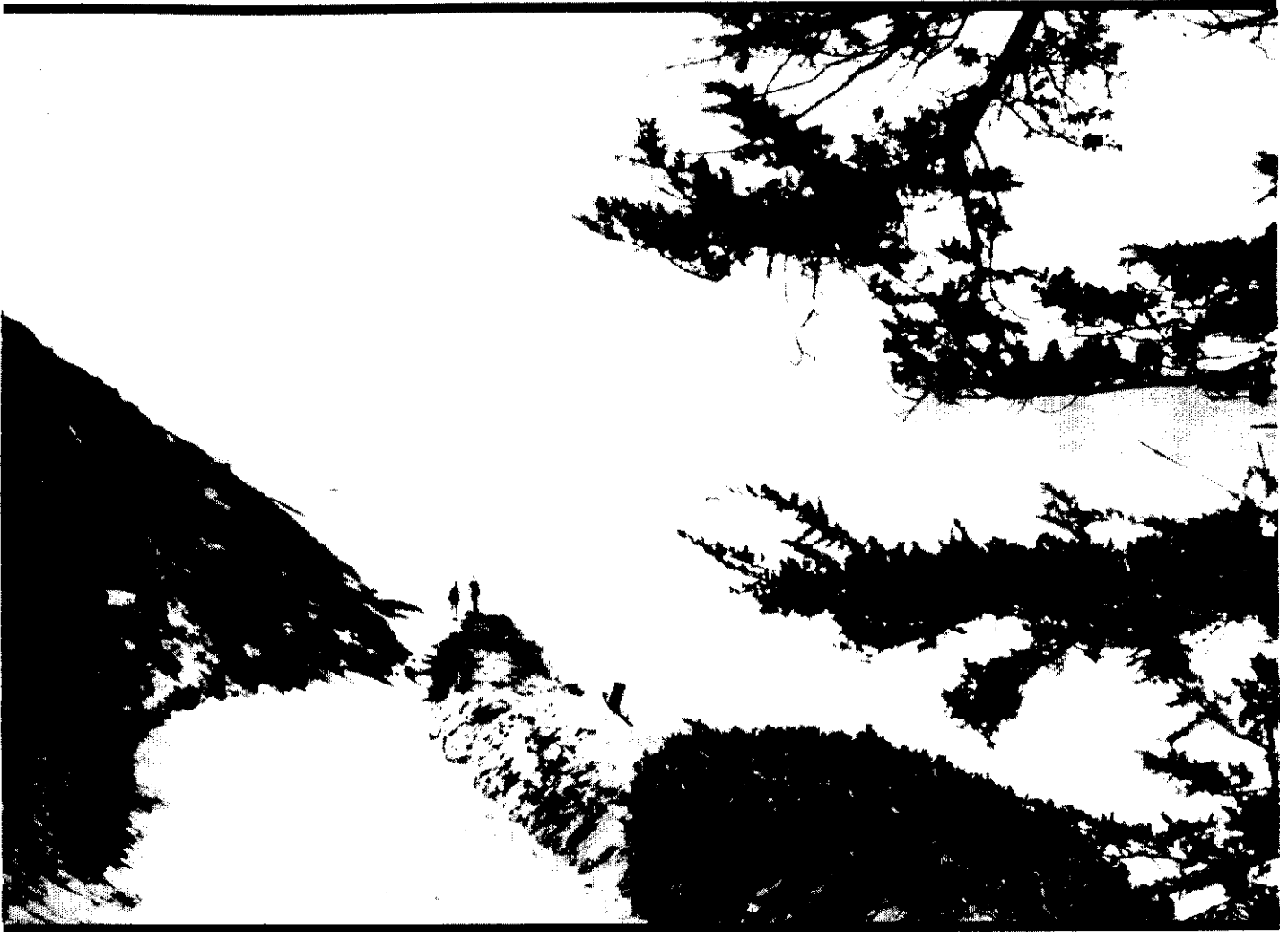


# SUNSET STATE BEACH

## *General Plan*



*State of California — The Resources Agency*  
*DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION*



