



Big Basin Redwoods State Park

General Plan and Environmental Impact Report

Newsletter: March 2011

Overview

California State Parks is currently in the process of preparing a General Plan in order to provide a template for future park management, resource protection and visitor use. Public input is an important part of this planning process.

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.

Public Meeting Notice

You are invited to attend the next public meeting to review and comment on the General Plan Preferred Alternative. State Parks staff will be available to answer questions about the draft plan and planning process.

Saturday, March 26, 2011
12 noon to 4 p.m.
Felton Community Hall
6191 Highway 9
Felton, CA 95018

You can review a summary of planning goals and recommendations related to each of the park areas on the following webpage:
<http://www.parks.ca.gov/BigBasinGP>

- **Park Headquarters (HQ)**
- **Saddle Mountain and Highway 236**
- **Little Basin**
- **Sky Meadow**
- **Waddell Beach & Rancho del Oso**
- **Wilderness and Backcountry**

Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative that was developed through this public planning process will be presented at the March 26th meeting. It represents a concept for preserving the prime natural and cultural features, while maintaining traditional park activities and programs.



February 2010 Public Meeting in Felton

The Preferred Alternative was developed based on further assessment of the park's goals for resource preservation, park management and future development, the potential for adverse resource impacts, and the public input that we received on the alternatives presented at the February 2010 public meetings.

Park Headquarters (HQ)

- Management intent is to preserve and protect the old growth redwood forest and historic character of park development, and maintain access for visitor enjoyment, interpretation and education.
- Preserve the old growth redwood forest, limit new facilities, and relocate some existing facilities, where necessary, to protect sensitive resources.
- Preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings and cultural landscape elements, as

appropriate. No new building construction in HQ historic area, except when necessary to replace or adapt an existing building for appropriate uses.



Campfire center built in 1936

- Rehabilitate historic lodge for multi-use facility.
- Provide park shuttle and satellite parking to reduce HQ traffic during peak use periods.

Saddle Mountain and Highway 236

- Management intent is to establish a new park welcome center for primary visitor contact, park orientation and campground registration.
- Develop multi-use trail connections between Saddle Mountain, Little Basin, and the HQ area. Consider provisions for equestrian trailhead parking and staging area.
- Establish a park & ride shuttle system and metro bus stop integrated in the development of visitor parking and support facilities.
- Protect and interpret natural and cultural resource features. Establish adequate vegetative screening and buffers between park facilities and adjacent land uses.
- Provide equestrian trailer parking and access to trails off Hwy. 236 and East Ridge Road.

Little Basin

- Little Basin property and facilities were recently acquired and added to Big Basin

Redwoods State Park. A non-profit group (United Camps, Conferences and Retreats) will operate and maintain Little Basin facilities under a 7-year concession contract to 2017.

- Upgrade and maintain utility systems and infrastructure, as necessary, to accommodate family and group recreational use, and for special events with both outdoor and indoor facilities.
- Maintain facilities for activities such as camping (including cabins), hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, interpretive and group activities. Consider program needs for possible environmental education center.
- Consider a concession-developed and operated overnight lodge with dining facilities and additional rustic cabins.
- Coordinate with Santa Cruz County to manage public vehicle access on Little Basin Road from Hwy. 236 to the Little Basin property.



Little Basin group picnic shelter

Sky Meadow

- Management intent is to continue to serve park housing and maintenance functions, and expand visitor accommodations while protecting resources.
- Introduce up to 10 overnight cabins for visitor use outside the area of sensitive resources, including the expansion of support parking and utilities infrastructure.



Lower Sky Meadow Historic 1940s Residence

- 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.

- Relocate the entrance gate to RDO further inland (approx. 200 feet east), and develop a vehicle turnaround, parking, and park information kiosk for visitors. Incorporate trail and camping information and interpretation on the area's history and significant natural and cultural resources.
- Upgrade or reconfigure the horse camp and equestrian staging facilities to improve campsites, horse trailer parking and vehicle circulation.
- Develop new bicycle camp and walk-in campground facilities at a location north of the day use parking lot or adjacent to the horse camp and ranger station. Consider alternative forms of camp facilities, such as yurts, and provisions to serve touring bicyclists along Highway 1.
- Rehabilitate the Nature and History Center building, parking and support facilities, as necessary.

Waddell Beach and Rancho del Oso (RDO)

- Management intent is to maintain and improve the coastal access and recreation opportunities at Waddell Beach and RDO as the western gateway into Big Basin and the West Waddell Creek State Wilderness.
- Develop day use parking (approx. 50 spaces) on the inland side of Highway 1. Provide review and input to Caltrans on their planning and design for the proposed Highway 1 bridge replacement at the mouth of Waddell Creek. Identify potential for day use parking and pedestrian underpass to the beach and safe vehicle access inland to the day use and campground facilities.
- Preserve the long-term health of the Waddell Creek watershed and coastal beach environment.
- Coordinate with Caltrans to maintain and expand Waddell Beach parking facilities, as feasible, to support beach activities and ocean view parking.



Waddell Beach and RDO along Highway 1

Wilderness and Backcountry

- Management intent is to preserve and protect the wild and remote natural landscape of the wilderness and backcountry areas, with opportunities for visitor experiences.
- Expand the state wilderness to include approximately 390 acres of additional lands north up to Gazos Creek Road and Whitehouse Canyon Road.
- Make provisions for multi-use of the backcountry, with additional trailhead parking and trailside camps.

- Develop additional loop trails, where feasible, for hikers and equestrians, and establish sustainable creek crossings and drainages to reduce erosion and stream sedimentation.
- Investigate potential realignment of the McCrary Ridge Trail to establish a more sustainable route for multi-use outside the state wilderness.
- Provide an Interpretation Master Plan to provide further park-wide guidance and recommendations for interpretation.



Backcountry view from Chalks Road

Contact Information

As the planning progresses, we encourage you to stay connected and be an active participant in this planning process. There are a number of ways to contact us, obtain planning information, and provide additional input into this planning process.

Mailing address:

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



Email address:

generalplan@parks.ca.gov

Big Basin Redwoods SP General Plan Webpage:

<http://www.parks.ca.gov/BigBasinGP>

Contacts:

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 Chet Bardo, Santa Cruz District Superintendent (831) 335-6318

Where we are in the Planning Process

With your feedback on the Preferred Alternative, the Planning Team will prepare the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The next steps for plan preparation and completion are outlined below:

Preferred Alternative

March 2011

Present Preferred Alternative for public review and comment.
 Hold public meeting/workshop and additional stakeholder meetings, as necessary.

Preliminary General Plan / Draft EIR

Fall 2011

Analyze the potential environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative.
 Prepare and distribute a Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR for the CEQA
 45-day public review and comment period.
 Respond to public comments and finalize and distribute Final EIR.

State Park and Recreation Commission Hearing

Spring 2012

Present General Plan/Final EIR to the Commission for consideration and approval.
 Print and distribute Final General Plan.