

LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

General Plan



State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

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STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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Resolution 6-88
adopted by the
CALIFORNIA STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
at its regular meeting in San Luis Obispo on
April 8, 1988

WHEREAS, the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation has presented to this Commission for approval the proposed General Plan for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve; and

WHEREAS, this reflects long-range development plans to provide for optimum use and enjoyment of this unit as well as the protection of its quality;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the California State Park and Recreation Commission hereby approves the Department of Parks and Recreation's Los Osos Oaks State Reserve Preliminary General Plan, dated November 1987, including the appendix, and language prohibiting bicycles and motorized vehicles, subject environmental changes as the Director of Parks and Recreation determine advisable and necessary to implement the provisions and objectives of said plan.

L O S O S O S O A K S S T A T E R E S E R V E

GENERAL PLAN

September 1991

MORRO BAY AREA STATE PARK UNITS GENERAL PLAN

Volume 1

State of California
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The Resources Agency
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LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

SUMMARY



SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN PROPOSALS

Long-range planning proposals for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, located in San Luis Obispo County, are presented in this General Plan, prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

This summary provides a quick reference to all proposals. The reader should refer to the separate sections of the plan for details of individual proposals. Discussions about land not now owned by the department have been included. These lands represent potential acquisition opportunities based on available data. However, the discussions are intended for long-range planning purposes only, and do not represent an intention or commitment for acquisition.

When fully implemented, the plan's proposals will improve visitor services, further protect resources, and help offset additional expenses.

Resource Management

Due to the fact that this unit is classified as a state reserve, a number of existing general policies are in effect that provide for more stringent protection of natural and cultural resources than for other units in the State Park System. In addition to these, specific policies proposed in this plan are:

- Protect existing water features and water quality within the reserve.
- Provide for the monitoring, reporting, and protection of the reserve's archeological resources.
- Make provisions for the discovery of paleontological resources.
- Minimize soil loss due to erosion and provide for the preservation and restoration of soil integrity in the reserve.
- Provide for the control or removal of German ivy, eucalyptus, and other invasive exotic plant species in the reserve.
- Develop a management plan to protect the integrity of the riparian ecosystem within the reserve, and expand it through acquisition if possible.
- Protect the reserve's significant lichen communities.
- Develop a prescribed fire management program.
- Develop a wildfire management plan in cooperation with other appropriate agencies.
- Prohibit bicycles and horses in order to protect the reserve's natural features.
- Develop an oak management plan to ensure the perpetuation of oaks in the reserve.

- Require systematic surveys for rare and endangered plants.
- Restore altered natural habitats as nearly as possible.
- Provide for the development of management plans for threatened or endangered animals when appropriate.

Land Use and Facilities

Low-intensity day uses are all that will be allowed at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Facilities will be limited only to those required to enable visitors to see, enjoy, and understand the resources:

- Develop new parking area to replace the one that will be eliminated due to road widening (8-12 spaces).
- Install unit identification sign.
- Construct exhibit shelter at new parking area.
- Install signs and/or fencing where necessary to control the destruction of natural values.
- Extend trail system to other areas of the unit.
- Acquire additional land to develop facilities that will not negatively impact natural and cultural values.
- Install enclosure for portable restrooms.

Interpretation

These proposals will improve educational and informational opportunities at the unit, so the public's recreational experience can be enhanced:

- Develop a series of orientation and interpretive panels that can be rotated seasonally.
- Improve and maintain existing interpretive trail signs.
- Develop more interpretive literature highlighting the resources of the unit.
- Update the teacher's guide to encourage and facilitate visitation by school groups.
- Encourage the recruitment of more volunteers.
- Schedule more interpretive walks and talks as visitor interest warrants.

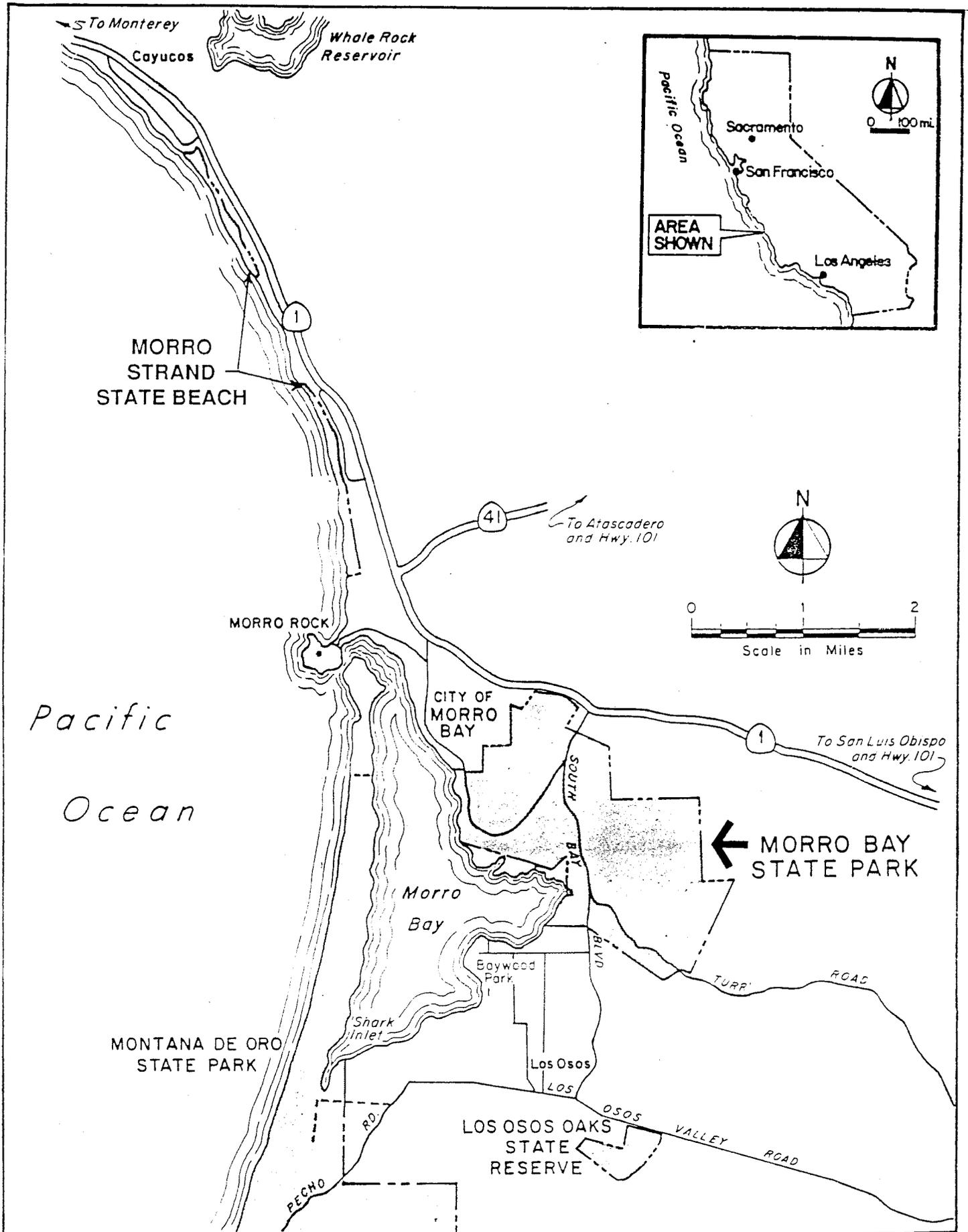


Figure - 1
VICINITY MAP
5

UNIT DESCRIPTION

Location: San Luis Obispo County, eight miles west of the City of San Luis Obispo, on the eastern edge of the unincorporated community of Los Osos.

Size: 85.1 acres of land in an L-shaped configuration.

Topography: Gently sloping, generally from west to east, with very sandy soils. Los Osos Creek borders the eastern edge of the unit.

Vegetation: A dense coast live oak forest dominates most of the unit. This is broken in several areas with openings of coastal sage scrub-type vegetation.

Existing Facilities: There are no permanent structures or developed utilities. The reserve is served by a small roadside parking area and a short interpretive loop trail.

Existing Operation: The reserve is operated by DPR's San Luis Obispo Coast District. The nearest State Park System units are Morro Bay State Park, three miles to the north, and Montana de Oro State Park, one mile southwest.



LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Plan

This General Plan establishes guidelines for the long-term use, management, and development of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. It has been prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation in compliance with Public Resources Code Section 5002.2. The law requires approval of the General Plan by the California State Park and Recreation Commission prior to budgeting any development that would constitute a permanent commitment of natural or cultural resources.

The plan summarizes the available information about the unit, documenting the planning process and the relevant data used in making land use decisions and management and development proposals. As conditions change, the plan may be reviewed and updated as necessary to responsibly guide departmental actions at the reserve. The plan, however, is not meant to provide detailed plans for site development, resource management, or unit operation and maintenance. These details should be provided at the time actual funding and implementation occur.

Discussions about land not owned by the Department of Parks and Recreation have been included. These lands represent potential acquisition opportunities, based on available data. However, the discussions are intended for long-range planning purposes only and do not represent an intention or commitment for acquisition.

Objectives of the Plan

The General Plan attempts to meet the following broad objectives:

1. Preserve and perpetuate the natural and cultural resources.
2. Manage the unit in a manner consistent with its classification as a state reserve.
3. Protect and perpetuate the prime resource value in the unit, the coast live oak forest.
4. Develop only low-intensity day-use facilities due to the limited size and sensitive nature of the reserve.
5. Provide appropriate interpretive services and facilities for educational and recreational purposes.
6. Minimize environmental damage caused by recreation use and development.
7. Monitor trail use and periodically reassess the ability of the resources to absorb the use they are receiving, and adjust trail use as necessary to adequately protect resource values.

The Planning Process

The development of this General Plan has been part of a larger planning effort for all state park units in this area. This effort is broadly referred to as the Morro Bay Area State Park Units General Plan and includes Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, Morro Strand State Beach, Atascadero State Beach, Montana de Oro State Park, and Morro Bay State Park.

The planning process included a comprehensive evaluation of all available resource and recreation information. Based upon this evaluation, a number of plan alternatives were prepared. These were again analyzed in cooperation with local agencies, interest groups, and the public. A single plan then emerged which we considered to offer the optimum balance between resource preservation and providing public access and educational opportunities.

General Plan Elements

This plan is a culmination of this effort with respect to Los Osos Oaks State Reserve and is divided into the following elements:

- o Resource Element - Evaluates the natural and cultural resources of the reserve and sets policies for protection, restoration, and use of these resources.
- o Land Use and Facilities Element - Evaluates existing land use and facilities and describes proposed land use and facilities that are consistent with the unit's resources and visitor needs.
- o Interpretive Element - Establishes interpretive themes and recommends methods for interpretation of the unit's natural and cultural values.
- o Operations Element - Describes specific operational and maintenance requirements of the unit and establishes operational guidelines for implementation of the plan.
- o Concessions Element - Evaluates existing and potential concession activities and establishes guidelines consistent with the classification of the unit.
- o Environmental Impact Element - In conjunction with the General Plan, serves as the Draft Environmental Impact Report required by the California Environmental Quality Act. It assesses environmental effects and proposes mitigation measures and alternatives.

Public Involvement

The public played a major role in creating this plan. From the outset, the planning team attempted to identify all parties interested in or affected by this plan, and to encourage their participation in the decision-making process. An active mailing list of over 800 names was developed, and more

than 5,000 user surveys were distributed at the state parks within the study area. Public workshops were held at three critical stages in the plan's evolution, and newsletters were sent to all on the mailing list four times to keep the public informed throughout the process. (See Appendix A for sample user surveys and newsletters.)

An initial newsletter was sent out after completion of the information gathering period. It summarized the information we had received through the user surveys and informed everyone of our planning process and our first public workshop.

The first public workshop was held on November 12, 1986 in Los Osos. The purpose of the workshop was to present the Draft Resource Element and to allow us to communicate with interested groups, individuals, and agencies to learn more specifically about the issues and concerns they felt should be dealt with. One hundred twelve people were in attendance, actively and openly sharing many concerns.

Issue 2 of the newsletter reported the comments, concerns, and ideas expressed by participants at the first public workshop. It also described the next phase of the process and informed everyone of the next public meeting.

The planning team then took the wealth of information and ideas that had been generated and synthesized it into a series of alternative plans. These were presented at a second public workshop on March 18, 1987. This meeting attracted well over 200 participants. A wide range of opinions and suggestions were received. The third issue of the newsletter summarized this input.

The planning team then embarked on the tasks of taking the many proposals received from the second public workshop and developing them into a single plan for the reserve.

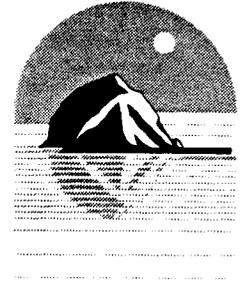
The single plan was then announced in the fourth issue of the newsletter and was presented for evaluation at a third series of public meetings held on September 1 and 2, 1987. Approximately 50 people attended each of these meetings. The plan was reevaluated after the meetings, appropriate changes were made, and the preliminary General Plan and Environmental Impact Element were issued in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act for review and comment.

In addition to the newsletters sent out by the planning team, news releases were distributed before each public meeting, resulting in numerous newspaper articles and radio and television announcements. The meetings were attended by a broad representation of user groups whose enthusiastic and insightful participation has strongly influenced this plan.

Agency Coordination

Valuable input was also solicited and received through coordination with the following agencies:

- o San Luis Obispo County
 - Department of Planning and Building
 - Park Facilities Division
 - Engineering Department
 - Department of General Services
- o California Department of Fish and Game
- o California Coastal Commission
- o Pacific Bell Telephone
- o Pacific Gas and Electric
- o California City Water Company
- o State Water Quality Control Board



LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

RESOURCE ELEMENT



RESOURCE ELEMENT

This Resource Element was prepared to meet requirements set forth in Section 5002.2, Subsection (b) of Division 5, Chapter 1 of the Public Resources Code and Chapter 1, Section 4332 of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code. In compliance with this section of the Public Resources Code, the Resource Element sets forth long-range management objectives for the natural and cultural resources of the unit. Specific actions or limitations required to achieve these objectives are also set forth in this element; maintenance operations and details of resource management are left for inclusion in specific resource management programs, which will be prepared at a later date.

This element also identifies specific resource sensitivities and physical constraints, and establishes the department's guidelines for acceptable levels of development and use with respect to these concerns.

The Resource Element has two main parts. The first is a brief summary of the unit's resources. More detailed information on these subjects is on file with the Department of Parks and Recreation. The second part deals with policy formulation, which begins with unit classification and declaration of purpose and concludes with specific resource management policies.

Resource Summary

Natural Resources

Topography

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is located on the central California coast within the southern end of the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province. In the area of the state reserve, the principal ranges are the northernmost Santa Lucia Range trending northwest to southeast and the Irish Hills of the San Luis Range paralleling the Santa Lucia Range to the south. Between these two ranges lies the Los Osos Valley, bordered on the west by Estero Bay and the Pacific Ocean, and on the southeast by the San Luis Valley.

Located one mile to the southeast of the town of Los Osos, the reserve is an L-shaped piece of property including 85.1 acres of heavily vegetated land. It lies in the Los Osos Valley, close to the steep slopes of the Irish Hills of the San Luis Range to the south. The elevation of the unit is from about 70 feet at its eastern boundary along Los Osos Creek, up a gradual slope to 240 feet above sea level at its southwestern corner. The aspect of these slopes is north-facing in the western portion of the unit, and east-facing in the eastern portion.

Meteorology

The Morro Bay area has a Mediterranean climate, which is characterized by mild temperatures with little diurnal fluctuation, moist winters, and warm, dry summers. Low cloudiness or fog often occurs along the coast during the summer, with an average frequency of 200-250 hours per month. The average annual temperature ranges from 56°F to 60°F, with maximums of 65° - 70°F in

summer and 50s - low 60s in the winter. There are usually 40 to 50 days per year with measurable precipitation; rainfall averages approximately 19 inches annually at Los Osos. The Los Osos Valley has a microclimate of strong, cool, onshore winds during the summer.

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is located in the Non-Salinas Valley sub-area of the South Central Coast Air Basin. The major pollutants monitored within this basin are ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, hydrocarbons, and total suspended particulate matter (TSP). The Non-Salinas Valley sub-area meets state and federal standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen dioxide; the sub-area is unclassified for TSP and sulfur dioxide.

Hydrology

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is situated within the San Luis Obispo Hydrologic Unit of the Central Coastal Drainage Province. The San Luis Obispo Hydrologic Unit covers 780 square miles on the western slopes of the Santa Lucia Range, extending from the Monterey-San Luis Obispo County line to the western drainage divide of the Santa Maria River. It is characterized by mountainous and hilly terrain, with many small stream valleys. Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is in the Los Osos Hydrologic Subarea of the San Luis Obispo Hydrologic Subunit. The unit is bordered on the east side by Los Osos Creek just after the creek leaves the Irish Hills on the south on its way to Morro Bay. The sandy soil of the area offers little resistance to winter floods, resulting in scouring and downcutting of Los Osos Creek. Other surface hydrological features are seeps and a spring, evidence of a high water table, particularly in wet weather. A high percentage of the precipitation infiltrates into the highly permeable old sand dunes, so surface runoff is negligible, and most of the water ends up in ground water aquifers. A small 100-year floodplain has been estimated and mapped along Los Osos Creek that includes the reserve property immediately bordering the creek.

Underlying the unit is the Los Osos Valley ground water basin which is held in recent alluvium and upper Pleistocene sand dunes with underlying lower Pleistocene Paso Robles water-bearing sediments. Precipitation is the main source of recharge through the flat lowlands of Los Osos Creek and its tributaries. The water table level fluctuates; it is generally higher in the spring than in the fall, and the overall subsurface flow is toward Morro Bay with localized depressions due to pumping.

Residences adjacent to the reserve discharge their wastes through septic tank filter field systems, contributing to a widespread and complex water quality problem. Although the additional water entering the aquifers has been suggested as a possible method of fighting saltwater intrusion into the coastal extremity of the Los Osos Valley Ground Water Basin, it has adversely affected the water quality in the area. Septic tank effluent is a possible source of coliform and iron bacterial pollution and a source of dissolved salts such as sodium chloride, phosphates, and particularly nitrates. Additional water can also raise the level of the water table to unnaturally high levels. These factors can affect the health of the oaks, causing an increase in root decay disease and foliar diseases, and a possible impairment of the mycorrhizal-oak roots relationship.

Geology

The Coast Ranges geomorphic province is made up of rocks of widely differing origins -- the Franciscan Complex representing a subduction zone complex, the Great Valley Sequence representing forearc basin sediments, and plutonic and metamorphic rocks of the Salinian Block representing a magmatic island arc. These rocks formed at roughly the same time during the Late Mesozoic as the eastward-spreading Farallon Plate collided with the North American Plate. Current geological theory holds that the thinner, denser oceanic Farallon Plate was subducted beneath the thick North American Plate and subsequently partially accreted to the continent as the accumulated sediments were scraped off, overridden, and sheared by the large-scale tectonic forces. As the Farallon Plate was "consumed," strike-slip movement began as a result of northwest movement of the Pacific Plate and eastern movement of the North American Plate. This later strike-slip movement juxtaposed rocks in incongruous relation to each other.

No bedrock is exposed at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Although the bedrock is projected to be either Franciscan melange or Type 2 greywacke, the entire unit is blanketed with thick sand deposits, entirely stabilized by vegetation. Alluvial deposits have been mapped east of Los Osos Creek.

Soils

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is located within the southernmost tip of the Northwestern Coastal Ranges Soil Region (Soil Region I), which is characterized by steep mountain ranges and small valleys. Five soil map units are found within the boundaries of the reserve: Baywood fine sand both in the 2-9% slope class and in the 9-15% slope class, Concepcion loam, drained Marime silty clay loam, and Salinas silty clay loam.

Baywood fine sand, with slope from 2-9% in the north and eastern parts of the reserve to 9-15% in the southern and central parts, is the dominant soil. It is a gently rolling soil formed in deposits of wind-blown sand and supporting dune oak scrub and the reserve's unique coast live oak forest. This soil repels water when dry but has a rapid intake rate and rapid permeability once it is moist, and would result in poor filter performance for septic tank absorption fields and a possible threat of groundwater contamination. The excessively sandy nature of the soil causes cut banks to cave in and is a consideration in any planning for recreational development. The soil has the potential for seepage and piping problems if used as a site for embankments, dikes, or levees.

Gently sloping (2-5% slope) Concepcion loam is found along the eastern side of the reserve. Formed in old alluvium weathered from sedimentary rocks, the vegetation found on this soil type is coastal sage scrub and northern coastal scrub. Its high shrink-swell potential and low strength must be considered in any plans for the building of roads or structures and for its use as a building material. Very slow permeability can cause improper functioning of septic tank absorption fields.

Los Osos Creek, running along the eastern boundary of the unit, is bordered by Salinas silty clay loam (0-2% slopes), which formed in alluvium weathered from sedimentary rocks. A small patch of Marimel silty clay loam with similar origins is found in the northeast corner of the reserve on the banks of Los Osos Creek. This nearly level soil has been naturally drained because of the downcutting of Los Osos Creek. Riparian vegetation is found growing on both of these soil types. The Salinas silty clay loam erodes easily, a consideration in planning for paths and trails, and both soils exhibit slow permeability, low strength, and a tendency for piping -- limitations to consider when designing roads or buildings.

Plant Life

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is within the Central Coast Floristic Region of the California Floristic Province. Because of the relative stability of the climate, as well as habitat diversity, the Central Coast Floristic Region is one of the richer areas in endemic taxa in California.

Five major plant communities are represented in Los Osos Oaks State Reserve: coastal sage scrub, central coastal scrub, dune oak scrub, coast live oak forest, and riparian.

Coastal sage scrub, also called "soft chaparral," occurs on south-facing slopes, in areas with thin soil and good drainage, and in areas of recent disturbance.

Coastal sage scrub vegetation is composed of dense, highly-branched, semi-woody, drought-deciduous shrubs. Within Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, it is dominated by California sagebrush (Artemisia californica), black sage (Salvia mellifera), and buckbrush (Ceanothus cuneatus var. fascicularis). Associated species include holly-leaf cherry (Prunus ilicifolia), mock heather (Haplopappus ericoides), and coast buckwheat (Eriogonum parvifolium).

Central coastal scrub is denser than coastal sage scrub and can be shorter in stature. Dominant species include sticky bush monkeyflower (Mimulus aurantiacus), poison oak (Toxicodendron diversilobum), and coyote bush (Baccharis pilularis var. consanguinea). Coyote bush also occurs as scattered shrubs on the banks of Los Osos Creek where it is associated with arroyo willow (Salix lasiolepis) and giant horsetail (Equisetum telmateia var. braunii). Annual grasses in this area include slender wild oat (Avena barbata), soft chess (Bromus mollis), and ripgut brome (Bromus rigidus).

Dune oak scrub is characterized by dwarf coast live oaks (Quercus agrifolia) found on relict sand dunes. These trees occur as large, multibranched shrubs 6 to 8 feet high. The dwarf oaks are associated with buckbrush and holly-leaf cherry and form dense, impenetrable vegetation.

Coast live oak forest occurs in areas with greater levels of soil moisture. The closed canopy forest consists of large, multitruunked trees, 20 to 25 feet high, and a sparse, herbaceous understory. Understory species include miner's lettuce (Montia perfoliata), bracken fern (Pteridium aquilinum var. pubescens), poison oak, and crimson sage (Salvia spathacea).

Riparian vegetation occurs along seepage areas and the banks of Los Osos Creek. Dominant species along Los Osos Creek include sycamore (Platanus racemosa), arroyo willow, red willow (Salix lasiandra), and black cottonwood (Populus trichocarpa). Deep undercutting by the creek has precluded development of a dense riparian woodland. Seepage areas support western dogwood (Cornus occidentalis) and stinging nettle (Urtica holosericea).

No rare, threatened, or endangered plant species are reported from this unit. The coast live oak forest and scrub vegetation found in this state reserve are of interpretive and scientific interest. Also of scientific interest are the diversity and distribution of lichens within the unit. Three species of lichens are restricted to Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, and are not currently known at any other location.

German ivy (Senecio mikanioides), an exotic species, is established in the understory of the coastal live oak forest adjacent to Los Osos Creek in the southern portion of the unit. Other exotics include veldt grass (Ehrharta calycina), filaree (Erodium sp.), and annual grasses. Eucalyptus (Eucalyptus sp.) was once widespread in the unit. Most of these exotic trees have been removed by the department; a few remain in the western portion of the reserve.

