

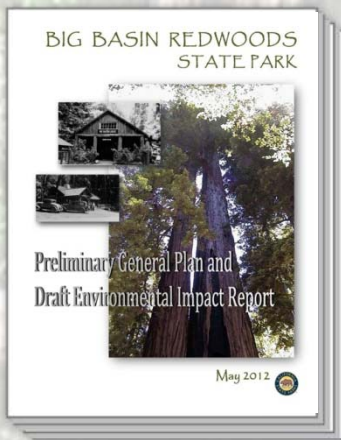


Big Basin Redwoods State Park

Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR Newsletter: June 2012

General Plan/Draft EIR available for public review

California State Parks has completed a Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR, which is now available for public review and comment. The plan is based on the preferred alternative developed through this public planning process, and represents a concept for preserving the prime natural and cultural features, while maintaining traditional park activities, programs, and recreation opportunities.



The General Plan serves as a framework for the management and use of park lands, and articulates the desired future conditions for natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences that will best fulfill the park's purpose.

Big Basin Redwoods State Park is California's oldest state park, established in 1902. The park consists of more than 18,000 acres in the Santa Cruz Mountains, located within 60 miles of major metropolitan centers in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Santa Clara Valley. The 3,800 acres that comprised the original California Redwood Park is nominated as a National Historic Landmark property. This area contains the heart of the redwood grove that inspired admirers to form the Sempervirens Club and advocate for the creation of a state park.

Public Review Period

The Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 45 days, beginning **June 18, 2012**. Your views and comments on this project are welcomed and must be in writing. Comments may be submitted by mail, fax, or email.

All comments should be submitted with a contact name and mailing address for the public record and postmarked no later than **August 1, 2012**. Please send comments to the following address:

California State Parks
Planning Division
Big Basin Redwoods SP Planning Team
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Email: generalplan@parks.ca.gov
Fax: (916) 653-4458

This project will be considered before the **State Park and Recreation Commission** in a public hearing to be held at a local venue after the public comments, Department responses, and a Final EIR has been prepared. Notice of the hearing will be mailed to all agencies, organizations, and individuals that have expressed interest.

Key Plan Proposals...

Wilderness and Backcountry

- Preserve the remote forested mountain character of the state wilderness and backcountry, and protect the integrity and character of the West Waddell Creek watershed through effective management of resources and visitor use.
- Expand the state wilderness to include approximately 390 acres of additional lands north to Gazos Creek Road and west to Whitehouse Canyon Road.
- Establish backcountry trails and trailheads for backpackers, equestrians, and cyclists outside sensitive resource areas and accessible from existing roads and trails.



Ocean view from the backcountry

Headquarters Area

- Restrict new facility construction in the old growth redwoods and manage visitor activities to protect significant resources and achieve long-term management objectives.
- Establish the primary visitor contact and campground registration outside the Headquarters area, and relocate some park administrative functions to a new facility at Saddle Mountain.

- Coordinate with DFG and USFWS toward the long-term recovery and survival of the Santa Cruz Mountain's marbled murrelet population.
- Rehabilitate the Lodge building, according to the Secretary of Interior Standards, to provide suitable adaptive uses for this historic building.
- Introduce up to 10 overnight cabins with parking and utilities in the Sky Meadow area along the road to the existing group camps and outside sensitive resource areas.

Saddle Mountain and Highway 236

- Develop a park welcome center for primary visitor contact, orientation, park information, and campground registration. Develop parking and determine the feasibility of implementing a shuttle system to transport visitors to other areas of the park.
- Conduct additional natural and cultural resource surveys, as necessary, to determine the presence of significant resources; implement protective measures, and interpret the site's history and important cultural properties through effective interpretation methods and media.
- Coordinate with Caltrans to manage visitor and non-visitor traffic along Highway 236 through the park, and improve signage at locations on Highway 9 at Waterman Gap and along Highway 236 at China Grade Road to redirect visitors to the south entrance at Saddle Mountain.
- Preserve and interpret historic 1940s residences located in the Lower Sky Meadow area. Continue staff housing use and allow for development of additional trailer pads and amenities to support staff housing, while maintaining the integrity of the historic residential district.



Waddell Beach and the T. J. Hoover Natural Preserve

Rancho del Oso and Waddell Beach

- Coordinate with Caltrans to maintain and expand Waddell Beach parking facilities, as feasible, to support beach activities and ocean view parking.
- Improve highway signage and implement effective measures to slow vehicle traffic and provide early warning to motorists for approaching intersection and pedestrian crossing.
- Provide review and input to Caltrans on their planning and design for the proposed Highway 1 bridge replacement at the mouth of Waddell Creek to promote desirable hydrological, riparian, and estuarine conditions and facilitate safe vehicle access and egress from Highway 1. Incorporate day use parking (approx. 50 spaces) on the inland side of Highway 1, with safe pedestrian access along Waddell Creek from the inland side of the highway to the beach.
- Protect special status plant and wildlife habitats, conduct resource surveys and monitor use along roadways and near sensitive habitats, and implement resource management and protective measures to eliminate or mitigate human impacts on significant natural resources.

Little Basin

- Upgrade and expand utility systems and infrastructure to support recreational activities, such as camping (including cabins), hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, interpretive programs and group activities, including special events. Consider program needs for a possible environmental education center.
- Complete resource inventories and evaluations, and implement resource protection measures where needed.
- Consider a concession-developed and operated overnight lodge with dining facilities and additional cabins.
- Coordinate with Santa Cruz County to identify road improvements and county maintenance that may be necessary to maintain public vehicle access on Little Basin Road from Highway 236 to the Little Basin property.

Environmental Analysis

The environmental analysis and the consideration of alternatives in the General Plan were prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirement to analyze and disclose the potential environmental effects of a proposed action. The environmental analysis is programmatic in scope and serves as a first tier EIR. The General Plan includes guidelines that direct future project-level environmental review of site-specific projects to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects to resources during construction or operation of the facilities and improvements. Specific projects would also undergo subsequent CEQA review as appropriate. Because the General Plan contains goals and guidelines that are designed to avoid or minimize potential adverse environmental effects, no significant program-level impacts were identified.

Availability of the General Plan/Draft EIR

Copies of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR may be reviewed online at <http://www.parks.ca.gov/BigBasinGP> and at the following locations during normal business hours:

California Department of Parks & Recreation:

Santa Cruz District Office
303 Big Trees Park Rd.
Felton, CA 95018-9660

Año Nuevo State Park Office
New Years Creek Road
Pescadero, CA 94060

San Mateo Coast Sector Office
95 Kelly Avenue
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019-1627

Calif. State Parks Planning Division
1416 9th Street, Room 1442-7
Sacramento, CA 95814

Santa Cruz County Libraries:

Central Branch Library
224 Church Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Boulder Creek Branch Library
13390 West Park
Boulder Creek, CA 95006

Scott's Valley Branch
251 Kings Village Road
Scott's Valley, CA 95066

Felton Branch
6299 Gushee
Felton, CA 95018

San Mateo County Libraries:

Half Moon Bay Library
620 Correas Street
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

Pacifica Sharp Park Library
104 Hilton Way
Pacifica, CA 94044

Portola Valley Library
765 Portola Road
Portola Valley, CA 94028

Woodside Library
3140 Woodside Rd.
Woodside, CA 94062

Santa Clara County Libraries:

Cupertino Library
10800 Torre Ave.
Cupertino, CA 95014

Saratoga Library
13650 Saratoga Ave.
Saratoga, CA 95070

Los Altos Library
13 South San Antonio Rd.
Los Altos, CA 94022