

# **DEL NORTE COAST REDWOODS STATE PARK MILL CREEK WATERSHED ADDITION GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

## **PUBLIC MEETING NOTES**

**OCTOBER 4, 2007**

The following notes were recorded on easels in each of three breakout groups led by EDAW facilitators Petra Unger, Ron Unger, and Yanna McLaughlin. Participants in each group were asked to provide input on the opportunities, issues and concerns they would like to see addressed during the General Plan Amendment process and associated Environmental Impact Report preparation. Summaries are provided by breakout group. When provided, name and affiliation of the commenters are given. Comments provided in written form will be summarized separately.

### **PETRA'S GROUP**

#### **LOU**

- ▶ Why are trails and roads closed? Is there not enough money to maintain them?

#### **HELEN**

- ▶ Would like to see as many trails open as possible (multi-use).

#### **RON – LAKE EARL GRANGE**

- ▶ Accommodate as many potential user groups as possible;
- ▶ Property should be big enough to accommodate many uses;
- ▶ Would like to see world class lodge as a potential private enterprise;
- ▶ Maintain all roads for multiple users, i.e., ATV;
- ▶ DPR OHV Division should take over a section of the park and implement a multi-user concept;
- ▶ Create lots of loops, designate some for ATVs;
- ▶ Accommodate hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, campers, ADA recreation;

- ▶ ATV/OHV users should pay fees to maintain day use;
- ▶ Provide a place for hunters to stage to get hunting access in NCA/Rattlesnake Ridge.

## **EILEEN – LAKE EARL GRANGE/NORTHWEST TRAIL RIDERS**

- ▶ Agrees with everything Ron mentioned;
- ▶ Would like to see vehicle access to camping areas and areas for horse trails;
- ▶ Expand the existing Mill Creek campground to accommodate horse camping, similar to what is available at Tolowa Dunes;
- ▶ Consider using volunteer and partnership to maintain facilities; host work parties etc.; our group has a good procedure in place for this;
- ▶ Create partnership with the community;
- ▶ Use community service workers for maintenance;
- ▶ Trees need thinning; sell bigger logs for firewood or use on site;
- ▶ All trails need to be kept open;
- ▶ Del Norte County should consider to maintain the main roads on the property.

## **HEATHER – PRIVATE CITIZEN**

- ▶ Ensure everybody (all user groups) keeps to their designated zones;
- ▶ Emphasize habitat protection for salmon and wildlife;
- ▶ Trim trees to maintain viewsheds;
- ▶ Provide picnic tables, restrooms, and benches on ridges;
- ▶ Need trails not just roads for hiking only; others for biking, horses;
- ▶ Outdoor education: Create a center for watershed restoration; create a real school;
- ▶ Provide ADA accessibility off roads. i.e. on trails, etc.;
- ▶ Provide evening access to Child's Hill for astronomy exploration;

- ▶ Create a bike in/hike in campground;

## **LILA – DEL NORTE COUNTY SENIOR CITIZEN**

- ▶ Ron / Helen / Eileen stated my concerns well;
- ▶ Would like to see access for older citizens into the backcountry.

## **MICHAEL: DISABLED VETERAN**

- ▶ Provide trails for wheelchairs;
- ▶ Provide off-road campgrounds that are wheelchair accessible;
- ▶ Provide multi-use roads for ATV and vehicles that provide access for seniors and disabled persons;
- ▶ Implement special use access / times / areas for various users, i.e., astronomy club, horses, etc.
- ▶ Provide an indoor facility for ATV education;
- ▶ Provide a “free style arena”;
- ▶ Provide an indoor shooting range;
- ▶ Allow the unallowable i.e., personal mushroom hunting

## **MARGIE – NW TRAIL RIDERS**

- ▶ Keep the park public friendly - most State Parks are not;
- ▶ Want trails that have been used for the last years to remain open and accessible such as:
  - Cougar Ridge – Upper First Gulch
  - Cougar Ridge – Section 5
  - Picnic Road
  - Springer Gap