Animal Life

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is an area of surprisingly high biotic diversity for a unit of its small size. Four biotic communities are represented within the unit boundaries: the coast live oak woodland, coastal dune chaparral, grassland, and riparian woodland.

The coast live oak woodland provides food, such as resident insects and acorns, and cover, including shade and nest sites. Bird species taking advantage of these resources include plain titmouse, western flycatcher, common flicker, and Nuttall's woodpecker. The bulky stick nests of the dusky-footed woodrat indicate its presence, and other, less obvious mammals include the deer mouse, California pocket mouse, striped skunk, deer, and gray fox.

Flowers of the coastal dune chaparral attract many nectivorous insects and birds. The Anna's and the Allen's hummingbirds are the most notable. Other birds include ground-foraging species, such as the California thrasher, California quail, and brown towhee. Characteristic reptiles are the southern alligator lizard and the western fence lizard, while mammalian life includes the brush mouse, California mouse, brush rabbit, and deer. Predators in this biome are the western rattlesnake, bobcat, and coyote.

The grassland biotic community occurs on the eastern side of the reserve. The seeds and grains produced by the forbs and grasses that make up the flora of this community provide a ready source of food for wildlife, but opportunities for cover are limited. Animal life found in the grassland biome includes many insect species, such as field crickets and several kinds of grasshoppers, and many rodents, including the western harvest mouse, deer mouse, and California ground squirrel. Common reptiles include the western fence lizard and the common kingsnake. Birds of the grassland include the mourning dove, Brewer's blackbird, and dark-eyed junco. At the top of the food web, the predators of

the grassland are active both night and day. Diurnally, birds of prey such as the red-tailed hawk and the American kestrel search for prey; nocturnally, the barn owl, the bobcat, and the coyote visit the area to forage.

The riparian woodland with its constant supply of water and lush vegetation offers wildlife a very productive and diverse biome. While some species are resident in this community, animals from surrounding communities also utilize the riparian resources for food gathering as well as shelter from predators or from the heat of the summer sun. A wide variety of wildlife may be found in the riparian area. Many insects, dragonflies for example, have an aquatic larval stage in their life cycle. Flies and butterflies are prevalent, the flies providing food for amphibians and reptiles, such as the Pacific tree frog and the western skink, and for insectivorous birds, such as the western flycatcher, yellow-rumped warbler, and common bushtit. The rufous-sided towhee, the house finch, the mockingbird, and the great horned owl are vocal members of the avifauna. Mammals characteristic of the riparian areas include the deer mouse, dusky-footed woodrat, opossum, and raccoon. The domestic cat, infiltrating from the nearby urban area, occurs as a predator and may put undue predation pressure on the native wildlife.

The wildlife species composition of the area today is very similar to the past except for the absence of a very notable predator, the grizzly bear. Urbanization and development are just recently making an impact on the native animal life of the area, indirectly by affecting the water quantity and quality of Los Osos Creek, and directly by habitat loss, disturbance due to increased human access, the introduction of the domestic cat as a predator, and competition for resources with introduced species, such as the house sparrow and the starling.

The reserve is within the historical range of the federally-listed endangered Morro Bay kangaroo rat and may still fulfill habitat requirements for this rare rodent. Other species of special concern that may occur within the unit are the Morro blue butterfly, Cooper's hawk, and northern harrier or marsh hawk.

Ecology

Three major types of vegetation, made up of five plant communities described previously, have developed within Los Osos Oaks State Reserve: coastal scrub, broadleaf evergreen forest, and streambank woodland and forest. The scrub and forest communities represent presumed successional stages in relation to geologic substrate in the Morro Bay area. The Los Osos area is situated on a lowland mantled by ancient dunes and forms the eastern boundary of a large Pleistocene deposit of deep, loose sand. The vegetation on the ancient sand sheet is dominated by woody species with an admixture of coast live oak, dune shrubs, and chaparral.

The plant communities in the unit provide important wildlife habitats. Numerous species of birds can be observed and are, in general, species characteristic of chaparral communities. The dense cover and abundant food supply also support several species of small mammals, as well as providing potential habitat for the Morro Bay kangaroo rat. The Morro Bay kangaroo rat is endemic to the Morro Bay area; its historical distribution coincides with the extent of the ancient sand sheet. Plants used as food by the kangaroo rat are found in the unit.

For management purposes, three ecological units have been identified within Los Osos Oaks State Reserve: riparian areas, coastal scrub, and oak forest. Principal considerations in managing these units include depletion of the water supply through agricultural pumping, coliform contamination of seepage areas, the reintroduction of fire into the scrub communities, and the assessment of the area for Morro Bay kangaroo rat habitat.

Cultural Resources

Archeological Sites

Four prehistoric archeological sites were recorded during a recent complete survey of this unit. These sites consist mostly of shellfish fragments and a limited amount of chipped stone debris, set on Pleistocene sand dunes apart from the groves of live oaks. One of the sites has been regularly subjected to illegal surface collecting and minor excavations.

Ethnographic Background

The Native American people who inhabited the central California coast prior to the Euroamerican period were known as the Chumash. The accounts of the early Spanish explorers depict sharp contrasts between the Chumash groups along the Santa Barbara Channel and those inhabiting the territory north of Point Conception. Cabrillo commented on the number and size of the villages found along the Santa Barbara Channel and the lack of villages on the coast north of Point Conception. Fages, a member of Portola's 1769 expedition, described the large villages found along the channel, all having populations in excess of 400, as pueblos. North of Point Conception, Fages depicted habitation sites as small or insignificant villages. The inhabitants were characterized as "very poor ill-conditioned Indians;" there is mention of a village without houses at Morro Bay.

Fages noted that the large villages along the channel had chiefs or captains (wot). The chief's primary role was that of military commander. The position was for life, and the individual had absolute, total independence. There is reference in the early Spanish accounts to only one captain or wot among all of the Northern Chumash; his name was Buchon. The Spaniards were told that Buchon, whose village was near Pismo Beach, took tribute for 20 leagues in all directions.

Based on archeological evidence and early ethnographic accounts, the Northern and Southern Chumash apparently shared similar food procurement and processing strategies. An extensive array of traps, nets, disguises, blinds, missiles and projectiles, fishing gear, and vegetable-gathering equipment was used. The wide variety of animals eaten included deer, sea mammals, bear, dog, wolf, fox, puma, skunk, raccoon, rodent, rabbit, mole, eagle, buzzard, snake, fish, and shellfish. Grinding implements, earth ovens, stone boiling in baskets, sun and smoke drying, as well as other implements and techniques, were used in food preparation.

Structures used by the Northern and Southern Chumash included ceremonial sweathouses, domed and conical buildings, and communal houses. The remains of a dwelling were excavated in 1961. The structure was circular, 25 to 30 feet in diameter. Archeological evidence indicates that it was dome shaped.

All of the coastal Chumash groups fished. Ethnographic accounts and faunal remains from excavated sites indicate that both the Northern and Channel Chumash used weir traps; dip, drag, gill, and seine nets; and hooks and lines. Hooks were made from cactus spines, shell, and bone. Spears and harpoons were also used. Both groups probably used the kelp fishery year-round. Channel Chumash, the only group to build and use the tomol (plank canoe), had access to the more seasonally available larger pelagic species, such as tuna and swordfish. Both the Channel and Northern Chumash used tule and dugout canoes.

Historic Background

What is now Los Osos Oaks State Reserve was once a part of a Mexican land grant, Canada de los Osos, given provisionally to Victor Linares in 1842. Linares sold the grant before it was legally his. The land grant was rightfully confirmed to John Wilson and James Scott who bought out Linares in September 1843. Wilson resided at Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, but more usually in the master's cabin of a schooner. In 1845, Wilson had an adobe ranch house built north of the reserve (the current Turri site). When Wilson visited his holdings in this part of the country, he resided there. Wilson bought out Scott in mid-1848.

Upon his death in October 1861, Wilson left the land of Canada de los Osos to his wife, Ramona Carrillo Wilson, and their son, John Wilson, Junior. John Senior had sent John Junior to school in England, and retained his stepson, Romualdo Pacheco, to serve as John Junior's agent. Two years after John Senior's death, Ramona gave her half of the land to Pacheco. In 1865, Romualdo Pacheco, who was then serving as state treasurer, bought out his half brother's interest. The day the deal was recorded in county records, Pacheco sold the property to Timothy Phelps of San Mateo County. Eighteen months later, Phelps sold the land to Thomas Hardy. A year later, Hardy sold it all to William H. Patterson, who broke up Canada de los Osos into farm plots. Plots 76 and 78 near the coast ultimately became part of the Spooners' Pecho Ranch and currently are part of Montana de Oro State Park. The Los Osos Oaks parcel was part of one of the farms. It is amazing that the oaks survived the land clearing for farming and grazing, which altered the surrounding landscape.

There have been attempts to place historic incidents that occurred on the four square leagues (18,000 acres) of Canada de los Osos within the current state reserve boundaries, but no concrete historical evidence exists.

Esthetic Resources

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is an area of visual and auditory contrasts. Huge, gnarled trees filter sun through their leaves, creating a dappled mosaic of light on the ground. Open areas of scrub oak are clothed in hanging lichens, highlighted by the blues and reds of wildflowers growing near them. Sounds are varied: the rush of wind through the trees and the cathedral-like stillness when it stops; the crackle of leaves underfoot; the whirring of a hummingbird in flight; and the gentle tinkling of running water. Mint crushed underfoot, buckbrush flowers, willows, and coyote brush create a world of scents.

Negative esthetic features in the immediate viewshed of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve include farm buildings and fields on the eastern boundary of the unit, the adjacent trailer park, and the traffic on Los Osos Valley Road.

Recreation Resources

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve was established in 1974 and is visited annually by about 5,000 persons. The complex natural resources of this unit provide excellent opportunities for the study of natural history and related sciences. Photography, interpretation, environmental education, and hiking also occur in the reserve. Trails, roadside parking, and an interpretive panel are the only recreational facilities located in this unit. Because of the unit's classification as a state reserve, future facility development will be limited to those facilities that accommodate and encourage daytime public use and enjoyment of the primary resources.

Resource Policy Formulation

Classification

Classification of a State Park System unit forms the foundation on which all management and development policies are based. Classification statutes contained in Article 1.7 of the Public Resources Code specify broad management objectives and improvements appropriate in a state reserve.

Los Osos State Reserve was acquired by the state in 1972. The unit was classified by the State Park and Recreation Commission in July 1974. Classification by the commission established this land as a unit of the State Park System and directed the department to manage the unit as specified in Public Resources Code Section 5019.65. This section reads as follows:

The purpose of a state reserve is to preserve its native ecological associations, unique faunal and floral characteristics, geologic features, and scenic qualities in a condition of undisturbed integrity. Resource manipulations shall be restricted to the minimum required to negate the deleterious influences of man.

Improvements undertaken shall be for the purpose of making the area available, on a day-use basis, for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of their natural features. Living and non-living resources contained within state reserves shall not be disturbed or removed for other than scientific or management purposes.

Declaration of Purpose

A declaration of purpose describes the purpose of the unit and identifies the prime resources, long-range management objectives, and the relationship between the unit's resources and recreational uses. A declaration of purpose was written for the state reserve in 1975 but was never presented to the State Park and Recreation Commission for approval.

Several changes in the declaration are proposed to clarify the department's management goals and objectives. The original and proposed declarations of purpose for the unit are as follows:

Original:

The purpose of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is to make available for the public, in an essentially natural condition forever, the outstanding grove of coast live oak with related understory and associated cultural values which exist in the watershed of Los Osos Creek near its crossing of Los Osos Valley Road. Only those recreational facilities for day use which are required to enable the public to see, enjoy, and understand the oak grove and the cultural values may be permitted.

Proposed:

The purpose of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is to protect and perpetuate the prime resource value in the unit, the coast live oak forest, as part of a healthy natural ecosystem for the enlightenment, inspiration, and enjoyment of present and future generations. The archeological resources found in the unit are also significant and shall be protected.

The long-range objectives of the department shall be to manage the unit in such a manner that the ecological processes function as closely as feasible to what they would be without modern human disturbance.

Appropriate visitor uses of the unit include only those activities that allow for and encourage enjoyment of the prime resource values and do not detract from or degrade the natural or cultural resources.

Zone of Primary Interest

The zone of primary interest is that area outside the unit in which land-use changes could adversely impact the resources of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. This area includes the adjacent community of Los Osos and the Los Osos Creek watershed. Specific concerns arising from uses on adjacent lands include the effects of pesticide use on agricultural land to the east, the possible introduction of feral animals and exotic plants from the residential area to the west, and the impact of road improvements to Los Osos Valley Road, which runs along the reserve's northern boundary.

In addition, the department should be concerned about activities on all lands, no matter how far from the unit, that can, through their development and use, adversely affect the unit's resources and features. Air pollution generated by the Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon power plants and pollution from other sources all potentially could affect Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Department officials should be aware of these potential threats and take action whenever possible to minimize them.

Resource Management Policies

Resource management in the State Park System is governed by laws contained in the Public Resources Code, by regulations in the California Administrative Code, by directives approved by the department's director, and by policies

approved by the State Park and Recreation Commission. General policies related to the unit classification and the declaration of purpose have been addressed in previous sections.

Specific departmental Resource Management Directives amplify the legal codes and provide clear management guidelines. Directives that are especially pertinent to existing or potential problems related to the management of resources in Los Osos Oaks State Reserve are:

- #6 State Reserves - Development and Resource Manipulation
- #33 Exotic Plant Species - Landscaping
- #34 Exotic Plants - Elimination
- #35 Wildlife Protection
- #46 Environmental Quality
- #58 Cultural Resource Protection
- #59 Underground Work
- #70 Archeological Sites

Directives #6, #58, and #59 are particularly relevant to planning issues for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve:

(6) Development in state reserves is limited to facilities required to enable visitors to see, enjoy, and understand the resources. These generally consist of perimeter access, interpretive facilities, trails, and overlooks. In state reserves, resources may not be manipulated or managed to enhance recreational experiences. Facilities not required for daytime public use and enjoyment of the primary resources are not appropriate.

(58) Cultural resources in the State Park System shall be protected against damaging or degrading influences, including deterioration or adverse modification of their environments. All evidence of such resources shall be investigated by qualified personnel, as designated by the director, before any restoration, reconstruction, or development is begun. If stabilization of cultural remains is required to prevent loss or deterioration, it shall be undertaken in ways that shall not threaten archeological, historical, or related environmental values.

(59) No underground work, whether original or maintenance, may be undertaken in the State Park System until clearance is given by a department archeologist. Emergency work required to protect the public health and safety may be undertaken without prior clearance, provided concurrent notice of the crisis is made to a department archeologist.

In addition to policies, directives, and laws that apply statewide, the following specific resource policies have been developed for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve:

Natural Resources

Hydrologic Resources

The water features in the unit are important to the perpetuation of the natural and esthetic values at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Any significant alteration of the hydrologic systems supporting these water features, either within or outside of the unit, may affect them significantly. These impacts need to be identified, monitored, and prevented or corrected before major State Park System values of the unit are lost.

Policy: The department shall be actively involved in local activities and land-use decisions that may result in such adverse impacts on the unit's water features as stream channelization, diversion, or pollution sources. Measures to maintain water quality, channel flow, and sediment rates shall be recommended and supported. No water shall be diverted within the unit's boundaries that will significantly affect the water features and the ecosystems they support.

Water Quality

Adjacent to Los Osos Oaks State Reserve are trailer parks. Discharge of the septic tank filter field systems from these developments contributes to a widespread and complex water quality problem including possible bacterial contamination from sewage sources, increased levels of nutrients and salts, and an additional volume of water increasing the level of the groundwater table. These factors can have adverse effects on the water quality of the unit and on the health of the coast live oak resource for which this unit was established.

Policy: The department shall regularly monitor the water resources of the unit, including the groundwater (the spring) and the surface water (Los Osos Creek), to determine water quality problems. If problems are identified, the department shall work with appropriate agencies in San Luis Obispo County to develop adequate water management plans to reduce the problems to state-accepted levels.

Paleontological Resources

No fossil resources are known to exist at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. It is possible that the sand deposits or alluvial deposits could yield fragmentary fossil material, although none has ever been reported to date.

Policy: In the event that a fossil discovery is made at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, the incident shall be promptly reported to the appropriate departmental staff person, who will determine the validity and significance of the discovery and take appropriate protective or stabilization action.

Mineral Resources

Sand has been commercially mined just south of the border of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve; however, the material is widespread and abundant. If mining operations were to resume, they would likely produce some negative impacts on the state reserve.

Policy: The department shall monitor sand mining activities on adjacent lands, and shall evaluate potential and actual detrimental effects if mining should resume.

Soil Constraints

Some of the soils of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve are poorly suited to the development of recreation facilities, buildings, and roads. Soil constraints, cited in the Soil Conservation Service Soil Survey of the coastal part of San Luis Obispo County, include being too sandy or too clayey and having a high shrink-swell potential or low strength, which would adversely affect plans for development of recreational facilities. Some soils have slow permeability and are poor filters, constraints for use of the soil for sanitary waste disposal. Other soils exhibit seepage and piping (the formation of subsurface cavities by water moving through the soil), which undermine their strength.

Policy: Soil characteristics shall be considered in the design and location of facilities. Soil loss due to erosion caused by facility development, visitor use, and unit operation and maintenance shall be monitored and projects shall be implemented when necessary to prevent soil losses and to restore soil integrity where possible.

Soil Erosion

Trails and streambanks at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve are experiencing erosion. As visitor use increases, erosion of the sandy soils due to trail development, foot traffic, horseback riding, and mountain bike use could accelerate and cause undue damage. It may be necessary to manage those most severely eroded areas and include soil erosion considerations in future plans for use of the unit.

Policy: The department shall endeavor to minimize human-caused erosion at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Unnatural or destructive erosion shall be controlled and prevented by means that are consistent with the goals of the state reserve. Where correction is necessary, all measures used shall be as unobtrusive as possible, fitting naturally into the environment, with the objective of restoring the natural condition.

Exotic Plant Species

German ivy, veldt grass, filaree, and annual introduced grasses have become established at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. German ivy occurs in the coast live oak forest. In this area, German ivy is successfully competing with native understory vegetation, whose perpetuation depends on the control of this exotic.

Policy: The department shall pursue a long-range objective of removing German ivy that has become established in the unit. Should additional exotic species become established in Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, high priority shall be given to controlling or eradicating where possible those species that are most invasive and conspicuous in the landscape.

Eucalyptus

Blue gum (Eucalyptus globulus) has been planted extensively in the Los Osos area. These trees, native to Australia, are well adapted to the marine Mediterranean climate and soil conditions found in the area. The species has become naturalized, reproducing via seed. The species is able to grow rapidly, quickly overtopping and eventually displacing native vegetation. Left unchecked, eucalyptus could eventually completely displace the oaks and other native vegetation in the reserve. In recognition of this threat to the unit's resources, the department initiated a resource management project in 1983 to remove all eucalyptus that had become established in the reserve. Over a three-year period, most of the eucalyptus trees were removed. Because this species is common in the surrounding area, it is likely that new seedlings will become established as seed is blown into the reserve or carried in by animals.

Policy: The department shall remove all the remaining mature eucalyptus trees in Los Osos Oaks State Reserve and establish an ongoing maintenance program to locate and remove all eucalyptus seedlings that become established.

Riparian Zone Management

The term "wetland" refers to any watercourse or body of water, the lands underlying or adjacent to these waters, and the wildlife and natural communities dependent upon the wetland habitat (Public Resources Code, Section 5812). With their diversity of plant and animal life, wetlands are important esthetic and recreational resources. A riparian zone is a type of wetland. In recognizing the significance of wetland ecosystems, the California Administrative Code (Sec. 5815) requires that the department "give particular recognition to opportunities for protecting and preserving wetlands lying within, or adjacent to, existing units of the State Park System..."

Within Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, land use upstream and adjacent to the riparian zone has resulted in impacts on the natural ecosystem through the introduction of non-native plant species, alteration of the hydrologic regime, soil erosion, and water pollution. The current boundary of the unit through the center of the Los Osos Creek channel limits management of the riparian zone in this unit.

Policy: The integrity of the riparian ecosystem of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve shall be protected through development and implementation of a riparian system management plan. Control of non-native species and revegetation shall be important elements of this plan. This plan will also provide guidelines for monitoring upstream land use. If lands within the riparian zone outside the unit become available, the department shall consider acquiring them for inclusion in the reserve.

Prescribed Fire Management

Before the 1920s, fires burned regularly throughout Los Osos Oaks State Reserve and vicinity. The fires were most often ignited by lightning in the late summer and early fall and by the intentional or accidental activities of Native Americans and ranchers. Wildfires began to be effectively suppressed in the late 1920s, and since then fire has only infrequently burned through

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Disruption of natural fire processes has resulted in ecological imbalances and the increased likelihood of destructive wildfires due to fuel accumulation. The reintroduction of fire through a carefully controlled prescribed fire program is needed to maintain native plant species and plant communities which developed under a regime of frequent fires, to restore the ecological processes occurring in the reserve to a more natural status, and to reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfires.

Policy: Fire shall be restored to its natural role in Los Osos Oaks State Reserve ecosystems in accord with department prescribed fire management policies. Fire management policies shall be based on fire models derived from burns conducted in similar types of vegetation. An ongoing Prescribed Fire Management Program shall be established and maintained. Perpetuation of the coast live oak forest, including the dwarf oaks, shall be an objective of the program.

Lichen Management

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve possesses a significant lichen community. Several species are restricted solely to this unit and represent species that are of special interest to the scientific community.

Policy: Areas known to possess significant populations of lichens of limited statewide distribution shall be considered for exclusion from an active fire management plan. These areas shall be so designated after consultation with a knowledgeable lichenologist.

Fire Prevention and Suppression

Wildfire can be a threat to natural resources, facilities, and human life and property. A prescribed Fire Management Program that simulates the historic natural fires of this region will reduce the damage from future wildfires, but cannot eliminate the threat of destructive wildfires during periods of fire weather conditions and from human causes. For these reasons, the department requires that a Wildfire Management Plan be developed for every State Park System unit that experiences wildland fires.

Because conventional fire control facilities and procedures can result in more serious and long-lasting impacts on State Park System resources than the wildfire itself, the development of special standards and procedures applicable to the state reserve environment is important.

Undesirable effects of suppression activities can be avoided by utilizing a planned program of modified fire suppression. This program divides the unit into compartments bordered by existing natural and artificial firebreaks. In the event of a wildfire, suppression activities are concentrated along the borders of a compartment, thereby minimizing resource damage. The program would also identify resource sensitivities of the reserve should additional suppression activities be required. Wildfire contingency planning in this manner will greatly reduce the likelihood of damage from suppression activities while providing for the necessary protection of resources and public safety.

Policy: The department shall work with the California Department of Forestry, the South Bay Fire District, and other appropriate agencies to implement a Wildfire Management Plan at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. This plan shall address all aspects of wildfire planning, including prevention, presuppression, and suppression. The plan shall identify modified fire suppression methods designed to preserve sensitive resources while protecting human lives and facilities.

Bicycle and Equestrian Use

Horseback riding and mountain bicycle touring are two popular recreation activities in the Morro Bay area. Trails in Los Osos Oaks State Reserve are used for these purposes. Long-term use of this unit by horses and bicycles will result in the degradation and destruction of vegetation and in soil erosion.

Policy: To preserve and protect the natural features for which Los Osos Oaks State Reserve was established, the department shall designate trails in this unit as foot trails only. Bicycles and horses shall be prohibited.

Oak Management

Through grazing pressures, habitat modification, and fire suppression, oaks in California have experienced a very low rate of regeneration. Most oak woodland/forest areas display a loss of natural age structure that typically exhibits a variety of different age classes. A plant community composed of even-aged individuals is considered to be an unstable community, especially when limited to the older age classes, as is found among the oaks in the unit. Little regeneration from seed has been noted in the unit's oak woodlands and forests.

Policy: To ensure the protection and perpetuation of the native oaks of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, the oak forest communities shall be managed to promote an increased representation of the younger age classes of the oaks. An oak monitoring program shall be established to determine annual recruitment and mortality of oaks and current age class representation.

Rare and Endangered Plants

Several rare or endangered plant species have been identified in the vicinity of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Although populations of some of these species have been accurately located, site-specific information for these sensitive plants is often lacking. As a result, rare or endangered plants can be inadvertently destroyed by development of facilities, maintenance programs, visitor use, or other activities.

Policy: Systematic surveys for rare and endangered plants shall be made throughout Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. If found, populations shall be mapped and management plans for their protection and perpetuation shall be developed. Any rare and endangered plants at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve shall be protected and managed for their perpetuation, in accordance with state law (PRC, Division 2, Chapter 10, Section 1900).