*George Deukmejian, Governor*

*Gordon Van Vleet, Secretary for Resources*

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With special thanks to:

The many people who helped shape this plan through participation at the public meetings and during field reviews. Special thanks to the park staff and active members of the Monterey Bay Natural-Historical Association for their assistance and daily efforts in the management of the Pajaro Coast State Beaches.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

## STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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



Resolution 28-90  
adopted by the  
CALIFORNIA STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
at its regular meeting in Santa Cruz on  
May 11, 1990

WHEREAS, the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation has presented to this Commission for approval the proposed General Plan for Sunset State Beach; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the California State Park and Recreation Commission hereby approves the Department of Parks and Recreation's Sunset State Beach Preliminary General Plan, dated January 1990, subject to such environmental changes as the Director of Parks and Recreation shall determine advisable and necessary to implement the provisions of said plan.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

## STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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



Resolution 29-90  
adopted by the  
CALIFORNIA STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
at its regular meeting in Santa Cruz on  
May 11, 1990

WHEREAS, the Department has proposed a 40-acre Natural Preserve be established within Sunset State Beach to provide for recognition and protection of the unit's important natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Natural Preserve encompasses a freshwater marsh and adjacent sand dunes, and provides habitat for diverse species of amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, and coastal dune plants;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to Section 5019.50 of the Public Resources Code and after proceeding in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act that the State Park and Recreation Commission hereby classifies 40 acres of freshwater marsh and adjacent sand dunes in Sunset State Beach as a Natural Preserve and names said unit Sunset Wetlands Natural Preserve.

SUNSET STATE BEACH  
GENERAL PLAN

April 1992

Pete Wilson  
Governor of California

Douglas P. Wheeler  
Secretary for Resources

Donald W. Murphy, Director  
Department of Parks and Recreation

State of California - The Resources Agency  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896  
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## SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This summary provides a quick reference to General Plan proposals for Sunset State Beach. The reader should refer to the separate sections of this plan and reference documents for complete details and specific policy statements.

### Resource Management Summary

Actual policy statements may be found in the Resource Element of this document:

1. The department shall work with local residents to minimize the negative effects of adjacent land use on Sunset State Beach. In general, state beach property shall not be utilized to protect structures on private property.
2. A monitoring program shall be established and coordinated with other agencies, to better understand beach erosion and seacliff retreat at this unit.
3. A "zone of exclusion" and "zone of demonstration" is established for cliffs and bluffs, to regulate design and placement of new facilities.
4. Structural protective measures are not consistent with general resource management objectives and shall be undertaken only if non-structural measures are not feasible.
5. The department shall coordinate beach erosion studies with the various agencies and develop non-structural solutions to erosion and beach replenishment at Sunset State Beach.
6. The department shall work with the appropriate state and county agencies to develop an adequate water management plan for Sunset State Beach.
7. The department shall work with adjacent landowners and local government officials to minimize the potential for accidental pesticide applications at Sunset State Beach.
8. The primary vegetation management objective is to develop a natural condition with minimum disruption to natural processes, and also to restore and perpetuate the native plant communities.
9. Human activities within the dunes shall be regulated to prevent destruction of the natural dune environment. Destabilized areas within the dunes shall be revegetated.
10. Riparian areas shall be protected to the maximum extent feasible.
11. Rare and endangered plants found within Sunset State Beach shall be protected and managed for their perpetuation. Systematic surveys shall be made throughout the unit and prior to site-specific development.