## **TOM – CALTROUT**

- ▶ Fisheries restored was stated as the purpose for acquisition;

- ▶ All activities need to be evaluated with regards to potential impacts on fish;
- ▶ Activities also need to be evaluated with regards to water quality and quantity, sediment remediation and control, introduction and future recruitment of large woody debris, and prevention of the introduction of exotic aquatic and terrestrial species introductions;.
- ▶ Provide public education regarding fisheries habitat needs and values;
- ▶ Develop and implement a comprehensive monitoring plan to assess future needs of restoration and protection actions.

## **DAVE – COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

- ▶ Management should be undertaken as co-management or by contract with the Resources Agency;
- ▶ DPR and CDF / Calfire should manage the Mill Creek Unit as a demonstration forest during the transition of the current “tree farm” to the fully implemented plan; implement the following:
  - Take off timber;
  - Do studies on vegetation, wildlife and use funding from resources;
  - Bring money back to the property;
- ▶ Cooperative management could be transitioned out once the transformation of the property is complete, the timeframe for this could be negotiable.

## **ARMAND – ALTERNATIVE INFORMATION OFFICER FOR THE LAKE EARL GRANGE**

- ▶ Ditto to comments made by Ron, Eileen, the horse people, and Tom, especially on issues pertaining to ADA access;
- ▶ Equal access for all, i.e., elderly
- ▶ Set up a group that deals with ADA issues only specific to Mill Creek!
- ▶ Protection of family activities/facilities for camping, hiking, education (environmental/ hunting/ATVs/ horses);
- ▶ Set up a group to deal just with family issues;

- ▶ All groups should report to County BOS on equal basis;
- ▶ Demonstration forest ditto!

## **KARL – BLUE RIBBON COALITION**

- ▶ Support Armand's remarks;
- ▶ There should be a State Parks maintenance center at the mill site;
- ▶ Deed Hamilton Road, Child's Hill Loop, and Rock Creek Loop to Del Norte City to conserve money for maintenance and maintain the site open for public
- ▶ Howland Hills Road is now closed off – this is a bad example; it used to be Country Road.

## **DOUG**

- ▶ Highway 101 may fail soon at Lost Change Grade; provide Caltrans the opportunity to look at an alternative Right of Way, i.e., Wilson Creek Road;
- ▶ Also would like to see access and development;
- ▶ Would like to see maintenance to prevent fire.

## **JEFF**

- ▶ Roads and trails should be open for families with ATVs, for camping, and for other activities not available now because roads/trails are closed.

## **ROBIN**

- ▶ All areas of Mill Creek should be open to the public;
- ▶ Charge daily or yearly fees of all users to fund maintenance effort;
- ▶ Make the site accessible to all user groups;
- ▶ Use inmate labor for maintenance and to create border fencing along roadway and trails;
- ▶ Once fencing is in place, implement fines for breaking the rules, i.e. going off road (like Winchester Bay, Oregon);

- ▶ Research Oregon State Parks (dunes/logging areas) to see how they determine and manage uses while keeping the environment pristine;
- ▶ Construct areas for RV parking, yurts, small cabins, such as Oregon's Umpqua Lighthouse State Park, 150 miles away;
- ▶ Implement ranger patrols;
- ▶ County should provide search and rescue;
- ▶ Salmon streams should be off-limits;
- ▶ Construct State Park entrance booth to collect fees;
- ▶ Keep the site open year around; leave the gates open.

## **DENNIS – BLUE RIBBON COALITION**

- ▶ Concerned to have only 12 days left to comment; NOP should be published day of 1st public meeting
- ▶ Objects to a process where staff can reject comments outside of scope;
- ▶ Offered the following comments:
  - 1) Eco-touring for OHVs, 4x4s, mountain bikes, ATVs, hikers, etc.
    - Need at least 4 day use / picnic areas with bathrooms; these could potentially be located at the September 4 road tour shops; need 2 areas on top and 2 on the bottom;
    - Need at least 4 large staging areas.
  - 2) County needs to take over Rock Creek, Hamilton, and Child's Hill Road; Park needs to keep all connecting loops open;
  - 3) County was promised an eco-lodge;
  - 4) Keep all trails/trail connectors open into Six Rivers National Forest and Jeddiah Smith State Park;
  - 5) Equal weight must be given to riparian, recreational, economic, restoration and cultural concerns.