Before any potentially deleterious activity takes place, including trail construction or relocation, or prescribed burns, additional surveys for rare or endangered plants shall be made during the flowering season in the areas that will be affected.

Wildlife Management

Animal life is an important part of natural ecosystems and adds interest and variety to the reserve experience. Protection and perpetuation of natural wildlife populations is a major management objective at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve.

Policy: Altered natural habitats shall be restored as nearly as possible to conditions that would exist had natural ecological processes not been disrupted. Whether or not restoration of natural conditions is possible, it shall be the policy of the department to avoid significant imbalances caused by human influences on the natural wildlife populations. If it is necessary to regulate animal populations, the methods used shall be based on sound principles of ecosystem management, shall be consistent with the general policies of the department, and shall avoid disturbance to other natural values of the state reserve.

Wildlife Requiring Special Management Consideration

Several animal species in or near Los Osos Oaks State Reserve are of special management concern. The State Department of Fish and Game is concerned about these species due to a reduction in breeding status, suitable habitat, or other threats to the population. These species include the Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, red-shouldered hawk, loggerhead shrike, blue-gray gnatcatcher, and yellow warbler. Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is also within the historical range of the Morro Bay kangaroo rat, a state and federally listed endangered mammal.

Policy: Specific management programs shall be developed when appropriate for animal species that are threatened, endangered, or of special concern. Necessary and suitable habitat, where it exists, shall be perpetuated. Programs or projects undertaken at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve shall be planned and designed so that animal life requiring special management consideration will not be adversely affected. Resource management actions will focus on natural processes, in recognition of natural processes that are mutually beneficial to all important resources.

Cultural Resources

Archeological Resources

Archeological resources are known to exist at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, and there may be other such resources concealed by vegetation or more recent sand and soil deposits. It is possible that future disturbances, natural or cultural, will uncover such resources.

Policy: In the event that a new archeological discovery is made at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, the incident shall immediately be reported to the appropriate department staff person who will determine the validity and significance of the discovery and will recommend appropriate protective or stabilizing action. Specific management programs shall be developed when significant cultural resources are threatened, endangered, or of special concern.

Archeological Investigations

Like archeological resources in general, those found in Los Osos Oaks State Reserve are nonrenewable resources relating to California's past. They contain information necessary to reconstruct the complex mosaic of past cultures in our state that cover many millenia. It is department policy to preserve such resources in place whenever possible. It is also important for the department to have as much data as possible about the resources it is charged to protect and to present this information to the public as accurately as possible.

Policy: When land uses, facility development, or natural causes, such as erosion, create ongoing or unavoidable impacts to archeological sites, or where it is necessary to know the nature of the subsurface deposits, the department shall initiate a project to study these sites in an effort to preserve their heritage values. Such studies shall include efforts to assess age, cultural affiliation, artifact content, and significant attributes of these sites. Information collected through these efforts shall be used to guide preservation, management, and interpretive actions. Sites determined to be threatened shall prompt the department to undertake appropriate stabilization or protective measures to ensure against the inadvertent loss of heritage values.

Allowable Use Intensity

The California Public Resources Code, Section 5019.5, requires that a land carrying-capacity survey be made before the preparation of any development plan for any park or recreation area. Section 5001.96 further requires that attendance be held within limits so established. Allowable use intensity is a refinement of the land carrying-capacity concept and is prepared as part of the Resource Element of the General Plan in fulfillment of the above code sections.

Allowable use intensity is just one of several factors considered in developing the Land Use Element of the General Plan. Other factors that may also be considered in determining land use for any unit of the State Park System are classification and purpose, recreation needs, design considerations, and social carrying-capacity (or the desired quality of the recreation experience).

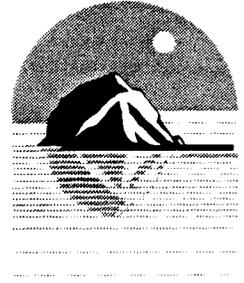
Allowable use intensity determinations establish the limits of development and use an area can sustain without an unacceptable degree of deterioration in the character and value of the scenic, natural, and cultural resources. Determinations are based on analysis and integration of resource management and protection objectives, resource constraints, and resource sensitivities information.

Resource management objectives are defined by the Public Resources Code and other law, unit classifications, and declarations of purpose, and by specific declarations of resource management policy presented in this Resource Element.

Resource constraints are factors that would make visitor use or facility development unsafe, economically impractical, or undesirable. They are determined by evaluating such factors as erodibility and compaction potential of soils, geologic hazards, slope stability and relief, hydrologic conditions, potential for pollution of surface waters, and flooding.

Sensitivities are conditions, locations, or values of resources that warrant restricted use or development to protect resources. Sensitivities are evaluated by considering such factors as the ability of the ecosystem to withstand human impact (ecological sensitivity), not only in the short term but also over a more extended time span; the fragility and significance of archeological and historical resources; vegetation characteristics such as durability, fragility, and regeneration rates; and wildlife considerations such as population levels, tolerance to human activity, and stability. Sensitivities may also include scenic resources; rare, threatened, or endangered plants, animals, and habitats; unique or scientifically important botanic features; and other resources of regional or statewide significance.

Based on the preceding factors, allowable use intensities for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve were determined and are shown on the allowable use intensity map. Nearly all of the reserve is in the low-intensity zone in keeping with the unit's purpose and the restrictions of the unit's classification. A small area of disturbed land along Los Osos Valley Road has been designated high-use intensity to allow space for parking and other support facilities.

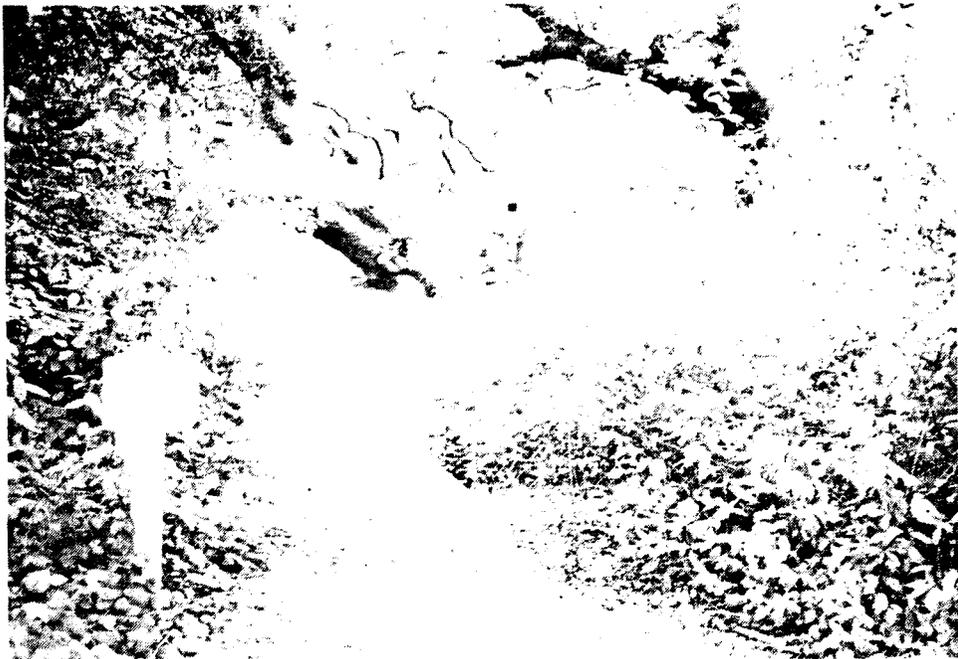


LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

LAND USE
AND
FACILITIES
ELEMENT



Existing parking area



Existing foot bridge/trail

LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

This element of the General Plan addresses current and proposed land use and facilities at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. The specific proposals recommended in this element are a logical extension of the analysis of allowable use intensities prepared in the Resource Element, which is based on the ability of the natural and cultural resources to accommodate recreational needs. However, the plan at this point also takes into consideration other factors such as the expressed interests of the public and other agencies, regional and statewide recreational issues, and physical design limits. After all factors are taken into consideration, a set of guidelines are established from which specific recommendations are made.

Regional Recreation Profile

The regional recreation profile provides a brief analysis of recreation needs by planning district (a grouping of contiguous counties with general economic and geographic similarities). The 11 planning districts in California are designated by the state Office of Planning and Research and are generally consistent with the boundaries of the regional councils of governments. Because California is a state with great social, economic, and geographic diversity, the division into manageable geographic units allows the department to more accurately identify recreation needs, problems, and priorities.

The Morro Bay State Park units are in Planning District 7, which includes five counties: San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz. This district contains about 4 percent of the state's population, yet only 2 percent of the district is urbanized. Therefore, much of the land is either undeveloped natural areas or in agricultural use.

Economically, agriculture ranks first in District 7. Tourism and recreation-associated services make up the second most important industry, centering on the cities of Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and the Monterey Peninsula, but relying on this region's wide beaches, spectacular natural beauty, and unspoiled areas for support.

The coastal areas (346 miles) offer most of the region's recreational opportunities, except for a variety of water-oriented recreation activities offered at several inland reservoirs. The district is a popular destination for tourists from the San Francisco Bay Area, Southern California, and the Central Valley.

Of the 11,230 square miles in the planning district, one-third is in public ownership. The U.S. Forest Service (Los Padres National Forest) manages a considerable portion of that land and is a principal recreation supplier. The California Department of Parks and Recreation manages 56 percent (63,000 acres) of the district's state-owned lands and offers a diversity of recreational opportunities.

Emphasizing the statewide demand for recreation in Planning District 7 is the fact that although only 6 percent of all State Park System land area is in the district, almost 30 percent of total state park visitor use occurs in this region. Demand for coastal camping and picnicking is particularly high throughout the district.

Closely associated with recreation demand and deficiencies is population growth. During the 30 years between 1955 and 1985, California's population doubled. During the same period, attendance in the State Park System grew tenfold. San Luis Obispo County, in which all the Morro Bay State Park units lie, is the fastest-growing coastal county in the state and is seventh fastest statewide. Population in 1985 was 189,605 and is projected to increase to 301,851 by the year 2000.

Out of 28 selected recreation activities, those with the highest projected demand in San Luis Obispo County by the year 2000 are picnicking, ocean swimming, camping, hiking/backpacking, and nature appreciation. All things considered, Planning District 7 is projected to have a deficiency by 1990 of 6,450 campsites, 12,843 picnic sites, and 1,642 miles of trail.

Existing Conditions

Land Use

Land uses immediately surrounding the reserve have not changed significantly since its establishment in 1974. However, growth through in-filling and expansion of the existing uses has been occurring at a phenomenal rate. The mostly-residential South Bay community, of which the reserve is a part, currently has a population of approximately 14,000, up from only 3,490 in 1970. Projections indicate a slowing of this growth rate to a population of 17,334 in the year 2000. Most people who live in the community work in other portions of the county. There is also a significant contingent of retired residents (approximately 22%).

Local recreation facilities consist of one community park and a nine-hole golf course. However, residents extensively use the many other nearby natural areas such as Los Osos Oaks State Reserve for recreational pursuits.

Land use immediately to the east of the reserve is agricultural. A mobile home park and other single-family residential areas adjoin the reserve on the west. Adjacent to the reserve on the south are generally newer rural residential estates. Across Los Osos Valley Road, which borders the unit on the north, is another area of suburban or rural residences.

Existing land use within the reserve has been restricted to hiking, walking, nature study, and other passive recreational uses because of the unit's classification and declaration of purpose. There is evidence that undeveloped portions of the reserve have also been used for mountain bike and equestrian purposes. The Natural History Association of Morro Bay, as well as local schools and the Audubon Society, regularly use the reserve for educational purposes. Visitor attendance at the reserve has steadily increased since its establishment and is estimated to be approximately 5,000 persons annually.

Facilities

The only access for vehicles is a small unpaved parking area for about eight vehicles along Los Osos Valley Road near the intersection of Palomino Drive. Several vehicle barriers made of eucalyptus logs border the lot. There are no roads in the reserve.

Los Osos Valley Road, a two-lane paved road approximately 30 feet wide, serves as the principal arterial connecting the South Bay community with the city of San Luis Obispo. The county is currently pursuing plans to widen this road to four lanes with a center turn-lane along each side. This would eliminate the existing access and parking area for the unit.

From the parking area a short loop trail enters the reserve, crossing a small wooden footbridge. The trail is approximately one mile long, with wooden posts installed at a number of key locations. An interpretive informational plaque is mounted on top of each post, but many of the plaques have been vandalized.

The reserve has no sign at the access point identifying it for the visitor. It has no electricity, no potable water, no restrooms, and no other visitor-serving facilities at this time.

Engineering Evaluation

The purpose of the engineering evaluation is to provide a general background of the capabilities and problems related to the engineering and utility aspects of proposed unit development. This report is based on information from various public agencies, utilities, and records. The information is very preliminary and does not constitute an in-depth engineering analysis, which is necessary for the final design of any particular development.

Water

There is no well, spring, or water supply facility available in this reserve. Although Los Osos Creek runs along the east boundary property line, the water quality and capacity are unknown. It is not considered a reliable source of water. An investigation shows that the California City Water Company has service to the adjacent property, Sunset Terrace Mobile Home Park, several hundred yards away. Therefore, the water company can provide service to Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. The state must pay the hook-up fee and the construction fee for the new main extension. However, the small quantities of water used in this reserve may not justify the cost of extending the water line.

Since this park only needs small quantities of water, another alternative is to truck in water from Morro Bay State Park and store it in a storage tank.

Sewage Disposal

There are no sewage disposal or pit toilet facilities available in this reserve.

Although there is no county control agency for disposal standards, all the on-site disposal requirements are controlled by the State Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region. San Luis Obispo County is planning to build a sewage treatment plant in the Los Osos area in the near future.

Furthermore, an underground water study is being conducted by the California Department of Water Resources, L.A. Southern District. So far, the study has shown that the Los Osos area has groundwater supply problems, groundwater contamination, and seawater intrusion into wells. A prohibition of new development has been proposed.

Possibilities for sewage disposal include connecting to the Los Osos sewage plant in the future (if the plant is constructed) or vault toilets with holding tanks. The method used will be in compliance with regulations of county health agencies and the California Water Quality Control Board.

Power and Phone

This reserve has no existing power and telephone services. Pacific Gas and Electric Company and Pacific Bell have service to a nearby location; thus, providing service to the reserve would not be a problem.

Pacific Gas and Electric has no natural gas service to this area. Liquid propane gas is another alternative.

Solid Waste

The garbage service in this area is provided by the San Luis Garbage Company.

Guidelines for Land Use and Facility Development

After careful consideration of user surveys, public concerns, regional and statewide recreational issues, departmental resource policies, and existing on-site conditions, the following guidelines were formulated to serve as a framework on which specific land use and facility recommendations can be based.

- The protection of existing natural values is the reason the reserve was established and must be the foremost consideration in its future use and development.
- Due to vandalism, special consideration should be given to the location, type of materials, and method of construction for any proposed facility.
- The existing loop trail displays only a small portion of the unit's resources. Any relocation or expansion of the existing trail system should be studied carefully with the involvement of the Natural History Association of Morro Bay prior to any construction.
- Because of the ecological sensitivity of the unit's resources, the unit's small size, and its location, only low-intensity day uses are appropriate in the reserve.
- Because of the unit's small size, limited access, and sensitive natural values, permanent developed facilities should not be constructed in the reserve.
- Immediate replacement parking for what will be eliminated by the widening of Los Osos Valley Road should be obtained and located so as to minimize impacts on the unit's natural values.

- Because of the rapid growth rate in the surrounding communities, increasing statewide visitation, and access improvements, attendance at the reserve is expected to increase beyond the capacity of existing facilities within the next five years. Due to the unit's ecological sensitivities, consideration should be given to the acquisition of additional land that can accommodate facilities capable of meeting increased visitation demands without causing significant negative ecological impacts.

Recommendations for Land Use and Facility Development

The following recommendations are made in order to maintain an optimum balance between providing quality visitor use facilities and preserving the natural and cultural resources of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve over the next 20 years. Due to its status as a reserve, preservation of natural and cultural values takes precedence over any attempt to maximize or meet recreational facility demands.

- In accordance with the declaration of purpose (page 24), with the bicycle and equestrian use policy (page 31), and State Park and Recreation Commission Resolution 6-88 (shown in the front of this document), motorized vehicles, bicycles, and horses are specifically prohibited from use in the reserve, except in designated parking areas.

Only low-intensity day uses are allowed. These shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Environmental education
 - Walking
 - Hiking
 - Birdwatching
 - Photography
 - Nature study
 - Interpretation
-
- Limit necessary vehicular access and parking use to the northeasterly edge of the unit, bordering Los Osos Valley Road (see Allowable Use Intensity map).
 - Monitor uncontrolled uses occurring in the reserve and install signs and fencing where necessary to control the destruction of natural values.
 - Develop a parking area along Los Osos Valley Road to accommodate 8 to 12 vehicles. This will replace the area that will be eliminated when Los Osos Valley Road is widened.
 - Install enclosures for portable restrooms.
 - Develop an exhibit shelter, containing orientation panels, near replacement parking area.
 - Install a unit identification sign near the replacement parking area.
 - Extend the trail system through additional areas within the reserve.

- When available from a willing seller, acquire land adjacent to and east of the reserve in order to develop permanent parking and day-use facilities that will not significantly affect the unit's natural or cultural values.

Implementation Priorities

The priorities in this section are intended to be a general guideline for the implementation of the land use and facility recommendations in this plan. In time, these are likely to change due to such factors as availability of funds or staff, unforeseen changes in resource conditions or off-site factors, and safety considerations. As each stage of development is completed, it will be prudent to evaluate how the facilities are being used and to determine what changes, if any, should be considered within the constraints of this plan.

The recommendations are listed in order of priority, from highest to lowest.

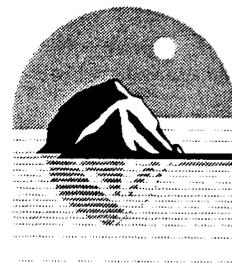
1. Replacement parking along Los Osos Valley Road.
2. Signs and/or fencing to protect natural and cultural values.
3. Unit identification sign.
4. Exhibit shelter at new parking area.
5. Trail system to other areas of the unit.
6. Acquisition of additional lands.

Local Coastal Plan Conformance

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve falls within the Estero planning area of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan/Local Coastal Plan. The plan places the reserve in an open-space land-use category. The recommendations contained in this plan are in conformance with the standards established in the Local Coastal Plan, which specifically states the following:

Los Osos Oaks Preserve

1. State Park Improvements. The state shall provide safer parking opportunities along Los Osos Valley Road. The widening of Los Osos Valley Road will require identification of new parking areas. Other improvements to this area should be limited to day-use provisions.



LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

Objectives

The general purpose of interpretation in a state reserve is to: orient the visitor, stimulate interest, and promote understanding and appreciation of the resources, thus making a visit more meaningful and enjoyable. This Interpretive Element provides guidance for ongoing and future interpretive development at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. It identifies interpretive themes, makes specific proposals, and establishes priorities. The element was initiated following the first public meeting for the Los Osos Oaks State Reserve General Plan held in Los Osos on November 12, 1986.

Interpretive Considerations

Environmental Influences

Rain, wind, cold temperatures, cloudiness, and heavy fog influence visitation to the state reserve as well as the types of interpretive facilities and programs that can be developed. The corrosive and abrasive effects of salt- and sand-laden sea breezes must be considered in the design, placement, and construction of interpretive facilities. Vandalism has been a problem here and interpretive development should be designed and placed to minimize this risk. Although the reserve is closed at night, illegal entry does occur.

Interpretive consideration should be given to the safety of the visitor as well as to the preservation of the reserve's resources. Poison oak can cause harm to unwary visitors. Restoring the natural environment by revegetating unplanned "volunteer" trails with indigenous species and correcting human-caused erosion will be an ongoing concern of the Department of Parks and Recreation. As open space outside the reserve decreases, air and water pollution, traffic congestion, noise levels, as well as visitor and resource protection problems will mount.

Visitors, Their Needs and Expectations

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve has an average annual visitation of 5,000 persons, a low number which is undoubtedly a result of poor access, limited parking, and lack of an identification sign on Los Osos Valley Road.

People of all ages come to see Los Osos Oaks. They come individually, in families, and in conservation, scout, or public school groups. Most are from the local area. The average visitor wants to spend one or more hours enjoying the reserve in its natural setting, while learning something about the natural history of the area. Visitation varies from month to month, depending on many factors -- the weather, migrating wildlife, vegetation in bloom, and scheduling of tours, to name a few.

A prime visitor need is for clear orientation to what is available to see and do at Los Osos Oaks, including when and where special activities will be conducted. Interpretation can enhance the public's enjoyment and appreciation of the reserve. It can also be an excellent tool for presenting resource and visitor protection information, as it explains the reasons behind rules and thus encourages compliance.

Interpretive Period

The department will interpret a flow of history at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, from geologic times to the present -- whether or not the whole spectrum of change is actually presented to the public.

Interpretive Themes

Although the scope of interpretive development will not be extensive in this unit, a range of appropriate interpretive themes and sub-themes are presented in this section to provide flexibility for future interpretation using a variety of media. Interpretation will principally focus on the natural resources and the importance of adhering to management rules for the future preservation of the reserve.

Primary Theme: Dynamic Communities Live Within Los Osos Oaks State Reserve

While every animal and plant has its own place in the coastal scrub and oak forest of the state reserve, each is affected by others and by the environment in which they live. Interpretation will encompass the ecology of this special place, highlighting many of the communities of living things and their interaction with one another.

Sub-Themes:

The Coast Live Oak: Generous Host to a Community Think of the live oak as one of nature's apartment blocks, with a constantly changing population of animals and plants. Interpretation will look at the host and how it provides food, cover, shade, and nesting sites for a diversity of life.

The Producer-Consumer-Reducer Pyramid in Los Osos Oaks The ecosystem of Los Osos Oaks needs energy to maintain itself. Like a pyramid, nature has created a method for sharing energy among life forms. Interpretation will focus on the interdependency of plants and animals in the reserve.

A Bird for Each Habitat Interpretation will examine the range of birds that make their home in the reserve, including Anna's and Allen's hummingbirds, the western flycatcher, the common flicker, Nuttall's woodpecker, the red-tailed hawk, and the great horned owl, to name a few.

Tracking Down Mammals Interpretation will help visitors recognize animal tracks and trails, holes and burrows, gnaw marks, droppings, and other clues in order to discover the presence of mammals in their different habitats in the reserve.

Primary Theme: The Chumash: Getting the Most Out of Their Natural World

A community of Native Americans called Chumash once depended for survival on the resources found at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. Their lives revolved around the seasonal changes in the environment and the varying forms of resources available to them. Interpretation will provide visitors an understanding of these people and their long and close tradition of interaction with the environment.

Primary Theme: Protecting the Reserve Is Your Responsibility

The future environmental quality of the state reserve lies with each visitor. Interpretation will stress how erosion can be minimized and plants and animals preserved for generations, if visitors are mindful of the rules that protect the reserve. By staying on marked trails, visitors will also avoid hazards, such as unpleasant encounters with poison oak.

Proposed Interpretation

Facilities and Media

A system of markers currently provides interpretive information for visitors hiking along the reserve's scenic trail. Vandalism of these markers has been a problem and, because they are located in isolated areas along the trail, it is expected that it will continue. The department will endeavor to see they are properly maintained. However, any new interpretive development will be located in the new, expanded parking area. Here the markers will be more visible and easier to protect.

It is recommended that one exhibit shelter be developed and located in the parking area to house four interpretive panels for the unit. One would orient visitors to the reserve with a map indicating trails, points of interest, and distances, while the other three would focus on the previously described interpretive themes, dealing with the unit's resources and rules for the preservation of the unit. The shelter could be made free-standing or attached to a permanent structure. Either way, it should appear attractive and substantial and, as much as possible, impervious to the elements and vandalism. The size of the shelter and panels should be standardized so that seasonal exhibits or those that are worn out can be easily replaced.

Publications such as trail guides, monthly or seasonal visitor activity calendars, bird and plant lists, orientation brochures, and books are highly valuable interpretive media, and their development should be encouraged for the state reserve. One such guide to Los Osos Oaks has been published by the Natural History Association of San Luis Obispo Coast, Inc. Publications like these have souvenir value and they allow the visitor, by way of text and bibliographies, to learn more about the reserve after they leave, or to prepare themselves for a return visit. Many of these interpretive items could be made available at either the nearby Morro Bay Museum of Natural History at Morro Bay State Park or the park headquarters at Montana de Oro State Park. Visitors should also be encouraged to visit the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History for a more comprehensive interpretation of the natural history of the area. The teacher's guide, produced by the Natural History Association, should continue to be updated for Los Osos Oaks to encourage and facilitate visitation by school groups.