12. Landscaping in developed areas should consist of species indigenous to the unit.
13. The freshwater marsh within Sunset State Beach is proposed for designation as a 40-acre natural preserve.
14. Animal species that are endangered, threatened, or of special concern shall be protected and managed for their perpetuation.
15. The department shall continue to survey for the California least tern, and work with other agencies to implement the California least tern recovery plan.
16. The department shall continue to conduct surveys for the tidewater goby, and manage any population for its perpetuation.
17. The department shall continue to survey for Smith's blue butterfly, and work with other agencies to implement the Smith's blue butterfly recovery plan.
18. Monarch butterfly overwintering habitat shall be perpetuated.
19. The department shall work with Santa Cruz County and appropriate agencies to manage, protect, and enhance the Pajaro River mouth.
20. The north picnic ramada built by the Civilian Conservation Corps shall be maintained as a historic and recreational resource.
21. The Van Laanen Farm Complex structures shall be protected and/or eventually restored for interpretive and adaptive reuse. Unsafe structures should be removed.

#### Land Use and Facility Proposals

1. Realign the main entrance road to consolidate use areas and maximize beach parking potential. This redesign will include additional landscaping, a new entrance station, parking, turnaround, and a recreation vehicle sanitation dump station.
2. Develop a new day-use parking lot for up to 125 cars with bluff fencing and picnic sites, located in the area of the existing roadway and parking lot to the west end of Sunset Beach Road.
3. Consolidate the north picnic ramada with a design for new day-use picnic and parking facilities, which will include a new comfort station with compatible architecture.
4. Restore the exterior of the Van Laanen home to 1920s appearance and use for interpretive purposes. The barn and milk shed/creamery will be stabilized and preserved in their present condition. The portion surrounding the farm complex will be managed as scenic open space.

5. Rehabilitate Pine Hollow campground to delineate campsites and parking.
6. Develop two group camps for 25 persons each, north of Dunes Camp. Construct parking and one combination building.
7. Construct a combination restroom/shower and improve parking at the existing group camp.
8. Rehabilitate the campfire center and provide parking and provisions for disabled access.
9. Construct a new boundary fence and revegetate the buffer between campsites and agricultural land.
10. Maintain existing south beach parking and picnic facilities. Rehabilitate or construct a new comfort station.
11. Maintain Shell Road adjacent to the proposed natural preserve for nature trail, bicycle route, and authorized vehicle access. Provide interpretive signing and boardwalks for hiking and nature studies.
12. Expand maintenance and visitor services structures at the existing service yard and provide additional vegetative screening.
13. Remove the existing office building and develop office space in an existing residence near the campground, or in conjunction with new operations facilities.
14. Explore drilling new well to 600+ for clean water supply. Encourage water conservation efforts and recycling of water whenever feasible.
15. Redesign and expand Palm Beach parking lot to provide an additional 20 parking spaces. Maintain existing trails, boardwalks, and picnic and restroom facilities.
16. Continue dune revegetation and stabilization efforts and control of exotic species.
17. Incorporate bilingual wording in directional and interpretive signing.
18. Protect and enhance coastal wetlands and remove the radio transmission building and tower superstructures.
19. Retain existing employee residence near the north entrance. Two residences near the campground will be considered for other uses, such as office space, camp host, camp store, or interpretive purposes.
20. Retain two existing mobile home sites at Palm Beach, with improved fencing and landscaping.



# INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

This General Plan provides guidelines for the long-term management and development of Sunset State Beach. Prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation to satisfy requirements of the Public Resources Code Section 5002.2, its approval by the California State Park and Recreation Commission is required prior to any development that would constitute a permanent commitment of natural or cultural resources.

The plan summarizes the available information about the unit, documenting the planning process and the relevant data used in making land use decisions and specific management and development proposals. As conditions change, the plan may be reviewed and amended as necessary to responsibly guide departmental actions at this unit. This General Plan, however, is not intended to provide detailed plans for site development, resource management, or unit operations. Facility capacities indicated by this plan are approximate only, indicating maximum capacity, and may be less when specific site plans are prepared for funding and implementation. Details of resource management are left for inclusion in specific resource management programs to be prepared at a later date.

### General Plan Outline

This plan is made up of the following elements which reflect the Department's responsibility to fulfill certain goals:

The RESOURCE ELEMENT evaluates the natural and cultural resources of the unit, and sets management policies for protection, restoration, and use of these resources.

The LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT describes current and proposed land uses consistent with the resources, and outlines the proposed facility development to enhance public recreational needs.

The INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT proposes programs and facilities for public information and interpretation of the unit's natural and cultural values.

The CONCESSIONS ELEMENT summarizes opportunities to provide appropriate goods or services to the public through concessions in existing or proposed facilities.

The OPERATIONS ELEMENT describes specific operational and maintenance requirements and guidelines for continued unit operations.

The ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ELEMENT assesses the environmental effects, and proposes mitigation measures and alternatives. The General Plan as a whole serves as the Environmental Impact Report required by the California Environmental Quality Act.

Further environmental assessment will be performed whenever specific construction or management programs are proposed. If significant environmental impacts differ from those specified in this General Plan, further environmental documents will be filed.

### Planning Process

The process used in developing this General Plan included a comprehensive resource inventory and evaluation of the opportunities and physical constraints of this unit. This resource information was used in determining management policies needed to protect, enhance, and preserve sensitive and important natural and cultural resources.

Existing land uses and facilities also were evaluated to determine their effectiveness in serving the recreational and operational needs of this unit. Current recreational patterns of the many varied segments of the state's population were also examined in order to identify specific needs to be met by this state beach. In addition, the County of Santa Cruz's various coastal land use, recreation, and transportation plans were reviewed to identify relevant goals, policies, and land use designations applicable to the South County Area, specifically at Sunset State Beach.

This information, coupled with the public comments and other governmental agency concerns, provided the foundation for the various development and management proposals contained in this document.

### Public Involvement

The public played an active role in creating this plan. From the outset, the planning team attempted to identify all parties interested in, or affected by the plan, and to encourage their participation in the decision-making process. A mailing list of over 400 persons was compiled, including residences from adjacent private beach developments, and interested persons and organizations from surrounding communities, such as Santa Cruz, Watsonville, San Jose, and Monterey.

Our planning effort began in 1984 with a resource study and preparation of draft management policies for five state beaches, located on the Pajaro Coast in Santa Cruz County. Public meetings were held during October 1987 in Santa Cruz, Aptos, and Watsonville, to identify major issues and concerns for the future of these beaches, including Sunset State Beach. Between October 1987 and October 1988, two general plans were completed for Natural Bridges and Twin Lakes State Beaches and adopted by the State Park and Recreation Commission.

Since that time, the department's planning team and technical staff have met with local planners, homeowners, park visitors, and others to better understand existing conditions and future needs for Sunset, New Brighton, and Seacliff State Beaches. On October 12, 1989, another public meeting was held in Santa Cruz. At this meeting, specific proposals for these three state beaches were presented to the public for their review and comments. Participation at these public meetings was enthusiastic and helpful.



