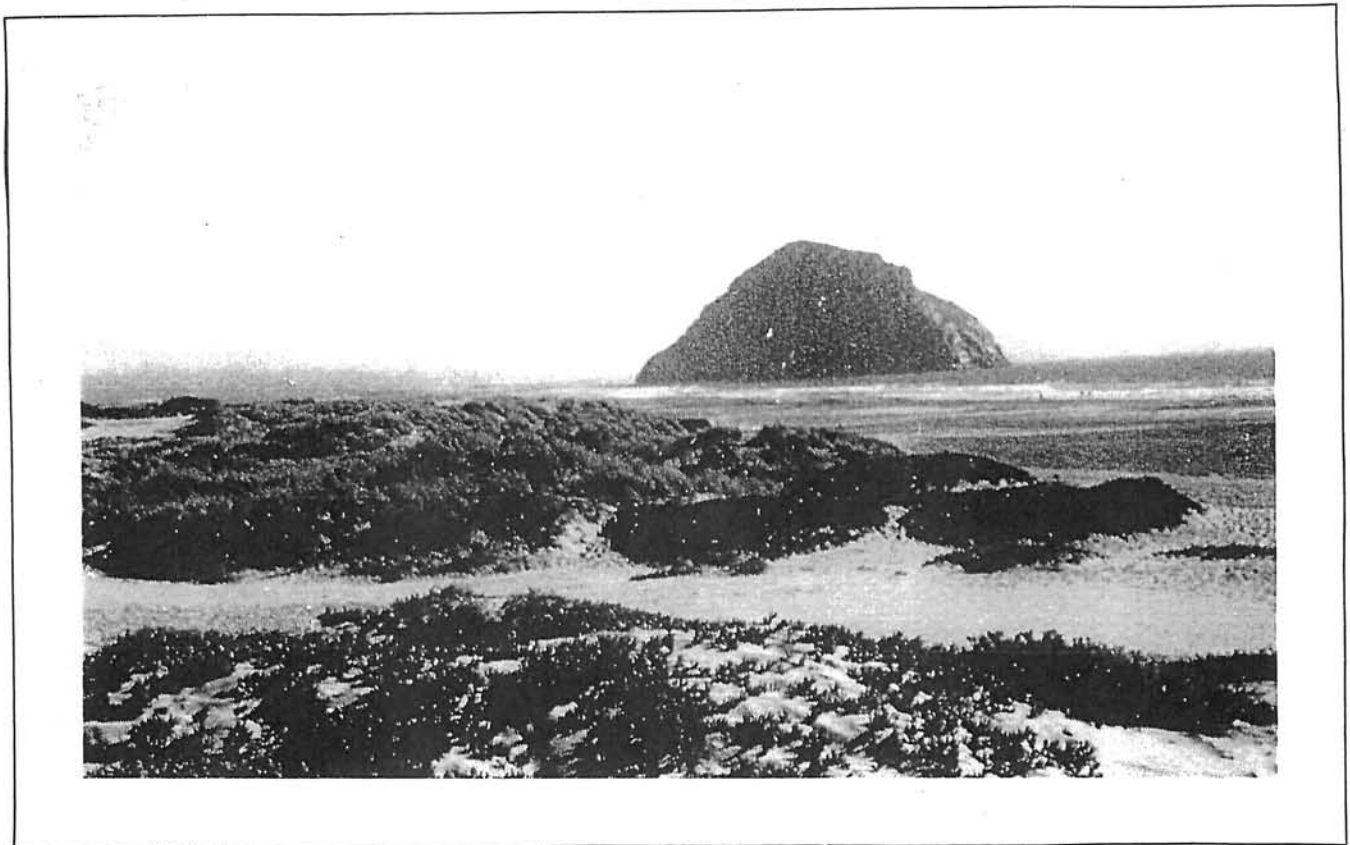




# MORRO STRAND AND ATASCADERO STATE BEACH

## General Plan



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

George Deukmejian  
Governor

Gordon Van Vleck  
Secretary for Resources

Henry R. Agonia  
Director

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

## STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

P.O. Box 942896, SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001



Resolution 7-88  
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 Morro Strand and Atascadero State Beach; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the California State Park and Recreation Commission hereby approves the Department of Parks and Recreation's Morro Strand and Atascadero State Beach Preliminary General Plan, dated November 1987, including staff's "Recommended Changes," and expanding language in Priority 1 on Page 60 to exclude off-road vehicles, subject to such environmental changes as the Director of Parks and Recreation shall determine advisable and necessary to implement the provisions and objectives of said plan.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

## STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

P.O. Box 942896, SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001



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

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation operates two units totaling 160 acres in and near the City of Morro Bay, now referred to as Atascadero State Beach and Morro Strand State Beach; and

WHEREAS, Atascadero State Beach lies less than one mile away from Morro Strand State Beach but is associated by name with the City of Atascadero located inland and more than 15 miles away; and

WHEREAS, both of these units provide similar outdoor recreational opportunities including sunbathing, swimming, fishing, and other beach-oriented recreational activities consistent with the State Beach classification as defined in Section 5010.56 of the Public Resources Code;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 5019.56 of the Public Resources Code and after proceedings in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act contained in Section 11370 et seq. of the Government Code, the State Park and Recreation Commission hereby renames Atascadero State Beach as Morro Strand State Beach.

MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

GENERAL PLAN

June 1992

MORRO BAY AREA STATE PARK UNITS GENERAL PLAN

Volume 2

State of California  
The Resources Agency  
Department of Parks and Recreation

Pete Wilson, Governor  
Douglas P. Wheeler, Secretary  
Donald W. Murphy, Director

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



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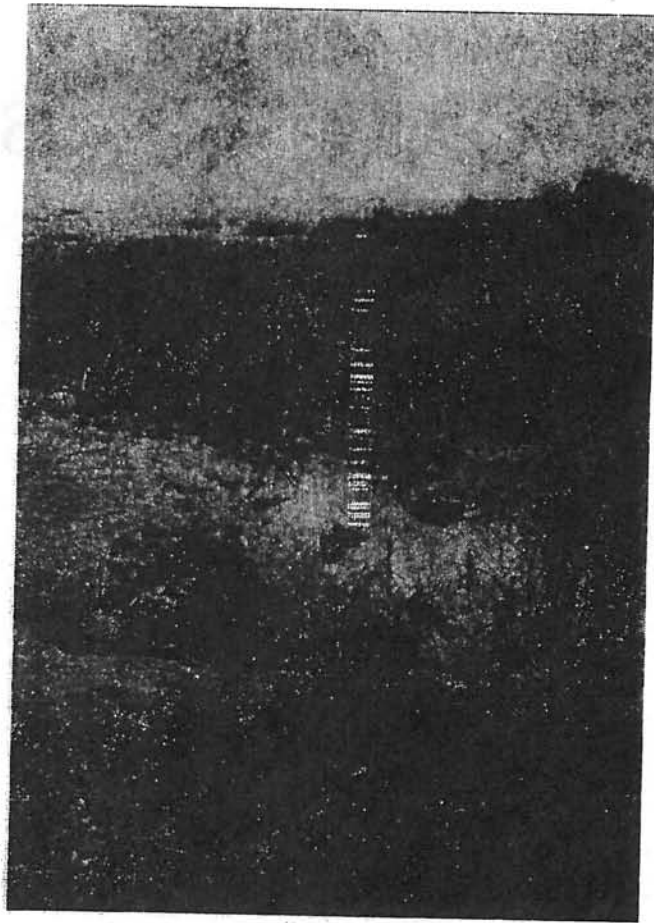
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MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

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# SUMMARY



## SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN PROPOSALS

Long-range planning proposals for Morro Strand State Beach, including areas formerly named Atascadero State Beach, both located in San Luis Obispo County, are presented in this General Plan, prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. It was a recommendation of the Preliminary General Plan to change the name of Atascadero State Beach to Morro Strand State Beach, thereby combining the two units into one. The State Park and Recreation Commission approved this name change, as stated in Resolution 8-88, shown in the front of this document. However, they are still addressed as separate areas in this plan.

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.

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

### MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

#### Resource Management

- Protect existing water features and water quality in the state beach.
- Protect and perpetuate the Old Creek wetland ecosystem.
- Reduce invasive exotic plant species in the unit.
- Use indigenous species for landscape plantings where feasible.
- Provide for monitoring of geological hazards and beach profile surveying.
- Design and locate new developments to reduce impacts on or impacts from the coastal erosion process.
- Provide for the monitoring, reporting, and protection of archeological resources.

#### Land Use and Facilities

- Limit use to beach-oriented day uses only.
- Construct outdoor shower, exhibit shelter, and five additional picnic sites at the existing paved parking area.
- Install entrance sign and interpretive panel at Studio Drive parking area.
- Improve Studio Drive parking area, and install vehicle barriers and erosion control plantings.

#### Interpretation

- Develop a series of rotational exhibits for the interpretive facilities recommended above.

- Install metal interpretive signs at the five coastal access points along the state beach.
- Encourage the recruitment of more volunteers.
- Schedule interpretive walks, talks, and demonstrations as visitor participation warrants.
- Develop more interpretive literature highlighting the resources of the unit.
- Update teachers guide, and encourage more visitation by school groups during off-season.

ATASCADERO STATE BEACH  
(Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

- Change unit name to Morro Strand State Beach. (Adopted, Resolution 8-88)

Resource Management

- Regulate use and development to prevent the destruction of the significant sand dune environment.
- Provide for monitoring of geological hazards and beach profile surveying.
- Design and locate new developments to reduce impacts on or impacts from the coastal erosion process.
- Reduce invasive exotic plant species in the unit.
- Use indigenous species for landscape plantings where feasible.
- Protect nest sites of the snowy plover and other ground-nesting seabirds.
- Provide for the monitoring, reporting, and protection of archeological resources, including the initiation of archeological investigations when necessary.

Land Use and Facilities

- Establish a wide range of beach use, including camping.
- Renovate existing campground.
- Replace existing entrance station.
- Expand day-use parking at campground to 20-25 spaces.
- Install beach accessways, fencing, and erosion control plantings in the campground area.
- Develop parking at the "Cloisters" site (50-75 cars).

- Develop up to 20 picnic sites at the "Cloisters" area.
- Install comfort station at the "Cloisters" area.
- Develop beach accessways and install vehicle barriers at the "Cloisters" area.
- Install interpretive panels at both campground and "Cloisters" area.
- Improve existing parking and access area at the end of Hatteras Street.

Interpretation

- Recommendations for interpretation are the same as listed for Morro Strand State Beach, with the exception of installing metal signs at coastal access points.



MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

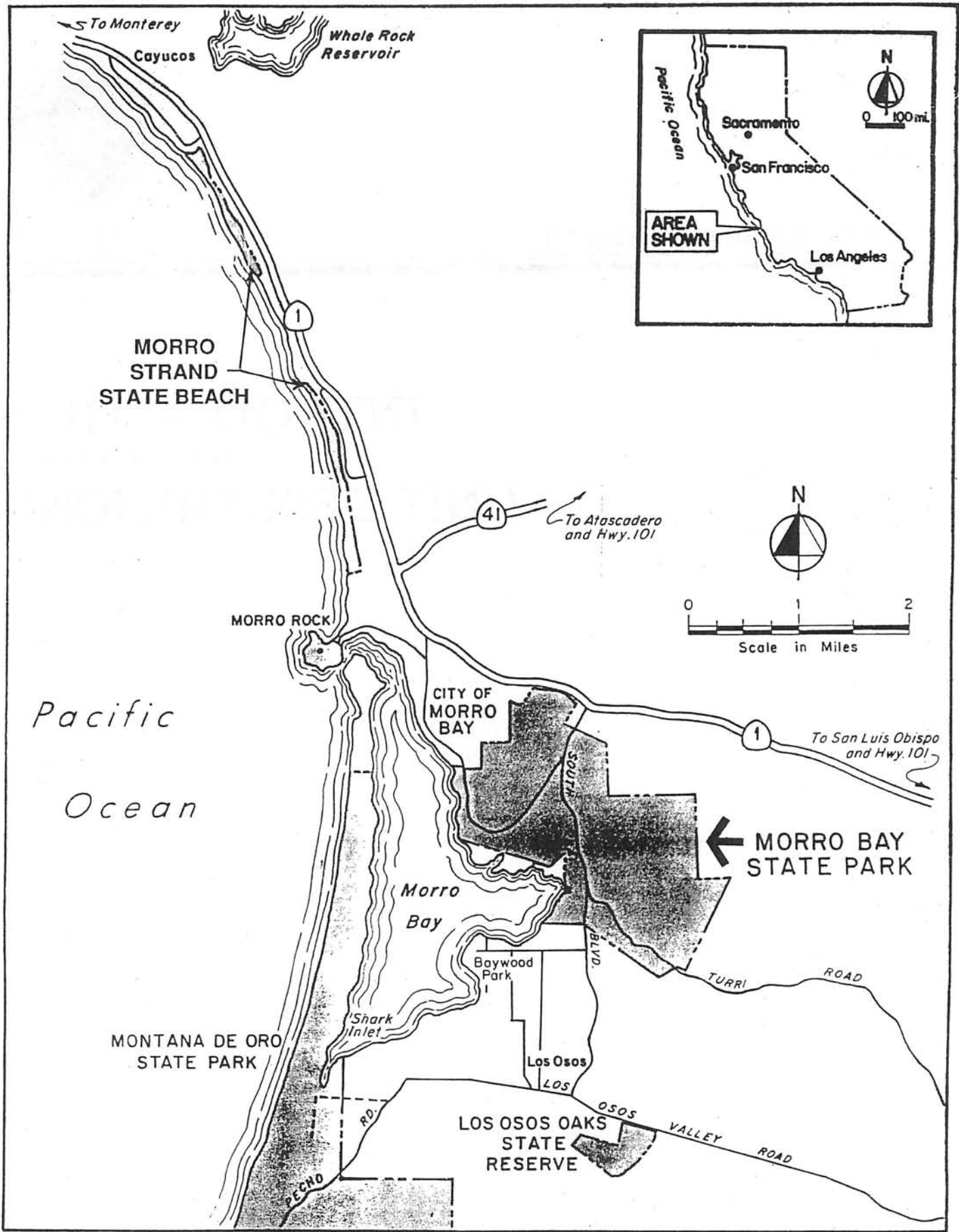
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# INTRODUCTION

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# UNIT DESCRIPTIONS





8  
 Figure - 1  
 VICINITY MAP

## UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

### MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

Location: San Luis Obispo County, three miles north of the city of Morro Bay. Sixteen miles northwest of the City of San Luis Obispo.

Size: A narrow strip consisting of 33.81 acres and 6,850 feet of ocean frontage.

Topography: Gently sloping from east to west. Some areas contain nearly vertical sea cliffs, with a maximum height of approximately 40 feet.

Vegetation: A majority of the unit consists of a sandy beach area, with very little vegetation. At the northern end, however, there is a small salt marsh and riparian area containing a dense thicket of willows.

Existing Facilities: A paved parking area for 50 cars, a restroom building, and five picnic tables off Pacific Avenue. A dirt parking area for 59 cars off Studio Drive.

Existing Operation: The unit is operated as part of DPR's San Luis Obispo Coast District. Cayucos State Beach (operated by the County of San Luis Obispo) is one mile north. Atascadero State Beach, which has been renamed Morro Strand State Beach, is three miles south.

### ATASCADERO STATE BEACH (Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

Location: In the City of Morro Bay, in San Luis Obispo County. Thirteen miles northwest of the City of San Luis Obispo.

Size: A strip of land consisting of 125.34 acres, including 9,950 feet of ocean frontage.

Topography: Gently sloping sand dunes and a steeper bluff area at the northern end of the unit. Maximum elevation varies from sea level to 40 feet.

Vegetation: Predominantly low-growing sand dune vegetation. Some larger trees, eucalyptus and cypress, occur on the Cloisters site. Myoporum is the predominant vegetation in the campground.

Existing Facilities: Contact station, 104-unit campground, 10 day-use parking spaces, two picnic sites, and two comfort stations with outdoor showers, all located at the northern end. Undeveloped dirt parking area at Cloisters site, which accommodates 50-75 vehicles.

Existing Operation: The unit is operated as part of DPR's San Luis Obispo Coast District. Morro Strand State Beach is three miles to the north. Morro Rock, part of Morro Bay State Park, is approximately 3,000 feet south of the southern end of this unit.

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of the Plan

Morro Strand State Beach and the former Atascadero State Beach are closely related in many respects. They contain similar resources, both natural and recreational. They are currently managed together in one operational area, and are in close proximity. In addition, there has been some confusion with regard to the name of Atascadero State Beach. It lies entirely within the city limits of the City of Morro Bay, and bears little proximity to the city of Atascadero, which lies approximately 12 miles to the northeast. Therefore, both units are included in this one document, and the State Park and Recreation Commission has changed the name of Atascadero State Beach to Morro Strand State Beach. However, for clarity, they will continue to be referred to as two separate units. That is the way they are referred to in each element of this document.

This General Plan establishes guidelines for the long-term use, management, and development of Morro Strand State Beach. 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 construction of any development that would constitute a permanent commitment of natural or cultural resources.

The plan summarizes the available information about the parks, 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 parks. The plan, however, is not meant to provide detailed plans for site development, resource management, or park 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. Provide, preserve, and protect public opportunities for ocean beach-oriented recreation in a high-quality environment.
3. Restore and protect the natural values of the Old Creek wetland area.
4. Preserve a natural setting for recreational activities.
5. Develop facilities needed to help meet current and future recreation demands.

6. Provide appropriate interpretive services and facilities for educational and recreational purposes.
7. Promote a safe, enjoyable, and well-managed recreation environment.
8. Minimize environmental damage caused by recreation use and development.
9. Monitor recreation use, and periodically reassess the ability of the resources to absorb the use they are receiving, and adjust recreation 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 (renamed Morro Strand 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 on this evaluation, a number of plan alternatives were prepared. These were again analyzed in cooperation with local agencies, interest groups, and the public. Single plans then emerged for each unit which were 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 Morro Strand State Beach and Atascadero State Beach. It is divided into the following elements:

- o Resource Element - Evaluates the natural and cultural resources of the units, 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 which 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 units, 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 units.

- 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 more than 800 names was developed, and more than 5,000 user surveys were distributed at the state parks in 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, informed everyone of our planning process, and of 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, 1986. This meeting attracted well over two hundred 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 task of taking the many proposals received from the second public workshop and developing them into a single plan for each unit.

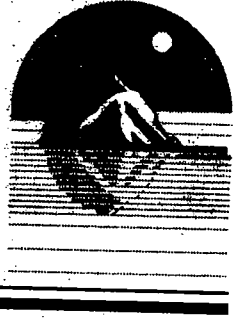
The single plan was then announced in the fourth issue of the newsletter, and was presented for evaluation at a third series of public meetings held on September 1 and 2, 1987. Approximately fifty people were in attendance at each of these meetings. The plans were reevaluated after the meetings, appropriate changes were made, and the preliminary plan and environmental impact report 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, prior to each public meeting, news releases were made which resulted 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:

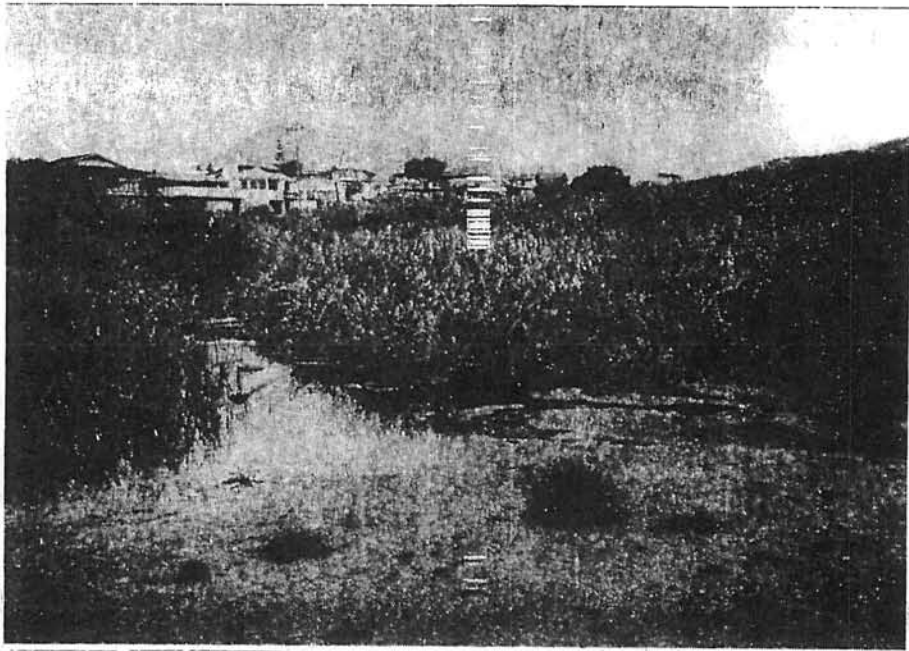
- o County of San Luis Obispo
  - Department of Planning and Building
  - Park Facilities Division
  - Engineering Department
  - Department of General Services
- o City of Morro Bay
  - City Administrator
  - City Council
  - Planning/Community Development
  - Public Works
  - Recreation and Parks
- o California Department of Transportation
- o California Department of Fish and Game
- o California Coastal Commission
- o State Water Quality Control Board
- o Pacific Gas and Electric
- o Pacific Bell



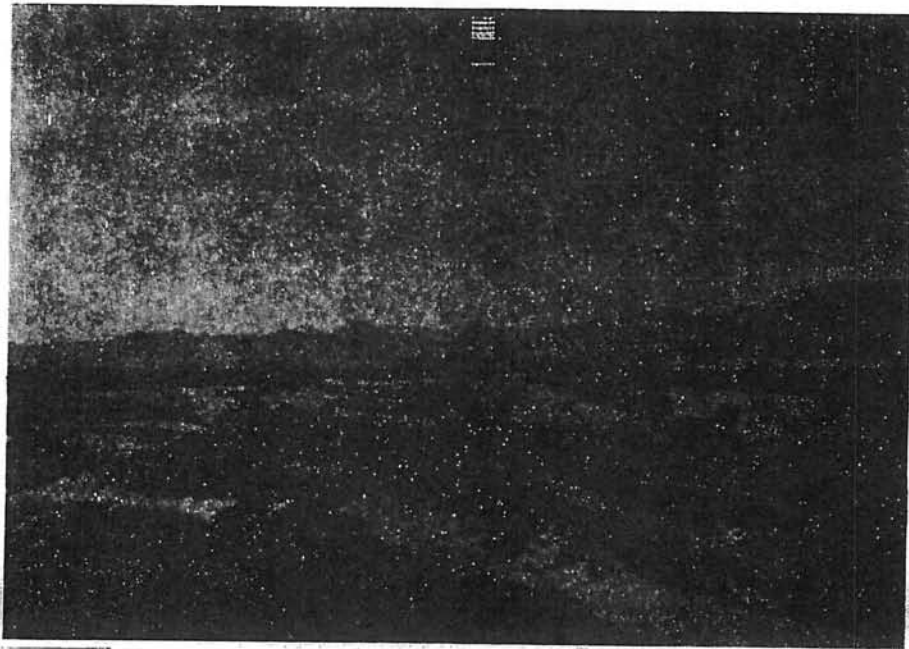
MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

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# RESOURCE ELEMENT



*Old Creek wetlands — Morro Strand*



*Sand dunes*



## 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 that 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.

### MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

#### RESOURCE SUMMARY

##### Natural Resources

###### Topography

Morro Strand State Beach is located on the central California coast, on the southern end of the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province. In the area of the state beach, 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.

The unit consists of a strip of flat, sandy beach bordering the southern part of the town of Cayucos. Facing southwest toward Estero Bay, the beach is backed by a narrow wave-cut terrace, the hills of the Santa Lucia Range, and the alluvial canyon of Willow Creek. The elevational range is from mean sea level to less than 40 feet. The outlet of intermittent Willow Creek crosses the middle of the beach strip. The northern end of the unit contains a small wetland and riparian area created by the outlet of Old Creek, emanating partially from the Whale Rock Reservoir located northeast of the unit. Coastal dunes and most of the vegetation found within the unit boundaries are located at the wider, northern portion of the unit; the remainder of the strip is bordered by the homes of the community of Cayucos. Sea stacks and submerged rocks may be seen from the beach.