Visitor Activities

Talks, guided walks, and orientation services offered by park personnel and docents provide the most effective interpretive techniques because they are interactive and are responsive to the immediate needs of visitors. At present, a great percentage of interpretation at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is carried out through these personal services. It is recommended that they be continued.

Appropriate interpretive activities for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve should include formal and informal talks about the unit's natural and historic resources and the State Park System, guided walks, bird and animal studies, and various environmental education programs.

Interpretive Associations

The Natural History Association of San Luis Obispo Coast, Inc. is the department's official cooperating association for state parks along the San Luis Obispo coast. Founded in 1977 and headquartered at the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History at Morro Bay State Park, the association's membership provides nearly all the interpretive programs for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. In the past they have developed the self-guided interpretive trail signs, provided docent-led tours, and prepared teacher's guides on the reserve's resources. They sponsor special events that produce revenue for planned development, programs, and maintenance of the reserve and its facilities. The Audubon Society also has a continuing interest in providing interpretive walks in the reserve.

Interpretive Concessions

A general statement of concession policy, adopted by the California State Park and Recreation Commission, reads as follows:

Recognizing the diverse missions of the Department of Parks and Recreation relative to providing recreation opportunities and preserving and interpreting natural and historic resources, it shall be the department's policy to enter into concession contracts for the provision of products, facilities, programs, and management and visitor services that will provide for the enhancement of visitor use and enjoyment, as well as visitor safety and convenience.

Such concessions should not create added financial burden on the state and, wherever possible, shall either reduce costs or generate revenues that aid in maintaining and expanding the State Park System. In carrying out this policy, the department shall observe and adhere to the provisions of the Public Resources Code that forbid commercial exploitation of resources in units of the State Park System, and that limit the kinds of improvements and activities that are allowed in certain types of units.

Appropriate activities for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve could include interpretive concessions.

Interpretive Collections

There are no interpretive collections directly associated with Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. However, resources at the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History in Morro Bay State Park could be made available to trained docents and staff for interpretive programs.

Recommendations

The following ongoing interpretive activities should continue to be encouraged:

Maintain and improve existing interpretive trail signs.

Schedule interpretive walks and on- and off-site talks when projected visitor interest warrants these efforts.

Encourage the recruitment of volunteers to increase the reserve's interpretive services.

Encourage the development and continual updating of monthly or seasonal visitor activity calendars, bird, animal, and plant lists, orientation brochures, books, and bibliographies to highlight the resources of Los Osos Oaks. These should be made readily available to visitors in the Morro Bay area.

Continue to update the teacher's guide with lesson plans for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve to encourage and facilitate visitation by school groups.

Development priority should be given to the interpretive activities listed below:

Construct new exhibit structure near the new parking area.

Develop an orientation panel and a series of interpretive panels based on the themes listed, and rotate them seasonally.



LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

OPERATIONS ELEMENT

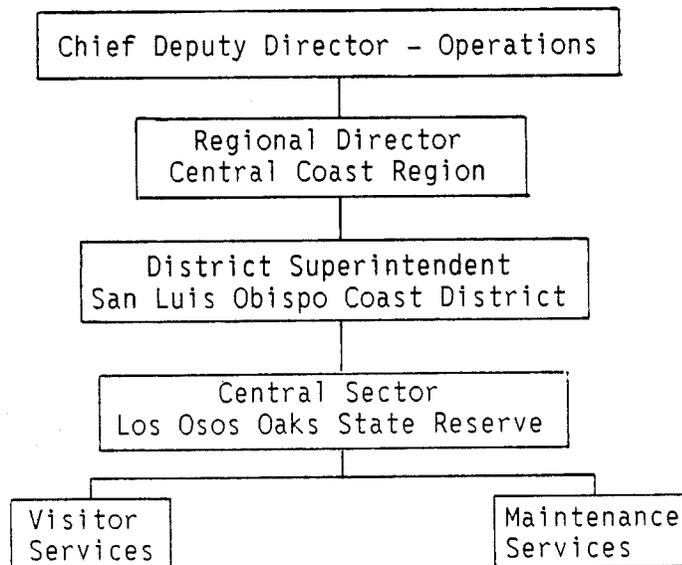
OPERATIONS ELEMENT

This element defines how the operations staff will carry out its responsibilities to operate and care for the park, protect the resources, serve park visitors, provide interpretive opportunity, enforce the law, ensure proper park use, and maintain facilities within statewide standards for maintenance.

The Operations Element outlines broad operational goals for the unit within the objectives for implementing the General Plan. This element assesses the impact of the General Plan's resource management policies and land use/facilities proposals on the unit's existing operations. It identifies existing and potential operations problems and strategies for solution.

The operational responsibilities are carried out by personnel at the unit, who are organized within the North Sector of the San Luis Obispo Coast District. The district superintendent provides supervision for three sectors; the district superintendent reports to the regional director of the Central Coast Region in Monterey. At the unit level, operating functions are divided into visitor services and maintenance. Administrative services are provided at the district level.

PARK OPERATIONS ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE



Existing Situation

Operations Summary

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve has been operated as a state reserve since its establishment in 1974. The unit is visited by more than 5,000 people each year; most are from the local community. There is no permanent staff assigned to the unit, and the only developed facilities consist of a loop nature trail and an unimproved parking area. Most of the interpretive hiking is conducted by volunteers.

Special Considerations

Public Protection

Because of urban growth in the area, law enforcement presence in the park will be necessary. Residential communities bordering the unit will require that the unit law enforcement staff monitor unit boundaries for trespass, off-highway vehicle use, fire hazards, trash dumping, and feral animals. Archeological sites will be monitored for illegal collecting.

Maintenance and Housekeeping

Care and upkeep of this unit is complicated due to the size, location, and type of unit. The main workload will be litter pickup, trail maintenance, exotic vegetation control, and boundary upkeep. The absence of major facilities eases the workload to a degree, but the distance from main work locations makes it more difficult.

Community Interest

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve in nature is a very delicate unit, and groups involved with it, such as the Natural History Association, are all very sensitive to this fact. They convey this in their guided nature walks for school groups and others, and they take a very personal interest in the future of this unit. Keeping them advised will be an important aspect of any future activities.

Utility Emergencies

There is an ever-present danger of a radiological release from the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. The unit staff would have to implement emergency procedures, which will be identified in a comprehensive evacuation plan. The plan will also require coordination of park efforts with the California Highway Patrol and Caltrans. This coordination will require a state park representative to be at the County Office of Emergency Services building.

Off-Highway Vehicles

Off-highway vehicle activity in the unit is a problem that will increase with urban growth in the community. The reserve is flanked by agricultural land on one side and residences on another. It is recommended that access areas be posted and that enforcement staff take strict enforcement action.

Easements and Rights-of-Way

Due to the unit's small size and location and the fact that it is surrounded by public land and private developments, it will have to be closely monitored to ensure that its delicate resources are not damaged or encroached upon and that appropriate public use not be inhibited.

Jurisdictions

Operations depend on maintenance of close working relationships between the department and all the agencies we deal with locally. The district superintendent carefully coordinates with federal, state, and county governments, and provides for liaison with elected officials to ensure that from good communications, problems and conflicts can be anticipated and avoided.

General Plan Implementation

Goals and Objectives

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve was established to preserve for the people of California a remnant of a unique California landscape and to provide for public access, enjoyment, and understanding of the reserve.

Operational Problems and Solutions

The preceding list of special considerations includes existing problems undergoing resolution. As development and facilities increase, public visitation will normally increase. Each of the following factors will create important new impacts on operations.

-- Trail System Expansion

Maintenance and patrol of an expanded trail system are a significant operations responsibility. Additional staffing and operational expenses will be required to maintain and protect the reserve and its newly accessible resources.

-- Resource Management

The Resource Element for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve identifies several major resource management programs that will be an operations responsibility. Control of exotic plant species, wildlife protection, cultural resource protection, and archeological site preservation are some of the most important programs. Protecting these resources and educating the public and staff to the sensitive nature of all nonrenewable cultural resources will be a continuing challenge to management.

Operational Impacts

The new developments, mainly hiking trails expected to attract consistent year-round use, will constitute a major operational item. This trail system should be carefully planned and constructed for minimum maintenance. District management recognizes the need to allocate personnel, funds, and volunteer efforts toward this system.

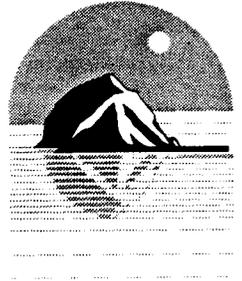
Volunteerism

A docent organization has been formed within the district. With development of the trail system and a parking lot, the docent program will be enhanced to increase interpretive activities at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve.

Visitor Safety

The safety of visitors to Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is a prime concern. A pre-accident plan will be developed that will address the problem of visitor safety. Access to the interior of the unit is limited because there are no roads. First-aid situations and other emergencies will require that the responders enter the reserve on foot.

Many of the interpretive methods described in the Interpretive Element will help protect the safety of visitors, such as interpretive signs, warning signs, and educational programs.



LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

CONCESSIONS ELEMENT

CONCESSIONS ELEMENT

The Concessions Element of the General Plan consists of an evaluation of existing and potential concession activities, an inventory of additional visitor services, and a statement of appropriate concession policies and guidelines consistent with the unit's classification.

A Concessions Element is a required aspect of general planning for all park units. The Public Resources Code, Section 5080.02 et seq., describes the manner in which concessions can be operated in the State Park System.

Definition

A concession is defined as authority to permit uses of state park lands and/or facilities for a specified period of time. The intent is to provide the public with goods, services, or facilities that the department cannot provide as conveniently or efficiently, or to permit limited uses of state park lands for other purposes compatible with the public interest and consistent with the Public Resources Code.

General Concession Policies

1. It is the department's policy to enter into concession contracts for the provision of services, products, facilities, programs, and management and/or visitor services that will provide for the enhancement of recreational and educational experiences in concert with visitor safety and convenience. Such concessions should not create an added financial burden on the state and, wherever possible, shall reduce costs and/or generate revenues to aid in maintaining and expanding the State Park System.
2. An economic feasibility study of proposed concessions shall be conducted by the Office of Economic and Fiscal Affairs, with participation and review by Resource Protection, Interpretive Services, Development, Operations, Acquisition, and Statewide Planning. Final approval for development and operation of a proposed concession will be made by the director of the Department of Parks and Recreation.
3. It is the policy of the department to cultivate and encourage small business and ethnic and racial minority-owned/operated businesses as concessionaires within the State Park System.
4. Specific concession proposals shall be analyzed on a case-by-case basis as submitted to the department.
5. It is the department's policy to generally avoid entering into convenience-type concession agreements for facilities, products, or programs that are adequately located a short distance outside state park unit boundaries, provided that such travel will not unduly endanger or inconvenience visitors or lead to an unreasonable consumption of transportation fuels.

6. It is the policy of the department that concessions shall provide facilities, products, programs, or services at prices competitive with similar businesses outside State Park System units.

Current and Recommended Concessions

There are no current concessions at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. The concession potential in this state reserve is very limited. This is because of State Park System management principles established for natural and cultural preservation and interpretation. Consequently, all concession developments, programs, and services must be compatible with the unit classification and General Plan provisions.

The plan does not recommend any concessions because, at present, there is no recognized need. Many retail services needed by park visitors, such as groceries, are available in the local communities close to the reserve. Interpretation is largely self-guided and is aided by nonprofit interpretive associations, which are encouraged and expected to continue (see Interpretive Element).

Although the plan does not recommend any at this time, it is not possible to predict all potential future concession activities. Any specific proposals made to the department shall be studied on a case-by-case basis.



LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ELEMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ELEMENT

The Environmental Impact Element serves as the environmental impact report required by the California Environmental Quality Act and the State EIR Guidelines.

The Environmental Impact Element incorporates by reference the other elements of the General Plan for the Project Description and the Description of the Existing Environment. It should be recognized that the level of detail of the Environmental Impact Element is commensurate with that of the General Plan. As site-specific development and resource management plans are proposed, they will be subject to further environmental review, and the appropriate environmental documents will be prepared, if necessary.

This Environmental Impact Element covers the proposals for resource management and protection, land use, and facility development.

Project Description

See the Resource, Land Use and Facility, and Interpretive Elements.

Description of the Existing Environment

See the Resource, Land Use and Facility, and Interpretive Elements.

Significant Environmental Effects

1. The expansion of trails could accelerate soil erosion and result in vegetation loss from its removal in construction and from incidental destruction by the public.
2. Trail construction could impact archeological resources.
3. Fire suppression activities could adversely affect vegetation and soil stability at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve.
4. Los Osos Oaks State Reserve is within the historical range of the state and federally listed endangered Morro Bay kangaroo rat. Increased public use could disturb its habitat and reduce its range.
5. The construction of the parking area may require the removal of some vegetation and the intrusion of traffic noise further into the interior of the state reserve.

Unavoidable Environmental Effects

Removal of vegetation, construction and maintenance of roads and trails, and creation of impervious surface areas will accelerate soil erosion in those disturbed areas.

Mitigation Measures

1. All excavation proposals will be reviewed by department historians and/or archeologists. Excavations or ground disturbances in known culturally sensitive areas will be monitored. If any cultural resources are accidentally uncovered during development, all work will cease until the site has been checked by an archeologist or historian and appropriate mitigation is developed.
2. Facilities will be sited to reduce vegetation loss.
3. The department will maintain a fire management plan to reduce excessive fuel accumulations and restore fire to its natural role in the ecosystem at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. During periods of extreme fire hazard, certain uses or activities may be curtailed or restricted.
4. The fire management plan will be developed to reduce resource impacts from fire suppression activities, such as the grading to create firebreaks or emergency access for fire-fighting vehicles.
5. Trail alignments will be selected and developed with the cooperation of resource specialists, unit staff, and user groups to reduce soil erosion, vegetation loss, and degradation of cultural values.
6. Future acquisition of land in the vicinity of Los Osos Oaks State Reserve could provide necessary public parking without the intrusion and impacts to the resources of the state reserve.

Alternatives

Several alternative facility development configurations and levels of development were considered and presented to the public during the evolution of the proposed plan. The alternatives considered, but not selected as the proposed plan, are discussed here. The alternatives of less or more intensive development are not ruled out with the adoption of the General Plan. The General Plan is only a guideline for development. Additional or more intensive development may be possible to a minor degree, within the environmental constraints and General Plan guidelines, to meet increased or changing recreational demands. Conversely, in preparation of site development plans, previously unknown environmental constraints may require less intensive development. The facility development proposals indicate what is estimated to be an acceptable range.

Alternative 1

A day-use area, including an access road, parking area for 10-15 vehicles, picnic tables, restrooms, and interpretive shelter/panels could be located in a meadow/grassland in the eastern half of the unit. Additional trails would be constructed. This alternative would require the loss of the meadow area in the unit along with the destruction of some vegetation. Several trees would be removed to provide the road access to the parking area.

Alternative 2

The no-project alternative, which would not provide any new parking or extension of trails. The county is proposing to widen Los Osos Valley Road. The existing roadside parking will be lost and there would be no new parking available for the unit if this alternative were chosen.

Relationship Between Short-Term Uses and Maintenance or Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

The proposed long-term and short-term use is preservation and recreation. The resources will be protected, and should another use prove more beneficial to the public than preservation, the resources will be available. There is no intent to enhance potential productivity. Natural resource value may be improved through resource management programs such as native plant revegetation or dune stability.

Irreversible Environmental Changes

No new land areas or natural resources will be irreversibly committed with implementation of the plan. Development proposals generally involve areas of previous impact or suitability for development, and the nature of the development is such that it could be removed, and the sites returned to a near pre-development condition. Only the building materials and the energy consumed in construction, operation, and maintenance may be considered an irreversible commitment of resources.

Growth-Inducing Impacts

There will be a minor growth-inducing impact in the surrounding community due to increased recreational capacity. Increased recreational capacity may influence demand for support facilities such as service stations, grocery stores, restaurants, and sports equipment outlets. However, the impact is not expected to be significant given the level of the proposed facility development. Most of the facility development is proposed to enhance or better accommodate existing use. The potential increase in use relative to the existing regional supply of visitor-support facilities is relatively small.

Effects Found Not Significant

1. Traffic volumes should not significantly increase at this unit. The proposed facilities will not substantially increase visitor capacity. Generally, they will accommodate or enhance the existing use. Population growth and changing recreational use patterns will have greater impact on the level of recreational use.
2. The proposed development may alter the rate and timing of runoff. However, in comparison to the total watershed area, the change will not be significant.
3. Air quality and noise impacts were not considered significant. Hiking and nature study will not create any significant noise levels at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve.
4. Sewage and waste production, water consumption, and fuel consumption will rise proportionally with the rise in public use.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

The Department of Parks and Recreation has circulated the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report for public review to state agencies through the State Clearinghouse, Sierra Club, City of Morro Bay, County of San Luis Obispo, California Coastal Commission, Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay Golf Course Advisory Committee, Natural History Association Docent Council, and the Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter of Small Wilderness Area Preservation. Notice of availability was published in the San Luis Obispo Telegram-Tribune. Copies of the document were made available for public review at the County Library Branch in the City of Morro Bay and the District Office, Department of Parks and Recreation. Comments were received from the California Department of Transportation, City of Morro Bay, Sierra Club, California Coastal Commission, San Luis Obispo County, Bureau of Land Management, Docent Council, and Ms. Betty Schetzer.

The numbered responses correspond to the numbered sections indicated in the comments.

RESPONSES

1. The department does not believe the proposed improvements at the North Studio Drive parking area will justify such a capital expenditure for highway improvements.

2. As Yerba Buena Street is the primary access to the state beach, the department agrees that it should participate in a proportionate share of future costs for signalization at the intersection of Highway 1 and Yerba Buena Street.

It is the department's desire to coordinate with the city regarding the drainage improvements which are reasonable and necessary, and which will be consistent with coastal resource preservation standards.

The plan currently identifies improvements to the existing day use area at the entrance. Screened dressing areas or a comfort station would be appropriate at this location. Due to the lack of space, potential erosion, and negative visual considerations, such structures are not appropriate along the bluff on state beach property.

The department has received significant criticism in the past for proposed development which would increase traffic in this residential area. In addition, the plan is recommending day use improvements in other areas of the park which are intended to minimize uncontrolled access and use in the neighborhood adjacent to the unit. The plan currently identifies adding three additional parking spaces at the seaward end of Hatteras Street. The department will maximize parking at this location if the city wishes. However, it is our desire to limit it to a maximum of 0 vehicles.

3. The Preliminary General Plan proposes an oak monitoring program. The purpose of this program is to gather data over a period of time to determine the age structure of the oak population. There is no proposal to remove any trees to balance the age structure.

4. Our population projections are the same as were used in the approved Local Coastal Plan. They are projections based on existing conditions which take utility limitations into consideration. Obviously, a change in the sewer capacity would affect this figure. However, it is our understanding that a sewer project has not yet been approved.

5. The department is cooperating with the Department of Fish and Game and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in habitat protection and enhancement for the Morro Bay kangaroo rat. Translocation of the kangaroo rat has not been given much consideration due to the elusiveness of the individuals, the possibility of inducing fatal stress in trapping and transportation, and the increased susceptibility of translocated individuals to predators.

6. The plan does not recommend adding water at this time. This is an engineering evaluation of the potential for adding water. If acquisition should occur in the future, the department may want to provide water at the new properties.

7. The plan does not propose expansion of parking capacity. Landscaping and vehicle control barriers are proposed to control and reduce erosion.

8. As stated in the plan, sewer service is provided by the City of Morro Bay.

9. Current regulations prohibit operation of unauthorized vehicles on the beach. The lack of enforcement personnel is a problem. The regulation of operation of jet skis in near-shore waters is beyond the department's authority.

10. The department does not believe that addition of an outdoor shower will have a significant effect on the water supply for Cayucos.

11. Any concession proposal would be evaluated on the basis of need or economic feasibility, and any concession agreement would require the concessionaire to provide trash receptacles and maintain the premises in an acceptable condition.

12. See Response No. 9.

13. The plan currently proposes significant improvements for day users, and no significant expansion of camping. This proposal is an attempt to help balance this inequity for peak use times. A good portion of the day use comes from the local area. With local growth, the community must be willing to proportionally increase its day use facilities. Overflow camping at the Cloisters site could be limited to overnight stays with time limits established which would prevent or substantially reduce conflict with day use.

14. The Land Use Element proposes to renovate the layout of the existing campground to provide more tent campsites at Atascadero State Beach.

15. The policies as described on pages 26 - 28 pertain primarily to facilities and development on lands in Morro Strand State Beach. However, the policy guidelines related to structural protection and minimizing impacts to recreation and natural processes can be applied if necessary to adjacent private property concerns. While the department is generally opposed to using State Park System lands for construction of shoreline devices, the department recognizes the serious problems confronting private landowners along Studio Drive. Encroachment of revetments will require a case-by-case analysis. There are a variety of possibilities that the department and private landowners may pursue as solutions to the beach erosion/revetment problem. Resolution will involve San Luis Obispo County and the Coastal Commission.

16. Disposition of the existing encroachment may not be decided by a simple policy declaration, but may be decided by negotiation with the individual landowners. Therefore, the department has not developed a policy for the existing encroachments.

17. The department is working with the County of San Luis Obispo to replace the parking area. The replacement parking area will be located adjacent to the road.

18. The purpose of the state reserve is not provision of day use; however, day use is permitted. The new Declaration of Purpose is in conformance with Section 5019.65 of the Public Resources Code.

19. See Response No. 16. The county is responsible for mitigation of the disturbance of the drainage near the creek.

20. Offshore (oil) operations would not be an immediate threat to air quality at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve.

21. Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo, and Hearst Castle are foci of tourism in San Luis Obispo County. However, the discussion was regarding Planning District 7, which includes five counties from Santa Cruz south to Santa Barbara. Thirty percent of all State Park System use occurs in this district, not just in the San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay, and Hearst Castle area.

22. The Resource Element policy on bicycle and equestrian use (page 30) clearly states: "Bicycles and horses shall be prohibited."
23. See Responses Nos. 17 and 19.
24. See response No. 6. The plan recommends installing enclosures to screen portable restrooms at the parking area along Los Osos Oaks Road. It is the department's position that these are needed because of the school groups and tours that use the state reserve. Users would be encouraged to stay on trails, and environmental degradation would be minimized by providing this amenity.
25. See Response No. 17.
26. As stated in the introductory paragraph, these priorities are flexible. The exhibit shelter was given priority because it could serve for interpretation of the existing trail system, and could be updated or revised to include any information pertinent to new trails.
27. A land acquisition proposal for this unit would have to compete with other proposals for units of the State Park System throughout the state, and, therefore, would have difficulty getting a very high priority.
28. Better posting and protection at the state reserve are very high priority, and are placed as priority 2.
29. Development of the trail system and interpretive features will be carried out in cooperation with the Docent Council.
30. See Response No. 29. Specific design features of the state reserve trails are beyond the scope of the General Plan. However, as part of the public record, the suggestions will be available for future planners.
31. The Resource Element recognizes (page 16) the presence of the spring in the state reserve.
32. See Response No. 24.
33. See Response No. 29.
34. Concur. This should be corrected in the final document.

35. The Land Use Element (page 59, item 11) proposes development of an accessway to the beach from Beachcomber Drive, north of the campground. This is in conformance with the Local Coastal Plan.

36. Unless there is a clear and compelling justification, such as at Los Osos Oaks State Reserve, where a unit cannot be developed or used without additional land, the department does not usually make acquisition recommendations which might damage a property owner's ability to use the land.

37. The department does not have regulatory authority over those sources of pollution outside Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. The water quality policy, as part of the Preliminary General Plan, has not yet been adopted by the State Park and Recreation Commission. If and when the plan is adopted, the policy is only a direction to the department and its staff to monitor the water quality, and cooperate with those agencies that have regulatory power to aid in maintenance of acceptable water quality.

38. The policy permits use of horses in designated areas and trails. These areas or trails have not yet been designated, or posted. Designation of these areas and trails will be the responsibility of the district, and they will be selected in cooperation with users and department resource specialists. The designated areas and trails may be rotated to reduce the impact and allow natural systems to recover.

39. Enforcement of any regulations on the state beach is primarily dependent on the availability of enforcement personnel. See Response No. 28.

