: Mike Wilson

1) Name or description of project: 2020 GMPA for Point Reyes National Seashore

2) Date and time of receipt of communication: April 4, 2021 at 4:00pm

3) Location of communication: Telephone

(If not in person, include the means of communication, e.g., telephone, e-mail, etc.)

4) Identity of person(s) initiating communication: Jared Huffman

5) Identity of person(s) on whose behalf communication was made: Jared Huffman

6) Identity of persons(s) receiving communication: Mike Wilson

7) Identity of all person(s) present during the communication: Mike Wilson and Jared Huffman

Complete, comprehensive description of communication content (attach complete set of any text or graphic material presented):

Congressman Huffman wanted to relay his support for the staff recommendations to make a determination of concurrence. He mentioned the regional political support, the long process to get to this point, as well as the need to move towards improved land use practices that recognize and value the existing agricultural activities of the families that currently farm in the park.

4/21/21
Date


Signature of Commissioner

TIMING FOR FILING OF DISCLOSURE FORM: File this form with the Executive Director within seven (7) days of the ex parte communication, if the communication occurred seven or more days in advance of the Commission hearing on the item that was the subject of the communication. If the communication occurred within seven (7) days of the hearing, provide the information orally on the record of the proceeding and provide the Executive Director with a copy of any written material that was part of the communication. This form may be filed with the Executive Director in addition to the oral disclosure.