## 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 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° to 60°, with summer maximums of 65°-70° and winter maximums in the 50s or low 60s. There are usually 40 to 50 days per year with measurable precipitation. The coastline of Estero Bay at Morro Strand State Beach is directly exposed to the wind from the west and southwest.

Morro Strand State Beach is located in the Non-Salinas Valley sub-area of the South Central Coast Air Basin. The major pollutants monitored in 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

Morro Strand State Beach is situated in the San Luis Obispo Hydrologic Unit of the Central Coastal Drainage Province. Morro Strand State Beach is in the Old Creek Hydrologic Subarea of the Cambria Hydrologic Subunit. The unit includes the mouths of two small ephemeral streams, Old Creek and Willow Creek. The flows of Old Creek are regulated by Whale Rock Reservoir, located 11 miles upstream from the unit. When Old Creek reaches the beach at Morro Strand, the water forms a pool and percolates into the sand; water generally does not flow directly into the ocean. These creeks are both ephemeral, and water quality is generally good, with some potential for degradation due to upstream land use practices. Land use in these watersheds includes irrigated agriculture with more pasture and alfalfa acreage than field crops, and recent urban and suburban development. These creeks are included in a current study by the State Water Quality Control Board investigating the effects upstream mining activities have had on water quality and aquatic habitat.

The unit is underlain by a portion of the Old Creek ground water basin, which is supplied primarily by precipitation percolation into recent alluvium. Groundwater quality is generally good, with a possibility of groundwater overdraft from overpumpage in dry years. Salt water intrusion into the aquifer is a transitory problem during dry periods.

Much of the beach is in the 100-year coastal flood zone, with additional area falling in the 500-year coastal flood zone. Tsunami or seismically induced waves and winter storm surges are sources of coastal flooding. The unit encompasses the 100-year flood zone for Willow Creek, and there is the possibility of flooding due to failure of the Whale Rock Reservoir dam.

## 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 were 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.

Bedrock in the Morro Strand area is Franciscan Complex -- rocks that are thought to represent the subduction zone complex. The rock outcrops belong to the "Broken Formation B," which consists of interbedded greywacke and shale. These rocks include small percentages of potassium feldspar (2 to 5%) and fragments of older Franciscan debris, such as red and green chert. The shale consists of illite, montmorillonite, and chlorite.

Morro Strand State Beach is very young, geologically. Beach sands, low dunes, and alluvial and terrace deposits make up the present-day surface, with some offshore and beach rocks and a few cliff rocks providing some hint of the dramatic history of this section of coastline.

The hillslopes inland from the unit are prone to landslides, and the cliff-edge houses are subject to damage from erosion and seacliff retreat. The entrance road and unimproved parking lot may suffer from extreme erosion or storms; however, they are constructed in the best available locations.

#### Soils

Morro Strand State Beach is located in the southernmost tip of the Northwestern Coastal Ranges Soil Region (Soil Region I), which is characterized by steep mountain ranges and small valleys. Two soil map units are found within the boundaries of the state beach: beaches and Cropley clay.

Beaches, the dominant soil mapping unit, consist of layers of sand grains of rock washed down waterways from inland areas to the ocean, and distributed southward along the coast by longshore currents. Found on the shore of Estero Bay, beach sand is essentially barren of vegetation. The soil permeability is high and very rapid, the available water capacity is low, and the erosion hazard due to wind and wave action is high, limiting the use of the beach almost exclusively to recreation.

Gently sloping (2-9% slope) Cropley clay is found behind the beach. Formed in alluvium weathered from sedimentary rocks, the vegetation types found on this soil are coastal foredune and coastal dune scrub, and northern coastal salt marsh bordered by willow riparian vegetation. It has slow permeability and surface runoff, lessening the hazard of water erosion but interfering with septic tank absorption fields. The available water capacity is high, and the soil has a high shrink-swell potential and low strength, posing limiting factors for its use as a site for building structures or roads, or for its use as a construction material for embankments, dikes, and levees.

## Plant Life

Native vegetation at Morro Strand State Beach occurs in the vicinity of Old Creek, and consists of northern coastal salt marsh and willow riparian community types. Dominated by herbaceous perennials, the salt marsh occurs primarily on the southeast side of Old Creek, inland from the active beach. The salt marsh intergrades with the riparian zone along the creek banks, and with small areas of freshwater marsh in shallow depressions adjacent to State Highway 1. Principal saltmarsh species include jaumea and salt grass. Freshwater marsh species include beach silverweed and Douglas' coyote bush. Beach silverweed and three-square also grow along the banks of Old Creek. Coyote brush occurs adjacent to the freshwater depressions. The Old Creek riparian zone is dominated by arroyo willow. Arroyo willow occurs as a dense, wind-pruned thicket of low trees. Shallow areas in the creek adjacent to the banks are dominated by cat-tail.

No rare and endangered species or special interest plants occur in this unit.

Several exotic species occur in the wetland area at Morro Strand State Beach. The most invasive of these species are periwinkle, castor bean, Fuller's teasel, and ice plant. Periwinkle forms an extensive understory in the riparian zone inland from Old Creek. Castor bean is established adjacent to the boundary fence at State Highway 1. Fuller's teasel and ice plant are established in the salt marsh area.

## Animal Life

Bordering the Pacific Ocean on Estero Bay and virtually surrounded by human development on its landward side, Morro Strand State Beach consists primarily of a beach and the coastal strand biotic community, with its associated, integrated faunal resources. Despite the harsh environment, the animal life is plentiful and diverse, and easily accessible to interested visitors. The beach receives nutrients from the ocean which feed its myriad burrowing invertebrate populations. Small crustaceans such as mole crabs and amphipods serve as a food source for many species of seabirds, making this area a popular overwintering or migratory stopover point. Willets, marbled godwits, and least sandpipers can be seen searching for food in the sand. Pelagic or ocean-going birds such as surf scoters and common loons may be seen from the beach, as can marine mammals such as the California sea lion and the harbor seal. Several species of gull frequent the beach to scavenge, as do some terrestrial birds such as the Brewer's blackbird.

Behind the beach, wind-created sand dunes offer some protection, vegetation, and freshwater ponds. Red-winged blackbirds, song sparrows, and meadowlarks take advantage of the seeds provided by the dune vegetation, and their songs can often be heard above the sound of the waves. The deer mouse and the black-tailed jackrabbit forage in the coastal strand during the night, and may themselves become forage for predators such as the short-eared owl and the bobcat.

The outlets of Old Creek and Willow Creek cross the beach, and the flow of fresh water provides habitat for additional flora and fauna. Numerous insects feed Pacific tree frogs, long-billed marsh wrens, and flycatchers such as the

black phoebe. Fish and amphibians are favored foods of the kingfisher, the great blue heron, and the black-crowned night heron, which also finds roosting cover and possibly nesting opportunities in the riparian vegetation.

Historically, the coastal dunes and wetlands were far more extensive. Urban development, altered streams, and intensive human use of the coastal areas have affected the pristine wildlife of the area; some species have been reduced, and others, including beach-nesting seabirds like the least tern, have disappeared.

Four state or federally listed rare (R), threatened (T), or endangered (E) species may occur in the state beach. Those that may forage in the unit include the brown pelican (SE, FE), the least tern (SE, FE), the bald eagle (SE, FE), and the American peregrine falcon (SE, FE). The state is also concerned about the welfare of many other animals, identified as species of special concern, that may occur in the unit. Some of these include the double-breasted cormorant and the California gull, both of which breed in the vicinity, and the western grebe, the common loon, and the elegant tern, which forage in the area.

#### Marine Life

Morro Strand State Beach is located along a broad curve of the coastline extending 20 miles from Point Estero south to Point Buchon. Although it is called Estero Bay, this stretch of coastline is not protected from wave action. The surf is often heavy during the winter, when Pacific storms bring strong winds and waves to the coast. The tide range in the area is from approximately the minus 2-foot level to the plus 7-foot level. The tide cycle is a mixed semi-diurnal type, characterized by two high tides and two low tides per day. Ocean water varies by about 13 degrees F. during the year. Water temperatures range from a low of about 51 degrees F. in the months from February through May to a high of 64 degrees in October.

Morro Strand State Beach is primarily a sandy beach, with only a few scattered rocks. The sand is not a suitable substrate for surface attachment and protection from surf, and, thus, limits the kind of intertidal organisms to those that can burrow in the sand. The scattered rocks serve as attachment sites for many organisms, but many are seasonally buried by sand.

Sixty-two species of multi-cellular plants have been identified in the intertidal area adjacent to this unit. Many of the rocks in the mid-littoral zone are covered with plant material. Plants of particular interest occurring here are species in the genus Porphyra. This algae is eaten by humans more than any other. Also known as nori, its cultivation and marketing is a multi-million dollar industry in Japan. Porphyra lanceolata occurs in large quantities in the mid-littoral zone at the north end of the unit.

As a result of wave action, large masses of kelp often come to rest on the sandy beach. These decomposing masses of kelp become an important part of the beach environment. Large populations of beach hoppers, flies, crustaceans, and other organisms inhabit these kelp masses.

Other than in the decaying kelp masses, the sandy beach fauna are mostly subsurface. Unless they are dug out, only those individuals washed out by strong wave action are seen. In the mid-littoral zone, bloodworms are often found in sufficient numbers to provide bait for fishing. The larger sandy beach organisms are found in the sub-littoral fringe, including the spiny mole crab and the eccentric sand dollar. Specimens of the Pismo clam, once locally abundant, are not often encountered. The population decline is an apparent result of the sea otter reestablishing itself as the top carnivore in the local ecosystem.

Fishes commonly caught at Morro Strand include bard surf perch, white croaker, and flatfish. In offshore areas, there are seasonal occurrences of king salmon and albacore in sufficient numbers to support recreational and commercial fishing activity. Five species of marine mammals are seen in the vicinity on a regular basis: harbor seals, California sea lions, Stellar sea lions, southern sea otters, and Pacific gray whales. The sea otter is a federally listed threatened species. The gray whale is a federally listed endangered species.

### Cultural Resources

#### Archeological Sites and Standing Structures

There are no known prehistoric or historic archeological sites or standing structures located within the boundaries of Morro Strand State Beach. Historic documents have been researched and a complete archeological survey conducted for this unit.

#### 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 channel, and the lack of villages on the coast north of the point. 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 mammal, bear, dog, wolf, fox, puma, skunk, raccoon, rodent, rabbit, mole, eagle, buzzard, snake, fish, and shellfish. Grinding implements, earth ovens, stone boiling in baskets, and 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 here in 1961. The structure was circular, 25 to 30 ft 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

Morro Strand State Beach was once part of the Rancho Moro y Cayucos land grant, and, in the 19th century, was simply known as "Morro Beach". At low tide, the beach was the commonly traveled "road" from Cayucos to the village of Morro (modern day Morro Bay). In 1916, developer E. G. Lewis purchased the southern half of Morro Beach, and christened it "Atascadero Beach," as part of his land development colony at Atascadero (the old J. E. Henry Ranch). In 1932, the State of California acquired the beach frontage of Morro Beach, and renamed it Morro Strand State Beach.

The site of the historic Old Creek store and saloon located "in a beautiful little valley off the beach" is not on State Park System property.

#### Esthetic Resources

Morro Strand State Beach provides sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean south to Morro Rock and the headlands of Montana de Oro State Park. The beach and offshore areas are accented by rock outcrops and small seastacks. The delicate tracery of small red algae and contorted streamers of kelp invite close examination of the cobbled and sandy beach.

There are several prominent negative esthetic features in the viewshed of Morro Strand State Beach. The most obvious of these features is the continuous row of houses atop the low bluff at the back of the beach. The owners of these houses have constructed stairways onto the beach, and, due to storm damage, many are in a state of disrepair. The base of the bluff has also been ripped or covered by concrete retaining walls. Trash associated with storm wrack is also unsightly. The smoke stacks of the Morro Bay Power Plant detract from downcoast vistas to Morro Rock.

## Recreation Resources

Morro Strand State Beach experiences an average yearly visitation of 40,000. Principal recreation activities in this unit include picnicking, wading, surfing, beachcombing, surf fishing, and nature study. Restrooms and five picnic sites are provided in this unit. Rough surf and cold ocean temperatures, as well as gusty winds, are constraints on recreational activities in this unit.

## RESOURCE POLICY FORMATION

### 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 beach.

The first acquisition by the state of the land which now constitutes Morro Strand State Beach occurred in 1932, in response to public pressure for a public park in the Morro Bay area. In the 1960s, the present State Park System classification system was established, and in July 1963, the State Park and Recreation Commission classified the unit as Morro Strand State Beach. Classification by the commission directs the department to manage the unit as specified in Public Resources Code Section 5019.56. This section defines and describes a state beach as a type of state recreation unit, as follows:

5019.56. State Recreation Units. State recreation units consist of areas selected, developed, and operated to provide outdoor recreational opportunities. Such units shall be designated by the commission by naming, in accordance with the provisions of Article 1 (commencing with Section 5001) and this article relating to classification.

In the planning of improvements to be undertaken within state recreation units, consideration shall be given to compatibility of design with the surrounding scenic and environmental characteristics.

State recreation units may be established in the terrestrial or underwater environments of the state and shall be further classified as one of the following types: . . . .

(d) State beaches, consisting of areas with frontage on the ocean, or bays designed to provide swimming, boating, fishing, and other beach-oriented recreational activities. Coastal areas containing ecological, geological, scenic, or cultural resources of significant value shall be preserved within state wildernesses, state reserves, state parks, or natural or cultural preserves.



### 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 beach in 1975, but was never presented to the state Park and Recreation Commission for approval.

A revised declaration of purpose is proposed, to clarify the department's management goals and objectives. The original and proposed declaration of purpose for the unit are as follows:

#### Original:

The purpose of Morro Strand State Beach is to make available to the public for recreational enjoyment the ocean shore and sandy beach at the mouth of Old Creek in the community of Cayucos. Developments shall be for the purpose of making the beach resources available to the public for recreational enjoyment, and shall not impair the scenic quality of the state beach.

#### Proposed:

The purpose of Morro Strand State Beach is to make available to the people, for their benefit and enjoyment, the scenic, natural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and the Old Creek wetland.

The function of the California Department of Parks and Recreation at Morro Strand State Beach shall be to provide, preserve, and protect public opportunities for ocean beach-oriented recreation in a high-quality environment, and to restore and protect the natural values of the Old Creek wetland area. A natural setting for recreational activities shall be preserved.

### Zone of Primary Interest

The zone of primary interest is that area outside the unit in which land-use changes could adversely affect the resources of Morro Strand State Beach. This area includes the adjacent community of Cayucos, the adjacent offshore areas, and the watersheds of Old Creek and Willow Creek.

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 resources and features in the unit. Air pollution generated by the Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon power plants, oil spills from offshore oil development, and pollution from other sources all potentially could affect Morro Strand State Beach. The damming of rivers and the development of both offshore and onshore protective structures could disrupt the normal movement of littoral sand, resulting in narrowing of the beach. 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 Morro Strand State Beach are:

- #15 State Recreation Units; protection of resources
- #18 State Beaches; avoid using sandy beaches for secondary uses
- #19 State Beaches; protection of resources
- #33 Exotic Plant Species
- #35 Wildlife Protection
- #46 Environmental Quality
- #58 Cultural Resource Protection
- #70 Archeological Sites

Directives #18 and #19 are particularly relevant to planning issues for the state beaches along Estero Bay:

(18) INSOFAR AS IS POSSIBLE IN STATE BEACHES, THE ENTIRE AREA OF THE SANDY LITTORALS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR RECREATION USE AND VISUAL ENJOYMENT. IT IS AN OBJECTIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT TO AVOID USE OF NATURAL SANDY BEACHES FOR PARKING OR FOR OTHER SUPPORTIVE OR SECONDARY USES.

(19) THE SCENIC, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL VALUES OF STATE BEACHES, INCLUDING THE ECOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS OF THE LITTORAL, TIDAL AND NEARSHORE AREAS WILL BE IDENTIFIED, EVALUATED, AND PROTECTED SO THE TOTAL QUALITY OF THE RECREATION EXPERIENCE MAY BE PERPETUATED AND ENHANCED.

Following several years of significant storm damage in many coastal State Park System units, the department adopted a policy for coastal erosion on October 24, 1984. The intent of the policy is to avoid construction of new permanent facilities in areas subject to coastal erosion unless the risk of loss is clearly offset by the need for the facility, and to promote the use of expendable or movable facilities in erosion prone areas. The policy reads as follows:

THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION SHALL AVOID CONSTRUCTION OF NEW STRUCTURES AND COASTAL FACILITIES IN AREAS SUBJECT TO OCEAN WAVE EROSION, SEA CLIFF RETREAT, AND UNSTABLE CLIFFS, UNLESS SPECIFIC DETERMINATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE THAT THE RISK OF LOSS OF THE FACILITY IS CLEARLY OFFSET BY THE INVESTMENT AND NEED FOR THE FACILITY. MEASURES SHALL

BE TAKEN TO MINIMIZE HUMAN INDUCED EROSION BY REDUCING: CONCENTRATED SURFACE RUNOFF FROM USE AREAS, ELEVATED GROUNDWATER LEVELS FROM IRRIGATION AND URBANIZATION, AND SURFACE DISTURBANCE OF BLUFFTOP SOILS. IN RECOGNITION OF CALIFORNIA'S ACTIVELY ERODING COASTLINE, NEW STRUCTURES AND FACILITIES LOCATED IN AREAS KNOWN TO BE SUBJECT TO OCEAN WAVE EROSION, SEA CLIFF RETREAT, OR UNSTABLE BLUFFS SHALL BE EXPENDABLE OR MOVABLE. STRUCTURAL PROTECTION AND REPROTECTION OF DEVELOPMENTS SHALL BE ALLOWED ONLY WHEN THE COST OF PROTECTION IS COMMENSURATE WITH THE VALUE (PHYSICAL AND INTRINSIC) OF THE DEVELOPMENT TO BE PROTECTED, AND WHEN IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE PROTECTION WILL NOT NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE BEACH OR THE NEAR-SHORE ENVIRONMENT.

In addition to policies, directives, and laws that apply statewide, the following specific resource policies have been developed for Morro Strand State Beach:

## Natural Resources

### Hydrologic Resources

The water features are important to perpetuation of the natural and esthetic values at Morro Strand State Beach. Any significant alteration of the hydrologic systems supporting these water features, either inside or outside the unit, may affect them significantly. These impacts need to be identified, monitored, and prevented or corrected before major 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.

### Geological Hazards

Geological hazards at Morro Strand State Beach include landslides, block falls, liquefaction, tsunamis, and seismic shaking. Site-specific investigations prior to new developments can help to avoid building in areas subject to these hazards.

Policy: New developments shall avoid geological hazards. Site-specific geologic reports shall be prepared by a registered geologist or certified engineering geologist prior to final siting of facilities, to assure that geological hazards have been avoided or mitigated to the fullest extent feasible. The report shall identify potential geologic hazards of the site, and provide for mitigating measures to ensure structural stability and integrity throughout the economic useful life of the development.

## Coastal Erosion

The seacliffs and beaches of Morro Strand State Beach are subject to coastal erosion, seacliff retreat, and beach sand loss. No DPR facilities are currently threatened by this natural process; however, conditions could change in the future.

Policy: The department shall support a beach monitoring/profiling program to document baseline beach and cliff conditions and changes over time. A topographic and property line survey shall also be performed in support of the monitoring effort. Future permanent facility developments at Morro Strand State Beach shall be sufficiently set back to ensure that the developments will endure. New developments shall neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion or geologic instability.

Development shall not be permitted on the cliff face except for engineered staircases or accessways to provide public access to designated public use areas. These access structures shall be designed to minimize the alteration of the bluff and beach.

## Paleontological Resources

No fossil resources are known to exist at Morro Strand State Beach. It is possible that the sand deposits or alluvial deposits in the terrace could yield fragmentary fossil material, although none has ever been reported to date.

Policy: In the event that a fossil discovery is made at Morro Strand State Beach, 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.

## Exotic Plant Species

Exotic species have become naturalized in and adjacent to the wetland in Morro Strand State Beach. In this area, they are successfully competing with native species. Exotic species have also been planted around the parking area. Perpetuation of native plant communities is dependent on the control and removal of exotic species.

Policy: The department shall pursue a long-range objective of reducing exotic plants, including periwinkle, castor bean, Fuller's teasel, and ice plant, that have become established in the unit. Highest priority for control efforts shall be given to those species most invasive and conspicuous in the landscape.

## Landscaping

Exotic species detract from the natural appearance of Morro Strand State Beach, displace native species, have lower habitat value for native wildlife, are more prone to insect attack and disease, and can require permanent irrigation and greater maintenance costs.

Policy: In order to maintain the diversity of native species, landscaping in developed areas should consist of species indigenous to the unit. If exotic species are used, these shall be species which are incapable of naturalizing in the wild, and which will not require a permanent irrigation system.

#### Old Creek Wetland

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 on the wetland habitat (California Administrative Code, Section 5812). Coastal wetlands are essential to fish as spawning and nursery areas, and to migratory waterfowl and shorebirds as resting, feeding, and nesting sites. From a human standpoint, wetlands may help to minimize the effects of flooding and erosion, and to buffer the effects of pollution. With their diversity of animal and plant life, wetlands are also important esthetic and recreational resources.

In California, 70 percent of coastal wetlands have been destroyed since 1900. Of the remaining wetland acreage, seven percent occurs on the coast between San Francisco Bay and the Mexican border; 80 to 89 percent is in the San Francisco Bay complex. Of the historic marshes reported in the Morro Bay area, many have been drained and converted to residential, industrial, or agricultural use.

The wetland at Morro Strand State Beach includes coastal saltmarsh and willow riparian areas. Old Creek, a small freshwater/tidal creek, provides habitat for the tidewater goby, a Category II species of special concern. The willow thickets may also provide roosting and nesting sites for the black-crowned night heron.

Policy: The wetland ecosystem in Morro Strand State Beach shall be protected and perpetuated. In order to preserve the integrity of the wetland, a vegetation management plan shall be developed and implemented. Control of exotic species shall be an important element of this plan.

The management plan shall address changes in historic hydrology and sedimentation, exotic species removal, sensitive species management, and water quality and pollution abatement. Sewage treatment facilities in proximity to the wetland shall be monitored for discharges. All flows from treatment facilities or leach fields shall be directed away from the wetland.

#### Cultural Resources

##### Archeological Resources

No archeological resources are known to exist in Morro Strand State Beach. It is possible that such resources are concealed by vegetation or more recent sand and soil deposits, and that future disturbances will uncover such resources.

significance of the discovery, and will recommend appropriate protective or stabilization action. Specific management programs shall be developed when significant cultural resources are threatened, endangered, or of special concern.

### Allowable Use Intensity

The California Public Resources Code, Section 5019.5, requires that a land carrying capacity survey be made prior to 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 specific declarations of resource management policy presented in this Resource Element.

Resource constraints are factors which 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 tolerance to human activity, population levels, 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 lands in Morro Strand State Beach have been determined, and are shown on the allowable use intensity map. Three use intensity categories have been developed: low, moderate, and high. The low intensity use zone is the wetland area at the mouth of Old Creek. Appropriate facilities here are limited to trails. The moderate intensity use zone is the sandy beach, which can withstand relatively heavy visitor use, but is subject to daily to infrequent ocean wave inundations. The high intensity use zone is the site of an existing parking area.

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ATASCADERO STATE BEACH  
(Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

RESOURCE SUMMARY

Natural Resources

Topography

The former Atascadero State Beach is located on the central California coast, on the southern end of the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province. In the area of the state beach, 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 at the northern end of the town of Morro Bay, the unit consists of a long, wide, and flat beach front, bordered by a vegetated foredune area. Facing west onto Estero Bay, the unit is backed by a wide wave-cut terrace, the alluvial canyon of a small, unnamed intermittent creek, and the hills of the Santa Lucia Range. The northern end of the unit is bordered by the homes of the community of Morro Beach, while less development exists along the border of the southern end. The unit encompasses 125.34 acres and 9,950 linear feet of waterfront footage, and the elevation range is from mean sea level to less than 40 feet, with some small topographical relief offered by the seasonally variable sand dunes. Dune slack and ponding are found in some areas behind the foremost dunes, and several small drainages across the beach flow into the sea. The northern tip of the unit is a rocky beach with sea stacks and submerged rocks offshore, while the remainder is a sandy beach with no rocks visible.