40. See Response No. 11.

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH

1400 TENTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814James M. Doyle
CA Dept. of Parks & Recreation
1416 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

February 5, 1988

Subject: Morro Bay State Beaches General Plans
SCH# 87040815

Dear Mr. Doyle:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to selected state agencies for review. The review period is closed and the comments of the individual agency(ies) is(are) enclosed. Also, on the enclosed Notice of Completion, the Clearinghouse has checked which agencies have commented. Please review the Notice of Completion to ensure that your comment package is complete. If the package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Your eight-digit State Clearinghouse number should be used so that we may reply promptly.

Please note that recent legislation requires that a responsible agency or other public agency shall only make substantive comments on a project which are within the area of the agency's expertise or which relate to activities which that agency must carry out or approve. (AB 2583, Ch. 1514, Stats. 1984.)

These comments are forwarded for your use in preparing your final EIR. If you need more information or clarification, we suggest you contact the commenting agency at your earliest convenience.

Please contact Keith Lee at 916/445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David C. Nuhenkamp".

David C. Nuhenkamp
Chief
Office of Permit Assistance

cc: Resources Agency

Enclosures

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FEB 8 1988

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BOX 8114
 LUIS OBISPO, CA 93403-8114
 Phone: (805) 549-3111
 (805) 549-3259



Date: January 5, 1988

Mr. James M. Doyle
 California Dept. of Parks
 and Recreation
 1416 Ninth Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

File: SLO-001-var.
 Morro Bay State
 Beaches G.P.
 SCH#: 87040815

Subject: Intergovernmental Review

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Caltrans District 5 staff has reviewed the above-referenced document. The following comments were generated as a result of the review:

Enhancing the existing parking area at the north Studio Drive location in Morro Strand State Beach could well generate additional traffic from Route 1, even though the size of the parking area would remain about the same. The existing left turn channelization from Route 1 to Studio Drive is minimal (only 50' of vehicle storage). As part of the proposed improvements at Morro Strand State Beach, consideration should be given to expand this left turn storage from Route 1, by Parks and Recreation.

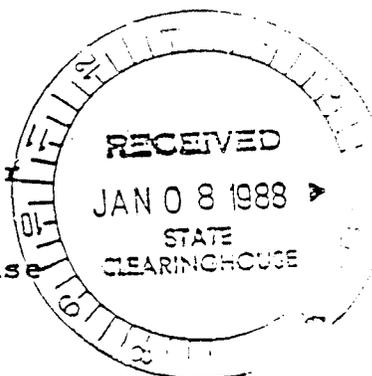
Please send us a copy of the completed General Plan when it is available. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

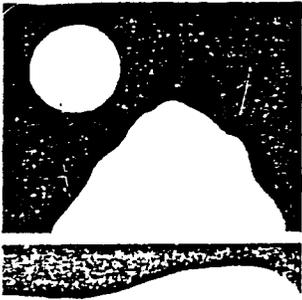
If you have any questions, please contact me at (805) 549-3139.

A. C. Carlton

A. C. Carlton
 District 5
 Intergovernmental Review Coordinator

cc: Glenn Stover, State Clearinghouse
 JMA, VLN, CSW





City of Morro Bay

595 Harbor St.
Morro Bay, CA 93442
805-772-1214

February 4, 1988

James M. Doyle, Supervisor
Environmental Review Section
State Department of Park & Recreation
P.O. Box 2390
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Mr. Doyle:

The attached resolution is the official response by the City Council of the City of Morro Bay to the Draft General Plan for Atascadero State Beach. The City is supportive of the draft plan but the resolution also indicates several areas of improvement that we request be incorporated into the final plan.

On behalf of the entire City I would like to thank you and your staff for your conscientious effort to prepare a plan sensitive to local concerns. The meetings held here in Morro Bay were appreciated and I am sure will result in better public support for the plan.

We look forward to receiving the Draft General-Plan for Morro Bay State Park which is expected soon.

Please call anytime with matters of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

Gary Napper
City Administrator

GN:bd
Enclosure

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
595 Harbor Street

FIRE DEPARTMENT
715 Harbor Street

PUBLIC WORKS
695 Harbor Street

FINANCE DEPARTMENT
595 Harbor Street

POLICE DEPARTMENT
350 Morro Bay Blvd

RECREATION DEPARTMENT
535 Harbor Street

do

RESOLUTION NO. 5-88

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF MORRO BAY, ANNOUNCING FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE PRELIMINARY
GENERAL PLAN FOR ATASCADERO STATE BEACH

T H E C I T Y C O U N C I L
City of Morro Bay, California

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Morro Bay, California, on the 25th day of January, 1988 held a duly noticed PUBLIC HEARING to consider the Preliminary General Plan for Atascadero State Beach; and,

WHEREAS, Atascadero State Beach is located within the City of Morro Bay, and the present and future uses of the State Beach are of vital interest to the City; and

WHEREAS, the City has a certified Local Coastal Program which sets forth various planning objectives for Atascadero State Beach, and provides for a coastal development permit process regulating future development within the state beach; and

WHEREAS, the City has actively participated with the staff of the State Department of Parks and Recreation to assist their understanding of the LCP and the City's concerns about improvements within the park unit; and

WHEREAS, the staff of the State Department of Parks and Recreation has been cooperative with the City throughout the planning process, and has been sensitive to City concerns; and

WHEREAS, the City of Morro Bay finds the Preliminary General Plan for Morro Strand and Atascadero State Beach to be in compliance with the general provision of the certified LCP Land Use Plan, yet there remain several recommendations made by the Council or City staff that are not presently included in the Preliminary General Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Morro Bay, California, as follows:

1. The City endorses the Preliminary General Plan and recommends its adoption to the State Parks Commission, subject to the inclusion of the following;

(a) The State should participate in proportionate share of future costs of signalization of Highway One at Yerba Buena Street, the principal access to the State Beach;

2

2

- (b) Drainage improvements at the State Beach may be needed in order to properly function with the City's system;
- (c) Additional dressing rooms, or similar screened areas for beach users in the vicinity of the park entrance should be provided.
- (d) The State should maximize public parking spaces at the seaward end of Hatteras Street.

2. The City Council of the City of Morro Bay commends the State Parks staff for a quality planning program and general responsiveness to the City's concerns.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED, by the City Council of the City of Morro Bay, on the 25th day of January, 1988, by the following vote to wit:

AYES:

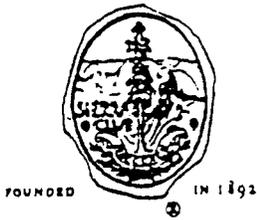
NOES:

ABSENT:



DALE REDDELL, Mayor

ARDITH DAVIS, City Clerk



SIERRA CLUB ~ SANTA LUCIA CHAPTER
P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

February 3, 1988

James M. Doyle, Supervisor
Environmental Review Section
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Re: Los Osos Oaks State Reserve
Preliminary General Plan

Dear Mr. Doyle;

The Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter, supports the general direction proposed in the preliminary general plan for Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. The plan seems to be properly emphasizing natural resource protection for this park unit. The Chapter forwards the following specific comments about the plan:

P. 24 - The Chapter supports the proposed declaration of purpose for the reserve, which focuses on perpetuating the coast live oak forest and on protecting the natural ecological processes at work in the reserve.

P. 27 and 28 - The policy to remove exotic plant species, such as German ivy, introduced grasses, and eucalyptus trees, is supported.

P. 28 - The policy to protect the riparian zone and to acquire land around it to protect its watershed is supported. Add protection for the seeps and the spring noted on P. 16.

P. 29 - Protection of the lichen communities in the reserve is supported.

P. 30 - The Chapter concurs with limiting trail designations solely for foot use. No motorized vehicles, bicycles, or horses should be permitted in the reserve.

P. 30 - The policy to conduct systematic surveys for rare and endangered plants, particularly during the flowering season, is supported.

3 P. 30 - Please define what is meant by "oak management plan." Does this include cutting down mature trees in order to achieve younger age classes representation? It seems that such tree cutting, if contemplated, would violate the reserve's declaration of purpose, which is to allow natural ecological processes to go forward.

4 P. 38 - Your projection that population growth is slowing to 17,000 in Los Osos by the year 2000 is questioned. Approval of the sewer project in Los Osos could see population buildout at 28,000 shortly after the year 2000.

P. 31 - Consider evaluating the coastal sage scrub habitat for suitability for translocation of the endangered Morro Bay Kangaroo Rat.

P. 39 - Do not provide water at this unit. Day users typically stay only a couple of hours at the most. They can bring in their own water bottles.

RPD

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Page 2: Sierra Club letter re: Los Osos Oaks State Reserve

P. 40 - The Chapter supports the policy not to construct any permanent developed facilities in the reserve.

P. 41 - The policy to acquire land outside of the oaks for a new parking area is supported.

P. 41 - The low-intensity day use designation is appropriate for this unit.

P. 47 - Putting up one exhibit shelter with four panels in the parking area is supported.

P. 54 - The Chapter supports the need for enforcement capability by the department in order to monitor for illegal trespass by OHV's and for feral pets such as cats.

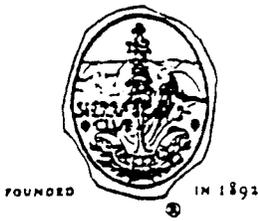
P. 60 - The Chapter agrees that no concessions are needed for this unit.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this preliminary general plan.

Sincerely,



Nancy Wood, Chair
Chapter Conservation Committee
Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter



SIERRA CLUB - SANTA LUCIA CHAPTER

P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

February 3, 1988

James M. Doyle, Supervisor
Environmental Review Section
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Re: Atascadero State Beach and
Morro Strand State Beach
Preliminary General Plans

Dear Mr. Doyle;

The Chapter compliment the department on plans that generally focus on protecting natural resources while permitting appropriate recreational uses. The following specific comments are forwarded for your consideration:

Morro Strand State Beach -

P. 28 and 29 - The Chapter supports the policy to reduce exotic plants, such as periwinkle, castor bean, and ice plant, and to use native species in landscaping

P. 29 - The policy to protect the Old Creek wetland, including assigning it a low-intensity use level, is supported.

7 P. 28 - The policy to protect the unit from coastal or development based erosion is supported. The amount of parking planned for the existing lots may be too much in terms of avoiding erosion problems.

8 P. 52 - Clarify whether or not the existing restroom is hooked into the sewer system. If it is not, then the plan should recommend such a hook-up.

9 P. 54 - The policy should state that no motorized uses are permitted on the beach or in near-shore waters, including prohibition against jet skis and jet boards. The policy should also consider whether or not horses are allowed on the beach and where. The plan should designate a route through the unit for the California Coastal Trail.

10 P. 54 - no showers should be built until Cayucco resolves its water shortage.

11 P. 88 - No food booth concession should be allowed at this unit. There are plenty of local markets or restaurants for users to enjoy. The food booth would increase the litter problems on the beach and at the wetlands.

Atascadero State Beach -

P. 45 - The Chapter supports the policy to protect the coastal dunes, prevent vehicle trespass in the dunes, and revegetation of destabilized dune areas. The VRM acquisition to the unit is certainly appropriate!

P. 46 - The policy to reduce exotic plants, such as European beach grass, is supported.

P. 46 - The effort to protect ground-nesting birds, such as the snowy plover, is supported.

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To explore, enjoy, and protect the nation's scenic resources

Atascadero State Beach continued -

P. 48 - The Chapter supports the low-intensity use designation for the dunes and riparian areas.

12

P. 58 - The policy on beach use should prohibit motorized uses on the beach or along the near-shore area, such as with OHV's, jet skis, or jet boards. The plan should state whether or not horses are permitted on the beach and where. The plan should designate a route for the California Coastal Trail through the unit.

13

P. 58 - The plan should not permit overflow camping at The Cloisters site. Where would that push the day user, back onto the dunes or along residential streets?

14

P. 59 - The plan should add campground sites suitable for tent camping.

P. 59 - The Chapter supports constructing vehicle barriers to the dunes and the beach to prevent illegal trespass.

P. 60 - The Chapter supports the intent to acquire the 84 acres of the WRM property for the dune reserve area of the unit. It should not be used for a golf course, any commercial development, or any residential projects.

P. 81 - The policy to provide staffing sufficient to patrol the unit for illegal trespass is supported.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these plans.

Sincerely,



Nancy Wood, Chair
Conservation Committee
Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA
925 DE LA VINA
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93101
(805) 963-6871



January 29, 1988

Mr. James Doyle
Department of Parks & Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Our office has received & reviewed the preliminary general plan & EIR for Morro Strand and Atascadero State Beach.

Coastal erosion is a major threat to existing homes located along the Studio Drive bluffs inland of Morro Strand State Beach. Many of these homes have been protected from erosion damage by the construction of revetments and other seawalls. In many cases, the protection of these existing homes has required seawalls encroaching into the State Park. These encroachments, as yet unpermitted by DPR or the Coastal Commission, may degrade the park by altering shoreline views (p. 23), occupying recreation lands, and modifying natural shoreline processes. On the other hand, extensive damage to public and private property would occur during erosion episodes if these seawalls had not been built. Additional revetment construction will be needed to protect other homes along this shoreline in the future.

The general plan's policy on the acceptability of these existing and future encroachments is unclear. While the plan acknowledges (p. 53) that the Department is working with adjoining owners on this issue, it is not clear whether seawalls encroaching onto parklands to protect homes inland of the state beach would conform to the policies of p.26-28 of the plan.

15 The plan should clearly state DPR's policy on existing & future encroachments by seawalls needed to protect existing residences. If the plan will authorize such encroachments, their general impacts on the environment should be assessed. Measures to coordinate review of such projects with San Luis Obispo County and the Coastal Commission could be described in order to mitigate potential adverse impacts. If the plan would not allow these encroachments, the FEIR should estimate the hazard posed to adjoining structures.

16 Clear policy guidance on the removal of other encroachments, such as private stairways which may cross the bluffs from the houses to the beach, could also be included in the plan. This would assist in the review of proposals to reconstruct private stairways and other encroachments after storm damage.

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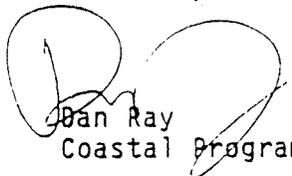
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8-702

We share your objectives of protecting the important Old Creek wetlands. Conservation easements over portions of the wetlands adjoining the state beach have been offered to public agencies for protection of the creek's resources. We would encourage the Department to consider acceptance of the easements to enhance your ability to protect the park's wetlands. Copies of the offered easements are available for your inspection in file 4-87-136 in our Santa Barbara office.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these plans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Ray", is written over the typed name and title.

Dan Ray
Coastal Program Manager

DKR
6691A



Department of Planning and Building San Luis Obispo County

County Government Center
San Luis Obispo
California 93408
(805) 549-5600

Paul C. Crawford, AICP
Director

January 5, 1988

Mr. James Doyle
Environmental Review Section
Department of Parks and Recreation
P. O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: COMMENTS ON PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN FOR: MORRO STRAND
AND ATASCADERO STATE BEACH AND LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

Dear Mr. Doyle:

We have reviewed the above draft documents and offer the following comments:

The preliminary plans appear to consider the county's Local Coastal Plan and we see no apparent conflicts as proposed. It is unlikely that the county will ever become involved with policy and management portions of the plans. When more detailed development plans for construction are ready, it is likely that the county will be the responsible agency for review of the Coastal Development permits.

If you have any questions, please contact me. Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hofschroer", is written over a horizontal line.

JOHN HOFSCHROER, Senior Planner
Local Coastal Program Coordinator

JH/mdw/2537H/38
01/05/88

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United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
520 Butte Street
Bakersfield, California 93305
Phone: (805) 861-4236

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays

IN REPLY
REFER TO

1795
(CA-016.14)

Mr. James M. Doyle, Supervisor
Environmental Review Section
Dept. of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

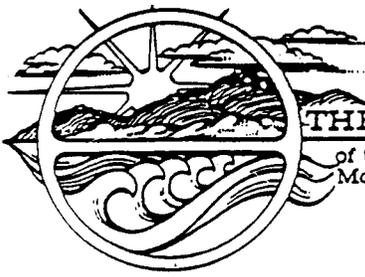
Dear Mr. Doyle:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Morro Strand/Atascadero State Beach and Los Osos Oaks State Reserve Preliminary General Plans. I have routed these documents through our staff for comments.

None of our staff had any particular comments on these plans. They appear to be quite comprehensive and well written. These two state beaches and reserve are important public resources. Your plans should lead the public to a greater understanding and enjoyment of these sites.

Sincerely,

Glenn A. Carpenter
Caliente Resource Area Manager



THE DOCENT COUNCIL

of the San Luis Obispo Coast Area State Parks
Morro Bay State Park, Morro Bay, CA 93442

1/05/88

Mr. James M. Doyle, Supervisor
Environmental Review Section
California Department of Parks & Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA. 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Thank you for your letter of December 22.

Your forty-five day time period makes it impossible for us to pass the booklets through the entire board of either the Docent Council or the Natural History Association, but a small group which did the major work on the earlier responses to your general plans did get together yesterday and has considered both proposals we received with care.

In general, those folks are favorably impressed with the proposals. We feel we can comfortably assure you that the majority of our members would agree. But a number of comments were made and I am attaching them, unedited, to this letter for your information.

17 | Although the subject is covered in the general proposal we feel a crisis has developed at the Los Osos Oaks Reserve. The widening of Los Osos Valley Road damaged part of the reserve, as you are doubtless aware, and demolished the former parking lot. The department cannot wait for implementation of a twenty-year plan to do something about parking at the L.O. Oaks Reserve. We hope action will be taken in the very near future.

sincerely yours,

Don Hoffmar
President

cc: Dave Sears
Docent Council Board
NHA Board

COMMENTS: LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE GENERAL PLAN

Eilleen Bowen
January 6, 1988

These comments refer to specific pages in the report unless otherwise noted.

p.24 - Proposed Declaration of Purpose

18

Day Use is not specified, as in the original purpose, and needs to be included.

p.24 - Zone of Primary Interest

19

1. Apparently the county road work is being done earlier than DPR anticipated. It is now apparent that significant disturbance to the drainage near the creek has already been done, and the present situation needs to be addressed before this report is accepted. The grading that has been done may also affect the planned parking

20

2. ¶2, Off-shore installations could affect air quality in the Oaks, and should be spelled out as a concern.

LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

p.37 - Regional Recreation Profile

21

¶3 - Neither Morro Bay nor San Luis Obispo is mentioned as a focus of tourism in this county--nor Hearst Castle.

¶6 - The above omission seems inconsistent with the statement here that 30% of total State Park usage is in this area.

p.38 - Existing Conditions

22

¶4 - Statement about mountain bike and equestrian uses is non-committal. They must not be tolerated in any part of the reserve.

23

p.39 - ¶1 - Statement on Los Osos Valley Road improvements needs to be updated before report is finalized.

p.39 - Engineering Evaluation

Water: Why is any water needed?

p.40 - Sewage: I am not certain that Los Osos Oaks is scheduled to be included in the proposed sewage district. If not, the sewage disposal, if needed at all, will need to be reevaluated.

24

I have reservations about the need for toilets. None have been provided in the past. The reserve should be retained in as near a natural state as possible. Amenities like rest rooms tend to civilize the place.

p.40 - Power and Phone: I don't think either is needed.

p.40 - Guidelines for Land Use and Facility Development

25

Last item on page: Parking lot cannot wait for the plan. Immediate attention is needed.

p. 42 - Implementation of priorities

26

5. Trail system needs to be developed before an exhibit shelter is built. There may be things on the new trails that should be explained by the exhibits.

INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

As I have stated on previous occasions, I am not in favor of generic interpretation. The generic themes suggested should be expanded locally to meet the needs of this specific situation, and the information should be presented with a view to the public served here.

p. 49 - Recommendations: Existing trail signs should be revised and replaced.

1/4/88

COMMENTS: General Plan, Los Osos Oaks Reserve

John Pierce

Two items in the general plan (preliminary) should be reconsidered and strengthened.

27

1. The priority for land acquisition to develop facilities that will not negatively impact natural and cultural values should be greater. At present, it has the lowest priority (see page 42). The rapid growth in S.L.C. County and the even more rapid growth of tourism emphasize the need for better posting and protection.

28

2. The question of security and protection of the grove both for vandalism and overuse on inappropriate uses needs to be addressed promptly.

3) services to keep a reasonable supply on hand for use by visitors, when the proposed interpretive shelter is built. It might be possible to collect something like \$.25 per copy -- or some such amount -- for users. On an honor system, of course, but it would require a coin repository and someone to monitor. Such things exist in some of the national parks and might work here to help unwrite the cost the pamphlets.

DJA

REACTION TO PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN

LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

November 1987

3

1. This is an excellent overall plan.

2. Additions are needed, however, as follows:

29 a. It is unlikely that any kind of trail sign located out of sight of the road will survive expected vandalism, regrettable as it is to make the statement. Therefore, trail signs within the reserve should be arrows, direct and a series of implanted redwood posts with numbers which refer to paragraphs in a pamphlet yet to be produced.

30 b. The existing trail -- and others that might be added in future -- should have clearly delineated boundaries. A border of white stones or a series of short posts with rustic rails on top, or some other system for keeping people on the paths would contribute significantly to limiting the impact of visitors on the environment.

3. Map #s 3 and 4 are inaccurate outside the reserve. It does not matter.

4. Minor comments include:

a. Saying the reserve is one mile northeast of Montana De Oro State Park is much like saying Montana De Oro State Park and Morro Bay State Park are less than a mile from each other. On the map both statements are correct. On the ground, both statements are functionally misleading for most purposes.

31 b. The local story is that the spring in the reserve used to be locally famous for water quality but is now contaminated by the Mobile Home Park uphill from the spring. There is in fact water there; it does in fact flow much of the time; and it may or may not be contaminated. But its existence should not be denied by saying the only water in the area is the creek which marks the eastern boundary of the reserve.

32 c. Toilet facilities and water should be postponed until there is much greater use of the reserve. Such amenities currently would encourage camping and overnight use by the growing number of homeless and indigent in the county. Enforcement problems in the reserve are now minimized by lack of toilet, water, and electrical facilities.

33 5. The Decent Council will probably be able to update a pamphlet or brochure for the reserve, and provide the

1/4/88

COMMENTS: Morro Strand and Atascadero State Beach general plans, November 1987

John Pierce

34

While the question of snowy plover nesting sites and their protection are dealt with on page 46, it would strengthen the plan to list this species on pages 36 and 37 under the ANIMAL LIFE heading. Perhaps in the "environmental impact" portion as well. The status of the snowy plover as an "endangered" or "threatened species" is currently under active consideration.

1/03/87

REACTIONS TO PROPOSED GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

MORRO STRAND & ATASCADERO STATE BEACHES
November 1987

1. In general, I feel these two plans are excellent.

2. I question whether it is advisable for both units to have the same name, as proposed. The only benefit of the proposed name change I can perceive is temporary administrative convenience for the DPR. Time and expansion will eventually require something like "Morro Strand North" and "Morro Strand South". While that might suit, would the improvement really be worth all the changes such an action would require?

35

3. The best surf fishing in either unit is at the north end of Atascadero State Beach. Many people who currently use the facility there -- in particular, surf fishermen -- park on Beachcomber Drive and climb down the sand cliffs there. Those cliffs are deteriorating rapidly. These visitors are unlikely to use the parking facilities inside the entrance kiosk for two reasons: (a) the risk that a day use payment will be required, and (b) it is a considerably longer walk to the good fishing spots at the north end of the beach. It might be wise and protective to install stairway access to the facility from the cliff top to the beach near the intersection of Beachcomber Drive and Yerba Buena St.

36

4. Part of the twenty year plan should be to acquire the land between the two state beaches (the interval is owned mostly by Chevron, I believe, which doesn't use the beach itself at all). The south end of Atascadero State Beach is somewhat in jeopardy also. The land is in private hands and it would not take too great a change in various governmental bodies to see a resort hotel and a bunch of houses built there. The beach and dunes should certainly be in DPR control.

DGH



2801 Johnson Ave., #13
San Luis Obispo, Ca. 93401
January 27, 1988

James M. Doyle, Supervisor
Environmental Review Section
Department of Parks & Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, Ca. 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Thank you for sending copies of the Morro Strand, Atascadero State Beach and Los Osos Oaks preliminary general plans.

On the whole, your staff has done a good job in resolving various conflicts in favor of long-term protection for these areas. I am especially pleased with your provisions involving rare and endangered species. Also, your approach to limiting so-called "improvements" to what the land can absorb without too much damage is encouraging.

Just a few questions...