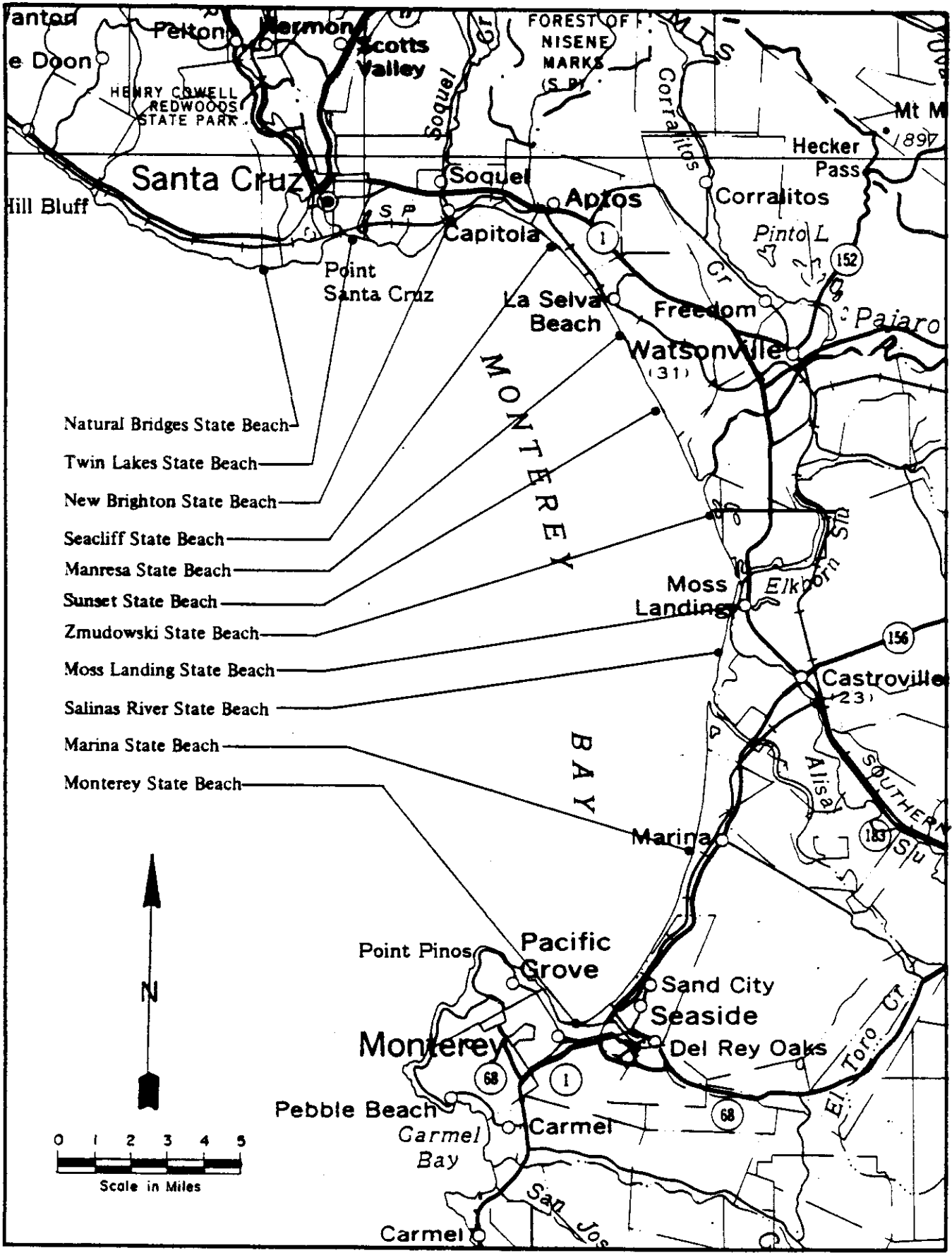
## Conformance with Local Plans

The department shares the responsibility with the County of Santa Cruz and other governmental agencies to protect the natural and cultural resources at Sunset State Beach, while providing for the recreational needs of the citizens of California.

Sunset State Beach is located within the coastal zone in the South County Area, an unincorporated portion of Santa Cruz County. In response to the provisions of the Coastal Act of 1976, the county developed a Local Coastal Program (LCP) that includes policies and programs for coastal protection. The LCP was certified by the California Coastal Commission on February 3, 1982 and is binding not only on local public and private development, but also on special districts and state agencies.

The county LCP and General Plan identify Sunset State Beach as park and recreation and urban open space land use designations. General and specific policies and programs are included in these county plans for resource protection, management, development, and uses at this state beach and its surrounding lands.

The Sunset State Beach General Plan was prepared in consultation with the county planning and public works departments, and the proposals contained herein are intended to assure conformance with all applicable plans. Specific LCP policies relevant to Sunset State Beach are included in the appendix of this document.



- Natural Bridges State Beach
- Twin Lakes State Beach
- New Brighton State Beach
- Seacliff State Beach
- Manresa State Beach
- Sunset State Beach
- Zmudowski State Beach
- Moss Landing State Beach
- Salinas River State Beach
- Marina State Beach
- Monterey State Beach

VICINITY MAP

# RESOURCE ELEMENT

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Rare and Endangered Plants  
Landscaping  
Freshwater Marsh  
Coastal Wetlands  
Wildlife Management  
Wildlife Requiring Special Management Consideration  
CCC Picnic Ramada  
Van Laanen Farm Complex  
Camp Goodall and Port Rogers/Port Watsonville

Allowable Use Intensity \_\_\_\_\_

40

## RESOURCE ELEMENT

### Purpose

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. These objectives and limitations are based on information in the Resource Inventory on file with the Resource Protection Division.