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 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° to 60°, with summer maximums of 65°-70° and winter maximums in the 50s or low 60s. There are usually 40 to 50 days per year with measurable precipitation; rainfall averages approximately 17 inches annually. The coastline of Estero Bay at Atascadero State Beach is directly exposed to the wind from the west and southwest.

The former Atascadero State Beach is located in the Non-Salinas Valley sub-area of the South Central Coast Air Basin. The major pollutants monitored in 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

The former Atascadero State Beach is situated in the San Luis Obispo Hydrologic Unit of the Central Coastal Drainage Province. The unit is in the Toro and Morro Hydrologic Subareas of the Cambria and San Luis Obispo Hydrologic Subunits, respectively. Both Toro and Morro Creeks are outside the unit boundaries, but the outlet of a small ephemeral creek, Alva Paul Creek, crosses the beach in the northern third of the unit. This small creek has not been monitored for water quality. The state beach falls in the area currently being investigated by the State Water Quality Control Board (WQCB) for the effects of upstream mining on water quality and aquatic habitat. In addition, the WQCB requires the City of Morro Bay to regularly monitor coliform bacteria at the shoreline to assess the potential impact from the city's sewage treatment plant discharge 3,000 feet offshore. The ocean waters have proven free of pollution except during heavy rains and runoff episodes which bring land runoff to the surf zone.

The unit is underlain by the Morro ground water basin, which is recharged primarily by perennial flows and storm runoff percolating into surficially exposed Franciscan formation and recent alluvial materials in the upper reaches of the drainage area. Fluctuating groundwater levels result from groundwater withdrawals, and are probably affected by ocean tide fluctuations, the level of the water table being higher in the spring than in the fall. The groundwater has a basic magnesium-calcium bicarbonate character, and there is a general seaward hydraulic gradient, the outflow paralleling Morro Creek. During dry periods, groundwater levels are drawn down to below sea level by overpumpage, resulting in sea water intrusion into the aquifer. This is generally a transitory problem, diminishing with increased freshwater recharge of the aquifers.

As a beach area, the unit falls in the 100-year and 500-year coastal flood zones, and, in addition to storm-generated ocean waves, seismically induced waves or tsunami pose another possible source of coastal flooding.

## Geology

The former Atascadero State Beach is in the southern Coast Ranges geomorphic province. 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 were 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.

Bedrock in the former Atascadero State Beach area is Franciscan Complex -- rocks that are thought to represent the subduction zone complex. The rock outcrops belong to the "Broken Formation B," which consists of interbedded greywacke and shale. These rocks contain small percentages of potassium feldspar (2 to 5%) and fragments of older Franciscan debris, such as red and green chert. The shale consists of illite, montmorillonite, and chlorite.

The former Atascadero State Beach is very young, geologically. Beach sands, low dunes, and terrace deposits make up the entire present-day surface, with the offshore rocks and cliff rocks at the northernmost part of the unit being the only hints about the dramatic history of this section of coastline.

A landslide at the northern end of the unit has been mapped in the terrace deposit. It was triggered by ocean-wave erosion removing previously existing buffer material (sand) from the base of the cliff.

### Soils

The former Atascadero State Beach is located on the southernmost tip of the Northwestern Coastal Ranges Soil Region (Soil Region I), which is characterized by steep mountain ranges and small valleys. Four soil map units are found within the boundaries of the state beach: beaches, Cropley clay, Diablo and Cibo clays, and duneland.

Beaches, the dominant soil mapping unit, consist of layers of sand grains of rock washed down waterways from inland areas to the ocean, and distributed southward along the coast by longshore currents. Found on the shore of Estero Bay, beach sand is essentially barren of vegetation. The soil permeability is high and very rapid, the available water capacity is low, and the erosion hazard due to wind and wave action is high, limiting the use of the beach almost exclusively to recreation.

Found behind the beach in the southern part of Atascadero State Beach, Duneland consists of sand dunes stabilized by coastal foredune vegetation and coastal dune scrub. With limiting factors similar to those of beaches, duneland surface runoff is slow, and the hazard of soil blowing is very high, limiting the area to recreational uses.

Gently sloping (2-9% slope) Cropley clay is found behind the beach. Formed in alluvium weathered from sedimentary rocks, it has slow permeability and surface runoff, lessening the hazard of water erosion but interfering with septic tank absorption fields. The available water capacity is high, and the soil has a high shrink-swell potential and low strength, posing limiting factors for its use as a site for building structures or roads.

Diablo and Cibo clays are strongly sloping (9-15%) soils found at the northern tip of the unit, and vegetated by coastal dune scrub. This soil exhibits slow permeability and a high shrink-swell potential, making it vulnerable to slippage when wet. Other limitations to be considered when planning for structures, roads, or sanitary facilities include low strength and shallow depth to rock.

## Plant Life

Native vegetation at the former Atascadero State Beach occurs to the north of the Cloisters site and in the dune slack area, and consists of coastal foredune and coastal dune scrub vegetation. Coastal foredune vegetation is dominated by low-growing herbaceous perennials that colonize embryonic dunes. Principal native species include common sand verbenas, whiteleaf saltbush, beach evening primrose, and American dune grass. Hottentot fig/sea fig also occurs on dunes in this area. Foredunes south of the Cloisters have been extensively colonized by European beach grass. When areas in dunes are eroded down to or near the water table, additional species are found in foredune vegetation, and include mesophytic or hydrophytic plants such as arroyo willow and sedge. The willows are wind-pruned and low-growing.

Coastal foredune intergrades with coastal dune scrub in inland areas, where wind, salt spray, and blowing sand are reduced. Coastal dune scrub is characterized by soft or woody shrubby species, and is dominated by dune lupine, mock heather, and beach aster.

No rare or endangered plant species occur in this unit. The dune slack and native coastal foredune areas are of interpretive and scientific interest.

Principal exotic species that occur at the former Atascadero State Beach are hottentot fig/sea fig and European beach grass. European beach grass has become established south of the Cloisters site, and occurs in dense, monospecific stands.

## Animal Life

Despite the harsh environment, animal life is plentiful and diverse at the former Atascadero State Beach. The beach receives nutrients from the ocean which feed its burrowing invertebrate populations. Small crustaceans such as mole crabs and amphipods serve as a food source for many species of seabirds, making this area a popular overwintering or migratory stopover point for waterfowl and other birds. Willets, marbled godwits, and least sandpipers can be seen searching for food in the sand. Pelagic or ocean-going birds such as surf scoters and common loons may be seen from the beach, as can marine mammals such as the California sea lion and the harbor seal. Several species of gull frequent the beach to scavenge, as do some terrestrial birds such as the Brewer's blackbird.

Behind the beach, wind-created sand dunes offer some protection, vegetation, and freshwater ponds. Red-winged blackbirds, song sparrows, and meadowlarks take advantage of the seeds provided by the dune vegetation, and their songs can often be heard above the sound of the waves. The deer mouse and the black-tailed jackrabbit forage in the coastal strand during the night, and may themselves become forage for predators such as the short-eared owl and the bobcat.

The outlet of a small ephemeral stream crosses the beach, and the flow of fresh water provides habitat for additional flora and fauna. Numerous insects feed Pacific tree frogs, long-billed marsh wrens, and flycatchers such as the black phoebe. Fish and amphibians are favored foods of the kingfisher, the great blue heron, and the black-crowned night heron, which also finds roosting cover and possibly nesting opportunities in the riparian vegetation.

Six state (S) or federally (F) listed rare (R), threatened (T), or endangered (E) species may occur in the state beach. Those that may forage in or near the unit include the brown pelican (FE, SE), the least tern (FE, CE), the bald eagle (FE, CE), and the American peregrine falcon (FE, CE). The state is also concerned about the welfare of many other animals, identified as species of special concern, that may occur in the unit. Some of these include the double-breasted cormorant and the California gull, both of which breed in the vicinity, and the western grebe, the common loon, the snowy plover, and the elegant tern, which forage in the area.

#### Marine Life

The former Atascadero State Beach is located along a broad curve of the coastline extending 20 miles from Point Estero south to Point Buchon. Although it is called Estero Bay, this stretch of coastline is not protected from wave action. The surf is often heavy during the winter, when Pacific storms bring strong winds and waves to the coast. The tide range in the area is from approximately the minus 2-foot level to the plus 7-foot level. The tide cycle is a mixed semi-diurnal type, characterized by two high tides and two low tides per day. Ocean water varies by about 13 degrees F. during the year. Water temperatures range from a low of about 51 degrees F. in the months from February through May to a high of 64 degrees in October.

The former Atascadero State Beach is primarily a sandy beach, with scattered rocks concentrated at the north end of the unit. The sand is not a suitable substrate for surface attachment and protection from surf, and, thus, limits the kind of intertidal organisms to those that can burrow in the sand. The scattered rocks serve as attachment sites for many organisms, but many are seasonally buried by sand. The main rocky area, providing a suitable habitat for larger marine plants, is the area north of Yerba Buena Street. In the lower intertidal zone in this area, there are a number of water channels that run parallel to the coast between the rocks. These channels as well as the rocks around them have an abundant growth of marine plants.

Ninety-one species of multi-cellular plants have been identified in the intertidal area adjacent to this unit. This is an impressive number of species for a stretch of rocky beach only about 1,000 feet in length. A few species are very abundant and conspicuous. Two species consumed by humans, nori (Porphyra lanceolata) and sea lettuce (Ulva sp.), are common.

As a result of wave action, large masses of kelp often come to rest on the sandy beach. These decomposing masses of kelp become an important part of the beach environment. Large populations of beach hoppers, flies, crustaceans, and other organisms inhabit these kelp masses.

Other than in the decaying kelp masses, the sandy beach fauna are mostly subsurface. Unless they are dug out, only those individuals washed out by strong wave action are seen. In the mid-littoral zone, bloodworms are often found in sufficient numbers to provide bait for fishing. The larger sandy beach organisms are found in the sub-littoral fringe, including the spiny mole crab and the eccentric sand dollar. Specimens of the Pismo clam, once locally abundant, are not often encountered. The population decline is an apparent result of the sea otter reestablishing itself as the top carnivore in the local ecosystem.

Fish in the intertidal areas of the former Atascadero are dominated by sandy bottom species. These include surfperches, such as the barrel surfperch and calico surfperch, as well as bottom fish, such as white croakers and California halibut. In offshore areas, there are seasonal occurrences of king salmon and albacore in sufficient numbers to support recreational and commercial fishing activity. Five species of marine mammals are seen in the vicinity on a regular basis: harbor seals, California sea lions, Stellar sea lions, southern sea otters, and Pacific gray whales. The sea otter is a federally listed threatened species. The gray whale is a federally listed endangered species.

### Cultural Resources

#### Archeological Sites

There is one small and apparently minor archeological site in the state beach south of the existing campground, Site SLO-1158, found during a recent complete survey of the unit. The Northern Chumash used the area prehistorically for fishing, gathering, and hunting, but no ethnographic locations or place names are recorded for the land now in the former Atascadero State Beach.

A mound of earth, some concrete curbing, and a few trees are all that remain visible of Edward G. Lewis' land development scheme of the post-World War I era. The site is the location of the former "Cloisters Inn," or "Morro Beach Inn," a project of the Atascadero Beach Land and Development Company. The "Cloisters Inn" site has very limited historic value, but may be suitable for interpretation of the issues of early 20th century coastal land development projects and recreational usages of San Luis Obispo County beaches.

#### 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 channel, and the lack of villages on the coast north of the point. 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 mammal, 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. As previously mentioned, Unamuno's expedition reported seeing large and small dugouts near Morro Bay. Clemmer excavated the remains of a dwelling in 1961. The structure was circular, 25 to 30 ft 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

Martin Olivera and Vicente Feliz petitioned in November 1837 for a grant of land north of the rock of El Moro, fronting the ocean for two square leagues. They called it San Cayetano. The concession was given provisionally, meaning it must be renewed every other year. In October 1842, Governor Alvarado issued a new grant to the same two men. The rancho was called El Moro y Cayucos under this new grant. Martin Olivera was awarded legal title to El Moro. Just before the American occupation, James McKinley, a naturalized citizen of the republic of Mexico, bought out Olivera and Feliz. During the American period, McKinley went through the ordeal of getting his grant confirmed, but died three years before the patent was issued. While the heirs, and apparent heirs, of McKinley's holdings struggled in court over legal ownership, the land was subdivided, and the coastal terraces behind the sand dunes became farm land. The beach from Morro Bay to Old Creek was traditionally known as "Morro Beach."

At the south end of this area, and beyond the current unit boundary, was a marsh on the property owned by the Greening family. This marsh went by the local title of Greening Lake or Green Lake. It was used as a limited recreation area prior to 1911. In that year, Morro Creek cut a new channel, and "Green Lake" disappeared.

Edward G. Lewis, developer of the "Atascadero Colony" or "Atascadero Community," added the idea of a beach community to his 1913 plan for Atascadero. In 1916, he began to buy up the beach frontage on what was to become "Atascadero Beach." He created the Atascadero Beach Land and Development Company in the hope that many of the people who bought at Atascadero would also buy recreational lots on the ocean shore. Sales began before he completely consolidated his holdings. Financing was irregular; the project did not mature as expected, and Lewis created the Atascadero Seed Company, which farmed the vacated land, raising vegetables and flowers for seed. By 1919, Lewis had acquired 463 acres on the oceanfront. While beachfront lots sold, few were developed. Only one house was built.

In the early 1920s, Lewis sought a new attraction, and by 1925 had constructed a hotel and cottage resort. He named it "Cloisters Inn and Cottages," though at times it was known as the "Morro Beach Inn." The hotel complex included single and double rooms, a restaurant, an adjoining 3,000-yard-long golf course to the north and east, and for the economy-minded, wood and canvas cabins, i.e., "the cottages." Lewis, however, found himself in financial trouble by the late 1920s. His efforts to recover entangled the project in a web of problems, and left Lewis in trouble with the law; he went to jail.

The project floundered, and, with the coming of the Great Depression, died. The development company was disbanded in 1932. County records indicated that many owners, unable to sell and unable to pay their taxes, defaulted on the property, which passed into governmental ownership. Some of the beach frontage was held on separate mineral claims for processing sand, but by the 1950s, the company was defunct.

The Cloisters Inn struggled through the Depression and into the first year of World War II. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, a Texas Coastal Artillery Regiment assigned to Ford Ord sent a detachment to Morro Bay to guard the oil tanks. Soon, it was augmented to company size. The U.S. Army took over the Cloisters Inn. When the army departed, the resort was plucked to pieces by vandals and scavengers. Shortly after World War II, the site had been picked clean. In 1957, the state acquired the beach for addition to the State Park System. The unit was called Atascadero State Beach, retaining the name given the area by E. G. Lewis in 1916. Improvements at the new state beach were delayed until 1964 due to problems of clear title and ownership. The mineral claims were declared invalid in 1962, allowing public facilities planning to begin.



## Esthetic Resources

Atascadero State Beach provides panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean, Morro Rock, and the headlands of Montana de Oro State Park. The vista is ever-changing and dramatic: Morro Rock enshrouded by fog and then lit by brilliant sunlight, the gray-green ocean suddenly translucent, and breakers throwing back a rainbow spray. The storm waves clear the beach, and provide a palette for footprints of shorebirds. The flow of water from the dune lakes creates braided meanders between grass-topped dunes and knolls. Summer brings a burst of color. Sand verbena and dune lupines accent the white sand with purples and blues. Sea sounds of waves and birds provide a counterpoint to the scenic beauty of this unit.

Negative esthetic features in the viewshed of the state beach include houses at the unit boundary and the prominent cooling towers at the Morro Bay PG&E plant. Trash associated with storm wrack is also unsightly.

## Recreation Resources

Although initial acquisition of the former Atascadero State Beach was made in 1957, the area has a much longer history of recreational use. A marsh and lagoon at the mouth of Morro Creek was a popular site in the 1890s. Known as Greening Lake, the site was used for duck hunting and summer boating excursions. The 1920s saw an expansion of facilities in the Morro Bay area. The Cloisters Inn was built in what was formerly Atascadero State Beach, and summer visitors could rent rooms or stay in small beach cottages. In 1926, a campground was also established.

The state beach currently experiences an average yearly visitation of 100,000. Principal recreation activities in this unit include picnicking, wading, surfing, beachcombing, surf fishing, and nature study. There are 104 family campsites at the state beach. Each site has a table and a stove, and can accommodate trailers and motor homes up to 24 feet long. No hook-ups are provided. Restrooms and cold showers are located in the campground. There are a limited number of paved day-use parking spaces in the campground. Rough surf, cold ocean temperatures, and gusty winds are constraints on recreational activities in this unit.

## RESOURCE POLICY FORMATION

### 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 beach.

The former Atascadero State Beach was acquired by the state in 1957. Following establishment of the current State Park System classification system in the early 1960s, the state Park and Recreation Commission classified the unit as Atascadero State Beach. Classification by the commission directed the department to manage the unit as specified in Public Resources Code Section 5019.56. This section defines and describes a state beach as a type of State Recreation Unit as follows:

5019.56. State Recreation Units. State recreation units consist of areas selected, developed, and operated to provide outdoor recreational opportunities. Such units shall be designated by the Commission by naming, in accordance with the provisions of Article 1 (commencing with Section 5001) and this article relating to classification.

In the planning of improvements to be undertaken within state recreation units, consideration shall be given to compatibility of design with the surrounding scenic and environmental characteristics.

State recreation units may be established in the terrestrial or underwater environments of the state and shall be further classified as one of the following types: . . .

(d) State beaches, consisting of areas with frontage on the ocean, or bays designed to provide swimming, boating, fishing, and other beach-oriented recreational activities. Coastal areas containing ecological, geological, scenic, or cultural resources of significant value shall be preserved within state wildernesses, state reserves, state parks, or natural or cultural preserves.

#### 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 Atascadero State Beach in 1975, but was never presented to the state Park and Recreation Commission for approval.

A revised declaration of purpose is 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 Atascadero State Beach is to make possible the public use of the sandy ocean beach in the area immediately upcoast from Morro Rock in San Luis Obispo County. The emphasis on public use will be on optimum public enjoyment of the ocean and ocean beach recreational resources. Only those developments may be undertaken which do not impair the utility of the ocean beach for recreational purposes, or which do not impair the public enjoyment of the scenic and recreational qualities of the ocean beach and the ocean at this location.

#### Proposed:

The purpose of the former Atascadero State Beach is to make available to the people, for their benefit and enjoyment, the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and adjacent uplands.

The function of California Department of Parks and Recreation at the former Atascadero State Beach shall be to preserve and protect public opportunities for ocean beach-oriented recreation in a high-quality environment, and to restore and protect the natural values of the coastal dunes. A natural setting for recreational activities shall be preserved.

#### Zone of Primary Interest

The zone of primary interest is that area outside the unit in which land use changes could adversely affect the resources of the former Atascadero State Beach. The area includes the adjacent city of Morro Bay, adjacent offshore areas, and the watersheds of the two creeks which terminate in the unit.

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 resources and features in the unit. Air pollution generated by the Morro Bay and Diablo Canyon power plants, oil spills from offshore oil development, and pollution from other sources all potentially could affect the state beach. Alteration of inland surface water flow and the development of both offshore and onshore protective structures could alter the available sand supply to the beach, potentially resulting in a permanent or progressive loss of beach sand. 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 management of resources in the former Atascadero State Beach are:

- #15 State Recreation Units; protection of resources
- #18 State Beaches; avoid using sandy beaches for secondary uses
- #19 State Beaches; protection of resources
- #33 Exotic Plant Species
- #35 Wildlife Protection
- #46 Environmental Quality
- #58 Cultural Resource Protection

Directives #18 and #19 are particularly relevant to planning issues for the state beaches along Estero Bay:

(18) INSOFAR AS IS POSSIBLE IN STATE BEACHES, THE ENTIRE AREA OF THE SANDY LITTORALS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR RECREATION USE AND VISUAL ENJOYMENT. IT IS AN OBJECTIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT TO AVOID USE OF NATURAL SANDY BEACHES FOR PARKING OR FOR OTHER SUPPORTIVE OR SECONDARY USES.

(19) THE SCENIC, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL VALUES OF STATE BEACHES, INCLUDING THE ECOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS OF THE LITTORAL, TIDAL, AND NEARSHORE AREAS WILL BE IDENTIFIED, EVALUATED, AND PROTECTED SO THE TOTAL QUALITY OF THE RECREATION EXPERIENCE MAY BE PERPETUATED AND ENHANCED.

Following several years of significant storm damage in many coastal State Park System units, the department adopted a policy for coastal erosion on October 24, 1984. The intent of the policy is to avoid construction of new permanent facilities in areas subject to coastal erosion unless the risk of loss is clearly offset by the need for the facility, and to promote the use of expendable or movable facilities in erosion-prone areas. The policy reads as follows:

THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION SHALL AVOID CONSTRUCTION OF NEW STRUCTURES AND COASTAL FACILITIES IN AREAS SUBJECT TO OCEAN WAVE EROSION, SEA CLIFF RETREAT, AND UNSTABLE CLIFFS, UNLESS SPECIFIC DETERMINATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE THAT THE RISK OF LOSS OF THE FACILITY IS CLEARLY OFFSET BY THE INVESTMENT AND NEED FOR THE FACILITY. MEASURES SHALL BE TAKEN TO MINIMIZE HUMAN-INDUCED EROSION BY REDUCING: CONCENTRATED SURFACE RUNOFF FROM USE AREAS, ELEVATED GROUNDWATER LEVELS FROM IRRIGATION AND URBANIZATION, AND SURFACE DISTURBANCE OF BLUFFTOP SOILS. IN RECOGNITION OF CALIFORNIA'S ACTIVELY ERODING COASTLINE, NEW STRUCTURES AND FACILITIES LOCATED IN AREAS KNOWN TO BE SUBJECT TO OCEAN WAVE EROSION, SEA CLIFF RETREAT, OR UNSTABLE BLUFFS SHALL BE EXPENDABLE OR MOVABLE. STRUCTURAL PROTECTION AND REPROTECTION OF DEVELOPMENTS SHALL BE ALLOWED ONLY WHEN THE COST OF PROTECTION IS COMMENSURATE WITH THE VALUE (PHYSICAL AND INTRINSIC) OF THE DEVELOPMENT TO BE PROTECTED, AND WHEN IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE PROTECTION WILL NOT NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE BEACH OR THE NEAR-SHORE ENVIRONMENT.

In addition to policies, directives, and laws that apply statewide, the following specific resource policies have been developed for the former Atascadero State Beach:

#### Geological Hazards

Geological hazards at the state beach include landslides, block falls, liquefaction, tsunamis, and seismic shaking. Site-specific investigations prior to new developments can help to avoid building in areas subject to these hazards.

Policy: New developments shall avoid geological hazards. Site-specific geologic reports shall be prepared by a registered geologist or certified engineering geologist prior to final siting of facilities, to assure that geological hazards have been avoided or mitigated to the fullest extent feasible. The report shall identify potential geologic hazards of the site, and provide for mitigating measures to ensure structural stability and integrity throughout the economic useful life of the development.

## Natural Resources

### Coastal Erosion

The former Atascadero State Beach is subject to coastal erosion, seacliff retreat, and beach sand loss. The access road and campground may be vulnerable to periods of extreme high waves and storms.

Policy: All future permanent facility developments at the state beach shall be sufficiently set back to ensure that the developments will endure. New developments shall neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion or geological instability.

### Paleontological Resources

No fossil resources are known to exist at the former Atascadero State Beach. It is possible that the sand deposits or terrace 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 the former Atascadero State Beach, 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.

### Coastal Dune Management

Dune systems are composed of unconsolidated sand that has been transported by strong onshore winds. Natural dune systems consist of several stages of dune development that range from embryonic foredunes to rear dunes. Dunes are initially stabilized by low-growing plants adapted to moving sand. With sufficient stabilization, woody species can become established. Typically, once vegetation is removed, a dune blowout occurs, and natural revegetation of the blowout may not occur. Human activities in sand dunes can destroy vegetation and destabilize the dunes. Ongoing human use of a blowout area renders natural revegetation virtually impossible.

Coastal dunes provide important habitats for many, often endemic, species of plants and animals. The use of coastal zones for residential, agricultural, and industrial purposes has degraded or destroyed a large portion of native dune habitat in California. Heavy recreational use of coastal lands has also resulted in the degradation of dune habitat in many areas.