- 37 1. Has your department taken any specific action to minimize pollution threats originating outside the Los Osos Oaks unit (page 24)? Has your water quality policy been implemented (page 26)? How? When?
- 38 2. The Morro Bay Strand-Atascadero State Beach plan mentions (page 25) that the function is opportunities for "ocean beach-oriented recreation..." Does that include horses? On page 45, you state that horseback riding "shall be restricted to designated areas and routes." Are these routes noted anywhere? Are the areas posted? How do riders and non-riders know? Is this use of the beach a compromise or is it your policy that horses belong on the beach?
- 39 3. Is the statement (page 46) that "dog leash laws shall be strictly enforced" a matter of present or only future policy? It's obvious that there is no such enforcement now.
- 40 4. I firmly oppose your possible "seasonal mobile food unit" (page 88) because it would simply cause additional litter, which already is a problem in most accessible areas.

I look forward to receiving the volumes for Montana de Oro and Morro Bay State Parks and to your next round of community meetings. I hope you will publicize the dates as soon as possible, so people can arrange to attend.

Sincerely,

Betty Schetzer
Betty Schetzer

RECEIVED

JAN 29 1988

RPD

APPENDIX

SAMPLE USER SURVEY

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



SAN LUIS OBISPO COAST DISTRICT

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is developing long-range plans for the management of the units of the State Parks System in the Morro Bay area. As part of this process we would like to know more about the people who use these parks and what needs to be done to improve the quality of your recreation experiences. Please complete this questionnaire and either return it to a park employee or mail it back to us. THANK YOU!

ABOUT YOU AND YOUR TRAVEL?

1. Which park unit are you visiting today? (If you are visiting more than one park, please use additional questionnaires. Please use only one questionnaire per park unit).

- Montana de Oro State Park
- Atascadero State Beach
- Morro Bay State Park
- Morro Strand State Beach
- Los Osos Oaks State Reserve
- Cayucos State Beach

2. How often do you visit this park?

- This is first visit
- 3-4 times a week or more
- 1-3 times a week
- 2-3 times a month
- Once a month
- 1-6 times a year

3. How long does your visit usually last?

- Less than an hour
- A few days
- Less than a day
- One week or more
- Overnight

4. In what city and state do you live?

LOS ANGELES, CA.

5. Your age? 40

6. What is your primary destination on this trip?

- This area is it
- San Simeon Big Sur Monterey
- Santa Cruz San Francisco and further north
- Central Valley and further west
- Los Angeles and further south

7. Where did you stay overnight? How many nights? 1

- Montana de Oro State Park
- Morro Bay State Park
- Atascadero State Beach
- Town of Morro Bay
- Los Osos San Luis Obispo Baywood Park
- San Simeon Cambria
- Other

8. What type of accommodations did you use?

- Motel
- Tent
- RV
- Bed & Breakfast
- Friend's Home

9. How many people are in your party? 3

10. How did you arrive at the park?

- Car
- Bike
- On foot
- Bus
- RV

WHY DO YOU COME TO THIS PARK?

11. Indicate only those activities below that interest you and which you would want to have emphasized within the park (use a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being of the most interest to you).

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>1</u> Walking | — Golfing |
| — Hiking | — Swimming |
| <u>3</u> Bicycling | — Sunbathing |
| — Jogging | — Beachcombing |
| — Horseback riding | — Surfing |
| — Mountain biking | — Sailing |
| — Picnicking | — Boating |
| <u>3</u> Camping | — Fishing |
| <u>4</u> Photography | — Visiting Museum |
| <u>5</u> Nature observation | — Docent Program |
| — Birdwatching | — Others |

12. What do you think is special about this park? (Use a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the best, etc.)

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| — Quiet | — Friends |
| <u>1</u> Scenery | — Beach |
| <u>2</u> Nature | — Relaxation |
| <u>3</u> It's nearby | <u>5</u> Weather |
| <u>4</u> Ocean | — Others |
| — Recreational Opportunities | |

13. What unique or fragile resources known to you at this park require special care or protection?

BIRD SANCTUARY

VISITOR SERVICES & FACILITIES?

14. Do you think additional or increased visitor services/facilities are needed? YES NO

If yes, rate the items below using a scale of 0 to 5 (0 being no increase/addition, 5 being the greatest need for an increase/addition).

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>1</u> Hiking Trail | — Interpretive Center |
| <u>2</u> Bicycle Trail | — Environmental Educ. Ctr. |
| — Mountain Bike Trail | — Junior Ranger Program |
| — Jogging Trail | — Tent Campground |
| — Horse Trail | — RV Campground |
| — Interpretive Trail | — Hike-In Campground |
| — Bike Rental Facility | — Bike-In Camp |
| — Horse Rental Facility | — Group Campground |
| — Horse Staging Area | — Campfire Center |
| — Shuttle Bus System | — Sanitation Station |
| — Comfort Station | — Camp Store |
| — Snack Bar | — Others |
| — Family Picnic Sites | |
| — Group Picnic Area area | |

15. When you visit this park, do you want to be provided more information on:

- Cultural features (Native American history, Mexican California, ranching, etc.)
- Natural features (dunes, morros, vegetation, wildlife, etc.)
- Recreational opportunities (other parks in area, activities, etc.)
- No additional interpretation/information needed

WHAT KIND OF A PARK SHOULD THIS BE?

16. What is your general philosophy about the use of land at this park?

- Minimum development, preserve the resources
- Leave the park the way it is
- Provide more recreation opportunities
- Maximum development while preserving the resources

17. What detracts from your visit to this park?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough parking spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park is too crowded | <input type="checkbox"/> Weather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough recreation opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Litter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Many areas inaccessible | <input type="checkbox"/> Too crowded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercialism | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard to get to |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overdeveloped | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

18. What is the single most important change or improvement, if any, you would like to see at this park?

What kind of place do you think this park should be?

20. Please use this space for any additional comments you would like to make.

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

If you would like to be on our mailing list for future planning activities or for results of this survey, please provide your name and mailing address.

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Update

The General Plan Newsletter

Issue One November 1986



Morro Bay Area State Park Units

The First Public Meeting

Please join us in planning the future of the Morro Bay Area state park units. Our first public meeting will be held:

November 12, 1986, 7p.m.
Los Osos Junior High School
1555 El Morro Street
Los Osos

State park planners will explain the general plan process and the role of public involvement in developing the plan. A presentation of the draft Resourced Element, highlighting the significant cultural and natural resources of the park, will include policies recommended by the Departmental staff for protection and management of these resources. An "issues and concerns" workshop will be held followed by a question and comment period.

General Plan Underway

The California Department of Parks, and Recreation is developing a plan to guide the future of the state park units in the Morro Bay Area: Atascadero State Beach, Morro Strand State Beach, Morro Bay State Park, Montana de Oro State Park and Los Osos Oaks State Reserve.

The purpose of the plan will be to provide general guidelines for management of the resources and development of facilities at the parks. The general plan for these units will serve as a flexible, comprehensive and long-range planning document. To do this effectively the general plan must:

- identify the cultural and natural

resources of the parks.

- identify existing and future problems and provide solutions.
- determine land use, park development, and visitor activities which are compatible with the park and surrounding areas.
- determine the potential environmental impacts of the land uses and visitor activities.
- establish policies for maintenance and operation, protection and preservation of the resources, development of facilities and interpretation of resource values.

Throughout the general plan process, the public is a vital member of the planning team. Your participation is requested at the public workshops to be held during the next year. At our first meeting we need your help in identifying issues and concerns: what recreation opportunities are needed, what facilities you would

like developed, what lands should remain in their natural condition, and which natural, historical and cultural values should be enhanced or interpreted. How can our parks be improved to meet your needs; what is good and bad about their operation and management?

Park planners will use this information to develop several alternative plans to be presented to you at a second workshop in February 1987. There you will be asked to evaluate the alternatives and help formulate a single plan. Our staff will then refine the single plan into a draft general plan for your review at a third public meeting in May 1987. The final document will be submitted to the State Park and Recreation Commission in Spring 1988. There, too, you will have an opportunity to comment on the plan.

Resource Element Available

During the last year resource specialists from the Department of Parks and Recreation inventoried the resources of the Morro Bay Area state park units and wrote draft Resource Elements (the first section of the general plan document). The Resource Elements summarize the Resource Inventories and set forth specific policies for the proper management and protection of each unit's natural, cultural, scenic, and

recreational resources. This part of the general plan is written first so that it can act as a guide for developing other elements of the plan.

Key portions of the Resource Elements will be discussed at the public meeting on November 12. Copies of the document will be available for public review at the meeting or may be reviewed during the month of November at the Department of Parks and Recreation San Luis Obispo Coast District Office (3340 South Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo) or the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History at Morro Bay State Park.

User Survey

Many of you are aware that the Department of Parks and Recreation distributed a user survey to park visitors this summer. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends 5000 surveys were distributed at Montana de Oro and Morro Bay State Parks, Los Osos Oaks State Reserve and Atascadero State Beach. (There are no developed facilities at Morro Strand State Beach and therefore no way to get surveys to the users at this unit). The response has been tremendous with a return rate of almost 25%.

The purpose of the user survey was to generate information about the types of visitors to the units, what activities they participate in, what their problems are in using the parks, how visitors think the parks can be improved to better meet visitor needs.

We publish the results of the survey here. Be aware that the survey data may not reflect fully the kinds of use the parks receive nor the desires of all who use them. A good deal of

day-use occurs, especially by local residents, where the visitors make no contact with the entrance stations or campgrounds where the surveys were distributed. We hope that input from local residents attending the public workshops to be held in the next few months will give us a more complete picture of park use.

	Atascadero SB	Morro Bay SP	Montana de Oro SP	Los Osos Oaks SR
1. Which park unit are you visiting today?				
TOTAL RESPONSES: 1189	190	719	252	28
2. How often do you visit this park?				
First visit	56%	49%	30%	50%
1-6 times/year	45%	47%	52%	38%
Once/month	3%	1%	2%	4%
2-3 times/month	--	1%	6%	--
1-3 times/week	1%	1%	5%	4%
3-4 times/week	1%	-	2%	4%
No response	--	--	3%	--
3. How long does your visit usually last?				
A few days	47%	54%	55%	--
Overnight	43%	20%	14%	--
One week/more	5%	9%	13%	--
Less/hour	1%	13%	1%	21%
Less/day	2%	3%	15%	79%
No response	2%	1%	2%	--
4. Where do you live?				
Local	7%	8%	18%	64%
Out of State	17%	13%	3%	7%
North Coast Calif.	4%	1%	2%	--
Northeastern Calif.	2%	4%	1%	--
San Francisco Bay Area	6%	8%	5%	4%
Monterey Bay Area	2%	2%	1%	--
Central Valley	32%	17%	16%	4%
Santa Barbara-Ventura Area	2%	5%	17%	4%
Los Angeles Area	11%	22%	20%	10%
Orange-San Diego Area	10%	11%	8%	7%
Southeastern Calif.	2%	5%	6%	--
No response	5%	4%	3%	--
5. What is your age?				
8-24	4%	6%	8%	11%
25-34	15%	13%	23%	16%
35-44	23%	23%	33%	25%
45-54	13%	12%	17%	14%
55-64	20%	22.5%	9%	21%
65+	20%	17%	9%	11%
No response	2%	.5%	1%	--
6. What is your primary destination on this trip?				
This area	55%	62%	87%	96%
San Francisco and north	20%	16%	6%	--
LA and south	13%	8%	1%	4%
San Simeon/Big Sur	7%	11%	1%	--
Central Valley	4%	2%	1%	--
No response	1%	1%	4%	--

7A. Where did you stay overnight?

Morro Bay State Park	1%	69%	3%	4%
Montana de Oro State Park	1%	.2%	78%	4%
Atascadero State Beach	80%	1%	--	--
City of Morro Bay	1%	7.7%	3%	--
SLO/Los Osos/Baywd Prk	--	2.6%	1%	--
San Simeon/Cambria	2%	3%	--	--
Local resident	5%	5.5%	11%	79%
Other	8%	8%	3%	13%
No response	2%	3%	2%	--

7B. Average Overnight Stay (for non-local visitors)

Nights	1.85	2.72	3	3.3
No response	20%	20%	7%	--

8. What type of accommodation did you use?

Motel	1%	9%	3%	10%
Tent	19%	27%	41%	4%
RV	71%	49%	37%	7%
B&B	--	.5%	--	--
Friend's Home	3%	6%	2%	14%
Under the stars	1%	.5%	2%	4%
Own home/local resident	4%	6%	11%	61%
No response	1%	2%	4%	--

9. How many people in your party?

Average size of party	2.7	2.9	3.6	2.1
-----------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----

10. How did you arrive at the park?

Car	34%	50%	60%	79%
RV	63%	48%	36%	7%
Bicycle	1%	.5%	1%	4%
On foot	1%	1%	.5%	10%
Motorcycle	1%	--	.5%	--
Horseback	--	--	1%	--
No response	--	.5%	1%	--

11. What activities do you want emphasized at the park?

The highest-rated activity listed first for each unit:

Atascadero SB	Morro Bay SP	Montana de Oro	
Camping-75%	Camping-40%	Camping-59%	Walking-75%
Walking-46%	Walking-40%	Nature obs.-46%	Nature obs.-68%
Beachcombing-46%	Nature obs.-37%	Walking-41%	Photo.-39%
Nature Obs.-33%	Visit museum-33%	Hiking-36%	Hiking-39%
Sunbathing-32%	Beachcombing-21%	Beachcombing-30%	Birdwatching-25%
Birdwatching-18%	Birdwatching-21%	Riding-30%	Picnicking-11%
Fishing-16%	Hiking-19%	Birdwatching-16%	
Photography-13%	Photography-15%	Photography-15%	
Swimming-11%	Fishing-15%	Sunbathing-9%	
Bicycling-7%	Picnicking-12%	Swimming-9%	

12. What do you think is special about this park? The top-rated 4 per unit:

Ocean	Scenery	Scenery	Quiet
Beach	Nature	Quiet	Nature
Relaxation	Nature	Nature	Scenery
Scenery	Ocean	Ocean	Relaxation

13. What unique or fragile resources require special protection?

Response to this question indicated that many people know of important resources and understand the need to protect them. No new information about the resources was discovered.

14. What new or improved facilities are needed?

Atascadero	Montana de Oro
None-27%	None-37%
Showers-31%	Toilets-22%
San. sta.-23%	Interp. trail-22%
RV Camp-13%	Env. Ctr.-18%
Campstore-9%	Hiking trail-16%
Restrooms-7%	Tent Camp-16%
Cmpfire Ctr.-7%	Interp. Ctr.-16%
Tent Camp-6%	Horse trail-16%
	Hike-in Cmp-13%
Morro Bay	Campstore-12%
None-53%	Eq. Staging-12%
Restrooms-11%	Jr. Rgr. Prog.-11%
RV Camp-15%	Fam. Picnic-11%
Hiking trail-14%	Bike-in Cmp-10%
Campstore-13%	Showers-9%
Interp. trail-11%	Bicycle Trail-9%
Bicycle trail-11%	Horse Rental-9%
C.S./Shwrs.-10%	RV Camp-9%
Bike rental-9%	Group Camp-8%
Tent Camp-8%	Sani. station-8%

Los Osos Oaks

None-57%
Parking-21%
Interp. trail-14%
Restroom-11%
Signs-7%
No response-7%

15. What do you want more information about as you visit the park?

Atascadero	Morro Bay	Montana de Oro	Los Osos Oaks	
Nothing	36%	24%	25%	43%
Cultural Resources	12%	18%	25%	14%
Natural Resources	35%	41%	59%	36%
Recreational Activities	29%	26%	20%	3%
No response	13%	18%	8%	11%

16. What is your general philosophy of land use at this park?

Minimum development	36%	27%	45%	39%
Leave as it is	28%	36%	36%	50%
Provide more recreation	7%	6%	2%	7%
Maximum development	20%	15%	12%	--
No response	9%	7%	5%	--

17. What detracts from your visit to this park?

Atascadero SB

- Nothing-31%
- Too crowded-16%
- No showers-10%
- Too small-8%
- Vandalism-8%
- Litter-8%
- Not enough facilities-7%
- No response-14%

Morro Bay SP

- Nothing-45%
- Too crowded-10%
- Too small-5%
- Traffic-5%
- Weather-5%
- Not enough facilities-4%
- Litter-3%
- No response-23%

Montana de Oro SP

- Nothing-41%
- Too small-21%
- Litter-9%
- Too crowded-8%
- Areas inaccessible-7%
- Vandalism-7%
- Not enough facilities-7%
- Weather-6%
- Traffic-6%
- Noise-5%
- Lack of flush toilets or showers-5%

Los Osos Oaks SR

- Nothing-54%
- Too small-11%
- Traffic-11%
- Hard to find-7%
- Not enough facilities-7%
- Litter-7%
- Vandalism-3%

18. What is the single most important change or improvement you would like to see at this park?

Suggestions made included a wide range of improvements. The ones included here represent a summary of those mentioned most often.

ATASCADERO STATE BEACH

- Hot showers
- Better campsites, larger sites, better screening, less parking, lot atmosphere, fire rings and table for each site, RV hook-ups.
- Better reservation system

MORRO BAY STATE PARK

- More restrooms/showers
- Better restroom maintenance
- More hook-ups
- Bike trail
- Better campsites: larger, less crowded, more privacy; better screening; separate RV and tent areas.
- Control noise: enforce quiet hours, no generators, radios, barking dogs, group campers or road noise.
- More campfire programs and activities with rangers.
- Control vehicle traffic through park.

MONTANA DE ORO STATE PARK

- Improve restrooms: hot showers, flush toilets.
- Acquire more land to the south.
- More camping area/sites: larger campsites, better privacy, screening.
- Improve water system: provide running water, hose bibbs closer to sites.
- Improve Hazard Canyon horse camp facilities and road.
- Improve trails: better maintenance, keep bikes off, allow dogs on horse trails, provide trail maps.
- Improve facilities: develop tent camping in private land to the south; develop environmental and wilderness camping, separate RVs and tents; develop a park entrance with info; eliminate RV use; provide longer RV sites with hook-ups; park store and laundromat.
- Improve operations: hire more staff, control racoons, enforce leash law, keep park cleaner, improve reservation system.
- Improve interpretation: provide more campfire programs, information, ranger hikes, nature activities and self-guided interpretive walks.
- Provide improved resource protection for the tidepools, oyster beds and mud flats; control poison oak, leave the eucalyptus trees.

LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

- Safer access to Los Osos Valley Road; paved parking further from the highway
- Restroom
- Better signing
- Longer trails
- A bike rack

19. What kind of place should this park be? The following is a selection of comments that reflect the range, diversity and sometimes conflicting responses received.

ATASCADERO STATE BEACH

- "Just like it is."
- "An overnight stop", and "A campground with hot showers, hook-ups and dump station"
- "Keep it natural, clean with park rangers giving talks on wildlife, sand dunes, tides."
- "A quiet place to sleep and enjoy the beach."

MORRO BAY STATE PARK

- "Just as it is."

"A quiet, natural setting for camping and relaxing."

"Nature's home: full of birds, squirrels, critters. Morro Bay is all it can be without major change. Campsites are not segregated enough to make it a true outdoor experience."

MONTANA DE ORO STATE PARK

- "Leave it as it is, primitive, quiet, unspoiled, undeveloped."
- "Special place for horse people to camp and ride."
- "Environmental camping, hiking and undeveloped beaches."
- "It should stay as it is. Morro Bay State Park has hook-ups, showers and dump station for those needing such services. Atascadero State Beach has ocean camping. Montana de Oro is special as a primitive park- we need these!"

"Montana de Oro is special as a primitive park: we need these!"

- "RV hook-ups and more sites."
- "Larger."
- "Limited access. Keep the road bumpy and not well-paved."
- "Easy access to natural resources"

LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE

"As it is."

"A natural preserve," "undeveloped sanctuary", "quiet and apart from the city", "a walk-in picnic area."

20. Additional Comments Again, it would be impossible to record all the comments received. Here is just a sampling:

ATASCADERO STATE BEACH

• Would like to see this park landscaped with native vegetation and shrubs. Plant between sites for privacy.

• One of our favorite state parks.
• Rangers friendly and helpful. Excellent attitude.

- Reservation system stinks!
- Cleaner restrooms please.
- Take away the tall smoke stacks.
- Length limit of 24' is not enforced.
- Remove the sand dunes to give better views of ocean.
- If you add hook-ups it will end up too crowded and noisy.

"Atascadero State Beach is one of our favorite state parks."

- Why do you give the closest ocean sites to tents? We made a reservation
- Enforce no generators between 8PM and 10AM.
- Atascadero S.B. seems well-utilized. Its small size does not warrant expansion of facilities.

MORRO BAY STATE PARK

- We love this park! It is clean, well-kept, with COURTEOUS personnel, very clean restrooms.
- Go back to more rangers. They were always informative and pleasant. Now they are overworked and cranky.
- We were treated with friendliness. This is not always the case in State Parks.
- The park is deluged with RVs. I hope strong restrictions will be

placed on them. A maximum designation of 70% tents and 30% RV should be made. There are few developed sites for tents elsewhere in this area.

• The generators, road traffic, smoke, lack of privacy and inconsiderate group campers forced us to find a motel in the middle of the night.

• I would like to see all our State Parks developed to accommodate many more campers and RVS, with facilities for more hook-ups.

• Our first and last visit. We still don't know what we paid \$12 for.

• Large RVs with generators should go elsewhere. The State should not compete with commercial RV parks.

"Our first and last visit. Still don't know what we paid \$12 for."

• Morro Bay campground seems to need a rest, an opportunity for recuperation and intensive maintenance work.

• Sheriffish deserve a break. How many others do we need? Limit the otter population.

• The museum nature walks are great.

MONTANA DE ORO STATE PARK

• Acquire more land to the south.

• For us this park is one of the most beautiful and peaceful places in California. We sincerely hope it can stay like this.

• I would like running water and hot showers to make this area perfect.

• Don't add more facilities (even if the toilets stink!)

• After staying in some of the overcrowded state parks, it was very refreshing to be in this quiet, relatively unspoiled park. We will certainly come again. We loved the ocean views along the bluff trails, and the sightings of pelicans, seals, otters, and cormorants.

• I've camped all over the U.S. and this is the nicest campground I've been to, primitive but clean.

• This park has a tremendous

amount of land and very few campsites. There should not be any additional purchase of land until the present park is developed to accommodate more visitors.

"Let those who want to bring the city with them go elsewhere."

• Leave it as it is. Let those who want to bring the city with them go elsewhere. Any increased development and usage would decrease the quality of the area. There are plenty of people here already.

• We appreciate the large campsites.

• Ranger and hostess both were nice and helpful.

• Do not remove eucalyptus trees.

• Thin eucalyptus to restore native vegetation.

LOS OSOS OAKS SR

• I was shocked at how small this area is.

• To protect ground-nesting birds, remind people dogs are not allowed.

• I thought the trail markers were well-done, just enough for a self-guided trail.

Update

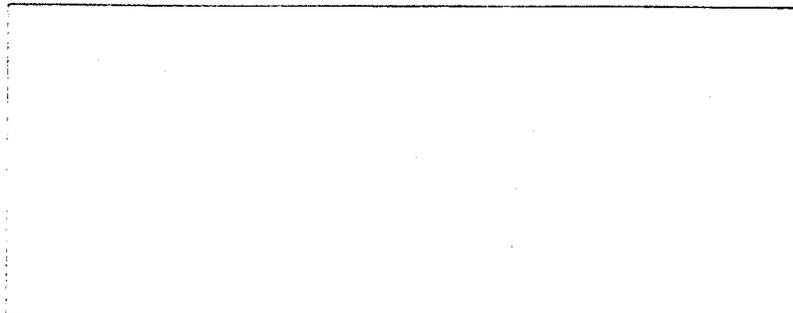
Update is published by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. For additional information direct your questions to Morro Bay Area State Park Units General Planning Team, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-001. Attn: Jill Vanneman (916) 323-4269.

The Planning Process...

Where we are:

- Step 1 Organizing the Planning Job
- Step 2 Gathering Information
- Step 3 Developing Alternatives
- Step 4 Composing a Single Plan
- Step 5 CEQA Review Process
- Step 6 State Park and Commission Hearing

State of California
Department of Parks and Recreation
Morro Bay Area State Park Units
General Planning Team
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001



Update

Issue Two February 1987

The General Plan Newsletter



Morro Bay Area State Park Units

For Your Information

If you are receiving *Update* for the first time, the California Department of Parks and Recreation is now in the process of preparing a comprehensive general plan for the five Morro Bay area state park units: Montana de Oro State Park, Morro Bay State Park, Atascadero State Beach, Morro Strand State Beach, and Los Osos Oaks State Reserve. On November 12, 1986, the first in a series of local public involvement workshops was held. During the summer of 1986 user surveys were also distributed to gather public concerns and ideas. This newsletter is published to inform you of the issues and concerns which have been identified, the progress of the planning process and of upcoming events. ■

First Public Meeting

One hundred twelve people attended our first public meeting on November 12, 1986. What a great turnout! We would like to thank each of you for your participation and for sharing your ideas with us. For such a large attendance we were exceptionally pleased with the orderly progress and productivity of the meeting.