## **SAM**

- ▶ Parks are user-unfriendly parts of the year;

- ▶ Leave access open, don't put up gates;
- ▶ Leave opportunities for different seasonal experiences, i.e., access to the site in the snow;
- ▶ Closure allows vegetation growth and creates fire hazards; also allows for illegal dumping;
- ▶ Shooting should not be on Mill Creek property at all (Note: others in the group would like to see a shooting range available);
- ▶ Would like to see an observation platform on Child's Hill;
- ▶ Would like to see a year-around park interpretive specialist;
- ▶ Would like to see a link to the Coast to Crest Trail;
- ▶ ATV people don't want to ride around in circles only – provide for a varied experience

## **RON'S GROUP**

### **CHRIS BURG**

- ▶ Enhance creek for salmon habitat.

### **ERIC LUND**

- ▶ Open area to as many user groups as possible – including ORV/OHV use;
  - Open the 4 proposed loops to the public;
  - Open more loops;
  - Have staging areas – for horses and non-street licensed equipment;
- ▶ More camping – primitive, with minimum facilities (i.e., pit toilets);
- ▶ Open the area in stages and/or ASAP.

## **DON GILLESPIE – FRIENDS OF DEL NORTE COUNTY**

- ▶ Support/provide enhancement of fisheries and of Mill Creek for coho salmon;
- ▶ Have loop road for licensed vehicles on site;
  - Incompatible with ORV; concern for degradation (streamside erosion);
- ▶ Provide more camping facilities – primitive type;
- ▶ Provide access for bicycling and equestrian uses;

## **MARTHA MCCLURE – COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

- ▶ Dedicate Child’s Hill and Rock Creek loops to County, because State Park lacks funding to maintain them; the county can maintain them
- ▶ Make dispersed / variety of recreation opportunities available;
- ▶ Have a lodge concession run by a contractor;
- ▶ Provide a realistic trail program:

## **JOHN MERTES**

- ▶ Contributed thousands of dollars to purchase;
- ▶ Keep commitment to major contributors: old growth forest restoration and salmon habitat enhancement.

## **GREG WILLIAMS**

- ▶ Provide trailhead and access for OHV/ORV, equestrian, and multiple uses;
- ▶ Provide emergency shelter(s) (i.e., for storm protection) in conjunction with these uses – it would take the load off sheriffs and other emergency services;
- ▶ Have Park as entrance point for hunting (on adjacent legal hunting areas);
- ▶ Keep dollars in local area;
- ▶ ATV / OHV trail – have unidirectional touring loop to minimize erosion and maximize safety;
- ▶ Want government accountability:



- Minimum number of gates and minimum amount of time closed,
  - Definite written dates when new uses and proposals will start or consequence if not met.
- ▶ Desire archery and shooting range (can be revenue-producing).

## **LEAPHA MORSE**

- ▶ Restore first before considering other uses.

## **LARRY WILLIAMS – BLUE RIBBON COALITION**

- ▶ OHV trail access desired;
- ▶ Turn loop roads over to County for maintenance;
- ▶ Make trails to Six Rivers National Recreation Area;
- ▶ Provide primitive camping opportunities.

## **ED REIDEL – NORTH COAST CLIFFHANGERS**

- ▶ Keep roads open – no gates;
- ▶ Have county take over loops;
- ▶ Provide overnight primitive camping;
- ▶ Provide overland / OHV access;
- ▶ Open access to roads to Six Rivers National Forest;
- ▶ Provide fishing and other recreation (e.g., gold panning / mining).
- ▶ Turn mill site into RV / camping park and also use it as a staging area; already is asphalt.