Most of the remaining natural dune environment in the Morro Bay area is in units of the State Park System. The continued existence of coastal dunes and of the species associated with them is dependent on the effective stewardship of the coastal dune resource.

Policy: Human activities in the dunes at the former Atascadero State Beach shall be regulated to prevent destruction of the natural dune environment. Hiking, horseback riding, and other recreational uses shall be restricted to designated areas and routes. Vehicular trespass and egress from adjacent residences onto the dunes shall be prevented through signing and fencing. Destabilized areas in the dunes shall be revegetated with species indigenous to the unit.

## Exotic Plant Species

Exotic species have become naturalized in the former Atascadero State Beach, for example, in the sand dunes. In this area, they are successfully competing with native species. Exotic species have also been planted in the campground area. Perpetuation of native plant communities is dependent on the control and removal of exotic species.

Policy: The department shall pursue a long-range objective of reducing exotic plants, including European beach grass and hottentot fig, that have become established in the unit. Highest priority for control efforts shall be given to those species most invasive and conspicuous in the landscape.

## Landscaping

Exotic species detract from the natural appearance of the former Atascadero State Beach, displace native species, have lower habitat value for native wildlife, are more prone to insect attack and disease, and can require permanent irrigation and greater maintenance costs.

Policy: In order to maintain the diversity of native species, landscaping in developed areas should consist of species indigenous to the unit. If exotic species are used, these shall be species which are incapable of naturalizing in the wild, and which will not require a permanent irrigation system.

## Snowy Plover

The snowy plover (Charadrius alexandrinus) is a small, ground-nesting shorebird that is listed as a Second Priority Bird Species of Special Concern by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Although these birds prosper wherever they are left undisturbed in suitable habitat, the snowy plovers are threatened by human harassment and direct destruction of nest sites and breeding habitat on every beach used for human recreation. Off-highway vehicle use and free-running dogs have been cited as particular sources of disturbance at the state beach.

Policy: The department shall survey appropriate areas for snowy plover nest sites. Information on ground-nesting seabirds, and snowy plovers in particular, and cautions against disturbing the nesting birds shall be posted. Vehicle trespass and dog leash laws shall be strictly enforced. If deemed warranted and necessary, access shall be limited seasonally to beach areas below high tide line, leaving the sensitive areas of soft sand preferred for nesting undisturbed.

## Cultural Resources

### Archeological Resources

One archeological resource is known to exist at the former Atascadero State Beach. There may be other such resources concealed by vegetation or more recent sand and soil deposits. There may be archeological remains at the Cloisters Inn site, where an early 20th-century recreation and commercial resort once stood. It is possible that future disturbances, natural or human, will uncover such resources.

Policy: In the event that a new archeological discovery is made at the state beach, the incident shall be immediately reported to the appropriate department staff person, who will determine the validity and significance of the discovery, and will recommend appropriate protective or stabilization 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 the former Atascadero State Beach are non-renewable resources relating to California's past. They contain information necessary to reconstruct the complex mosaic of past cultures in our state covering 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 on record 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 there is a necessity 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 take 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 prior to 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 specific declarations of resource management policy presented in this Resource Element.

Resource constraints are factors which 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 tolerance to human activity, population levels, 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 lands in the former Atascadero State Beach were determined, and are shown on the allowable use intensity map. Three use intensity categories have been developed: low, moderate, and high. The low intensity use zone includes the vegetated coastal dunes, archeological sites, and riparian areas. The moderate use zone is the coastal beach, where relatively heavy visitor use can occur but is subject to ocean wave inundation. The high intensity use zone includes the sites of existing facilities (the campground) and a small portion of the Cloisters area.



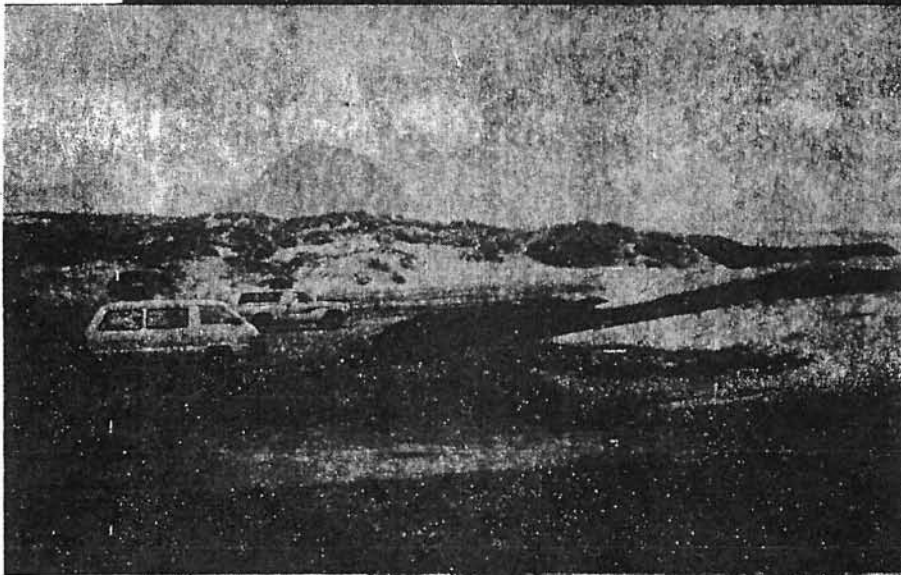
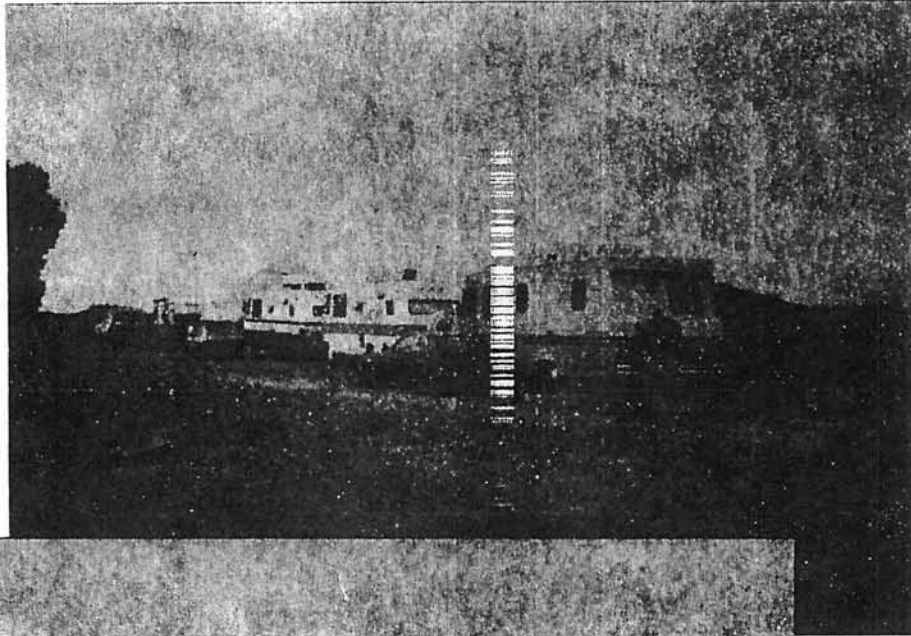


MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

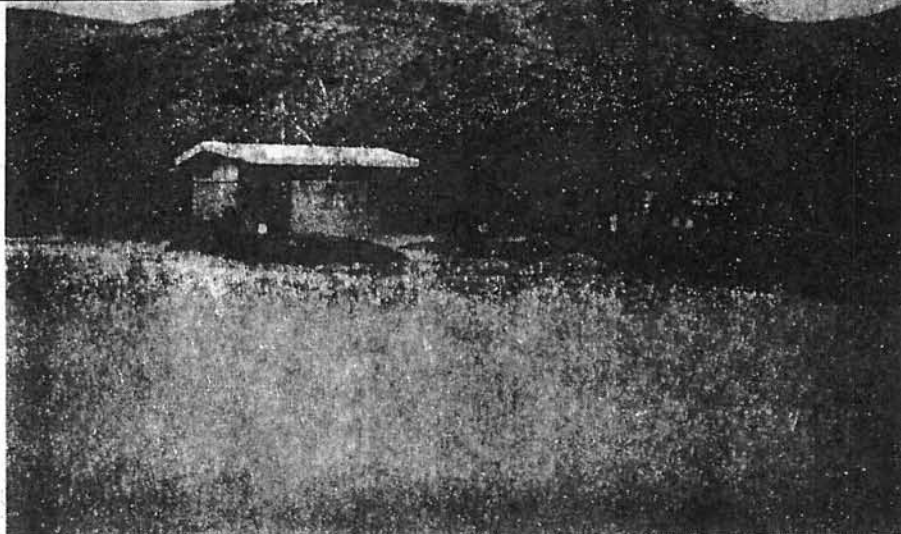
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LAND USE  
AND  
FACILITIES  
ELEMENT

*Existing campground*



*Existing informal parking at  
"Cloisters" site*



*Existing comfort station — Morro Strand*

## LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

This element of the General Plan addresses the current and proposed land use and facilities at Morro Strand State Beach and the former Atascadero State Beach. 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 actual physical design parameters. After all factors are taken into consideration, a set of guidelines is 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 eleven 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 Government. 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 within 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 comprise the second most important industry, centering around the cities of Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and the Monterey Peninsula, but relying on the region's wide beaches, spectacular natural beauty, and unspoiled areas for support.

The coastal areas (346 miles) offer most of the region's recreation opportunities, except for a variety of water-oriented recreation opportunities offered at several inland reservoirs. The district is a popular destination zone 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 (Las 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.

Recreational demand and deficiencies - Emphasizing the statewide demand for recreation in Planning District 7 is the fact that although 6 percent of all State Park System land area is in the district, almost 30 percent of the 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 time period, attendance in the State Park System grew ten-fold. 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.

#### MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

##### Existing Conditions

Land Use: Morro Strand State Beach lies in the Cayucos planning area of San Luis Obispo County. This is an unincorporated community of approximately 2,600 people. Since 1970, population growth has increased by approximately 30%. Population is expected to reach 3,246 by the year 2000. It is predominantly a retirement community, with a small resort and commercial section. The community's socioeconomic structure is stable, and not expected to change significantly in the foreseeable future. Land and utilities are limited with regard to any major land developments. So growth has been occurring by the infilling of vacant lots. Local recreation facilities consist of one community park and Cayucos State Beach, which is operated by the county, located at the north end of the community.

Single-family residences adjoin the state beach along the eastern boundary for more than three quarters of its length. Near the northern end of the unit, park ownership extends easterly to Highway 1, then continues northerly to a point where single-family residences again adjoin the state beach on its north end. Estero Bay and the Pacific Ocean are to the west of the unit. Undeveloped beach extends southerly from the unit.

Existing land uses in the unit have been limited exclusively to beach-oriented day uses such as picnicking, wading, surfing, beachcombing, surf fishing, sunbathing, wind surfing, jogging, walking, and nature study. Many visitors just come to the park and watch the surf or whales from their vehicles. A number of visitors also use the unit as a staging area from which to skin or scuba dive. Visitor attendance for 1986-87 was approximately 40,000 people.

Facilities: A paved day-use parking lot is located off Pacific Avenue at 24th Street, near the northern end of the state beach. This lot is the primary access point for the unit, and will accommodate approximately 50 vehicles. A restroom building is located at the southeast corner of the parking lot. Both the parking lot and the restroom building are in good condition, even though they have been subjected to occasional flooding due to winter storms. Five picnic tables are located to the south of the parking area.

The facilities mentioned above are all located just to the north of the mouth of Old Creek. Just to the south of Old Creek, approximately 600 feet downcoast from the paved parking area, is another parking area. Vehicular access to this is via Highway 1 at the northern end of Studio Drive. Access is paved down to the parking area. However, the parking area itself is dirt. It can accommodate approximately 60 vehicles. No restrooms or other facilities exist at this location.

Although there are no other developed park facilities in the unit, the county maintains five coastal access points through the residential area bordering the southeast portion of this unit. Some of the residents in this area have also developed erosion protection devices and/or private accessways down to the beach. The department has been working with adjacent landowners and local governing agencies to protect the sandy beach resources in a manner consistent with established state policies.

### 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 the proposed park development. This report is based on information from various public agencies, utilities, and records.

Information is very preliminary in nature, and does not constitute an in-depth engineering analysis that is necessary for the final design of any particular development.

Water and Sewage: The existing water supply service is provided by Cayucos City, and the existing sewage service is provided by the City of Morro Bay. There are no water wells located in the unit. Although other potential water supply sources are Willow Creek and Old Creek, these two creeks are too small to provide a dependable water supply, and the wetland areas are protected as a natural preserve. The water quality and quantity of these creeks are unknown.

Electricity: Pacific Gas and Electric Company is the current power source at this state beach. Service extension is available. The existing source provides 120 volts, single-phase power.

Telephone: Telephone service is currently provided by Pacific Bell.

Gas: Natural gas service is not available at this unit. Liquid propane gas is an available alternative.

Waste Disposal: Solid waste service is currently provided by the Morro Bay Garbage Service 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.

- Although camping demands are great in this planning area, because of its small size and resource sensitivities, day uses are all that are appropriate within the current boundaries of this unit.
- Demands on the existing day-use facilities are high, and have been increasing with the growth of surrounding communities. Improvements shall therefore be made to existing facilities in order to adequately provide for this increasing day use.
- Bluff and beach erosion factors should be taken into consideration with regard to the development of any facilities, and should be in conformance with coastal erosion policies outlined in the Resource Element of this plan.
- Because Morro Strand State Beach is in a seismically active area, new facilities should be designed to withstand a Richter magnitude 6.0 earthquake, with a repeatable ground acceleration of 0.3 gravity (g).
- The Old Creek watershed is a sensitive resource area which should be protected from the encroachment of public use facilities.
- Signing and interpretation of the unit should be improved to increase visitor awareness of resources, dangers, and regulations.

#### 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 Morro Strand State Beach over the next 20 years.

- Land use in the Old Creek watershed area shall be limited to low-intensity day uses. This shall include, but not be limited to, nature study, photography, and birdwatching.
- Facilities in the Old Creek wetland area shall be limited to foot trails only.
- Land use in the remainder of the state beach, outside the Old Creek wetland, may be moderate-to-high-intensity day uses. This shall include, but not be limited to, beachcombing, sunbathing, fishing, picnicking, wading, surfing, wind surfing, jogging, walking, skin and scuba diving, photography, whale watching, and nature study (see Allowable Use Intensity map).
- The existing paved parking area shall be retained, along with the existing restroom building.
- Vehicle barriers will be installed at the existing parking area.
- An outdoor shower will be installed in the vicinity of the existing restroom building.

- An interpretive shelter will be constructed adjacent to the existing paved parking area.
- Five additional picnic sites will be developed in appropriate locations adjacent to the parking area.
- An entrance sign and an interpretive panel will be installed at the Studio Drive parking area.
- The Studio Drive parking area will be raised and graded in order to protect it from storm damage.
- Vehicle barriers and erosion control plantings will be installed at the Studio Drive parking area.

#### Implementation Priorities

The priorities of this section are intended to be a general guideline for implementation of the recommendations in this plan. Over a period of 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, or safety considerations. As each phase 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. Make improvements to the Studio Drive parking area. This would include signs and interpretive developments.
2. Make improvements to the existing paved day-use parking area. This would include the interpretive shelter, outdoor shower, and additional picnic sites.

#### Local Coastal Plan Conformance

Morro Strand State Beach falls in the Estero planning area of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan and Local Coastal Plan. That plan places the state beach in a recreational land use category. The recommendations contained in this plan, except as outlined below, are in conformance with the standards established in the Local Coastal Plan.

Where this plan varies is regarding the paving of the Studio Drive parking area, and the construction of a new restroom building at that location. These would be considered permanent new facilities developed in an area subject to significant coastal erosion. It is the policy of this department not to invest in permanent improvements of this nature (see resource management policies in Resource Element). This is, of course, because of the high cost of maintenance, repair, or replacement caused by storm damage.

ATASCADERO STATE BEACH  
(Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

Existing Conditions

Land Use: This unit lies entirely within the city limits of the city of Morro Bay. Morro Bay is an incorporated city of approximately 10,000 people. Its population in 1970 was 7,110. Projections indicate that 13,047 people will be living in the city by the year 2000. This growth rate is much higher than other areas of the county. However, due to severe utility limitations, especially water, development has been more moderate than it might otherwise have been. The city's economy is primarily oriented to the strong attraction of tourism/recreation activities and the desirability of the area as a place of retirement. It is the principal visitor-serving center for this section of the coast. The state beach encompasses the westerly edge of the extreme northerly extension of the city. This area is bisected by Highway 1, which contains a strip of commercial uses. However, a majority of the land use is residential. The city operates five local parks and two beach areas, one on each side of the Morro Bay entrance. Three of the five parks and one of the beach areas serve the northern portion of the city, of which the state beach is a part. The community has a very strong orientation toward park and recreation values. It is expected to continue to maintain these values as the community grows.

Land adjoining the unit on the south is city-owned beach. Morro Bay High School is adjacent to the unit, at the southeastern corner. North of the high school, along the eastern boundary, is a large undeveloped area which is commonly referred to as the VRM property. A system of sand dunes extends from the state beach onto this property. The remainder of the eastern edge of the state beach, from the VRM property north, is bordered by a single-family residential area. The beach area extending north from the unit is undeveloped. This beach is owned by Chevron USA, and public access is limited. Chevron operates two offshore marine terminals from this location for loading tankers with crude oil through underground pipes. Another marine terminal is operated offshore from the state beach by the U.S. Navy. This terminal, however, is used for unloading jet fuel through underground pipes. These pipes pass under the state beach, extending to storage tanks on the hill east of the highway.

Land use in the state beach includes camping, picnicking, beachcombing, wading, surfing, fishing, and nature study. Many local residents also use the unit for walking and jogging. Visitor attendance for the 1986-87 year was 100,849 people. This is down somewhat from the previous year. However, for the last several years, it has been nearly level at around 100,000 people. This is an indication that use of existing facilities is being maximized.

Facilities: The main vehicular access point for this unit is at Yerba Buena Street and Beachcomber Drive. This is at the extreme north end of the state beach. If future signalization of this intersection is required, the department will coordinate with the city and Caltrans as necessary. A paved entrance road enters the unit at this point, and descends the bluff to a small entrance station. The station has no restroom, and has other poor design features. However, it is in fair condition. Just inside the entrance station and to the east, a paved loop has been installed which has 10 day use parking spaces and two picnic sites. From the entrance station, the road enters directly into a 104-unit campground. The campground is laid out in the form of a very large parking lot. This is because it was originally designed to serve as a day-use



area only. However, due to the high demand for camping in this area, it was converted. It has no RV hookups, and can handle vehicles up to only 24 feet in length. Yet it is used extensively by RVs which are self-contained.

Two large restroom buildings exist in the campground. They have large dressing rooms on each side, and outdoor showers. The campground facilities are beginning to deteriorate from age and extremely heavy use. At the south end of the campground, a paved road bridges an unnamed creek, and ascends the bluff to Hatteras Street. This road has been blocked off at the campground and at Hatteras Street, and is used only for vertical access by foot. At one time, this was to be the main entrance to the state beach. An undeveloped parking area exists near the middle of the unit, where Azure Street intersects the beach. This is known as the "Cloisters" site, and accommodates between 50 and 75 vehicles. No facilities have yet been developed here. No other developed facilities exist in the unit.

### 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 the proposed park development. This report is based on information from various public agencies, utilities, and records.

Information is very preliminary in nature, and does not constitute an in-depth engineering analysis that is necessary for the final design of any particular development.

Water and Sewage: Water supply and sewage services are currently provided by the City of Morro Bay. There are no water wells located in the unit. Other potential water supply sources are Toro and Morro Creeks located just outside of the state beach boundary, and the outlet of small Alva Paul Creek in the northern area of the unit. The State Water Quality Control Board is currently studying the effects of upstream mining on water quality and aquatic habitat. The quality of these creeks is unknown; no data have been recorded.

The City of Morro Bay is the only currently available treated water supply source for any new construction at the proposed park unit. The city has strict control concerning new connections. Water supply is limited, and water policies are governed by the "Water Allocation Model" written by the California Coastal Commission, and "Measure F," a city ordinance.

Electricity: Pacific Gas and Electric Company is the current power source at this state beach. Service extension is available. The existing source provides 120-volt, single-phase power.

Telephone: Telephone service is currently provided by Pacific Bell.

Gas: Natural gas service is not available at this unit. Liquid propane gas is an available alternative.

Waste Disposal: Solid waste service is provided by the Morro Bay Garbage Service Company.

Drainage: Drainage at the unit is not currently a major problem. However, future improvements may be necessary in order to properly function with the city's system where it crosses the unit.

### 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.

- There is no other nearby campground having direct access off the highway and such a close orientation to the sandy beach. Therefore, this campground serves a popular demand for camping, and should continue.
- Any major expansion of camping within the current boundaries of the unit is inappropriate. This is because of natural and visual sensitivities and space limitations.
- Existing camping facilities function poorly, and are heavily used. Consideration should be given to renovation of the campground.
- Erosion is a major issue at this unit, and should be taken into consideration in any land-use or facility recommendations.
- Because Atascadero State Beach is in a seismically active area, new facilities should be designed to withstand a Richter magnitude 6.0 earthquake, with a repeatable ground acceleration of 0.3 gravity (g).
- Due to its location near an urban area, day use has been and is expected to continue to be heavy. Because of limited facilities, there have been conflicts between camping and day use. Day-use accommodations should be increased and more clearly designated to minimize conflicts with other uses.
- Sensitive sand dune habitat throughout the southeastern portion of the state beach should be managed for its preservation. No major permanent facilities should be considered in this area.

### 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 the state beach over the next twenty years.

#### Land Use:

- Beach areas subject to direct wave action shall be open to a wide variety of uses, which shall include, but not be limited to, fishing, sunbathing, birdwatching, beachcombing, jogging, hiking, and nature study.
- A sand dune protection and stabilization program shall be developed, and use in these areas shall be limited to protect dune systems.
- The "Cloisters" site is suitable for high intensity day use and possibly some limited overflow camping during peak seasons, if adequate operational can could be maintained.
- Land use in the existing campground shall remain as is.

- Land use along both sides of the unnamed creek at the south end of the campground and east of the culvert shall be limited to hiking only.

#### Facilities:

- Replace and relocate existing comfort stations with smaller and less visually intrusive combination buildings, including hot showers.
- Replace and relocate entrance station with one that has a restroom and adequate space for dry storage.
- Improve existing day use picnic area, install a screened dressing enclosure, and increase parking to 20-25 cars.
- Renovate layout of existing campground to provide more tent sites and more landscaping between sites.
- Install esthetically pleasing fencing, integrated with erosion control plantings, along the base of the bluff behind the campground.
- Install interpretive panels at both the campground and the "Cloisters" day-use area.
- Develop up to 20 picnic sites in the upland area of the "Cloisters" day-use area.
- Develop off-street parking for 50 to 75 vehicles behind the frontal dunes, off Azure Street, at the "Cloisters" day-use area.
- Install a permanent comfort station in the vicinity of the parking/picnic area at the "Cloisters" day-use area.
- Install vehicle barriers where necessary to control vehicle access into sensitive sand dune and beach areas.
- Develop four accessways to the beach, one from Beachcomber Drive north of the campground, one from Beachcomber Drive at the south end of the campground, one from the "Cloisters" picnic area, and one from the "Cloisters" parking lot.
- Improve the existing access area and maximize parking at the seaward end of Hatteras Street. Reconstruct barriers at the end of Hatteras Street, in order to use three existing paved parking spots and improve pedestrian access to the beach.

#### Implementation Priorities

The priorities of this section are intended to be a general guideline for the implementation of the recommendations in this plan. Over a period of 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, or safety considerations. As each phase 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. Construct day-use and interpretive improvements at the "Cloisters" site in order to help relieve the increasing impacts of inadequate day-use facilities in other areas of the unit.
2. Install beach accessways, fencing, and erosion control plantings in order to reduce the impacts of erosion in the unit.
3. Replace the entrance station, and expand the existing day-use area at the campground.
4. Renovate the existing campground layout and facilities. This would include replacement of both restrooms and installation of interpretive developments.

