



CASTLE ROCK STATE PARK

GENERAL PLAN NEWS

FEBRUARY 1999, Revised 3/3/99

NEWSLETTER #5

STATE PARK PROMOTES STEWARDSHIP & PUBLIC ACCESS

Castle Rock State Park (CRSP) is a place of spectacular natural scenic beauty. The nearly 4,000 acres of land consists mostly of steep terrain and forested canyons and provides habitat for sensitive plant and wildlife species. Sandstone rock outcrops with rare tafoni formations and outstanding scenic vistas are evident within the park. The area is recovering from past logging, farming and development.

Thirty-four miles of existing trails provide access from multiple parking locations and trailheads. The most popular activities include hiking, rock climbing, and nature walks. Camping and horseback riding also occur within the park. It is visited by over 70,000 people per year and is an active place year-round on days with good weather. Additionally, Castle Rock State Park is interconnected within a larger system of regional trails and open space recreation areas.

A general plan has been prepared by the Department, with input from a citizen's advisory committee and the public. This general plan is a management document for the state park, establishing its purpose and direction for the future. With its long-term goals and guidelines, it provides the framework for management of resources and public use. This framework assists in guiding daily decision-making and serves as the basis for developing more detailed management and site-specific project plans in the future.

Evident throughout the planning process were the concerns for appropriate opportunities for visitor access, enjoyment, education and inspiration along with the preservation and protection of the recovering 'wild' characteristics.

PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN available for public review

Copies of the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) are available for public review at the following locations:

Big Basin Redwoods SP
21600 Big Basin Way
Boulder Creek, CA 95006

California State Parks
Northern Service Center
1725 23rd Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

Santa Cruz District Office
600 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Los Gatos City Library
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95032

Santa Cruz Public Library
224 Church Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Saratoga Comm. Library
13650 Saratoga Avenue
Saratoga, CA 95070

Santa Clara Central Library
2635 Homestead Road
Santa Clara, CA 95051

San Jose Main Library
180 W. San Carlos Street
San Jose, CA 95113

San Francisco City Library
Civic Center
San Francisco, CA 94142

Library
CA State Univ., San Jose
San Jose, CA 95192

Scotts Valley Library
230 Mt. Herman Road
Scotts Valley, CA 95066

Felton Library
6299 Gashee
Felton, CA 95018

Library
UC Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Boulder Creek Library
13390 W. Park Avenue
Boulder Creek, CA 95006

Written comments on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR must be received at the Northern Service Center by April 15, 1999

For Information call: (916) 323-0975

PROPOSED DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

As a state park, the purpose at this unit is to preserve the outstanding natural resources, wildland values, and supporting ecosystems of the upper watershed of the San Lorenzo River, while providing opportunities for the visiting public to enjoy and be inspired by the unique and diverse topography, geology, biotic communities, and scenic views.

To accomplish this purpose, the California State Park System is to manage the park resources for the continuing scenic, educational, scientific, and recreational benefits of present and future generations. Park management shall guide the recovery of natural processes and features in the park towards the balances that existed prior to the arrival of Euro-Americans. Restoration, preservation, and education of wildland resources and ecological processes will be primary considerations within the Natural Preserve.

The General Plan Calls for Wildlands Preservation



Tafoni rock formations in the Lion Caves

General Plan Goals

The following are general plan goals for the management of natural and cultural resources, esthetics, interpretation, recreation, and facility improvements. You will find in the general plan document, the specific guidelines on the desired actions to achieve these goals and the park's purpose.

NATURAL RESOURCE GOALS

- Restore upper watershed functions and remedy unnatural soil erosion and stream sedimentation problems within CRSP
- Preserve and perpetuate examples of natural plant communities, and restore, protect, and maintain ecosystems and indigenous flora and fauna
- Prevent wetland soils compaction and destruction of associated vegetation
- Protect special plants and special plant communities within CRSP and manage for their perpetuation in accordance with state law (PRC, Div. 2, Chapter 10, Sec. 1900)
- Prevent the establishment and spreading of exotic plant species in the park.
- Reintroduce the benefits of fire to restore species composition and stand structure of native plant communities.
- Protect CRSP resources from unnecessary damage from wildfires and their suppression.
- Protect and perpetuate native wildlife populations at the park.
- Maintain and enhance the movement of plants and animals within the park, and between the park and other wildland areas whenever possible.
- Mitigate or prevent outside disturbances from having adverse impacts on park resources and disruption of natural ecosystem processes.