Discussions about lands not now 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 planning purposes and do not represent an intention or commitment for acquisition.

### Unit Description

Sunset State Beach (305.93 acres) is at the south end of Santa Cruz County. La Selva Beach is four miles north; Watsonville is five miles east. The nearest State Park System unit is Manresa State Beach, one mile northwest; Zmudowski State Beach is adjacent to the unit to the south, across the mouth of the Pajaro River.

Sunset State Beach is within three miles of State Highway 1. The main unit entrance is at the west end of Sunset Beach Road. The entrance to the Palm Beach day-use area is at the west end of Beach Road.

### Resource Summary

#### Natural Resources

##### Topography

In aspect, Sunset State Beach faces generally southwest. The primary topographic features of this unit are the extensive sand dunes which range in elevation from 200 feet in the northern part of the unit to 40 feet in the vicinity of Palm Beach. The dunes in the northern part of the unit rise abruptly from the beach, and seaward faces have been steepened by ocean wave erosion. A major blowout has occurred west of the northern camping area, site of a recent vegetation project. Wind erosion now causes sand deposition east of the beach and subsequent changes in dune configuration. The creation of paved parking areas in Sunset State Beach has also altered the natural topography. A freshwater lagoon exists in the central portion of the unit, and Watsonville Slough bisects state beach land contiguous to Palm Beach. The Pajaro River forms the southern boundary of Sunset State Beach. The ocean frontage is about 18,000 linear feet.

## Meteorology

Northern California experiences a Mediterranean climate with cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers. The waters of the Pacific Ocean have a profound moderating effect on temperatures along the coast, producing a maritime temperature regime with mild temperatures year-round. Mean daily maximum temperatures for the months of May through November at Sunset State Beach are in the low to mid 60s and mean daily minimums are in the high 40s. For December through April, mean daily maximums are in the high 50s and mean daily minimums are in the middle 40s. Mean annual precipitation is estimated at 18 inches. Most of this precipitation (83 percent) occurs during the months of November through March.

Windy conditions are the norm around Monterey Bay; the weather station in the City of Monterey reports wind speeds of four to 15 miles per hour about 75 percent of the time, and strong winds, 16 to 31 miles per hour, are recorded five percent of the time. Calm, meaning winds of less than four miles per hour, is recorded about 20 percent of the time.

Fog, or fog-generated low clouds, occurs during all seasons, but is most common on summer mornings and evenings. The Monterey Bay area has fog 12 percent of the time during July through September. As a consequence of the foggy summers and frequent winter storms, this area only receives about 3,000 hours of sunshine, or about 70 percent.

Microclimatic zones, areas which depart from the general climatic factors (e.g., insolation, temperature, or soil moisture), are generated at Sunset State Beach by the ocean, the prevailing breeze, the coastal fog, the sandy beach, the steep cliffs facing the beach, and the forest canopy.

Water reflects only half as much solar radiation as land; hence, the ocean stores more energy during the day and releases more energy at night. However, because of its lower specific heat, the land warms up and cools down two to three times as fast as the ocean. These energy storage and temperature differences, together with the prevailing onshore breeze, moderate high and low temperatures near the coast. When the coastal fog moves inland, it enhances this moderating effect. At first, it produces a sudden chill; thereafter, it acts as a thermal blanket, keeping air and soil temperatures almost constant.

White beach sand, and surf, reflect about half the solar radiation. This extra half-dose of sunshine accounts for the unexpected sunburns of many inexperienced beach users.

The steep cliffs shade the beach from the early morning sun; in the afternoon, heat shielding by the cliffs causes the beach to warm up rapidly, and at night, this reflected energy creates a thermal belt along the toe of the cliffs.