#### Local Coastal Plan Conformance

This unit falls in Planning Areas 1 and 2 of the Local Coastal Plan for the City of Morro Bay. The city's plan places it in an Open Space/Recreation land-use category. The recommendations contained in this plan, except as outlined below, are in conformance with the standards established in the Local Coastal Plan.

The Local Coastal Plan makes specific recommendations for the state beach in Policies 1.10 and 1.12. This General Plan does not include the improvements proposed as Item (b) of Policy 1.10. This would require the state to construct a small parking area on the blufftop, just below Hatteras Street. This General Plan proposes to increase day-use parking in two locations under state ownership. One area is the Cloisters site, and the other is at the campground. To expand day-use parking in other areas would create operational difficulties, and further increase traffic throughout the adjacent residential neighborhood. At the end of Hatteras Street, there is currently space for three or four cars to park and have access to the state beach. There is also a paved parking area for three additional cars which has been blocked off. The General Plan recommends that this existing area be improved. However, no expansion of parking is recommended. Also, state ownership does not include all of the open bluff area between Hatteras Street and the first house to the south. A portion of this bluff area is owned by the Texaco Corporation.

#### Appropriate Future Addition

Adjacent and to the east of the state beach, between Morro Bay High School and the "Cloisters" site, is an undeveloped parcel of land known as the VRM property. This is a privately owned parcel, approximately 84 acres in size. It was nominated for state acquisition using funds from the California Park and Recreational Facilities Act of 1984. Although it was designated in priority group II, funds were insufficient to proceed with acquisition.

This coastal plain area is highly suited for development of recreational facilities, protection of scenic coastal dunes, and buffering the beach from encroaching urban development. Throughout this planning effort, members of the public have urged the state to continue to maintain this property as a high priority for acquisition. Should future funding become available, it would be an appropriate addition to the state beach.



MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

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# INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

Morro Strand State Beach, and promote safety. Visitors may also benefit from an orientation to the region, and from more knowledge about the resources of the area. From the department's point of view, interpretation is 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 Morro Strand State Beach from geologic times to the present -- whether or not the whole spectrum of change is actually presented to the public.

#### INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Interpretive themes for Morro Strand State Beach separate into three loosely connected groups: resources, recreation, and management and safety (specific themes may fit more than one of these categories). Although the scope of interpretive development will not be extensive in this unit, a range of appropriate interpretive themes has been presented in this section to provide flexibility for future interpretation, using a variety of media.

##### Resources

There are a wealth of resource-related themes to interpret at Morro Strand State Beach. Natural history themes can be interpreted in two ways: through ecological associations, and through singular outstanding species. This approach addresses both the interrelatedness of associated species and the uniqueness of some of those species. In some instances, themes covering resource-oriented topics have ramifications that aid in management of the unit and protection of the resources.

##### Primary Theme: The Ever-Changing Coast

The coast is a dynamic place. Interpretation will encompass the constant motion of sand particles, their downcoast movement, and the seasonal transport of sand and its impact on the coastal beach. The concepts of "littoral drift," "littoral cells," and "the sand budget" will be explained. In addition, the process that uplifted the marine terraces and formed the coastal bluffs will be interpreted. Bluff erosion is a natural process in this area, but human intrusions have accelerated that process. Interpretation will stress how visitors can prevent erosion.

##### Primary Theme: The Resourceful Life on the Beach

The range of habitats found at and around the state beach should be interpreted for visitors, with emphasis on how the physical and vegetative make-up of each area determines what wildlife will be present.

##### Sub-Themes:

The Underwater Community. Interpretation will focus on the rich offshore flora and fauna found in the region of Estero Bay.

The Sandy Beach Community. The varied lifestyles and lifeforms of the common invertebrate and vertebrate animals found on Estero Bay beaches will be presented. Interpretive approaches may include: "Life Under Foot" (invertebrates which live in the sand in the wave wash zone); "A Bill for Every Purpose" (shorebirds, their specialized feeding techniques, size differences, and migratory patterns which minimize inter-species food competition); "Flotsom and Jetsam" (evidences of various lifeforms found washed up on the beach, such as shark egg cases, jellyfish, and kelp, and the animals which scavenge these castaways).

Bluff Ecology. Interpretation will examine the continually evolving (eroding) nature of the bluffs in this region of the California coastline, and the plants and animals that are adapted to live on the bluff face.

The Wetland: Home to Critters Great and Small. The coastal salt marsh and willow riparian areas of Morro Strand State Beach are home to many forms of wildlife. The prolific nature of a healthy estuarine system will be presented. Tidal influence will be described, major species presented, and food chain relationships explained. The theme will also seek to foster an esthetic appreciation of the wetland landscape, and an understanding of the need to protect it.

Primary Theme: Special Species to Seek

Beach visitors will be directed toward unusual plant and animal species that may require some effort to find at Morro Strand State Beach.

Sub-Themes:

Watching for Whales and Other Marine Mammals. Morro Strand State Beach offers excellent views of the winter and spring migrations of the gray whale. Subjects that should be covered include: size, appearance, habits, diet, navigation; when, where, and why they migrate, and a map to illustrate their route; courtship and rearing of the young; and a brief history of whaling, their threatened extinction, the need for protection, and the present status of the species. In addition, indentifying information about other marine mammals commonly observed along this coastline should be provided.

Unusual Plants and Animals of Estero Bay. This theme will highlight those species that are uncommon in their appearance or habits, and are found around Estero Bay, including grunion.

Primary Theme: Bygone Beachcombers

The use of Estero Bay's beach and wetland environments by the Chumash and later settlers will be the focus for interpretation. This should incorporate comparative information about the various cultures (Native American, Hispanic, American), their different technologies, and their use of the environment through time.

Primary Theme: The State Park System Story

The development of the State Park System and how Morro Strand State Beach came into public ownership will be interpreted. This theme will treat the coast as a region, orienting visitors to the resource and recreational values of the nearby state beaches and parks, as well as parks administered by other agencies.

Recreation

The diverse recreational opportunities available at Morro Strand State Beach should be interpreted, along with appropriate regulations and safety tips.

Primary Theme: Having Fun in the Surf

Opportunities for board and body surfing, wind surfing, and boating should be interpreted for visitors unfamiliar with the beach. Techniques, regulations, and points of access should be covered, along with wave formation and its relationship to surfing. A tide schedule should also be posted.

Primary Theme: Fishing for Sport

Interpretation will highlight edible fish commonly caught in the surf, including barred perch, jacksmelt, kelp greenling, silver perch, starry flounder, and walleye surfperch. Fishing techniques and applicable regulations will be covered.

Primary Theme: Dive into the Underwater World

Interpretation will illustrate appropriate skin and scuba diving equipment, techniques, regulations, safety, and favorable water conditions.

Management and Safety

Interpretation at a beach unit should inform visitors about how to use the beach safely, as well as indicating ways they can preserve the environment. It should support the unit staff involved with enforcing regulations, providing visitors with the justification for regulations.

Primary Theme: Be Safe at the Beach

Interpretation will aid visitors by explaining the formation and hazards of rip currents and sleeper waves, methods swimmers can use to escape them, and other rescue techniques. It will also warn visitors about other dangers, such as stinging jellyfish, stingrays, sunburn, and buried fires and glass.

Primary Theme: You Can Prevent Erosion

Interpretation will address the cumulative effects of individual impacts on unstable bluffs at the state beach. It will stress how each tiny gully from runoff, ground squirrel holes, and volunteer trails can eventually lead to the loss of large portions of the bluffs. Interpretation will remind visitors to stay off the bluff face, and to use the stairways, marked trails, etc. for their own safety, and to preserve the natural environment.



## PROPOSED INTERPRETATION

### Facilities and Media

There are currently no interpretive facilities at Morro Strand State Beach. The lack of buildable land precludes any extensive interpretive structures. Consequently, minimal interpretive facilities, such as free-standing exhibit shelters with panels, or exhibit shelters attached to permanent buildings, are proposed. These should be located near the day-use parking area.

Exhibit panels should be the principal fixed interpretive medium used by the department at Morro Strand State Beach. Panels should be placed in exhibit cases that are impervious to the elements, not only to protect them from corrosion and vandalism, but also to make them appear attractive and substantial. The cases could be made free-standing or attached to permanent structures, and installed in the heavily used Old Creek day-use area, where they will be seen often, and better protected from vandalism. Free-standing exhibit structures, located at sites susceptible to unusually high tides and flooding, should be modular in design to aid their temporary removal. The size of the panels and cases should be standard, so seasonal exhibits or those that are worn out can be easily replaced. A program of seasonally rotated panels is strongly suggested. Modular cases and panels should be used throughout the Morro Bay District, enabling the rotation of panels from unit to unit, especially panels with themes that have coast-wide value. Metal interpretive signs should also be installed at the beach's coastal access points.

Publications, such as trail guides, monthly or seasonal visitor activity guides, bird and plant lists, orientation brochures, and books are valuable interpretive media, and their development should be encouraged for the state beach. Publications have souvenir value, and they allow visitors, by way of text and bibliographies, to learn more about the park after they leave, or to prepare themselves for a return visit.

Visitors should be encouraged to make use of the nearby Morro Bay Museum of Natural History at Morro Bay State Park for a more comprehensive interpretation of the natural history of the area. Also, the department's California coastal wetlands van, which focuses on wetlands ecology, should make regularly scheduled visits to the beach, particularly when park visitation is at its height.

### Visitor Activities

Talks, guided walks, and orientation services offered by park personnel and docents provide the most effective interpretive techniques, because they allow interactive communications, and are responsive to the immediate needs of visitors. At present, most of the interpretation at Morro Strand State Beach is carried out through these personal services. It is recommended that they be continued.

Appropriate visitor activities for Morro Strand State Beach should include formal and informal talks (on the unit's natural and historic resources and the State Park System); guided walks on the beach or near the wetlands; bird

study walks; demonstrations (lifeguard rescue, aquatic safety, board and body surfing, and surf fishing); and Junior Ranger programs. Trained and certified docents could aid the unit staff, augmenting the number and variety of interpretive programs offered to visitors.

#### 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, the association's membership periodically schedules interpretive programs for Morro Strand State Beach. Headquartered at the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History at Morro Bay State Park, the organization boasts more than 800 members, of which 150 are active docents. They produce a monthly newsletter with a calendar of their activities, which includes nature walks, on- and off-site talks, school programs, docent training, etc. They also sponsor special events to produce revenue for planned development and programs.

#### INTERPRETIVE CONCESSIONS

A general statement of concession policy, adopted by the California State Parks 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 which 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 and 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 concession activities for Morro Strand State Beach could include concessions that are interpretive in nature.

#### INTERPRETIVE COLLECTIONS

There are no interpretive collections directly associated with Morro Strand State Beach. However, resources at the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History in Morro Bay State Park may be available for use in interpretive programs to trained docents and staff.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following ongoing interpretive activities should continue to be encouraged:

- Schedule interpretive beach and dune walks, on- and off-site talks, aquatic safety demonstrations, and surf fishing demonstrations when projected visitor participation warrants these efforts.
- Develop and update monthly or seasonal visitor activity guides; bird, animal, and plant lists; orientation brochures, books, and bibliographies highlighting the state beach's resources; and a teacher's guide with lesson plans for Estero Bay state beaches, to encourage and facilitate visitation by school groups during the off season.
- Recruit volunteers to augment the unit's personal services interpretation for beach visitors.

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

- Construct new exhibit shelters in the existing day-use parking areas near Old Creek.
- Develop a series of interpretive panels, based on the themes listed, along with a seasonal rotation program for them, in the Old Creek day-use area.
- Locate metal interpretive signs at the beach's various coastal access points.

### ATASCADERO STATE BEACH (Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

## INTERPRETIVE CONSIDERATIONS

### Environmental Influences

The quality of the recreational experience at the former Atascadero State Beach is directly proportional to the esthetic appeal of the environment in which it takes place. Rain, wind, cold temperatures, cloudiness, and heavy fog influence visitation to the unit, as well as the types of interpretive facilities and programs which 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 can be a problem, and interpretive development should be designed and placed to minimize this risk.

Interpretive consideration should be given to the safety of the visitor, as well as to the preservation of the unit's resources. The ocean can present potential hazards to beach users. Dangerous rip currents can be confusing, frightening, or even fatal to unwary swimmers. Beach users can also have unpleasant encounters with poisonous jellyfish and stingrays, as well as less natural beach litter, such as broken glass and hot coals covered by sand.

Where the bluffs are high and steep, bluff erosion is in evidence, the result of natural processes at work, often accelerated by human activities. Dune erosion and destruction of the natural dune environment has similarly been increased because of unplanned "volunteer" trails. Revegetation of the destabilized dune areas with indigenous species of the unit will be an ongoing concern of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Smoke stacks of the Morro Bay Power Plant detract from the downcoast vistas of Morro Rock.

### Visitors, Their Needs and Expectations

On average, one hundred and nine thousand people visit the former Atascadero State Beach each year. The unit has two types of use, camping and day use. Day users outnumber campers, and are generally from the local area, although some come from outside the area, and stay in nearby overnight accommodations. Campers, many with their own recreational vehicles, come from greater distances. Some are traveling enroute to another destination and only stop overnight, while others stay as long as allowed (seven consecutive days in the summer months). The campground is generally filled during the summer.

The visitors' principal needs and expectations are for a readily accessible, affordable, clean, safe, and scenic spot in which to pursue their chosen forms of recreation and relaxation. Park personnel have noted that visitors to Atascadero State Beach tend to be older and more inclined to do their own recreating, without taking part in organized activities. Although not a strong expectation of the average visitor, interpretation can enhance the public's enjoyment and appreciation of the beach, as well as promoting safety. Visitors may also benefit from an orientation to the region, and from more knowledge about the resources of the area. From the department's point of view, interpretation is 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 the former Atascadero State Beach from geologic times to the present -- whether or not the whole spectrum of change is actually presented to the public.

### INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Interpretive themes for the former Atascadero State Beach separate into three loosely connected groups: resources, recreation, and management and safety (specific themes may fit more than one of these categories). Although the scope of interpretive development will not be extensive in this unit, a range of appropriate interpretive themes has been presented in this section to provide flexibility for future interpretation, using a variety of media.

## Resources

There are a wealth of resource-related themes to interpret at the former Atascadero State Beach. Natural history themes can be interpreted in two ways: through ecological associations, and through singular outstanding species. These approaches address both the interrelatedness of associated species and the uniqueness of some of those species. In some instances, themes covering resource-oriented topics have ramifications that aid in management of the unit and protection of the resources.

### Primary Theme: The Ever-Changing Coast

The coast is a dynamic place. Interpretation will encompass the constant motion of sand particles, their downcoast movement, and the seasonal transport of sand, with its impact on the coastal beach. The concepts of "littoral drift," "littoral cells," and "the sand budget" will be explained. In addition, the process that uplifted the marine terraces and formed the coastal bluffs will be interpreted. Bluff and dune erosion is a natural process in this area, but human intrusions have accelerated that process. Interpretation will stress how visitors can prevent erosion.

### Primary Theme: The Resourceful Life on the Beach

The range of habitats found at and around the state beach should be interpreted for visitors, with emphasis on how the physical and vegetative make-up of each area determines what wildlife will be present.

### Sub-Themes:

The Underwater Community. This theme will interpret the rich offshore flora and fauna found in the region of Estero Bay.

The Sandy Beach Community. The varied lifestyles and lifeforms of the common invertebrate and vertebrate animals found on Estero Bay beaches will be the focus. Interpretive approaches may include: "Life Under Foot" (invertebrates which live in the sand in the wave wash zone); "A Bill for Every Purpose" (shorebirds, their specialized feeding techniques, size differences, and migratory patterns which minimize inter-species food competition); "Flotsom and Jetsam" (evidences of various lifeforms found washed up on the beach, such as shark egg cases, jellyfish, and kelp, and the animals which scavenge these castaways).

Dune Ecology. Subjected to strong, salt-laden winds, high tides, and extremes in temperatures, plant and animal species that comprise the duneland community of Atascadero State Beach have adapted well to their harsh environment. Interpretation will look at these "survivors," as well as the concept of dune succession.

Bluff Ecology. This theme will examine the continually evolving (eroding) nature of the bluffs in this region of the California coastline, and the plants and animals that are adapted to live on the bluff face.

The Wetlands: Home to Critters Great and Small. The prolific nature of a healthy estuarine system and its related uplands will be presented, focusing on tidal influence, major species present, and food chain relationships. The theme will also seek to foster an aesthetic appreciation of the wetland landscape, and an understanding of the need to protect it.

Primary Theme: Special Species to Seek

Beach visitors will be directed toward unusual plant and animal species that may require some effort to find at the former Atascadero State Beach.

Sub-Themes:

Watching for Whales and Other Marine Mammals. The former Atascadero State Beach offers excellent views of the winter and spring migrations of the gray whale. Subjects that should be covered include: size, habits, diet, navigation; when, where, and why they migrate, and a map to illustrate their route; clues to identification; courtship and rearing of the young; and a brief history of whaling, their threatened extinction, the need for protection, and the present status of the species. In addition, identifying information about other marine mammals commonly observed along this coastline should be provided.

Unusual Plants and Animals of Estero Bay. Those species that are uncommon in their appearance or habits and are found around Estero Bay (e.g., grunion) will be highlighted.

Primary Theme: Bygone Beachcombers

The use of Estero Bay's beach and wetland environments by the Chumash and later settlers will be the focus for interpretation. This should incorporate comparative information about the various cultures (Native American, Hispanic, American), their different technology, and the changing use of the environment through time.

Primary Theme: A Boom Gone Bust

Edward G. Lewis' ill-fated development scheme for a resort community along Estero Bay should be interpreted, highlighting the buildings and grounds that once comprised the Cloisters Inn and Cottages.

Secondary Theme: The State Park System Story

The development of the State Park System and how the former Atascadero State Beach came into public ownership will be interpreted. This theme will treat the coast as a region, orienting visitors to the resources and recreational values of the nearby state beaches and parks, as well as notable local parks administered by other agencies.

## Recreation

The diverse recreational opportunities available at the former Atascadero State Beach will be interpreted, along with appropriate regulations and safety tips.

### Primary Theme: Having Fun in the Surf

Opportunities for board and body surfing, wind surfing, and boating should be interpreted for visitors unfamiliar with the beach. Techniques, regulations, and points of access should be covered, along with wave formation and its relationship to surfing. A tide schedule should be kept posted.

### Primary Theme: Fishing for Sport

Interpretation will highlight edible fish commonly caught in the surf, possibly including barred perch, jacksmelt, kelp greenling, silver perch, starry flounder, and walleye surfperch. Fishing techniques and applicable regulations will be covered.

### Primary Theme: Dive into the Underwater World

Interpretation will illustrate appropriate skin and scuba diving equipment, techniques, regulations, safety, and favorable water conditions.

## Management and Safety

Interpretation at this beach unit will inform visitors about how to use the beach safely, as well as indicating ways to preserve the environment. It should support the unit staff involved with enforcing regulations, providing visitors with the justification for regulations.

### Primary Theme: Be Safe at the Beach

Interpretation will aid visitors by explaining the formation and hazards of rip currents, methods swimmers can use to escape them, and other rescue techniques. It should also warn visitors about other dangers, such as stinging jellyfish, stingrays, sunburn, and buried fires and glass.

### Primary Theme: You Can Prevent Erosion

Interpretation will address the cumulative effects of individual impacts on unstable bluffs and dunes at the state beach. It will stress how each tiny gully from runoff, ground squirrel holes, and volunteer trails can eventually lead to the loss of large portions of the bluffs and dunes. Interpretation will remind visitors to stay off of the bluff face and fragile duneland, to use the stairways, marked trails, etc., for their own safety, and to preserve the natural environment.

## PROPOSED INTERPRETATION

### Facilities and Media

There are currently no interpretive facilities at the former Atascadero State Beach. The lack of buildable land precludes any extensive interpretive structures. Consequently, minimal interpretive facilities, such as free-standing exhibit shelters and exhibit shelters attached to permanent structures, are proposed. A program of seasonally rotated panels is strongly suggested. Possible locations for exhibit structures could be at the proposed day-use area for the unit near the site of the former Cloisters Inn and Cottages, at overlooks in the campgrounds, and against permanent restroom walls. At such time as a trail is formalized through the duneland, there will be additional opportunities for interpretation.

Exhibit panels should be the principal fixed interpretive medium used by the department at the state beach. Panels should be placed in exhibit cases that are impervious to the elements, not only to protect them from corrosion and vandalism, but also to make them appear attractive and substantial. Whether free-standing or attached to permanent structures, the cases should be installed in well-lit, heavily used areas, where they will be seen often and better protected from vandalism.

The size of the panels and cases should be standard, so that seasonal exhibits or those that are worn out can be easily replaced. Modular cases and panels should be used throughout the San Luis Obispo Coast District, enabling the rotation of panels from unit to unit, especially panels with themes that have coast-wide value.

Publications, such as trail guides, monthly or seasonal visitor activity guides, bird and plant lists, orientation brochures, and books are highly valuable interpretive media, and their development should be encouraged for the state beach. Publications have souvenir value, and they allow visitors, by way of text and bibliographies, to learn more about the park after they leave, or to prepare themselves for a return visit.

Visitors should be encouraged to make use of the nearby Morro Bay Museum of Natural History at Morro Bay State Park for a more comprehensive interpretation of the natural history of the area. Also, the department's California Coastal Wetlands Van, which focuses on wetlands ecology, should make regularly scheduled visits to the beach, particularly when park visitation is at its height. A teacher's guide with lesson plans should be developed for the state beach to facilitate visitation by school groups during the off-season.

### Visitor Activities

Talks, guided walks, and orientation services offered by park personnel and docents provide the most effective interpretive techniques, because they allow interactive communication, and are responsive to the immediate needs of visitors. At present, the greater part of interpretation at the former Atascadero State Beach is carried out through these personal services. It is recommended that they be continued.



Appropriate visitor activities for the former Atascadero State Beach should include formal and informal talks (on the unit's natural and historic resources and the State Park System); guided walks on the beach or through the dunes; bird study walks; demonstrations (lifeguard rescue, aquatic safety, board and body surfing, and surf fishing); and Junior Ranger Programs. Trained and certified docents could also aid the unit staff, augmenting the number and variety of interpretive programs offered to visitors on and off site.

#### INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATIONS

The Natural History Association of San Luis Obispo Coast, Inc., is the department's official cooperating association for Morro Bay area state parks. Founded in 1977, the association's volunteer membership schedules almost all of the interpretive programs for the state beach. Headquartered at the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History, located in Morro Bay State Park, the organization now boasts more than 800 members, of which 150 are active docents. They produce a monthly newsletter with a calendar of their activities, which includes nature walks, on- and off-site talks, school programs, docent training, etc. They also sponsor special events that produce revenue for planned development and programs.

The Morro Coast Audubon Society, Inc. also has some interest in providing interpretation at the state beach.

#### 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 which 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 concession activities for the former Atascadero State Beach could include interpretive concessions.

## INTERPRETIVE COLLECTIONS

There are no interpretive collections directly associated with the former Atascadero State Beach. However, resources at the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History in Morro Bay State Park may be available for interpretive programs to trained docents and staff.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following ongoing interpretive activities should continue to be encouraged:

- Schedule interpretive beach and dune walks, on- and off-site talks, aquatic safety demonstrations, and surf fishing demonstrations when projected visitor participation warrants these efforts.
- Recruit volunteers to augment the unit's personal services interpretation for beach visitors.
- Develop and update monthly or seasonal visitor activity guides; bird, animal, and plant lists; orientation brochures, books, and bibliographies highlighting the state beach's resources; and a teacher's guide with lesson plans for Estero Bay state beaches, to encourage and facilitate visitation by school groups during the off season.

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

- Construct new exhibit shelters in the campground and in the proposed day-use area near the Cloisters Inn site.
- Develop a series of interpretive panels, based on the themes listed, along with a seasonal rotation program for them.
- Locate metal interpretive signs at the beach's various coastal access points.



MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

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# OPERATIONS ELEMENT

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COUNTY OF ...