The meeting began with an introduction of our departmental planning team and a discussion of the purpose and content of the general plan.

The draft Resource Element was presented, highlighting the significant cultural and natural resources of each unit. This discussion also included policies recommended by the departmental staff for protection and management of these resources. (The draft Resource Element can be reviewed at the Department of Parks and Recreation San Luis Obispo Coast District Office, 3220 South Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, or the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History at Morro Bay State Park).

Upcoming Public Workshop

The results of the user survey and first public workshop will help us to develop land use alternatives. These alternatives will contain specific proposals regarding such things as road alignments, parking improvements, camping capacities, day-use improvements, interpretive facilities, and marina or golf course alterations. We will present the proposed alternatives for your evaluation and discussion at the next public workshop which will be held:

**MARCH 18, 1987, 7 - 10 PM
LOS OSOS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
1555 EL MORRO STREET
LOS OSOS**

If you wish to communicate with us before then, write us at our return address, or call us at (916) 323-5067 or 323-4269.

After a brief question and answer period, workshop participants formed 14 separate groups. These groups spent the next hour and a half discussing specific park issues related to resources, camping, day-use, the Morro Bay S.P. Golf Course and marina, the Morro Bay park road, Camp K.E.E.P., interpretation, and other issues of concern identified by the group participants. Each work group then presented its ideas to the workshop as a whole. It was a lengthy but very productive evening.

The following is a summary of the comments, concerns, and ideas expressed by workshop participants as well as others who have contacted us. These comments are not intended to represent a public consensus on any particular issue, but simply an indication of the variety of issues and concerns expressed.

Resource Issues

- Do not remove eucalyptus trees.
- Gradually replace some eucalyptus with natives.
- Plant some oak trees in treeless areas.
- Protect the water quality of bay and wetlands.
- Do not replant sand dunes.
- Maintain wilderness and pristine nature of Montana de Oro.
- Protect tide pools.
- Control obnoxious weeds.

- Eliminate hunting.
- Assess impact of hunting on park resources.
- Protect Monarch butterfly habitat.

Camping

- Update existing facilities rather than expand.
- Separate one-night campers from others.
- Improve and expand campgrounds.
- Provide more camping at Montana de Oro.
- Need more restrooms in all units.
- Reopen Chorro Willows group camp area.
- Develop water at Montana de Oro.
- Develop new camping east of South Bay Blvd.
- Eliminate enroute camping in marina parking lot.
- Keep children away from Orcas St. bridge at Atascadero S. B.
- Have year around camp hosts.
- Provide more garbage containers at Atascadero / Montana de Oro.
- Eliminate over-use of existing campgrounds.
- Develop additional environmental campsites at Montana de Oro.
- Provide R. V. camping on new property east of South Bay Blvd.
- Provide more bike camping.

Day-use Facilities

- Expand facilities at Montana de Oro.
- Improve poorly located Morro Bay facilities.
- Provide emergency telephones.
- Provide better maintenance of existing facilities.
- Improve day-use access to sand dunes.
- Improve day-use launch ramp at marina.
- Improve parking and day-use facilities at Los Osos Oaks.
- Develop more facilities at Morro Strand.
- Improve and expand facilities at Hazard Cyn.
- Need day-use area at marina.
- Need picnic area at Morro Rock.
- Improve separation of day-use and camping.

Morro Bay Golf Course and Marina

- Do not expand marina improve it.
- Improve safety of marina.
- Retain a percentage of the slips for live-aboards.
- Dredge and upgrade marina.
- Add more slips to marina.
- Improve marina area for recreation.
- Provide more shore facilities for marina users.
- Need dry storage racks for small boats.
- Provide pump-out facility.

- Use reclaimed water on golf course.
- Need a harbor master at marina.
- Leave golf course as is.

Morro Bay Park Road

- Widen roadway.
- Need a bike path.
- Provide walking and bike path on inside of road.
- Put speed bumps on road.
- Limit speed to 15 MPH.
- Take trees out on curve.
- Consider one-way traffic flow.
- Upgrade road through golf course.
- Close road through golf course.

Camp K.E.E.P.

- Keep it as it is for children.
- Open it to the public if schools can still use it.
- Add a separate environmental center for the public.
- Expand and allow permanent buildings.
- Do not make it permanent.
- If expanded it should be available to others.
- It should be open to the general public.
- Use old CCC camp area at Camp San Luis.
- Use Spooner house for environmental education.
- Develop public environmental education in another location.
- Open it to all SLO county schools, but not the

general public.

Interpretation

- Provide maps for things of special interest.
- Need more self-guided tours.
- Provide more trail signs.
- Expand campfire program.
- Need more interpretive staff and museum curator.
- Provide interpretation of Kangaroo Rats.
- Continue doing a great job.
- Enlarge auditorium at museum.
- Montana de Oro needs interpretive center.
- Remove interpretive signs at Los Osos Oaks because of continued vandalism.
- Ensure that contemporary museum standards are met.
- Provide more printed hand-outs.
- Improve interpretive displays at museum.
- Have more rotating displays at museum.
- Provide more guides than more signs.
- Provide hands-on aquarium at museum.

Other Issues

- No hunting in bird sanctuary.
- Do not allow damming of feeder streams.
- Provide for hang gliding east of S. Bay Blvd..
- Prohibit off-road vehicles

in any park.

- Purchase Fields ranch at Montana de Oro.
- Provide more patrol staff for public safety
- Reconstruct Black Hill trail.
- Develop mountain bike trails.
- Restrict dogs in sensitive resource areas.
- Screen ranger residence area at Montana de Oro from public view.
- Provide safe bike trail to Montana de Oro.
- Reopen bay channel north of Morro Rock. ■

New Planner

On December 2, 1986, a new staff member joined our planning team. Jim Quayle is a licensed Landscape Architect with over 12 years of experience. He worked as a project manager in our Acquisition Division before coming to the Development Division. His experience with the most recent acquisitions for the local state park units has increased his already strong familiarity with many issues in the Morro Bay area. His initial familiarity dates from the four years he spent as a student at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and the two years he worked for a developer in Avila Beach. ■

THE PLANNING PROCESS...

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State of California
Department of Parks and Recreation
Morro Bay Area State Park Units
General Planning Team
P. O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Update

The General Plan Newsletter

Issue Three June 1987



Current Planning Status

Since our last public meeting, held March 18 in Los Osos, the planning team has been busy compiling and analyzing the individual and group reports prepared by the workshop participants. We've answered a number of letters from the public resulting from the workshop, and we met again with various city and county officials and staff. The Docent Council (of the San Luis Obispo Coast Area State Parks, invited the planning team to an April meeting at the Morro Bay Natural History Museum to give us its thoughts about planning for the parks.

The planning team is now attempting to develop a single plan for each of the Morro Bay Area state park units based on appropriate park planning and design guidelines, statewide recreation needs, and public input from the user survey results and the comments and reactions to the alternative plans that we've heard so far. The single plans will be presented for public review and evaluation at meetings to be held in August. We will tell you more about these meetings and the single plans in the next issue of *Update*.

To our new readers...

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is preparing a comprehensive general plan for the five Morro Bay area state park units. Public involvement is a crucial component of the planning process. *Update* is published at critical points in the planning process so that you know what the planning team is doing, what issues and ideas have been expressed to us by the public, and when upcoming meetings will be held so that you will have an opportunity to participate.

During the summer of 1986 a user survey was distributed to visitors at the Morro Bay area state park units. The results of almost 1200 responses were summarized in Issue One of *Update*. Issue Two reported the results of the first local public meeting held November 12, 1986 to gather public comments and concerns regarding planning of the park units and to present the draft Resource Elements, which highlight the significant cultural and natural resources of the unit along with recommended policies for the protection and management of those resources. This issue of *Update* reports the results of the last public workshop, held March 18, 1987, when the planning team presented alternative land use and facilities plans for each unit and asked the workshop participants to evaluate the different plans.

March Workshop Results

Between 200 and 250 people attended the last workshop, a much greater turn-out than we had anticipated. Most written and oral comments from the public concerned Morro Bay State Park. During the meeting the planning team heard a lot of vocal opposition to any changes to the golf course. The following is a summary of both

the workgroup and individual workbook reports

Montana de Oro

Thirteen individuals turned in evaluation forms and another twenty-three people worked together in groups of 5 to 7 to evaluate the Montana de Oro alternatives. Each group agreed by consensus on its preferred alternative for eight different areas of the park: Pecho Road, Hazard Canyon and Sandspit Beach Access, Hazard Canyon Horse Camp, Camp KEEP, Spooners Cove, Islay Creek, Coon Creek, and Trails.

Pecho Road

Group 2 preferred that only minor safety improvements be made to the road, while Groups 2, 3, and 4 voted to widen the road and provide bike lanes. Group 3 was concerned that any road improvements not lead to increased speed. Groups 2 and 3 thought certain turn-outs along the road should be developed as vista points and for additional day-use parking. Group 1 thought a park entrance station was a good idea, but without fee collection.

The results of the 13 individual evaluation forms turned in are summarized below for Pecho Road.

- Minor improvements: 5
- Widen road/provide bike lanes: 9
- Develop turn-outs along road: 8
- Develop entrance station: 7

Hazard Canyon and Sandspit Beach Access

All four groups agreed on the concept of eliminating park access from Army Road and developing a new sandspit parking area from a new access road about 1/2 mile south of Army Road. All four groups agreed on eliminating roadside beach access parking at Hazard Canyon, and developing a new 80-car parking area and restroom south of the existing beach access trail. Group 2 was concerned that there be one designated beach access trail at Hazard Canyon to reduce bluff erosion caused by the use of several existing trails. Group 1 suggested that a phone be provided at the parking area.

- Individual Report Results**
- Develop new 80-car parking lot: 10
 - Eliminate Army Road access; develop new access road and parking area: 11

Hazard Canyon Horse Camp

Groups 1, 2, and 4 like the idea of a day-use equestrian staging area with a restroom and picnic sites. Group 1 thought the existing access road should be improved or a new one developed, and that the existing horse camp facilities should be improved and the capacity increased. Group 1 also suggested that parking be provided in this area for hikers and mountain bikers. Group 3 thought the area is fine just the way it is, but needs better maintenance. Groups 1, 2, and 3 suggested that a phone be provided.

- Individual Report Results**
- Improve access: 6
 - Develop day-use horse staging area, restroom and picnic sites: 9
 - Upgrade horse camp and increase capacity: 4

Camp KEEP (Kern County Environmental Education Program)

All four groups preferred that an environmental education center be developed for use by many groups and school districts, but that Kern County continue to operate on an interim basis. Group 2 thought that the existing ranger residences should be relocated. Group 3 suggested that the Camp KEEP area be designed to accommodate a youth hostel as well as an environmental education center, while Group 4 thought the area would be suitable for a group camp/day-use facility.

- Individual Report Results**
- Develop environmental education center: 12
 - Relocate existing ranger residences: 7
 - Develop youth hostel: 2
 - Develop multi-use group camp/day-use facility: 2

Spooners Cove

Group 3 wanted the area to remain as is with minor access improvements and interpretive signs. Groups 1, 2, and 4 thought the existing facilities should be upgraded, although each suggested different ways of doing that. Paving, increased picnic sites, permanent restrooms, outdoor showers, and interpretive signs were preferred by Group 1, while Group 2 said "no showers and no paving". Group 4 thought parking on the beach should be eliminated, but liked the other proposed improvements.

- Individual Report Results**
- Remain as is and make minor access improvements: 3
 - Upgrade facilities: 10

Islay Creek

Group 3 would like the existing campground to remain as is. Groups 1, 2, and 4 thought the facility should be upgraded with improved restrooms, running water, and landscape screening. Adaptation of the ranch house as a combination park office and interpretive center is a good idea according to Groups 2, 3 and 4. Groups 1 and 2 voted to remove the barn in Islay Creek Canyon, although Group 2 wanted it to remain "until really dangerous". Group 4 wanted to leave the barn alone while Group 3 suggested that it be improved for use as a rain and shade shelter.

- Individual Report Results**
- Campground to remain as is: 3
 - Upgrade campground and provide restrooms, showers, landscape screening: 9
 - Adapt ranch house as park office/interpretive center: 11
 - Remove Islay Creek barn: 2
 - Leave barn/improve it: 5

Coon Creek

Three groups, 1, 2, and 3, agreed on upgrading the Coon Creek day-use facilities with a paved parking area, increased picnic sites and permanent restrooms. Group 2, however, thought that only additional picnic sites are needed.

Groups 1 and 3 favored development of a new 50-75 unit campground, but both groups felt it should be "primitive". Only one group wanted interpretive panels added to the coastal bluff trailhead.

Individual Report Results

Upgrade day-use facilities: pave, increase picnic sites, permanent restrooms: 11.

Develop new 50 to 75-unit campground: 4

Add interpretive panels to Bluff Trail: 2.

Trails

All four groups favored establishment of the State Coastal Trail link through the park. Group 1 thought mountain bike trails and additional equestrian trails should be established. Group 2 was unable to reach a consensus regarding trails: "Part of the group feels strongly that equestrian and mountain bike use should be maintained and expanded. Others are concerned about environmental damage from these uses". Group 3 favored establishment of additional trails, designating existing trails as "multiple use", and installation of trail yield signs. Group 4 thought that some existing trails outside sensitive areas should be designated multiple-use to accommodate mountain bike use. Groups 2 and 3 like the concept of a system of trail camps, although Group 3 was concerned about the fire hazard.

Individual Report Results

Establish additional equestrian trails: 7.

Establish State Coastal trail link through park: 13.

Establish or designate mountain bike trails: 11.

Develop trail camps: 8.

Los Osos Oaks State Reserve

One group was formed to evaluate the different plans for this unit. A number of individuals comments were also received.

The group consensus, along with six individual comments, was that parking should not be provided on the interior of the unit, roadside parking should be provided to replace that to be eliminated by the county widening of Los Osos Valley Road, and that additional land should be acquired when available to provide parking that will not impact the unit resources. The group and seven individuals recommended that additional trails be provided in the western portion of this unit. Other comments / suggestions: provide a unit sign (four people), leave the unit as it is (1 person), provide parking within the unit (1 person), add a restroom, limit dog use, no cutting of eucalyptus (1 comment each).

Morro Bay State Park

Five groups (a total of almost 40 people) worked together to arrive at a consensus for each area of the park. In addition, a large number of individual evaluations were received which expressed concern

about one or more areas of the park, such as the golf course. It has been difficult to evaluate some of the information we received for various reasons. However, for many areas a consensus is quite clear.

Morro Rock

All five groups agreed that the parking and turn-around area on the south side of the rock should be improved and interpretation provided. 19 individual comments supported this concept, 10 individuals wanted the area to remain as is. Additional suggestions: reopen the harbor entrance north of the rock (2 people), widen the road to the rock (1 person).

Vehicular Access and Circulation

The consensus of three groups and 10 individuals was to close park roads to thru traffic. One group and 11 individuals thought existing roads should be left as is with minor safety improvements. Development of a bypass road was supported by 10 people. Nine individuals recommended that the golf course road be widened along with improvements such as an overpass/underpass for golfer safety. Additional concerns: suggestions: maintain open access to the museum (1 group and 8 individual comments); develop a bike path through the park (1 group and 1 individual); improve both park roads (1 group); realign South Bay Boulevard to the east (2 individuals).

Heron Rookery

The majority of responses favored improvement of interpretation at the rookery (four groups and seven individuals). Two groups and 19 individuals wanted it left as it is. One group and one individual

recommended that the existing parking area be removed. Five responses recommended trail improvements to accommodate the handicapped.

Windy Cove

Two groups and 10 individuals responded that they want the area to remain as is. Improved trail connections from this area to the museum and the campground were preferred by 3 groups and 8 individuals. Additional suggestions: relocate the existing parking (1 group and 5 individuals), provide a picnic area (5 people).

Natural History Museum White Point

All five groups and 23 individual comments supported updating the museum displays and realignment of the trail to the top of White Point to avoid archeological resources. Additional suggestions: Enlarge the museum theatre (2 groups and 5 individuals), remove trees from the rock (1 group and 1 individual), provide more museum staff (1 group and 1 individual), increase museum parking (2 individuals), eliminate the trail to White Point (1 person).

Golf Course

This area of the park received the largest number of comments. Four of the 5 groups, along with 30 individuals did not wish to see the golf course changed. Three groups and 11 individuals concurred that the golf course parking be expanded and improved. Twelve individuals recommended that an additional nine holes be added to the course. One group wanted a trail developed for the interpretation of the Monarch butterfly habitat. Other recommendations: realign holes 14 and 15 to allow some expansion of the campground (1 person), continue use of non-

potable water for golf-course irrigation (one group), realign the golf course parking lot (2 people), relocate the back nine holes behind Black Hill (1 person), realign holes 13, 14, and 15 (1 person), increase fees for non-county golfers, correct vehicle/golfer conflict between holes 2 and 3.

Marina

Three of the five groups and 13 individuals want the existing marina retained and improved. Two of the groups, along with 13 individuals, would like to see a small-boat launch ramp installed. Two groups and 7 individuals recommended that picnic facilities be added in this area. Two groups and 7 individuals also want enroute camping eliminated in the marina area. One group and 5 individuals want additional slips provided. One group and 2 individuals asked that the area be left as it is.

Marsh Parking Area (Hunters Lot)

Three groups and 6 people want interpretive displays, trails, and a boardwalk to be added to the area. One group and six people recommended that parking be upgraded with access provided from the marina. One group and 2 people would like to see picnic sites and a restroom provided in this area. One group and 5 people would like to see parking eliminated. One person was opposed to a boardwalk or any additional trails in the marsh.

Campground

All five groups agreed that a permanent group camp should be developed. Two groups and 6 individuals felt that the existing campground should be improved but not enlarged. Two groups and 13 people felt that it should be left as is. One group and 6 individuals felt that the campground should be

improved and enlarged. Other comments / recommendations: relocate all camping to the east of South Bay Boulevard (2 people), expand camping east of the existing campground (2 people), enlarge other campgrounds in the Morro Bay area (1 person), remove trees in the campground, develop a bike path and exercise trail in the campground (1 person), locate RV camping near the freeway on the back side of Black Hill.

Black Hill

Four of the five groups and 18 persons would like to have trailhead signing and connections to the existing campground improved. Three of the groups along with 4 individuals would like an interpretive display. Other suggestions: enlarge the parking for a school bus turn-around (1 group and 4 individuals), eliminate vehicular access (4 individuals), leave area as is (2 people), control trail erosion (1 person).

Operations, Maintenance, and Staff Residence Areas

Three of the groups and 8 individuals would like a centralized administrative facility located on Turri Road. One group and 9 individuals desire that these areas remain as they are. One group expressed concern about visual esthetics regardless of what is done. One individual suggested that staff housing be relocated rather than eliminated.

Chorro Willows

Three of the groups and six individuals want a small day-use parking area developed. One group and twelve individuals want trail access only in this area. One group and two individuals want RV camping developed in this area. Three individuals want the area

raised and permanent group camping developed here

Baptista Ranch

Three groups and 8 individuals want only parking, interpretive exhibits, and trails developed on this property. Two groups and 12 individuals want a mountain bike trail and other trails developed. One group, along with 6 individuals, recommended that hang-gliding be allowed on this property. One group and 3 others want the property left as is. Five people want the property used for day-use and enroute camping. Other suggestions: no equestrian trails (2 people), develop an 18-hole golf course (1 person).

South Bay Blvd.

Four of the five groups recommended that day-use continue with improved access and interpretation. One group and 6 individuals would like a portion of this area returned to marsh habitat. One person opposed any marsh interpretive panels in this area.

Morro Strand State Beach

Not enough interest was expressed in the alternative plans for this unit to form a workgroup, although 3 individuals filled out evaluation forms. All three recommended establishment of the Old Creek area as a

natural/wildlife habitat area. One person thought the Studio Drive parking should be removed, while two people preferred to see it retained with additional landscaping and safety improvements. Two people preferred additional amenities such as picnic sites, fire rings, outdoor showers, and interpretive shelter/panels. One person thought the area should be designated as an underwater park.

Atascadero State Beach

Only individual comments were received for this unit. Twelve people made 31 comments about various areas of this park.

Campground

None of the alternative options for the campground received more than two votes.

Coastal Access Points

Three people recommended that a stairway be added at Yerba Buena and Beachcomber. One person supported development of a stairway at Beachcomber and Orcas Street. One person expressed concern that parking be provided near all beach access points. One person recommended that access from Beachcomber be eliminated.

Cloisters Site

Four of the twelve comments received for this area

recommended that the existing parking area be upgraded and paved for 50-75 vehicles and that a permanent restroom and interpretive material be installed. Three others recommended that a picnic area be installed. Three others also expressed that vehicular access to the sand dune to the south should be eliminated. Other suggestions included providing fencing, signing, designated pedestrian beach access, dune stabilization plantings, an entrance station and additional camping, and state purchase of the VRM property.

Other Recommendations

Three individuals concurred that the existing name is confusing and should be changed to be combined with Morro Strand State Beach. Two other comments were received to designate off-shore lands as an underwater park.

Update

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The Planning Process...

Where we are:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Step 1 | Organizing the Planning Job |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Step 2 | Gathering Information |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Step 3 | Developing Alternatives |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Step 4 | Composing a Single Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Step 5 | CEQA Review Process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Step 6 | State Park and Recreation
Commission Hearing |



State of California
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942895
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Update

The General Plan Newsletter

Issue Four August 1987

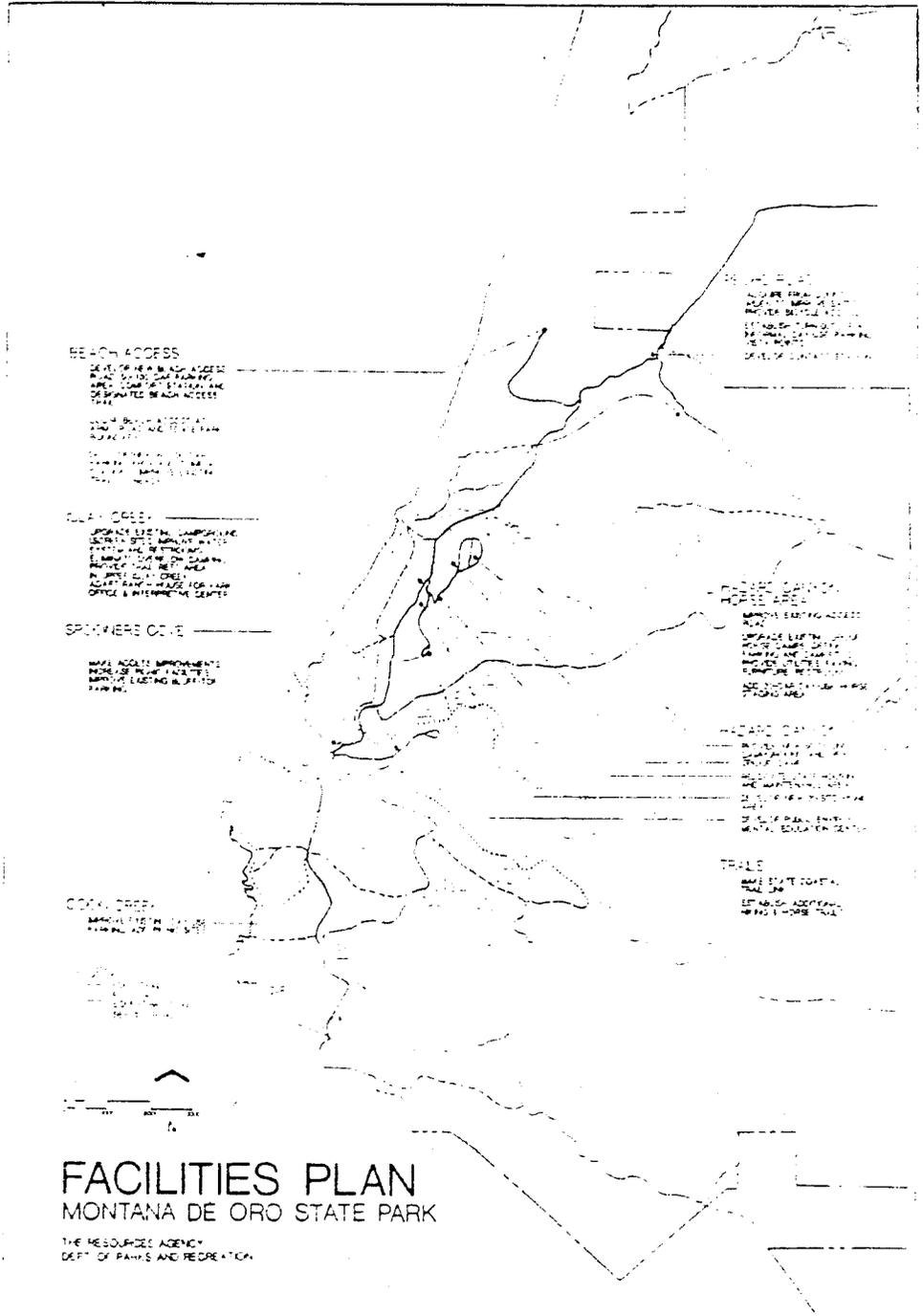


General Plan Progress...