## **CATHY BURGD**

- ▶ Restore habitat for coho salmon;
- ▶ Marbled murrelet nest protection;
- ▶ Limit access – no ATV's;

- ▶ Clearly mark hiking trails;
- ▶ Provide maps to users;
- ▶ Provide bathrooms.

## **WADE GIST – DEL NORTE COUNTY FISH & GAME ADVISORY COMMISSION**

- ▶ Park has strong potential to be self-supporting;
- ▶ Provide or allow commercial thinning:
  - Roads too overgrown;
  - Risk of fire;
- ▶ Remove rock pits / mountains;
- ▶ Favor access for ATVs and horse access;
- ▶ Provide hunting and fishing access.

## **CHUCK SCHAAD – COOS BAY HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

- ▶ Provide interpretation for Native American uses (shells found), logging history, ships, Del Norte County history;
- ▶ Learn more and draw people in (e.g., with forest knowledge, fire need etc.)

## **HELEN FERGUSEN – LAKE EARL GRANGE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**

- ▶ Object to property being classified as State Park before comment was allowed;
- ▶ How can we expand advisory committee?
- ▶ Advocate turning as many roads over to County as possible;
- ▶ Family and rustic camping desired;
- ▶ Day and overnight use desired;

- ▶ Provide many interpretive-type centers on Del Norte County; e.g. a demonstration sawmill;
- ▶ Maintain healthy forest – manage / thin forest;
- ▶ Want loosest interpretation possible of State Park rules;
- ▶ Explore new avenues/methods directed towards stream restoration, e.g. put logs in stream instead of removing them;
- ▶ Protect all Native American interests;
- ▶ Desire multi-use – have ATV / dirt bikes / OHV scenic / touring routes;
- ▶ Maintain and build new equestrian trails;
- ▶ Allow fishing access;
- ▶ Provide area for ATV and racing competition;
- ▶ Provide area for dirt bikes;
- ▶ Provide for archery and riflery.

## **ERIC CHANDLER**

- ▶ With 25,000 acres, there is enough area for everyone to have a piece of the pie;
- ▶ Everyone won't get exactly get what they want, but all can have a small portion;
- ▶ Want opportunities for OHV / equestrian / shooting range / mountain bike / flower sniffing spot.

## **SCOTT GREACEN – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INFORMATION CENTER PUBLIC LANDS COORDINATOR**

- ▶ OHV use is incompatible with State Park particularly with the purpose for establishment of this State Park. (i.e., forest and watershed restoration);
- ▶ Road removal is good 1<sup>st</sup> step, but need more;
- ▶ Recreation – emphasis should be “quiet recreation”, e.g. equestrian use, wildlife watching, hiking.

# YANNA'S GROUP

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

- ▶ Concern for preservation of wilderness and wild salmon runs;
- ▶ Interest in restoration of old growth forest, wildlife habitat, maintaining the elk herd, manage for long-term goals;
- ▶ Monitoring & law enforcement;
- ▶ Interest in new development for recreation & education, including:
  - facilities such as a lodge/center for community gathering;
  - trails for hiking, bike-riding, dog-walking, quiet recreation opportunities, public access;
  - roads for (eco-)OHV use, ADA access;
- ▶ Create easy research possibilities for forestry/restoration;
- ▶ We need to work together, involve the community, form a volunteer corps to help see this through

## INTERESTS, ISSUES & CONCERNS RAISED DURING THE BREAK-OUT GROUP ORGANIZED BY TOPIC:

### RECREATION

- ▶ Allow public access for all uses;
- ▶ Make it a public forest;
- ▶ Provide public access;

### NON-MOTORIZED RECREATION

- ▶ (Paul) I would like for the Mill Creek Addition to include possibilities for hiking, bird watching, dog-walking, wildlife viewing, mountain biking/bicycle riding. Enjoys listening to animals and the peacefulness of wilderness.
- ▶ (Laura) I'm interested in sustainable forestry and public access.