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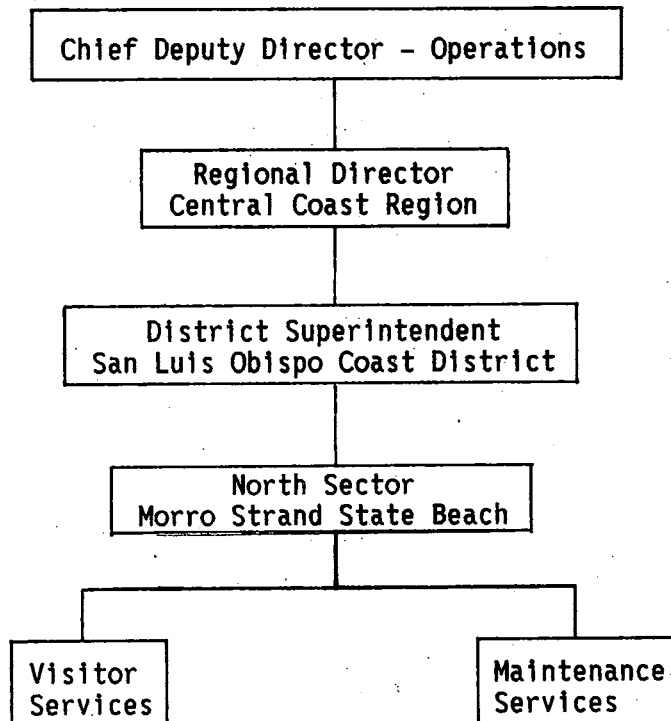
## OPERATIONS ELEMENT

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 and provide interpretive opportunity, enforce the law and 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 in 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

Morro Strand State Beach and the former Atascadero State Beach are operated as two distinct units. They received 140,000 in attendance during fiscal year 1986-87; 40,000 at Morro Strand State Beach, and 100,000 at the former Atascadero State Beach. Year-round permanent staffing provides for routine visitor services and maintenance functions. Summer and holiday operations require additional daily services provided by seasonal staffing; entrance station operations and housekeeping are provided by seasonal employees.

### Special Considerations

For the most part, operational considerations are very similar for these units. Therefore, the following apply to both Morro Strand State Beach and the former Atascadero State Beach, except where specifically noted.

#### Public Protection

Law enforcement in these units requires a highly visible presence. The close proximity of the existing facilities to a residential area and a major highway have led to a pattern of excessive minor crimes committed in the parks. Local law enforcement's interpretation of concurrent jurisdiction requires that state park personnel respond to all crimes within park boundaries.

#### Maintenance and Housekeeping

With new use facilities and the already increasing use of these units, greater emphasis will have to be placed on the additional demands associated with this increased use. More refuse, litter, and maintenance of new facilities will all add to the workload, and the staff will have to develop ways to best deal with this increase and still maintain other areas of responsibility at the present high level.

#### Community Interest

These units are heavily used due to their long expanse of beach and ease of availability. At Atascadero State Beach, the ability to camp right next to the beach, and all aspects of recreation associated with this type of unit, make it a favorite of many people. The development of more usable facilities while pleasing visitors will also concern residents in the area by increasing visitation and the problems associated with that increase.

#### Emergency Preparation

The safety of visitors at these state beaches is a prime concern. Water rescues in the ocean and emergencies on the beach require four-wheel-drive capability so emergency and first aid equipment can be quickly transported to the site. Radio communication between responding agencies will be a problem that will have to be addressed in a pre-accident plan.

## Utility Emergencies

There is an ever-present danger of a radiological release from the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. The park 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 of efforts will require a park representative to be at the county Office of Emergency Services building.

## Off-Highway Vehicles

Off-highway vehicle activity will continue to be a problem for these units. There is open access to the area from the city beach and by off-highway vehicle users that elect to drive directly onto the beach from state park parking lots. It is recommended that access routes be blocked, that signs be posted at all entrance locations, and that enforcement staff take strict enforcement action.

## Easements and Rights-of-Way

Both units are, in part, bordered on the east by private properties, and will have to be monitored to avoid and control existing encroachments. Other easements for utilities will also have to be controlled to ensure public access and safety.

## Jurisdictions

Operations depend on maintenance of close working relationships between the state parks and all of 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 through good communications, problems and conflicts can be anticipated and avoided.

## General Plan Implementation

### Goals and Objectives

Both Morro Strand State Beach and the former Atascadero State Beach were established to preserve for the people of California a unique stretch of coastline which provides a setting for outdoor recreational activities. DPR's primary objective is to provide for the public access and enjoyment, while protecting the underlying resources.

### Operational Problems and Solutions

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

Atascadero State Beach  
(Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

-- Development of Cloisters Picnic Area

Development of the Cloisters site creates a new focus for public use. Additional personnel, equipment, and operating expenses will be required to provide new public service. Facilities will be designed for minimum maintenance requirements, but high impact day-use workload cannot be absorbed; additional operations resources are necessary.

-- Redevelopment of Campground

Redevelopment and reconfiguration of the campground will result in an even more attractive camping facility. These improvements will increase the demand for beach camping; we expect more off-season use, which, in turn, will create more workload for maintenance, visitor services, and administrative personnel. Operating expenses for longer seasons and additional costs for hot showers must be increased.

-- Resource Management

The Resource Element identifies several major resource management programs which will increase operations responsibility. Control of exotic species, protection of sandy beach resource, wildlife protection, and cultural resource protection are some of the most important programs. Protecting these identified natural and cultural resources and educating the visiting public and staff about the sensitive nature of all non-renewable resources will be a continuing challenge to management.

Morro Strand State Beach

-- Day-Use Improvements

Day-use facility development and improvements are proposed for the unit. These facilities will be accessible to the public from Highway 1. These new facilities will increase park maintenance functions. The impact on ranger personnel will have an effect on the patrol function and interpretation.

-- Resource Management

As for Atascadero State Beach, the Resource Element identifies several major resource management programs which will increase operations responsibility. Of particular concern will be resource management efforts at Old Creek and protection of the sandy beach resource.

Volunteerism

-- Camp Host Program

At Atascadero State Beach, the camp host program may continue to be used in order to allow both maintenance and ranger personnel the time for more critical park problems.



-- Docent Interpretive Organization

A docent organization has been formed in the district, with limited activity at both Morro Strand and Atascadero. With the development of the day-use facilities, additional parking, and resource management efforts at both units, the docent program will be enhanced to increase interpretive activities.

Visitor Safety

In order to protect the safety of visitors, it is important to identify the (a) existing and proposed visitor activities; (b) history of accidents; (c) need for a monitoring program; and (d) need for an interpretive program.

There is a variety of visitor activities at these units, including camping, picnicking, wading, surfing, hiking, beachcombing, surf fishing, and nature study. The ocean waters are generally too cold to attract visitors to swimming or body surfing. The proposed development in the General Plan will not significantly change these activities.

Although the operations staff has responded to such typical accidents as dog bites, vehicle accidents, and health problems, there have been no recorded drownings at these units in the past twenty years. The beaches are currently patrolled, but lifeguard services are unavailable. The department will closely monitor the status of aquatic and other safety measures to determine whether lifeguarding services may be required in some form.

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.

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MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

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# 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 which 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.

### Purpose

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 which will provide for enhancement of recreational and educational experiences in concert with visitor safety and convenience. Such concessions should not create 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.

### Compatibility

Concession developments, programs, or services must be compatible with a unit's classification, and in accordance with the Public Resources Code.

### General Concession Policies

1. A study of the economic feasibility of proposed concessions shall be conducted by the Office of Economic and Fiscal Affairs, with participation and review by the Resource Protection Division, the Office of Interpretive Services, the Development Division, the Operations Division, the Acquisition Division, and the Statewide Planning Section. Final approval for development and operation of a proposed concession will be made by the director of the Department of Parks and Recreation.
2. It is the policy of the department to cultivate and encourage small business and ethnic and racial minority-owned/operated businesses as concessionaires in the State Park System.
3. Specific concession proposal shall be analyzed on a case-by-case basis, as submitted to the department.

4. It is the department's policy to generally avoid entering into convenience-type concession agreements for facilities, products, or programs that are adequately provided for a short distance outside state park unit boundaries, when such travel will not unduly endanger or inconvenience visitors, or lead to an unreasonable consumption of transportation fuels.
5. 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

##### Morro Strand State Beach

Currently, there are no concession facilities at Morro Strand State Beach, and no recognized need has been identified by the study. However, a future food concession, possibly a seasonal mobile food unit, could be established, should a need develop.

##### Atascadero State Beach (Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

There are no concession facilities currently at the former Atascadero State Beach, and no recognized need has been identified by the study. However, a seasonal mobile food unit could possibly be established, should a need develop. Such a concession would be intended to serve day-use needs. Staples and other supplies needed by campers are available in the surrounding communities.



MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH

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# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ELEMENT

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ELEMENT

### Morro Strand State Beach

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 (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 subjected 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 Facilities, and Interpretive Elements.

#### Description of the Existing Environment

See the Resource and Land Use and Facilities Elements.

#### Significant Environmental Effects

Increased foot traffic could accelerate dune instability and soil erosion.

#### Unavoidable Environmental Effects

Public use will incur some impacts to soils, wildlife, and vegetation. The impacts will be minor and/or mitigatable.

#### Mitigation Measures

1. All excavation proposals will be reviewed by department historians and/or archeologists. 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. New utility lines, where they could be visual intrusions, will be installed underground next to roads, where possible.
3. Facilities will be sited to reduce vegetation loss.
4. During periods of extreme fire hazard, certain uses or activities, such as campfires, may be curtailed or restricted.
5. The Studio Drive parking area will be landscaped to reduce soil erosion.



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, along with the no project alternative. 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

Alternative 1 would remove the Studio Drive parking area and retain the existing (north) parking area, with no additional development other than that an interpretive shelter or panels. This alternative would reduce parking for the public.

#### Alternative 2

The no project alternative would not allow for protection and restoration of the Old Creek wetland area, or provide any additional recreational facilities for the public. It would allow bluff erosion and dune instability to continue. Uncontrolled access to the beach through the Cloisters site would continue.

#### 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; that natural resource value may be improved through restoration of the Old Creek wetland area.

#### 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 with 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 due to increased recreational use resulting from improved facilities. Increased recreation use may influence the 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; the facility development is proposed to enhance or better accommodate existing use. The potential increased use relative to the existing regional supply of visitor support facilities is relatively small.

#### Effects Found Not Significant

1. No rare or endangered plant or animal species inhabit Morro Strand State Beach, although six state or federally listed threatened or endangered animal species may occur in or be seen from the unit. There is the tidewater goby, a candidate for federal listing, which occurs in the Old Creek wetland.
2. Other than in the Old Creek wetland, there are no unique or significant natural communities in Morro Strand State Beach.
3. Traffic volumes should not significantly increase. The proposed facilities would not substantially increase visitor capacity. Generally, they accommodate or enhance the existing use. Population growth and changing recreational use patterns will have greater impact on the level of recreational use.
4. The proposed development will create new impervious surface areas which will alter the rate and timing of runoff. However, in comparison to the total watershed area, the increase will not be significant.
5. Air quality and noise impacts were not considered significant. The background noise from Highway 1 and the ocean generally cover the noise level from recreational activities at Morro Strand State Beach.
6. Sewage and waste production, water consumption, and fuel consumption will rise proportionally with public use.

#### Atascadero State Beach (Renamed Morro Strand State Beach)

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 (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 Facilities, and Interpretive Elements.

### Description of the Existing Environment

See the Resource and Land Use and Facilities Elements.

### Significant Environmental Effects

1. Increased foot traffic could accelerate dune instability and damage vegetation.
2. The beach accessways could accelerate dune instability and create "blowouts," if the design does not consider dune landform, revegetation, and prevailing wind direction.
3. Increased public use of the Cloisters site may create traffic and litter problems for nearby residents.
4. Renovation of the existing campground may require removal of existing vegetation.

### Unavoidable Environmental Effects

Removal of vegetation, construction and maintenance of roads and trails, and creation of impervious surface areas will accelerate soil erosion in 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. New utility lines, where they could be visual intrusions, will be installed underground next to roads, where possible.
3. Facilities will be sited to reduce vegetation loss.
4. During periods of extreme fire hazard, certain uses or activities, such as campfires, may be curtailed or restricted.
5. Beach accessways will be developed to reduce dune erosion and instability.
6. A fence will be constructed in the campground area to reduce bluff erosion.
7. A sand dune protection and stabilization program will be developed.
8. Vehicle control barriers will be placed at the Cloisters site to reduce illegal vehicle travel through the dunes and on the beach.

## 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, along with the no project alternative. 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

Alternative 1 would convert the north end of the campground to a day-use area, and provide parking at the Cloisters site for 25-50 vehicles. This alternative would provide fewer recreational opportunities than the proposed plan, but would reduce public use problems for residents near the Cloisters site.

### Alternative 2

The no project alternative would not provide any additional recreational facilities for the public, and would allow bluff erosion and dune instability to continue. Uncontrolled access to the beach through the Cloisters site would continue.

### 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; that natural resource value may be improved through resource management programs such as native plant revegetation or dune stabilization.

### 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 with 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 impact due to increased recreational capacity and improved facilities. 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 use relative to the existing regional supply of visitor support facilities is relatively small.

#### Effects Found Not Significant

1. No rare or endangered plant or animal species inhabit Atascadero State Beach, although six state or federally listed threatened or endangered animal species may occur in or be seen from the unit.
2. There are no unique natural communities in Atascadero State Beach.
3. Traffic volumes should not significantly increase. The proposed facilities would not substantially increase visitor capacity. Generally, they accommodate or enhance the existing use. Population growth and changing recreational use patterns will have greater impact on the level of recreational use.
4. The proposed development will create new impervious surface areas which will alter the rate and timing of runoff. However, in comparison to the total watershed area, the increase will not be significant.
5. Air quality and noise impacts were not considered significant. The background noise from Highway 1 and the ocean generally cover the noise level from recreational activities at Atascadero State Beach.
6. Sewage and waste production, water consumption, and fuel consumption will rise proportionally with the 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.

The following information is being furnished to you for your information and is not intended to constitute an offer of insurance or any other financial product. The information is provided for your general information only and should not be relied upon as a basis for any investment decision. The information is provided for your general information only and should not be relied upon as a basis for any investment decision.

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## 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 black ink, appearing to read "David C. Nunenkamp".

David C. Nunenkamp  
Chief  
Office of Permit Assistance

cc: Resources Agency

Enclosures

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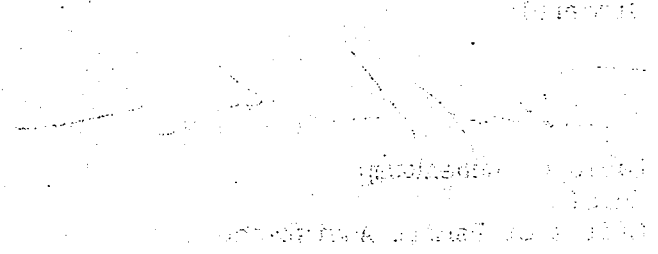
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The first of these is the fact that the number of people who are employed in the service industries has increased steadily since 1947. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that the service industries are becoming more important in the economy as a whole. Another factor is the fact that the service industries are becoming more profitable, which has led to an increase in investment in these industries. Finally, the fact that the service industries are becoming more important in the economy as a whole has led to an increase in the number of people who are employed in these industries.

The second of these is the fact that the number of people who are employed in the manufacturing industries has decreased steadily since 1947. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that the manufacturing industries are becoming less important in the economy as a whole. Another factor is the fact that the manufacturing industries are becoming less profitable, which has led to a decrease in investment in these industries. Finally, the fact that the manufacturing industries are becoming less important in the economy as a whole has led to a decrease in the number of people who are employed in these industries.

The third of these is the fact that the number of people who are employed in the agricultural industries has decreased steadily since 1947. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that the agricultural industries are becoming less important in the economy as a whole. Another factor is the fact that the agricultural industries are becoming less profitable, which has led to a decrease in investment in these industries. Finally, the fact that the agricultural industries are becoming less important in the economy as a whole has led to a decrease in the number of people who are employed in these industries.

The fourth of these is the fact that the number of people who are employed in the construction industries has increased steadily since 1947. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that the construction industries are becoming more important in the economy as a whole. Another factor is the fact that the construction industries are becoming more profitable, which has led to an increase in investment in these industries. Finally, the fact that the construction industries are becoming more important in the economy as a whole has led to an increase in the number of people who are employed in these industries.



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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BOX 8114  
 SAN 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:

① 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.

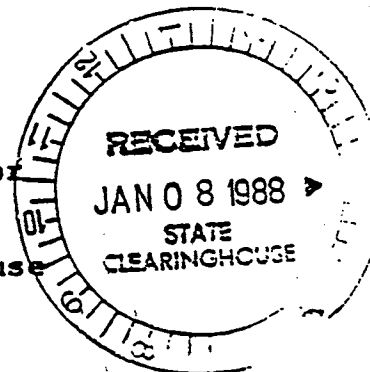
Please send us a copy of the completed General Plan when it is available. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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

*A. C. Carlton*

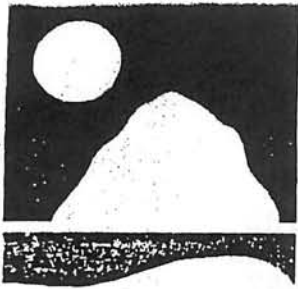
A. C. Carlton  
 District 5  
 Intergovernmental Review Coordinator

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

FINANCE DEPARTMENT  
595 Harbor Street

FIRE DEPARTMENT  
715 Harbor Street

POLICE DEPARTMENT  
850 Morro Bay Blvd.

PUBLIC WORKS  
695 Harbor Street

RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
535 Harbor Street

8-814

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

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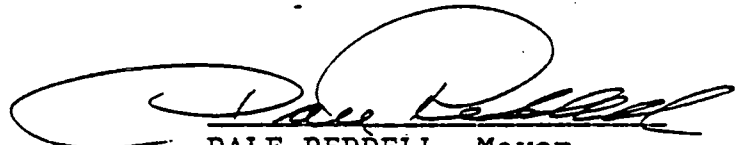
- (b) Drainage improvements at the State Beach may be needed in order to properly function with the City's system;
  - (c) Additional dressing rooms, or similar screened areas for beach users in the vicinity of the park entrance should be provided.
  - (d) The State should maximize public parking spaces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

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

6 | 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.

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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 Cayucos 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

DDN

8-820

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.

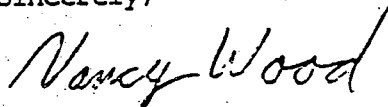
P. 59 - The Chapter supports constructing vehicle barriers to the dunes and the beach to prevent illegal trespass.

P. 60 - The Chapter supports the intent to acquire the 84 acres of the VRM 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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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

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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,

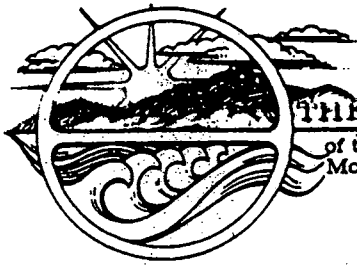
Glenn A. Carpenter  
Caliente Resource Area Manager

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**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 Hoffman  
President

cc: Dave Sears  
Docent Council Board  
NHA Board

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Don

8-152

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 lot

20

2. ¶12, 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

24

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.

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.O. 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 or inappropriate uses needs to be addressed promptly.

REACTION TO PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN

LDS OSQS OAKS STATE RESERVE

November 1987

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, the trail signs within the reserve should be arrows, directions, 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 may 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 Docent Council will probably be able to update a pamphlet or brochure for the reserve, and provide the

33

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.

DGA

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 (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 (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

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APPENDIX



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? 48

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 east
- 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>2</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   | — Environmntl. Educ. Cntr. |
| — 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"/> Nothing                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough visitor facilities       | <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park and area too small             | <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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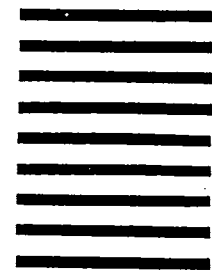
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ATTENTION: JILL VANNEMAN



# Update

Issue One November 1986

The General Plan Newsletter



## 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
<b>1. Which park unit are you visiting today?</b>				
TOTAL RESPONSES: 1189	190	719	252	28
<b>2. How often do you visit this park?</b>				
First visit	50%	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%	--
<b>3. How long does your visit usually last?</b>				
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%	--
<b>4. Where do you live?</b>				
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%	--
<b>5. What is your age?</b>				
8-24	4%	6%	8%	11%
25-34	18%	19%	23%	18%
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%	--
<b>6. What is your primary destination on this trip?</b>				
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%
Beachcambng-46%	Nature obs.-37%	Walking-41%	Photo.-39%
Nature Obs.-33%	Visit museum-33%	Hiking-36%	Hiking-39%
Sunbathing-32%	Beachcambng-21%	Beachcambng-30%	Birdwctching-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	Quiet	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-inCmp-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%
TentCamp-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%
Cultural Resources	12%	18%	25%
Natural Resources	35%	41%	59%
Recreational Activities	29%	26%	20%
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-40%
- 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.
- Shellfish deserve a break. How many otters 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.

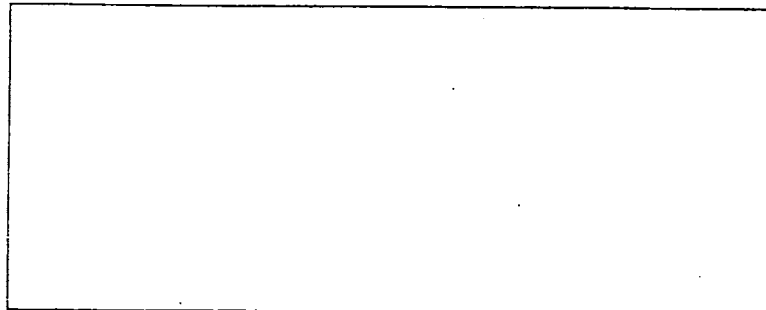


## The Planning Process...

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

The General Plan Newsletter

Issue Two February 1987



## 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

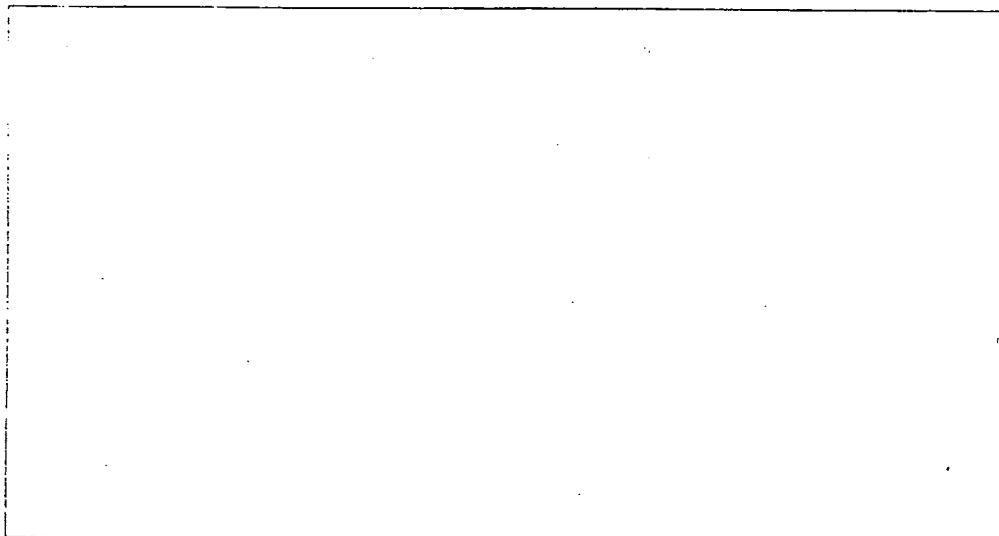
On December 2, 1986, a new staff member joined our planning team. Jim Quayle is a licensed Landscape Architect with over 12 years of experience. He worked as a project manager in our Acquisition Division before coming to the Development Division. His experience with the most recent acquisitions for the 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...

### 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 Recreation 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

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

*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: Jim Quayle (916) 323-5067, or Jill Vanneman (916) 323-4269.