Planners from the California Department of Parks and Recreation have been working since April, 1986, with the people of the Morro Bay area in an effort to prepare general plans for the Morro Bay area state park units that will meet the needs of both local residents and statewide users. Alternative plans were prepared from the information collected at workshops held in Los Osos in November, 1986. These alternative plans were evaluated in March, 1987, in a workshop at which the people told our planners what should be in the final plan. A single plan for each of the park units is summarized in this issue of *Update* and will be available for review and comments at a public meeting in September (see back for details). ■

Final Proposals: The Single Plans

This issue of *Update* summarizes the planning team's recommendations for changes or improvements in facilities at the Morro Bay area state park units. Recommendations for resource preservation and management policies at the parks were presented at the first public meeting.



Montana de Oro State Park
Several policies are recommended in the Resource Element for protection of the natural and cultural resources at this park, including:

- designation of the barrier dune complex as a natural preserve;
 - acquisition of the watershed lands of upper Hazard, Islay, and
- (Continued on page 2).

Coon Creeks;

- restoration of degraded riparian areas;
- protection of the unit's 16 rare or endangered plant species, and development of management programs, when appropriate, for animal species that are threatened, endangered or of special concern;
- management of the Coon Creek / Islay Creek roadless area in a manner consistent with long-term perpetuation of its wilderness character, and,
- nomination of the sand dunes' 30 prehistoric archeological sites to the National Register of Historic Places as an Archeological District.

In conjunction with protection of the sandspit and the endangered kangaroo rat habitat, the Facilities Plan for Montana de Oro recommends eliminating public park access from Army Road in an effort to control illegal OHV use and resultant erosion and habitat destruction. The plan proposes that the park boundary be fenced, with only emergency vehicle access to the beach allowed, and that kangaroo rat habitat be restored. To provide continued beach access to this portion of the unit's coastline, the plan recommends development of a new parking area and access road off Pecho Road to the south.

Beach access at Hazard Canyon will continue, although a new parking area will be established south of the canyon, across from the entrance road to Camp KEEP, while the existing trail to the beach from the south side will be improved. This proposal will improve visitor safety and eliminate the unsightly appearance of cars parked along this narrow stretch of road.

The plan calls for development of an environmental education center just south of the existing Camp KEEP facility, and a new 50-75 unit family campground and small group camp just north of Camp KEEP. The existing ranger residences will be relo-

cated to what is now Camp KEEP, as will the park's storage / maintenance area (now at the Spooner Ranch). The plan also proposes a small day-use picnic area (20 sites) where the ranger residences are now located. Locating new facilities in the general Camp KEEP area will orient new visitor recreation access and use to the primary beach resource which is located north of the mouth of Hazard Canyon. The proposed location of the new facilities will also concentrate new development in an area where the natural scene has already been impacted by human use and where existing trees and landform will minimize visual impact.

The existing campground at Islay Creek will remain, without expansion, but with improvements to provide more screening between sites and better sanitary facilities. The Spooner Ranch House will be improved to serve dual use as both an interpretive center and park office.

One of the plan's recommendations is to designate the unit's offshore lands as an underwater park. Spooners Cove is now heavily used by scuba divers, since the primary underwater resource is located between Spooners Cove and Point Buchon. Minimal new facilities to be provided at Spooners Cove as part of the underwater park designation would include a changing room and outdoor shower for scuba divers. Additional picnic sites and minor access and parking improvements are the only other changes proposed for this area.

The plan also proposes improvement of the bluff-top parking area above Spooners Cove, the addition of picnic sites and improvement of sanitary facilities and parking at Coon Creek.

The plan proposes few changes to the Horse Camp in Hazard Canyon: widening of the existing access road and upgrading of the existing camp-

sites, sanitary facilities, and utilities. The one new facility recommended for this area is a 20-car day-use horse staging area.

Trail proposals include development of a coastal trail link, establishment of additional hiking and horse trails, and development of a rest area in upper Islay Creek where the existing barn is located.

The plan also recommends acquiring Pecho Road from the County to be operated and maintained as a park road and improved to provide bicycle access.

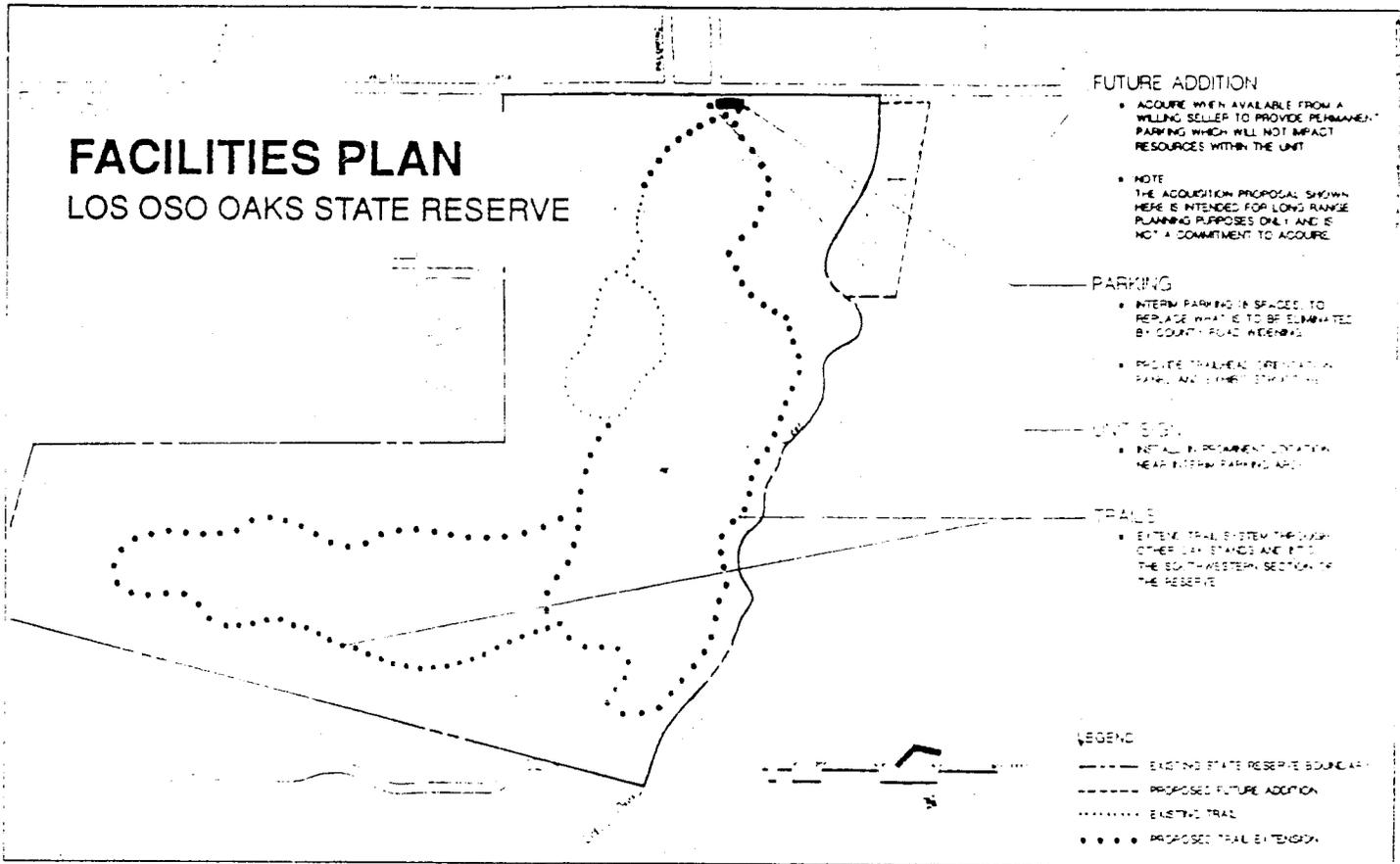
Los Osos Oaks S.R.

The plan proposes that interim parking be developed along Los Osos Valley Road when County road widening takes place. Parking for 4-8 cars would be located approximately 100 feet east of the current head-in parking. The plan recommends that a small piece of property to the east of the reserve be purchased to provide safe and adequate permanent parking facilities which will not impact resources within the unit.

Other proposals for the unit include the installation of a park sign, expansion of the trail system, and addition of an interpretive panel at the new parking area

Update

Update is published by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. For additional information, direct your questions to Jim Quayle (916) 323-5067, or Jill Vanneman (916) 323-4269. Or write to them, Morro Bay Area State Park Units Planning Team, P.O. Box 94896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001.



Morro Bay State Park

This park unit is the most developed of the state parks in the area and provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities for statewide users. The golf course and marina are used primarily by the local community. The general plan proposes no major changes to the golf course; recommended improvements are to expand the clubhouse parking lot, provide a pedestrian/golf cart overpass on the upper road for golfers, and relocate the maintenance area to a more central and better screened location. No golf holes will be eliminated. Recommendations for the marina include 25-50 new boat slips, and the addition of a new day-use picnic area and expanded parking on the east side of the marina.

In order to continue to provide a high quality camping experience the plan

proposes that the existing campground be renovated and expanded to the east where an existing park residence and maintenance facility are now located. A proposed new administrative / maintenance area to be developed off Turri Road on the Baptista property would provide the necessary facilities for day-to-day operation and maintenance of the San Luis Obispo Coast state parks.

To meet existing and future recreational demands, the plan proposes that the Baptista property be developed, with access from a new park road off Turri Road. In addition to a new 50-100 unit campground, the plan recommends development of a trail system, with several vista points, connecting to the western part of the park. Any developments on the Baptista property will need to be carefully

placed to minimize visual impacts.

Both the golf-course (upper) road and the lower state park road serve as local commuter routes between the Los Osos / Baywood Park communities and the City of Morro Bay. Both roads will remain thru-traffic routes and continue to function essentially as they are now. However, the plan recommends that a portion of the lower road be realigned to run between the campground and the golf course. This will enable the campground entrance to be relocated to provide more vehicle stack-up space at the entrance without tying up thru-traffic. It will enhance the quality of the visitor experience by making it possible for the visitor to walk to various areas within the park without having to cross a busy thru-road. And it will improve visitor safety and enable a Class I bike path

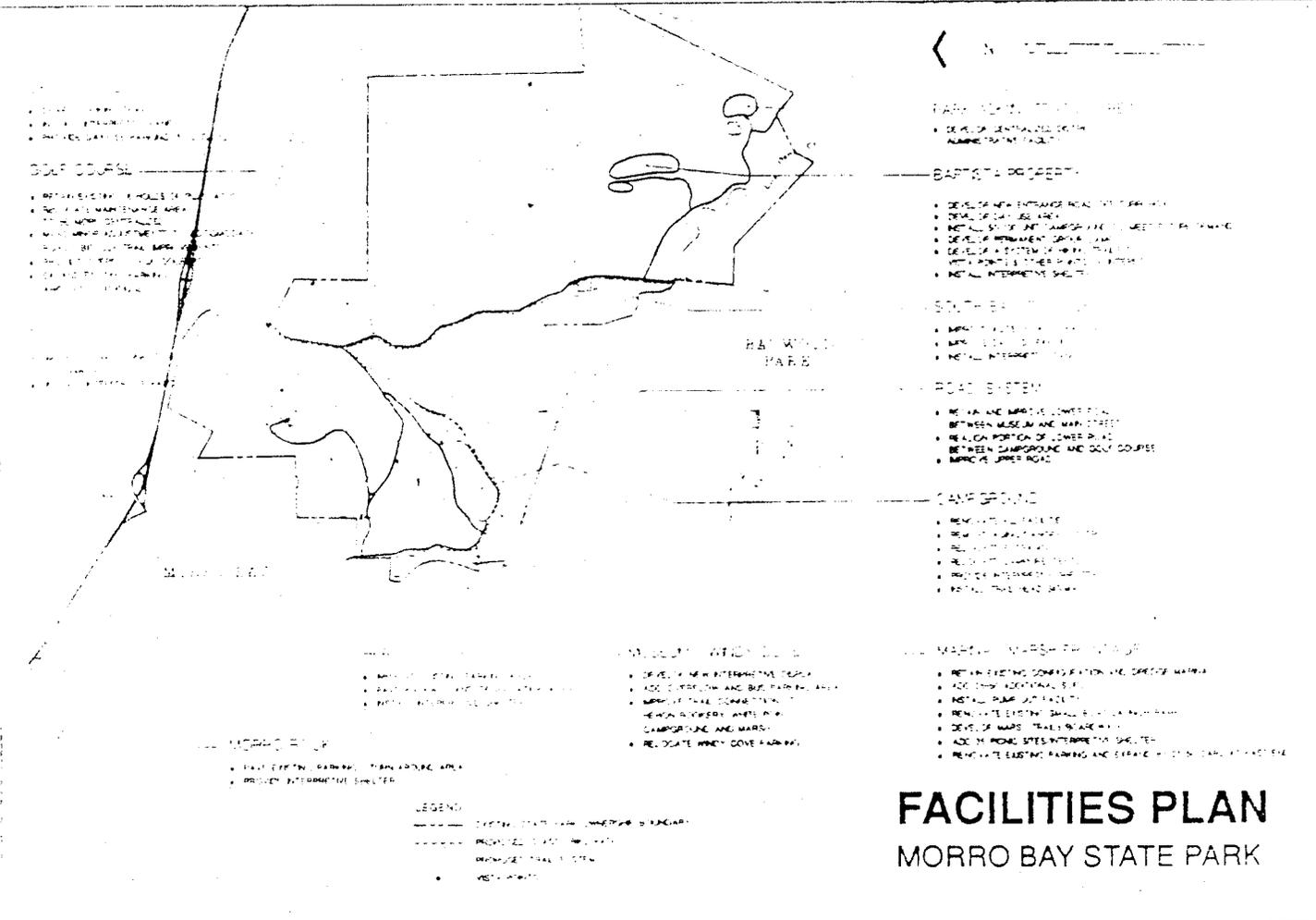
and a hiking trail to be placed along the marsh without any major grading immediately adjacent to the marsh. Along the marsh the proposed road realignment would be at a higher elevation, thereby maximizing scenic views of the marsh. Two roadside parking areas are proposed for viewing and access to the marsh edge. A portion of the existing alignment of the lower road is not wide enough to safely allow vehicles to stop and park for viewing the marsh nor to adequately accommodate both a road and a separate bicycle / pedestrian trail.

The plan recommends development of a bus and overflow parking area for the Museum of Natural History. Trails from the heron rookery, campground, and marsh should be oriented to the museum. Due to archeological values at White Point, physical limitations, and engineering considerations, expansion of the museum is not proposed.

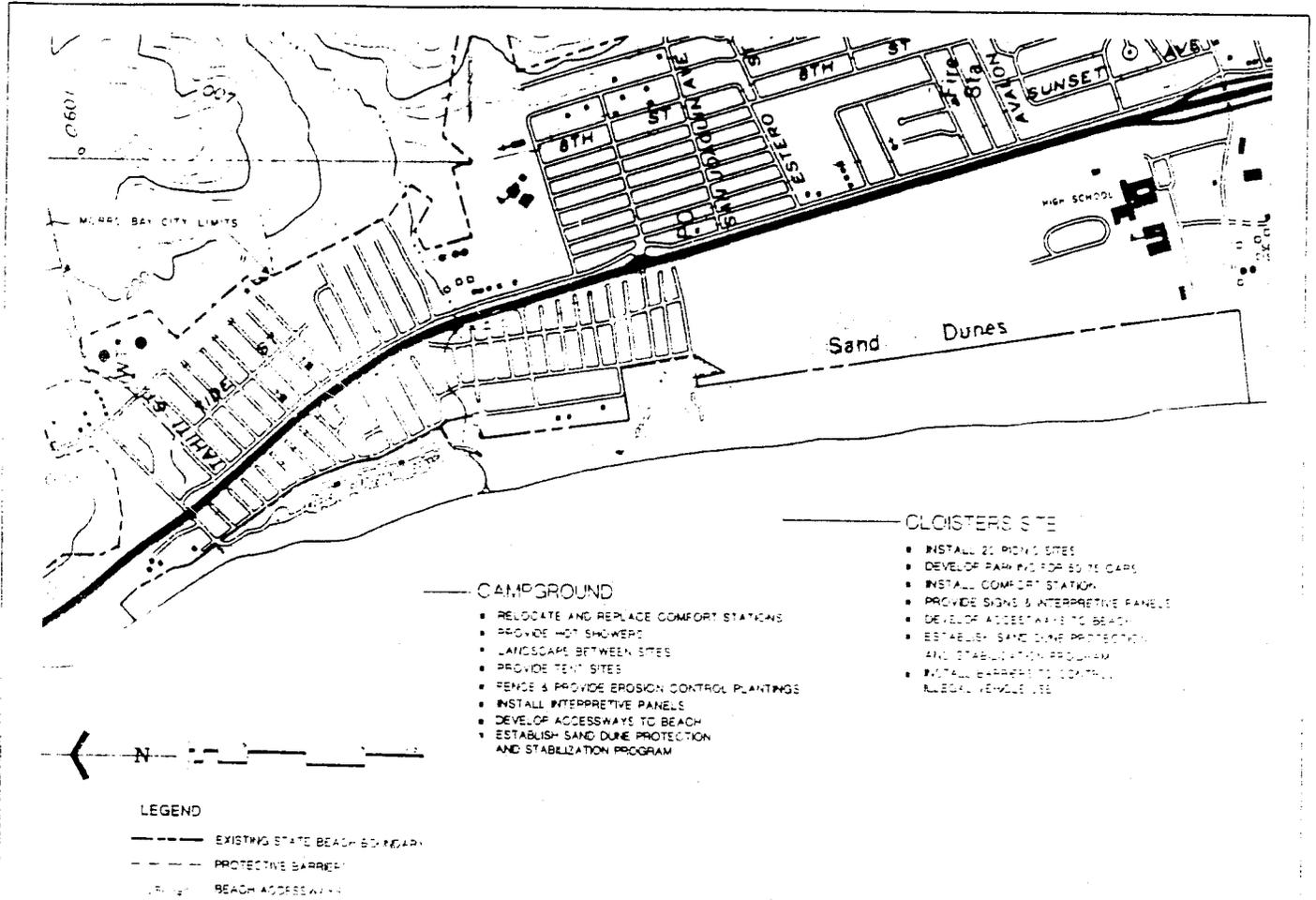
These are the major proposals of the single plan for Morro Bay State Park. Additional recommendations are shown on the map.

Atascadero State Beach

Due to the great demand for camping in the area, the plan proposes that the existing campground continue to serve this need rather than being converted partially or fully to day-use as was proposed in one of the "alternatives" plans. The plan proposes formalizing and improving the appearance of the existing day-use at "The Cloisters" site. Development of beach accessways for day-users is proposed at two locations near the campground. See other specific recommendations on the plan.



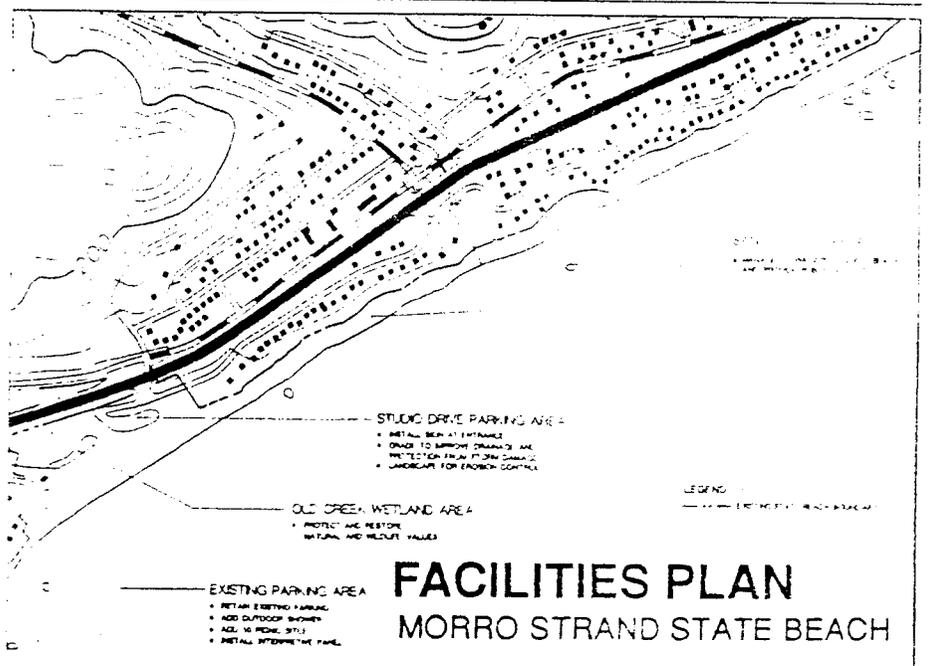
Final Plan



FACILITIES PLAN ATASCADERO STATE BEACH

Morro Strand S.B.

This unit will continue to serve only day-use recreation needs. No new permanent facilities are proposed, primarily because the beach-level elevation of the unit exposes it to storm wave damage. Recommendations consist of enhancing and protecting the existing use areas.



FACILITIES PLAN MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH



Upcoming Public Meetings

Plans for the five Morro Bay Area state park units will be heard on different evenings.

Montana de Oro State Park and Los Osos Oaks State Reserve plans will be presented:

**Tuesday
September 1 7PM
Veterans Building
209 East Surf Street
Morro Bay**

Plans for Morro Bay State Park, Atascadero and Morro Strand State Beaches will be presented:

**Wednesday
September 2 7PM
Veterans Building
209 East Surf Street
Morro Bay**

This is your last opportunity to comment on the plans and make revisions before they go to the printers. After publication, the plans will be reviewed by public agencies, interest groups and concerned individuals. Then they will go to the State Park and Recreation Commission with staff recommendation for approval in Spring, 1988. The planning staff believes the plans reflect the desires of the people of the Morro Bay area and the state for resource preservation and quality recreational experiences. Please come and share your thoughts with us in this important final phase of the planning process.



State of California
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

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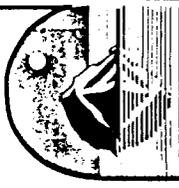
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DRAWING NO.
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MAP
4

LOS OSOS OAKS STATE RESERVE
PROPOSED LAND USE
AND FACILITIES
GENERAL DESIGN AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
APPROVED _____ DATE _____

DESIGNED _____ DATE _____
DRAWN D.A. 86
CHECKED _____

FUTURE ADDITION

- ACQUIRE WHEN AVAILABLE FROM A WILLING SELLER TO PROVIDE PERMANENT PARKING WHICH WILL NOT IMPACT RESOURCES WITHIN THE UNIT.
- NOTE: THE ACQUISITION PROPOSAL SHOWN HERE IS INTENDED FOR LONG RANGE PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT A COMMITMENT TO ACQUIRE.

PARKING

- REPLACE PARKING (8-12 SPACES) TO REPLACE WHAT IS TO BE ELIMINATED BY COUNTY ROAD WIDENING.
- PROVIDE TRAILHEAD EXHIBIT STRUCTURE
- INSTALL ENCLOSURE FOR PORTABLE RESTROOMS

UNIT SIGN

- INSTALL IN PROMINENT LOCATION NEAR REPLACEMENT PARKING AREA

TRAILS

- EXTEND TRAIL SYSTEM THROUGH OTHER OAK STANDS AND INTO THE SOUTHWESTERN SECTION OF THE RESERVE.

LEGEND:

- EXISTING STATE RESERVE BOUNDARY
- - - PROPOSED FUTURE ADDITION
- EXISTING TRAIL
- PROPOSED TRAIL EXTENSION