- ▶ ATV's should not conflict with other uses/ resources;
- ▶ Create trails for mountain bikes and horses;
- ▶ Would like to see horses & camping and nature trails.

## **MOTORIZED RECREATION**

- ▶ Allow ATV use;
- ▶ I would like to see ECO-OHV use allowed;
- ▶ Develop a specific management plan for the roads (with emphasis on reducing the roads).
- ▶ Allow for all different kinds of recreational uses, including ATV use, trails, etc.;
- ▶ ATVs should be allowed because the drivers are environmentally sensitive people;
- ▶ Provide ADA access, including ATV use.

## **FACILITIES**

- ▶ Create a center for Redwood State and National Parks, a central gathering place for the community as there is no such thing at the moment;
- ▶ Create/allow for a destination resort lodge; use local materials (wood) and thus reduce the fire risk when gathering the materials for the lodge;
- ▶ Develop a RV-facility (related to the lodge);
- ▶ Provide facilities for an outdoor school;
- ▶ If there is an opportunity for these, consider using LOCAL contractors and vendors.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

- ▶ I'm scared of hunters and being outside during hunting season. The no hunting rule needs enforcement on these lands.
- ▶ Monitoring and law enforcement are needed with recreational uses on the site.

## CONSERVATION

- ▶ Maintain the elk herd;
- ▶ I am concerned about invasive and non-native plants;
- ▶ Create and maintain an open grassy area for elk – restore (high-elevation) meadows;
- ▶ No roads near water;
- ▶ I am here to support the mission of the State Parks; ATV's are not compatible [with that mission];
- ▶ Remove at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the roads; emphasis should be on quiet recreation;
- ▶ The goal should be for Mill Creek and Rock Creek restoration to restore the fish runs in Smith River (which is not in as good condition as it once was and needs to be restored.)
- ▶ I would like to see the native redwood forest rehabilitated and restored;
- ▶ create old-growth wilderness areas and pristine nature (long-term vision);
- ▶ Marbled murrelet – is endangered and there is habitat adjacent to the old mill site in the old growth; the species is sensitive to disturbance.
- ▶ Conserve the ecosystem;
- ▶ I am concerned about salmon habitat protection and road management as these two are related;
- ▶ Restore old growth forest;
- ▶ Do something to reduce the impacts of the mill site;
- ▶ I am worried about my safety and being run over by OHV's. Another issue is erosion and dust creation through OHV's. Also, their noise scares away wildlife and makes wildlife watching hard;
- ▶ Mill Creek is a pristine Coho spawning area that needs to be maintained and enhanced;
- ▶ ATV use is destructive to the environment. It reduces the reproductive rate in animals (through dust, stress, invasive plants, and reduced wildlife habitat);
- ▶ I don't see the need for a County road in a State Park;

- ▶ I am concerned about the Endangered Species such as the marbled murrelet (i.e. don't allow campgrounds);
- ▶ Maintain this area as wilderness and preserve the salmon habitat.

## **PROCESS**

- ▶ Form a local advisory group;
- ▶ The local environmental community should be part of the local advisory group;
- ▶ Involve the community and develop a volunteer corps;
- ▶ Learn to work together;
- ▶ I am interested in the process, how the plan amendment is developed, and the public involvement.

## **EDUCATION**

- ▶ I would like State Parks to have streamlined research capabilities, so that students are more capable to do research quickly/easily for their universities; make the process easier for Mill Creek;
- ▶ showcase the restoration efforts; have State Parks hold a session/conference in 10 years to show highlights of the forest restoration;
- ▶ Facilitate and allow field trips and nature education.
- ▶ Develop trails and loop trails for education, interpretation purposes, nature hikes.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

- ▶ The southwest corner Highway 101 easement – consider it in the plan and don't forget it!
- ▶ Access on to Hamilton road from 101 is dangerous!