## 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<br>Commission Hearing |



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

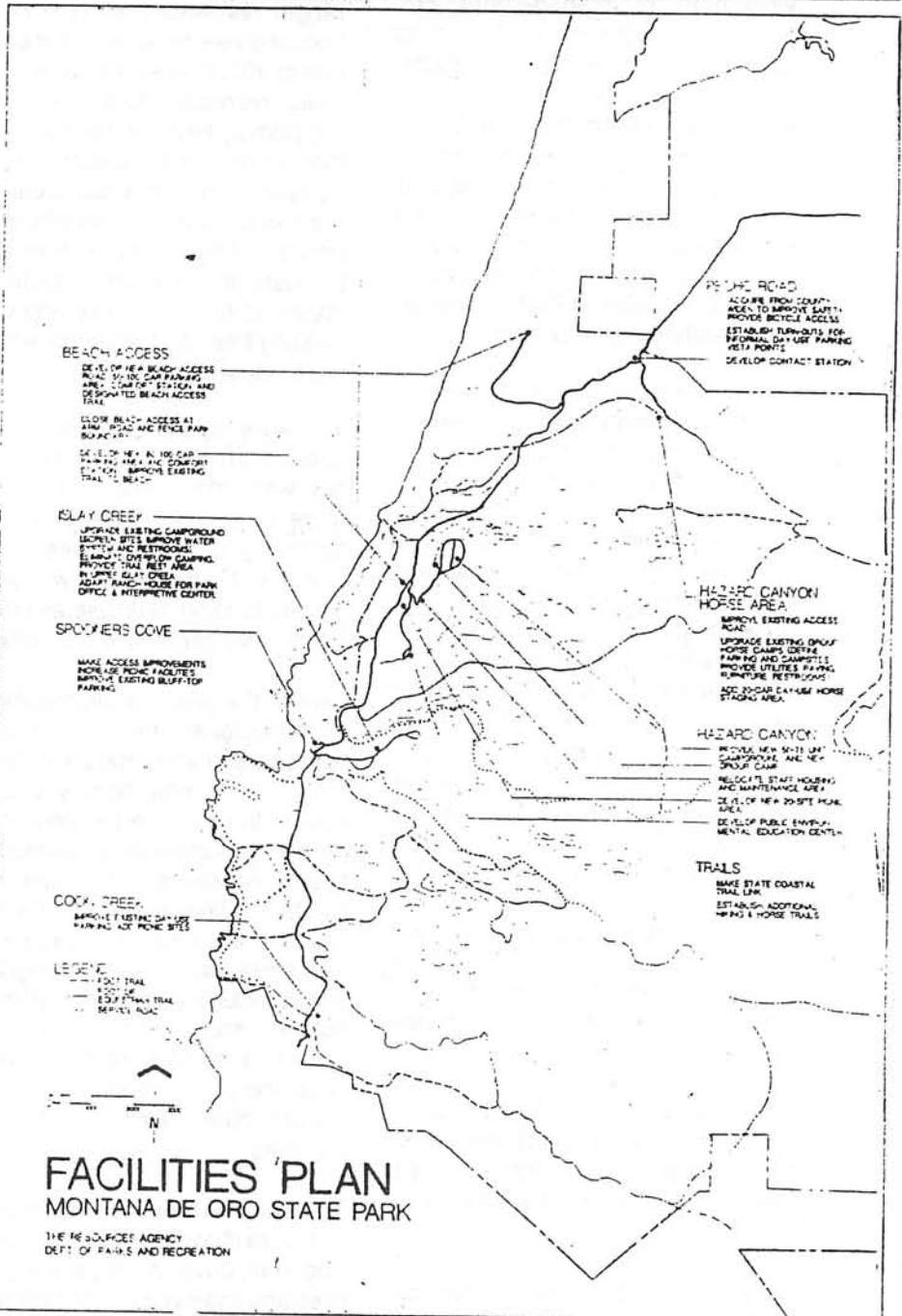


## General Plan Progress...

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 re-

located 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.

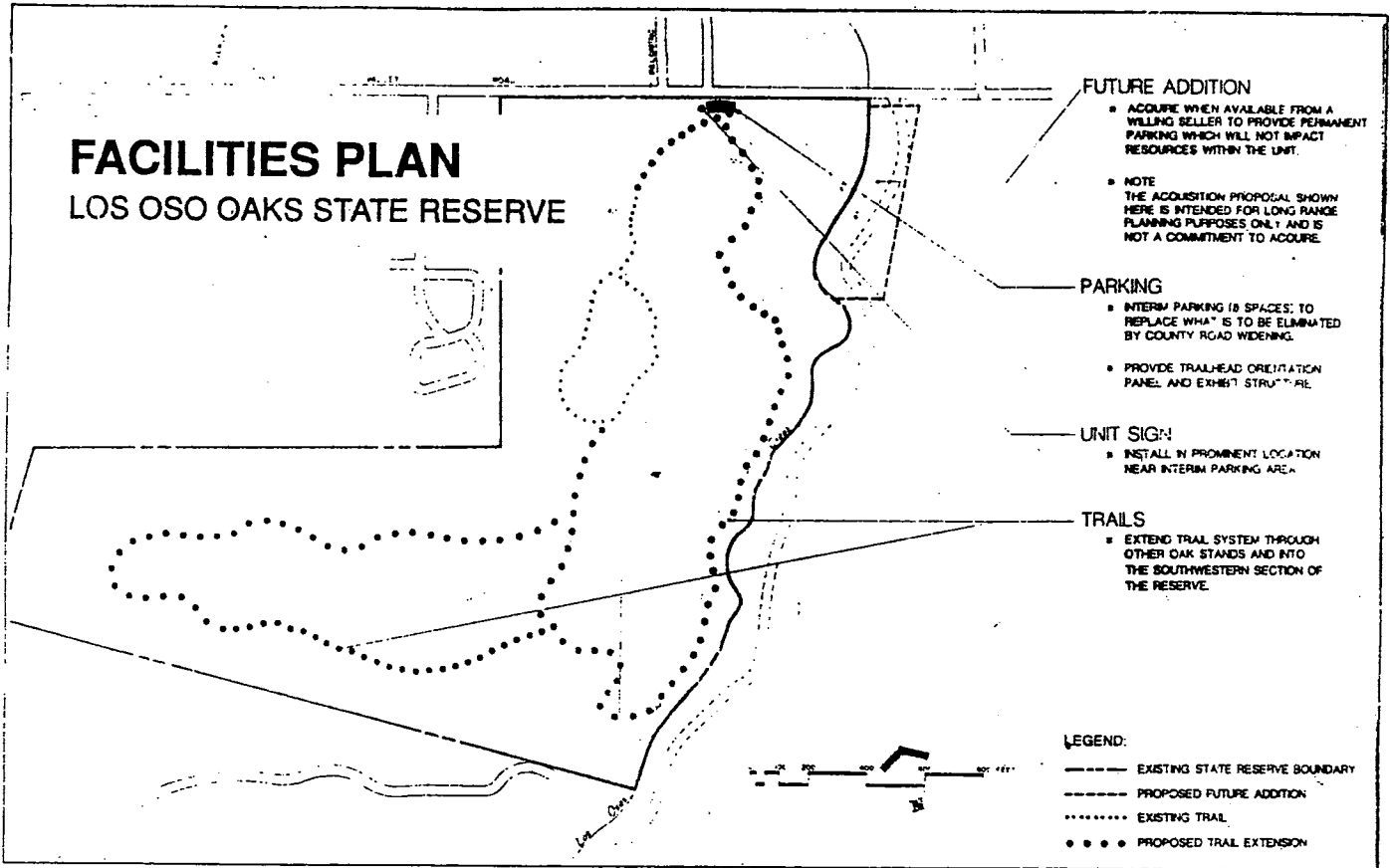
### Los Osos Oaks S.R.

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.

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### 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

# Final Plan

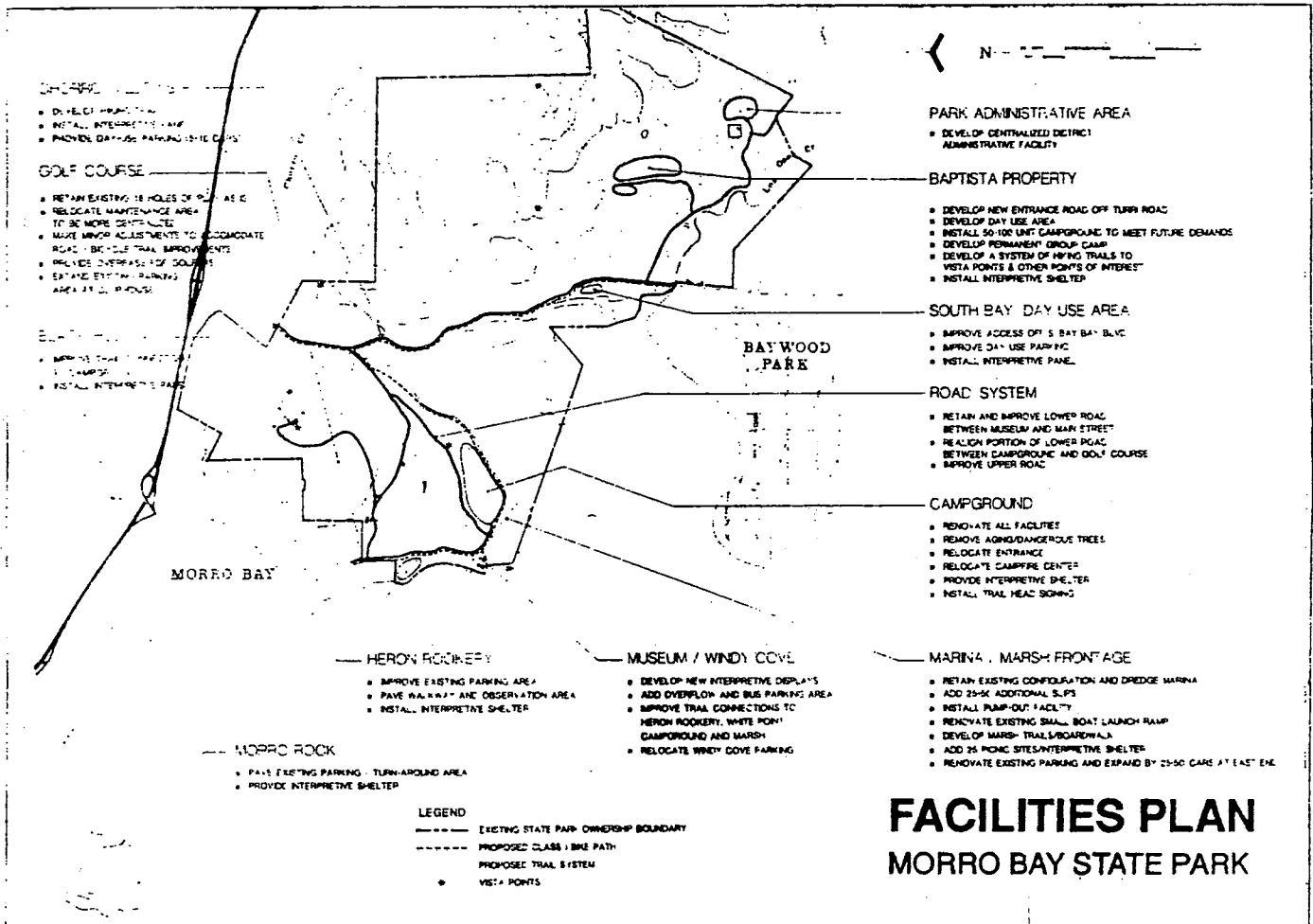
and a hiking trail to be placed along the marsh without any major grading immediately adjacent to the marsh. Along the marsh the proposed road realignment would be at a higher elevation, thereby maximizing scenic views of the marsh. Two roadside parking areas are proposed for viewing and access to the 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.

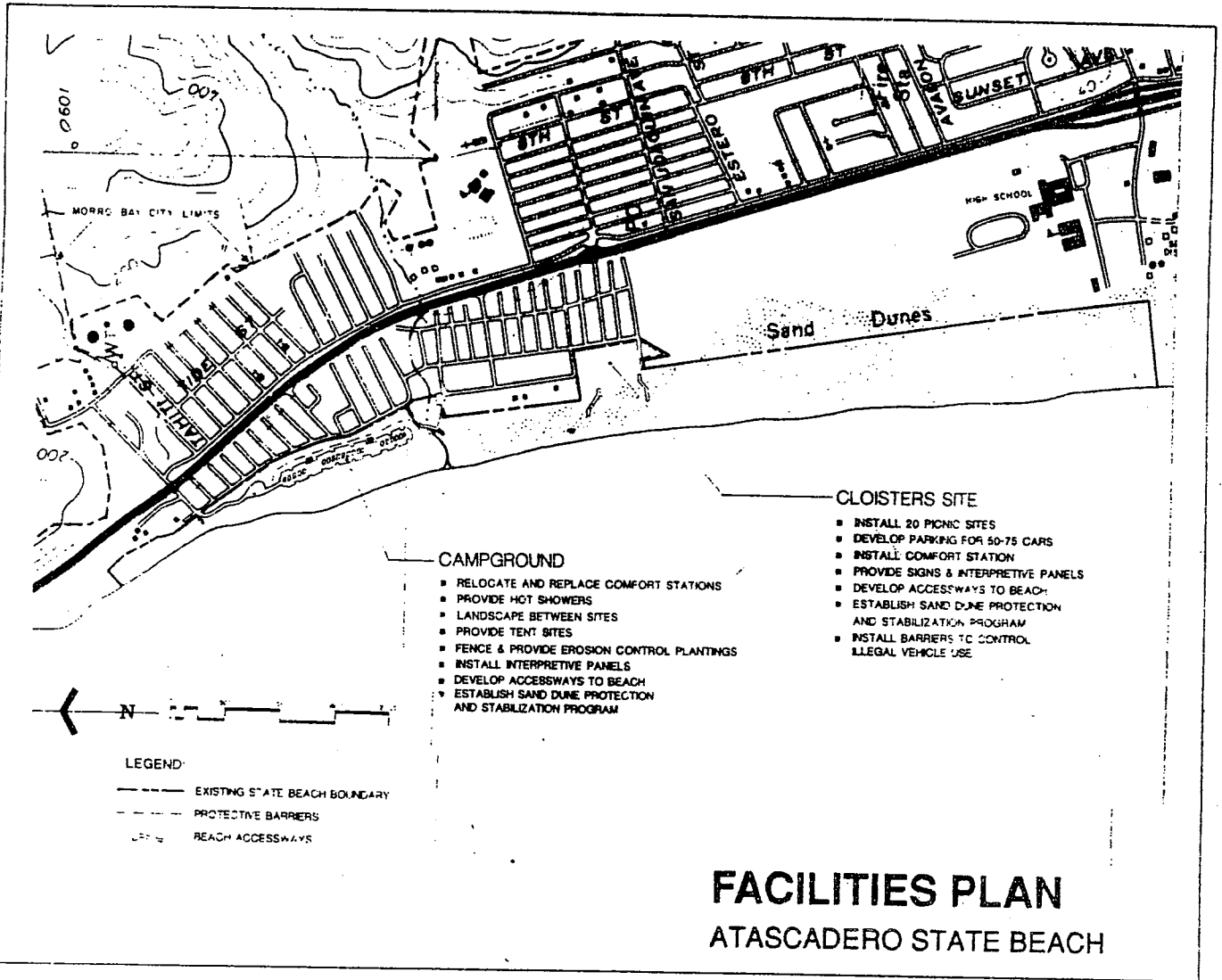
These are the major proposals of the single plan for Morro Bay State Park. Additional recommendations are shown on the map.

## 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.

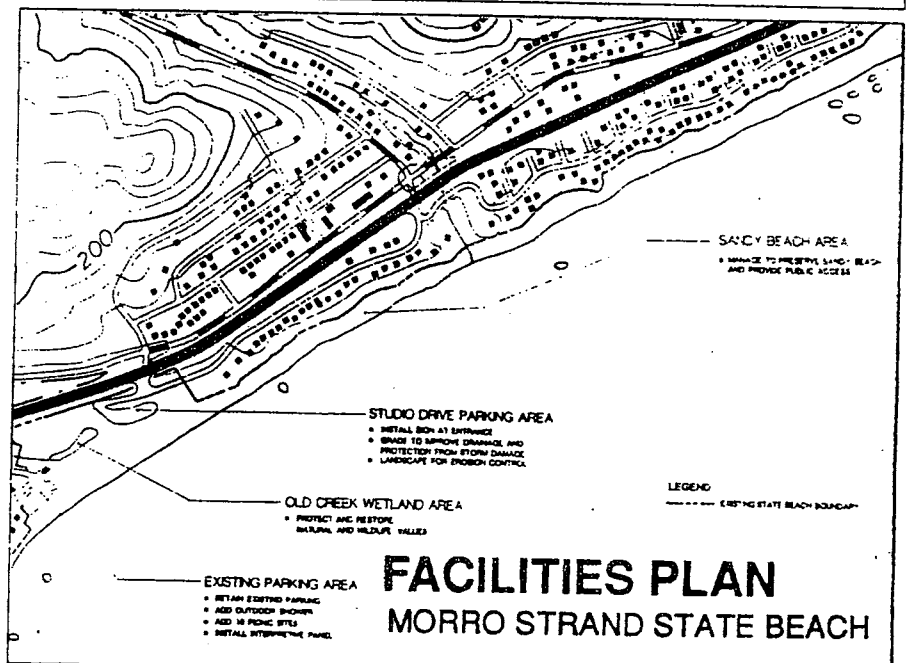






**Morro Strand S.B.**

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.







## **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**

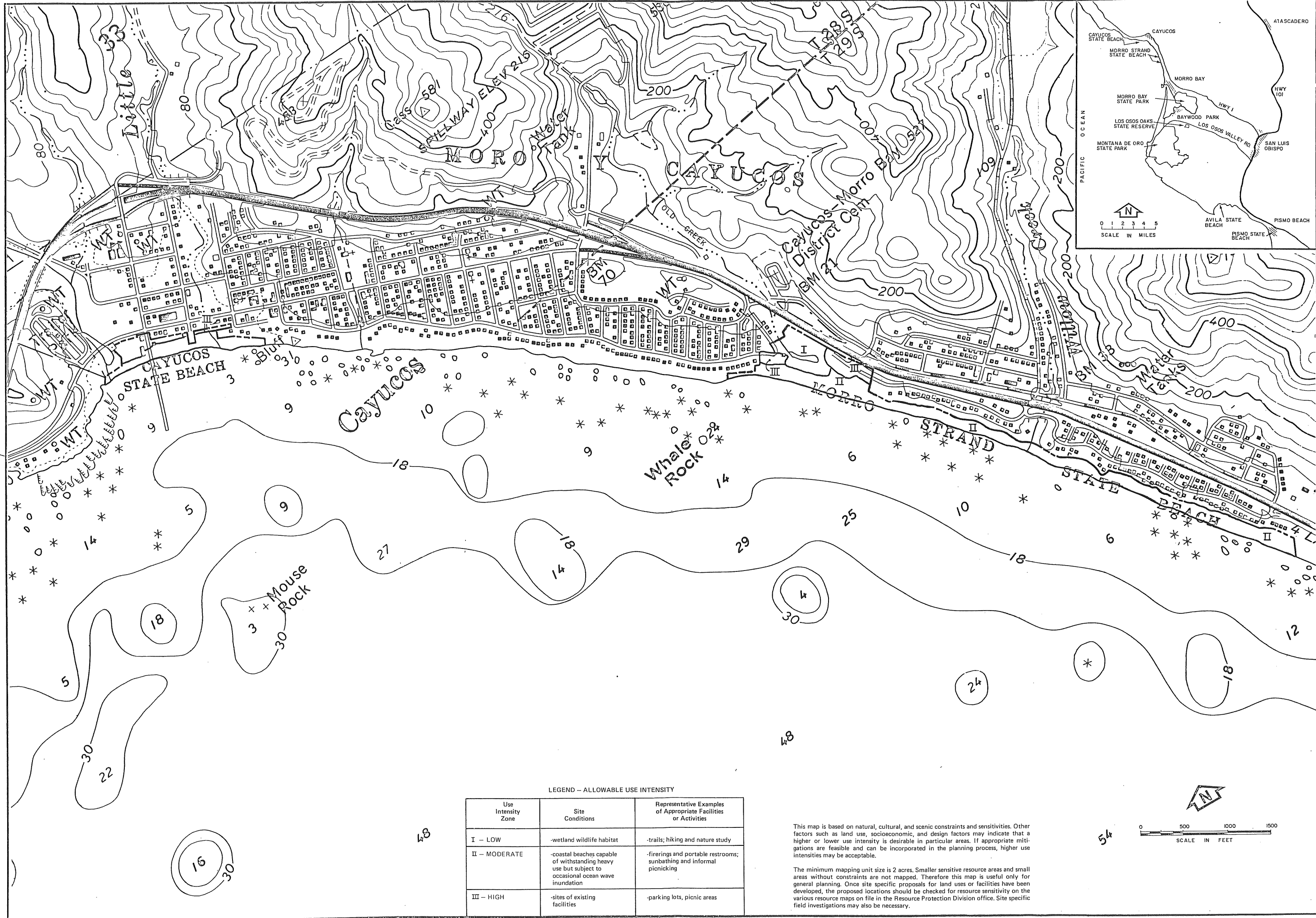
Plans for **Morro Bay State Park,  
Atascadero and Morro Strand  
State Beaches** will be presented:

**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  
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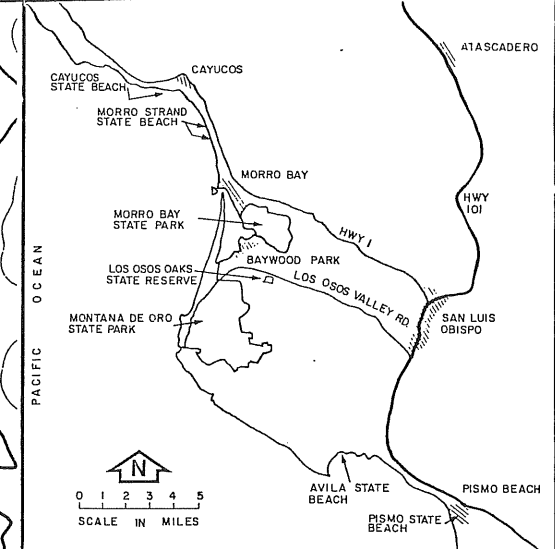


LEGEND - ALLOWABLE USE INTENSITY

Use Intensity Zone	Site Conditions	Representative Examples of Appropriate Facilities or Activities
I - LOW	-wetland wildlife habitat	-trails; hiking and nature study
II - MODERATE	-coastal beaches capable of withstanding heavy use but subject to occasional ocean wave inundation	-fireings and portable restrooms; sunbathing and informal picnicking
III - HIGH	-sites of existing facilities	-parking lots, picnic areas

This map is based on natural, cultural, and scenic constraints and sensitivities. Other factors such as land use, socioeconomic, and design factors may indicate that a higher or lower use intensity is desirable in particular areas. If appropriate mitigations are feasible and can be incorporated in the planning process, higher use intensities may be acceptable.

The minimum mapping unit size is 2 acres. Smaller sensitive resource areas and small areas without constraints are not mapped. Therefore this map is useful only for general planning. Once site specific proposals for land uses or facilities have been developed, the proposed locations should be checked for resource sensitivity on the various resource maps on file in the Resource Protection Division office. Site specific field investigations may also be necessary.