- Provide for public safety and prevent structural failures due to seismic activity and landslides through proper siting and design of future park facilities.
- Protect and preserve tafoni features, including caves, spheroid masses called "cannonballs", and lattice-work rock walls and faces. The fossil and mineral record and specimens of CRSP should also be preserved.
- Establish special protection and designation for sensitive plant and wildlife habitats and geologic features. Provide a Natural Preserve classification of approximately 1,800 acres of the upper San Lorenzo River and Kings Creek drainages, including the area known as Lion Caves.

CULTURAL RESOURCE GOALS

- Identify and protect all significant prehistoric sites in Castle Rock State Park.
- Identify and protect all significant historic sites and features in Castle Rock State Park.
- Maintain the "Partridge House" as an example of agricultural residency in the Castle Rock area, with consideration of appropriate adaptive uses.
- Maintain, protect, and perpetuate, if determined historically significant, the historic orchard and any historic varieties.
- Preserve the historic integrity of old roads and sites that are determined significant to the history of CRSP.

ESTHETIC RESOURCE GOALS

- Protect the scenic resources inherent to the vicinity of CRSP from potentially degrading intrusions.
- Eliminate unsightly debris and elements that pose an environmental risk to people and resources at CRSP.
- Reduce the impact of noise pollution in the park.
- Work to bring about the elimination of the existing high power transmission lines, along with associated rights-of-way through the unit, and to restore the area to natural conditions.

Park will be managed for Low-impact Recreation



ACCESS & RECREATION GOALS

- Manage CRSP for protection of significant resource values and opportunities for low-impact recreation, including rock climbing.
- Provide appropriate access and opportunities for the visiting public to enjoy the park, while not degrading the natural features and ecological processes.



Interpretive Shelter at Partridge Farm

Provide Visitors with Education and Interpretive Opportunities

INTERPRETIVE GOALS

- Establish Partridge Farm as an entrance (or portal) into CRSP. As such, it will provide for improved vehicle access, visitor contact, parking, orientation, and interpretive facilities at the park's perimeter. The level of recreational activity and use provided at Partridge Farm will be consistent with and complement the resource management objectives of adjacent RMZs.
 - Satisfy operational needs for improving the management of access and parking for visitors.
 - Relocate the park entrance and main parking area to Partridge Farm. Phasing will allow for monitoring resource impacts and changes in visitor use, and determining the appropriate management actions to be taken.
 - Provide overnight parking for visitors who want to camp.
 - Consolidate parking for appropriate access and effectiveness
 - Expand access opportunities for visitors who may travel a greater distance or want to experience the park's environment during the morning and evening hours.
 - Rehabilitate existing campsites and trails, and restore the primitive camping experience.
 - Provide for park administrative and maintenance functions.
 - Provide opportunities to expand visitor services at CRSP through contracts and special events.
- Provide the opportunities to increase the visitors' knowledge and appreciation of the significant natural and cultural resources of the park; to increase their understanding of ecological relationships; and to increase their awareness of, and sensitivity to, human impacts on these resources.
 - Acquaint the public with the park's resource values and the need for preserving and protecting the significant resources. Update the existing interpretation and provide a place to be used for traditional campfire programs or outdoor classroom.
 - Consider a multi-agency visitor center facility in the vicinity of CRSP that could serve park visitors with an orientation to the entire Santa Cruz Mountains, including state parks. It could supplement the park's interpretation through exhibits, brochures, and publications on recreation opportunities and the natural and cultural history of this entire region.