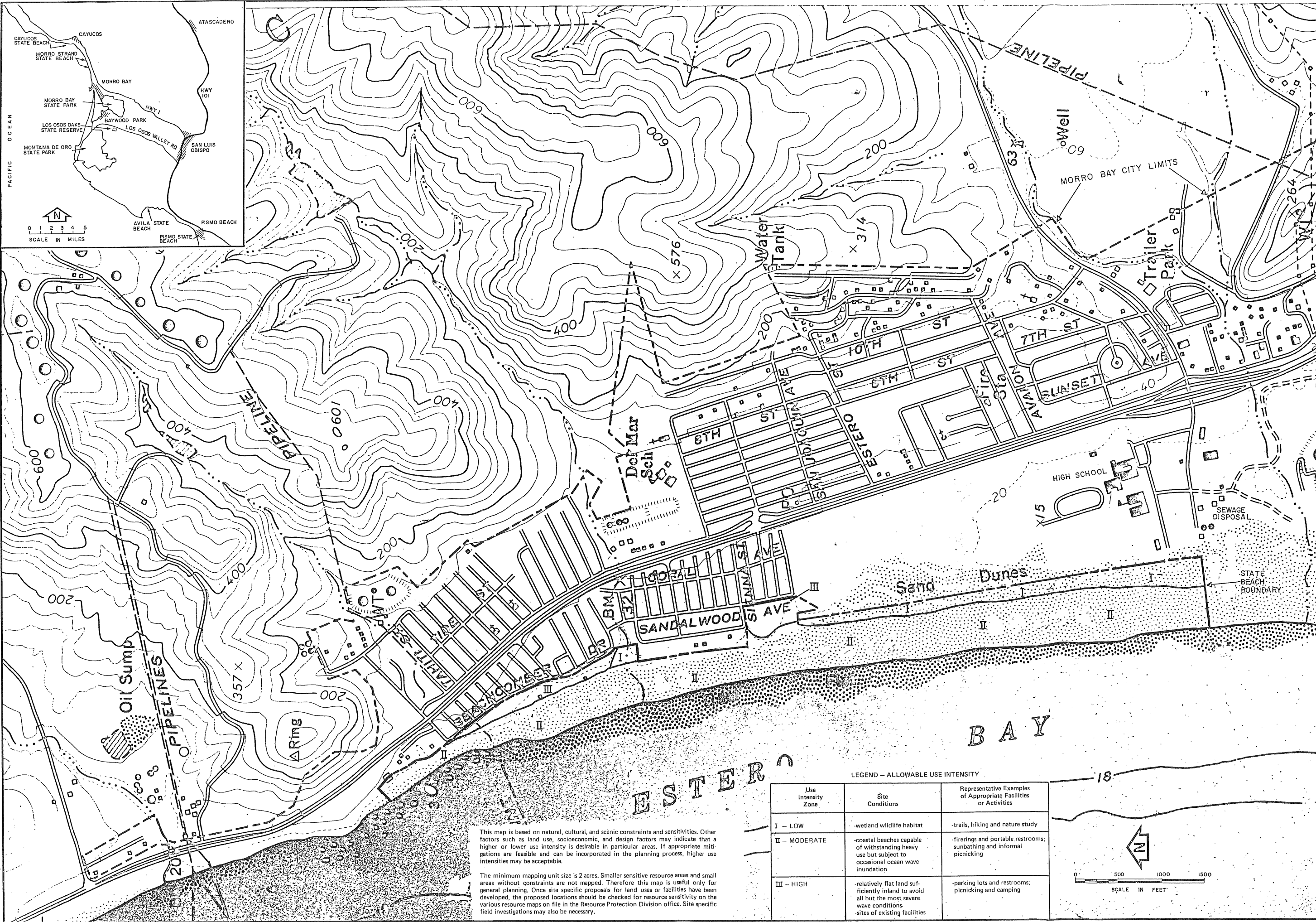
DESIGNED J. Quigley	DATE
DRAWN J. Quigley	REVISIONS
CHECKED	DATE

RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH  
(NORTHERN PARCEL)  
**ALLOWABLE USE INTENSITY MAP**  
GENERAL PLAN - RESOURCE ELEMENT

DRAWING NO.  
**24017**

**MAP**  
**2**

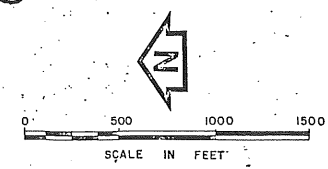


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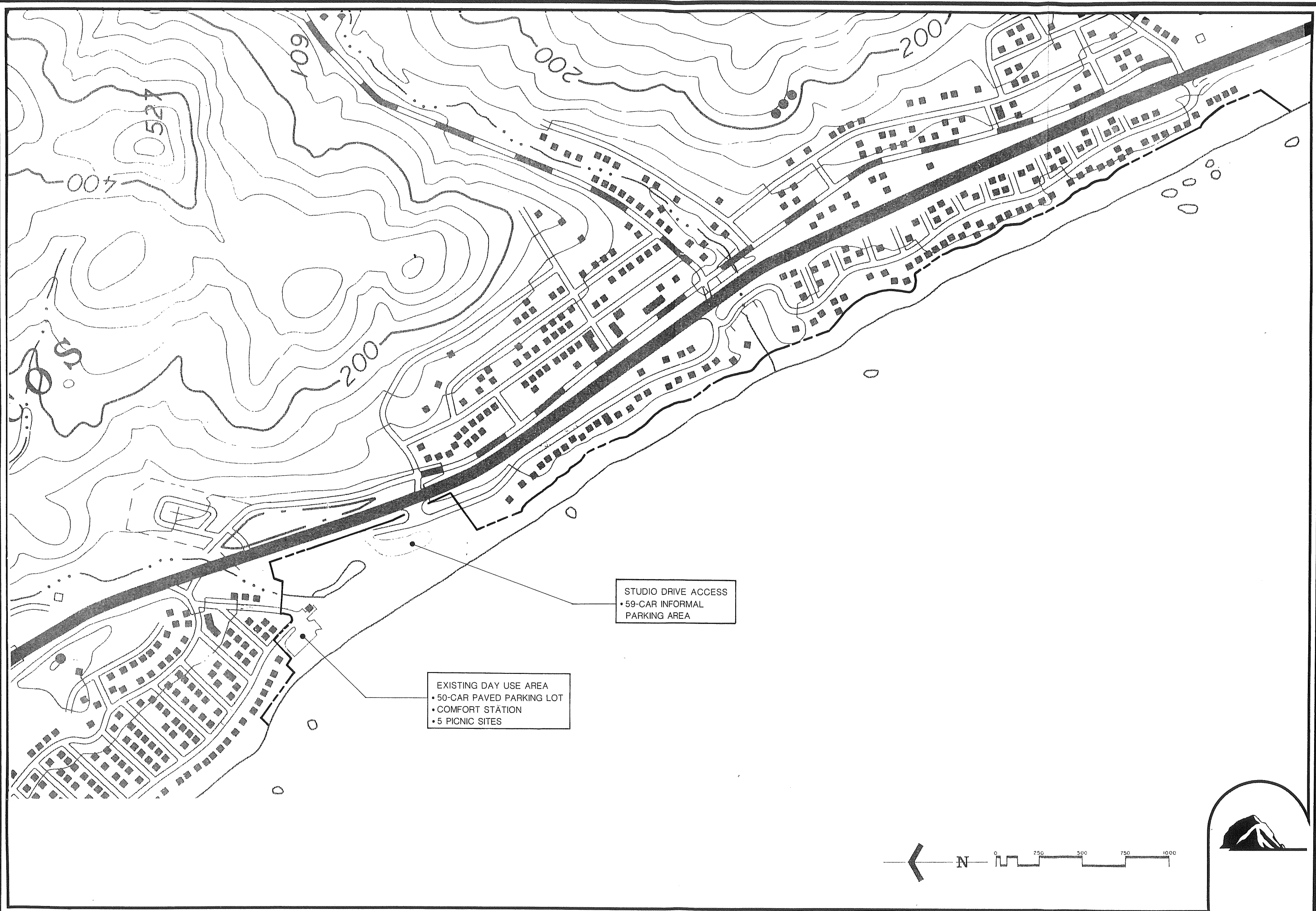
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LEGEND - ALLOWABLE USE INTENSITY

Use Intensity Zone	Site Conditions	Representative Examples of Appropriate Facilities or Activities
I - LOW	-wetland wildlife habitat	-trails, hiking and nature study
II - MODERATE	-coastal beaches capable of withstanding heavy use but subject to occasional ocean wave inundation	-firerings and portable restrooms; sunbathing and informal picnicking
III - HIGH	-relatively flat land sufficiently inland to avoid all but the most severe wave conditions -sites of existing facilities	-parking lots and restrooms; picnicking and camping

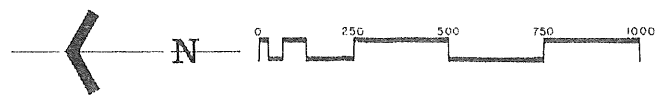


MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH (SOUTHERN PARCEL) <b>ALLOWABLE USE INTENSITY MAP</b> GENERAL PLAN - RESOURCE ELEMENT	RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION APPROVED _____ DATE _____
DRAWING No. <b>24018</b>	DESIGNED <i>J. Quayle</i> DRAWN 2-88 CHECKED
<b>MAP</b> <b>3</b>	REVISIONS DATE



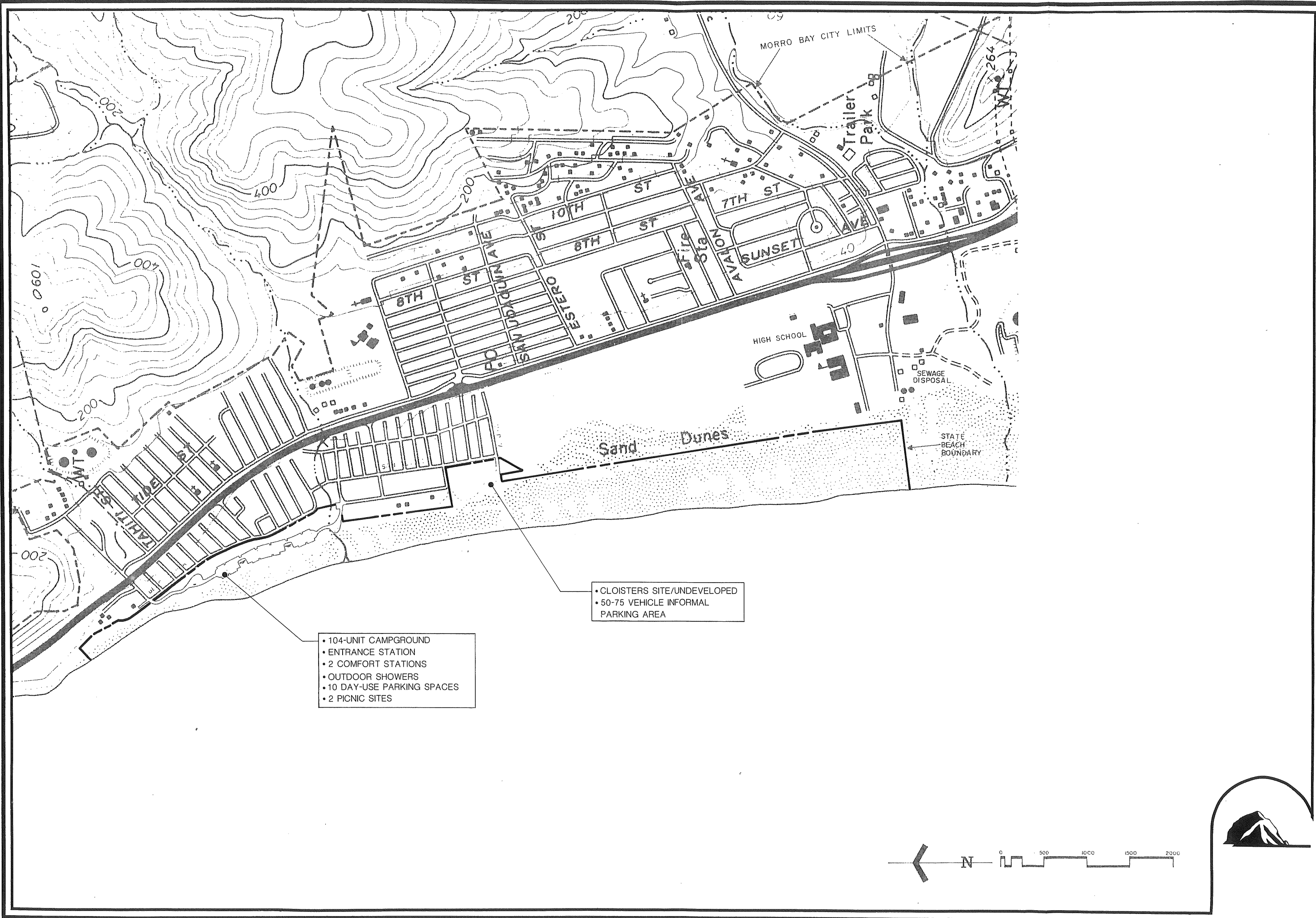
EXISTING DAY USE AREA  
 • 50-CAR PAVED PARKING LOT  
 • COMFORT STATION  
 • 5 PICNIC SITES

STUDIO DRIVE ACCESS  
 • 59-CAR INFORMAL  
 PARKING AREA



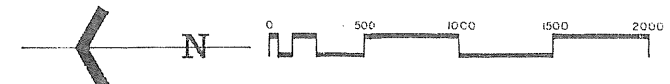
DESIGNED	DATE
	REVISIONS
DRAWN	DATE
CHECKED	DATE
RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION	
APPROVED _____ DATE _____	
<b>MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH</b> <small>(NORTHERN PARCEL)</small> <b>EXISTING FACILITIES</b>	
GENERAL PLAN-LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT	
DRAWING No. 24018.1	
<b>MAP</b> <b>4</b>	



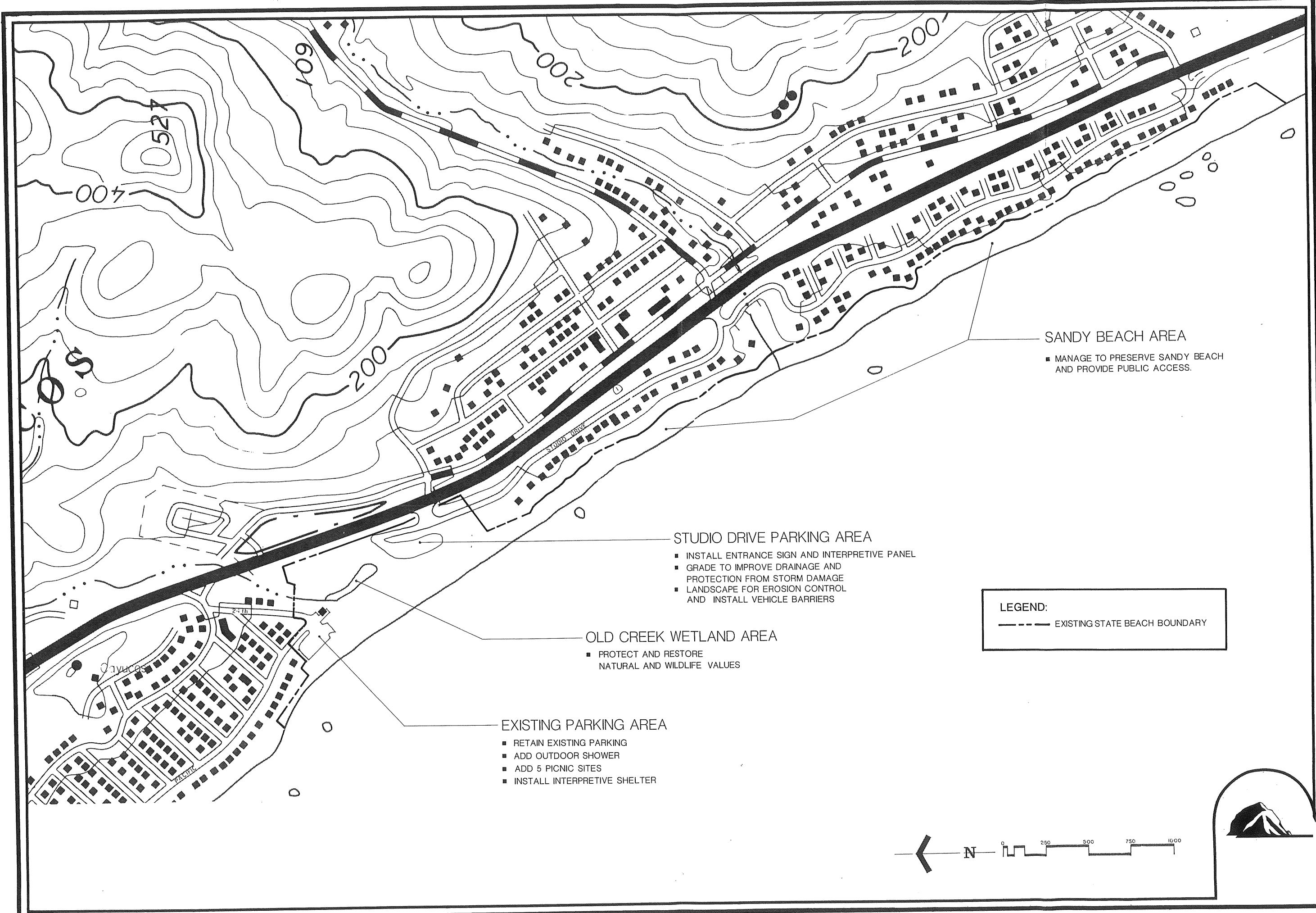


- 104-UNIT CAMPGROUND
- ENTRANCE STATION
- 2 COMFORT STATIONS
- OUTDOOR SHOWERS
- 10 DAY-USE PARKING SPACES
- 2 PICNIC SITES

- CLOISTERS SITE/UNDEVELOPED
- 50-75 VEHICLE INFORMAL PARKING AREA



DESIGNED	DATE
	REVISIONS
DRAWN	
CHECKED	
RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION APPROVED _____ DATE _____	
<b>MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH</b> (SOUTHERN PARCEL) <b>EXISTING FACILITIES</b> GENERAL PLAN-LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT	
DRAWING No. 24018.2	
MAP 5	



**SANDY BEACH AREA**

- MANAGE TO PRESERVE SANDY BEACH AND PROVIDE PUBLIC ACCESS.

**STUDIO DRIVE PARKING AREA**

- INSTALL ENTRANCE SIGN AND INTERPRETIVE PANEL
- GRADE TO IMPROVE DRAINAGE AND PROTECTION FROM STORM DAMAGE
- LANDSCAPE FOR EROSION CONTROL AND INSTALL VEHICLE BARRIERS

**OLD CREEK WETLAND AREA**

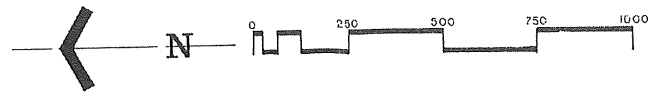
- PROTECT AND RESTORE NATURAL AND WILDLIFE VALUES

**EXISTING PARKING AREA**

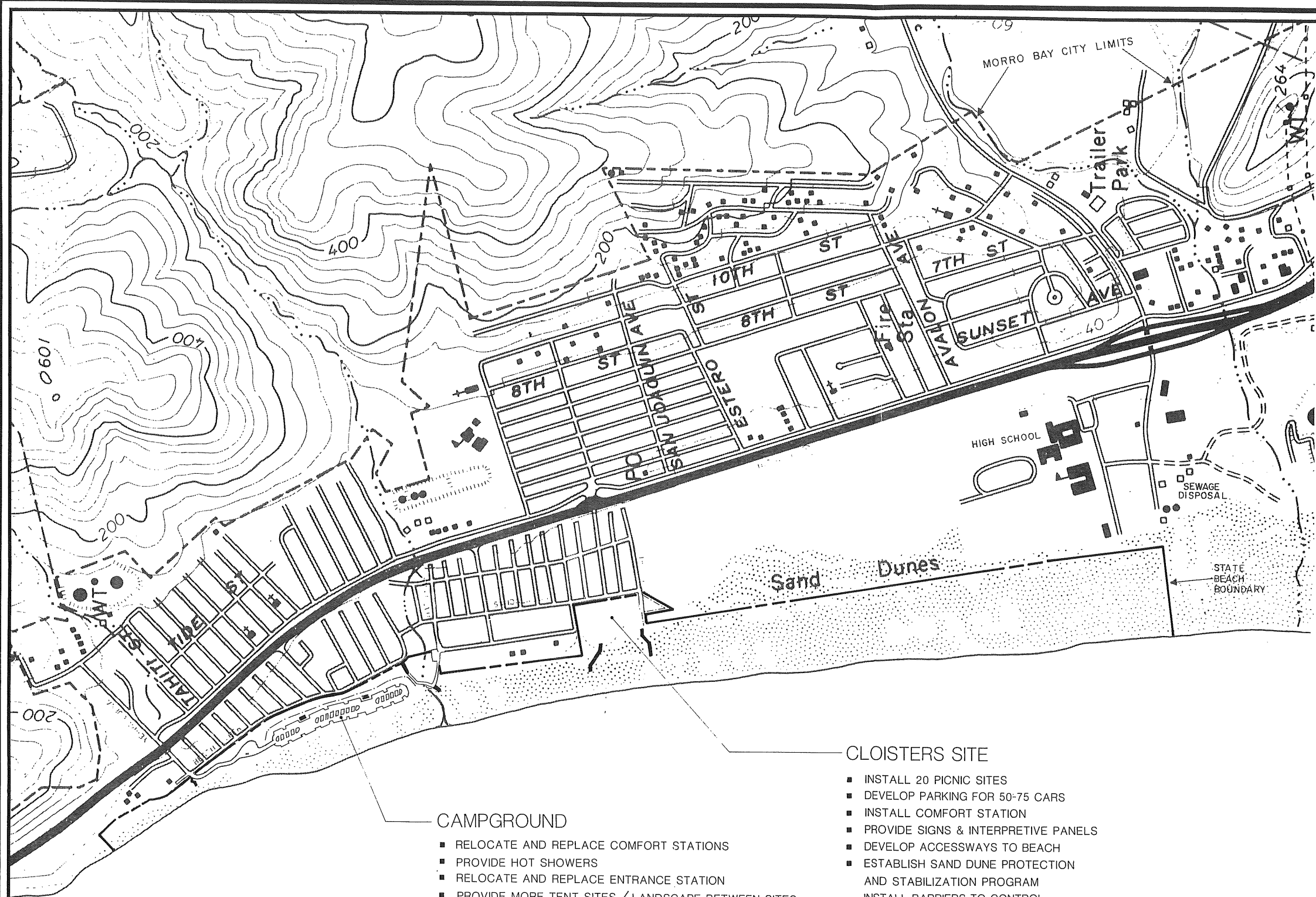
- RETAIN EXISTING PARKING
- ADD OUTDOOR SHOWER
- ADD 5 PICNIC SITES
- INSTALL INTERPRETIVE SHELTER

**LEGEND:**

--- EXISTING STATE BEACH BOUNDARY



DESIGNED	DATE	REVISIONS	DATE
DRAWN			
CHECKED			
RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION APPROVED _____ DATE _____			
<b>MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH (NORTHERN PARCEL)</b> <b>PROPOSED LAND USE AND FACILITIES</b> GENERAL PLAN-LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT			
DRAWING No. 24018.3			
<b>MAP 6</b>			

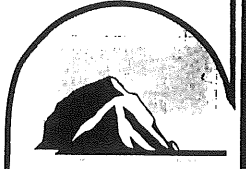
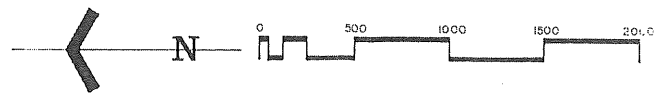


- CAMPGROUND**
- RELOCATE AND REPLACE COMFORT STATIONS
  - PROVIDE HOT SHOWERS
  - RELOCATE AND REPLACE ENTRANCE STATION
  - PROVIDE MORE TENT SITES / LANDSCAPE BETWEEN SITES
  - FENCE & PROVIDE EROSION CONTROL PLANTINGS
  - INSTALL INTERPRETIVE PANELS
  - INCREASE DAY USE PARKING TO 20-25 CARS AND IMPROVE DAY USE AREA
  - ESTABLISH SAND DUNE PROTECTION AND STABILIZATION PROGRAM
  - DEVELOP ACCESSWAYS TO BEACH
  - RECONSTRUCT BARRIERS AT HATTERAS ST.

- CLOISTERS SITE**
- INSTALL 20 PICNIC SITES
  - DEVELOP PARKING FOR 50-75 CARS
  - INSTALL COMFORT STATION
  - PROVIDE SIGNS & INTERPRETIVE PANELS
  - DEVELOP ACCESSWAYS TO BEACH
  - ESTABLISH SAND DUNE PROTECTION AND STABILIZATION PROGRAM
  - INSTALL BARRIERS TO CONTROL VEHICLE USE

**LEGEND:**

- — — — — EXISTING STATE BEACH BOUNDARY
- - - - - PROTECTIVE BARRIERS
- ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ BEACH ACCESSWAYS



RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION	APPROVED _____ DATE _____
MORRO STRAND STATE BEACH (SOUTHERN PARCEL) <b>PROPOSED LAND USE          AND FACILITIES</b>	GENERAL PLAN-LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT
DESIGNED _____ DATE _____	REVISIONS _____ DRAWN _____ CHECKED _____
DRAWING No. <b>24018.4</b>	
<b>MAP 7</b>	