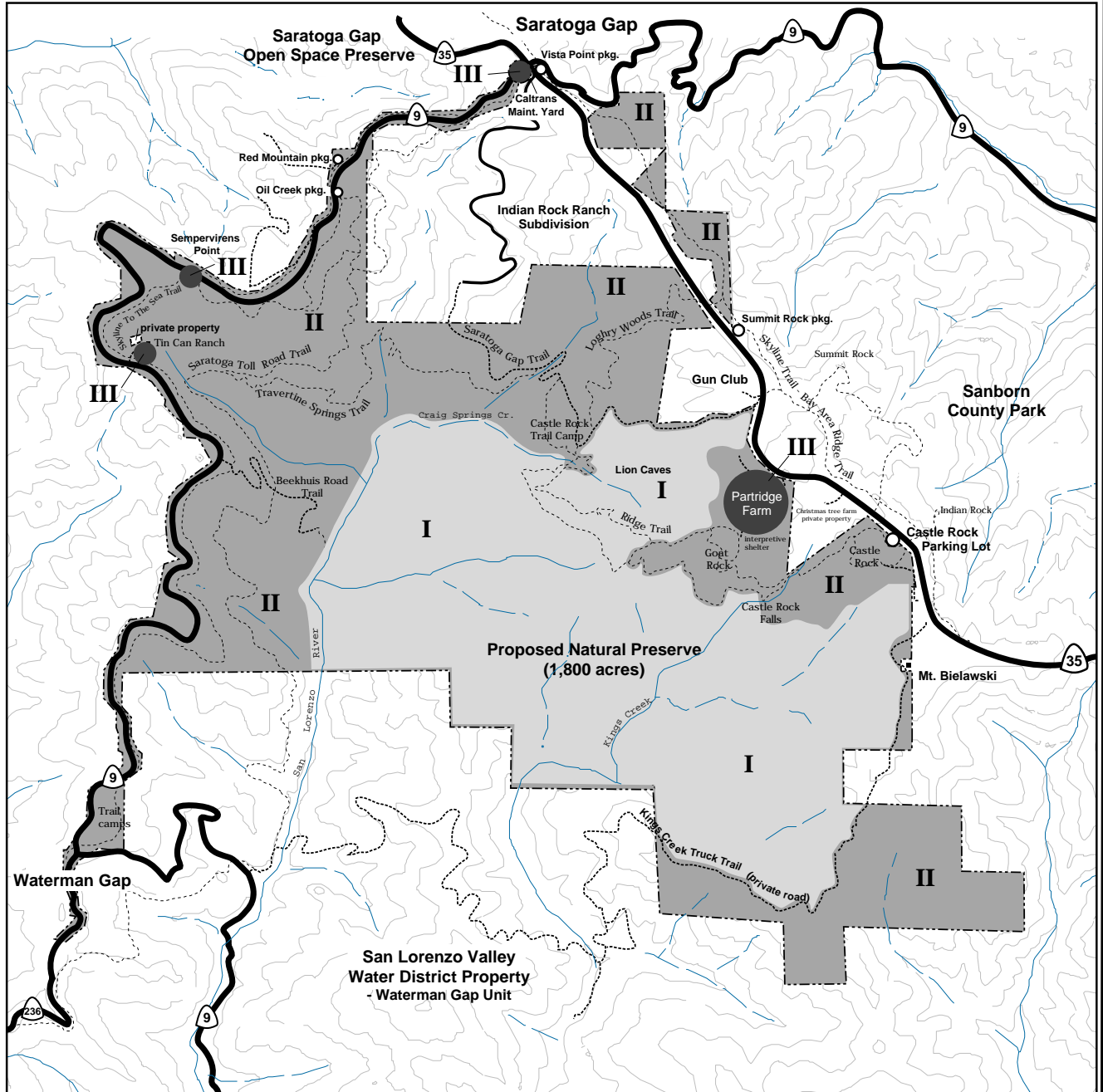
ALLOWABLE USE INTENSITY

The general plan map (Figure 2 at the right) illustrates park areas in categories of allowable use intensity. These categories are defined as low, medium, and high, which correlates the significance, sensitivities, and constraints of the park's resources with an allowable degree of disturbance due to human impacts.

Designations consider past, present, and future uses, and are used as planning parameters in assessing the appropriateness of future proposals. These uses are defined by human activities and/or development of facilities.

FIGURE 2

Allowable Use Intensity



- I**
- II**
- III**

LOW USE INTENSITY
 Appropriate activities include sightseeing, hiking, and nature study. Trails are the only facilities allowed.

MODERATE USE INTENSITY
 Appropriate facilities include trails, unpaved roads, primitive trail camps, small interpretive structures. Appropriate activities may also include low-impact rock climbing.

HIGH USE INTENSITY
 Appropriate facilities include trails, roads, parking, and buildings. Appropriate activities include day use, walk-in camping, group activities, administrative and maintenance functions.

What's the next step?

The Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report is now available for public review. This is your opportunity to make comments, and the Department will respond to those comments.

Written comments on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR must be received at the Northern Service Center by April 15, 1999.

California State Parks
Northern Service Center
1725 23rd Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 323-0975

The general plan document with the public comments and responses will constitute the Final Environmental Impact Report. This document will be presented to the California State Park and Recreation Commission for their consideration at a future public hearing. Further notice will be given for the hearing date and location.

Where we are in the planning process:

- Data Gathering
- Identify Issues & Concerns
- Prepare Alternatives
- Develop Preferred Plan (draft)
- Prepare General Plan Document
- Public Review (CEQA)
- Park Commission Approval

Thank you...

How to get information

If you would like General Plan information about Castle Rock State Park, please give us a call, or write to the address below:

Dave Keck, Project Manager
1725 23rd Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 322-2997
Email: dkeck@parks.ca.gov

For information on other parks and programs in the State Park System, please visit the State Parks Website at:

<http://www.cal-parks.ca.gov>

The planning team would like to give special thanks to the members of the Castle Rock Advisory Committee, and the many citizens and organizations who help shape this plan through their participation in public meetings and planning workshops.