The forest canopy in the camp area produces cooler, moister conditions.

The sand dunes at Sunset, like most young dunes, comprise a unique habitat. The high reflectivity of dune sand and its low water-holding capacity produce a cool, arid habitat.

## Hydrology

Sunset State Beach is situated within the Watsonville Hydrologic Area in the Central Coastal Hydrologic Basin. The mouth of the Pajaro River forms the southern boundary of the unit. Land use in the vicinity of the Pajaro River includes residential, agricultural, livestock, and industrial. Flow in the Pajaro River is regulated by five reservoirs. Watsonville Slough, a principal tributary of the Pajaro River, flows through Sunset State Beach adjacent to Palm Beach. A ten-acre coastal wetland borders the slough in this area. A seasonal freshwater marsh also occurs to the south of the main Sunset Beach day-use parking area. The soil in the vicinity of this wetland area is underlain by a high water table.

Floodways and floodplains are found peripheral to the Pajaro River and Watsonville Slough. Flooding can also result from tidal inundation and tsunamis.

Ground and surface water quality for Sunset State Beach is poor. Surface water has shown to be contaminated by coliform bacteria, heavy metals, and pesticides. Groundwater pumpage in the vicinity of Sunset State Beach exceeds yield and, as a consequence, seawater has intruded into the aquifer. Groundwater sources for the unit have a high nitrate level contamination. The presumed source of contamination is agricultural runoff.

## Geology

Sunset State Beach is within the Salinian block of the southern Coast Ranges geomorphic province. The Salinian block is a wedge of continental material bounded on the northeast by the San Andreas fault zone (about eight miles northeast of Sunset State Beach) and on the southwest by the Sur-Nacimiento fault zone. The continental basement rocks of the Salinian block are probably granitic and metamorphic in nature, and owe their origin to a distant time and place, having ridden along the tectonic boundary between the Pacific and North American plates which juxtaposes very different basement rocks. However, no bedrock is exposed at Sunset State Beach. Rather, a significant complex of terrace, beach, and dune deposits are revealed.

The northern uplands at Sunset State Beach are made up of dune sand deposited on top of unconsolidated terrace lands. The older dunes (now largely obscured due to surface disturbance, development, agricultural activity, and vegetation) are in turn overlain by remnants of Flandrian dunes (dunes which formed during and following the Wisconsin glaciation, when sea level was lowered, and extensive sand deposits bordered the bay). As sea level rose following the Wisconsin glacial period, the sand deposits and structures were destroyed as they were eroded by the advancing sea. However, active dunes continued to migrate inland ahead of the rising sea, and today remnants of these dunes mantle the cliffs at Sunset State Beach, north of the Watsonville Slough. These Flandrian dunes are in a single series, apparently the arc-shaped centers of parabolic dunes whose tail ends have been eroded by the sea. The intervening truncated ridges appear in the bluffs as triangular facets. An active tongue transects the belt, with a slipface 70 feet high, probably activated by toe erosion from waves.

A residential community exists as an inholding within the Flandrian dune deposits, with over 30 single-family dwellings. Thirteen houses are located close to the cliff edge, and slope failures have been produced by toe erosion from the ocean waves and the subsequent readjustment of the unconsolidated deposits.

A wedge of low modern dunes begins at the day-use parking area, south of the campground, and extends to the mouth of the Pajaro River, encompassing the Pajaro Dunes and Shorebirds developments. The dune sands are unconsolidated, well-sorted, fine- to medium-grained deposits. This very young dune field consists of a series of closely spaced, commonly overlapping parabolic dunes generally less than 20 feet high. The dunes are subject to accelerated erosion when the natural vegetation is disturbed or removed. The configuration of these modern dune sands has been drastically altered as a result of the private developments. The modern dune sands are generally confined between the Watsonville Slough and the encroaching sea, and are narrowing as the migrating shore yields to the ocean wave erosion. Efforts to protect the housing developments from ocean wave erosion have resulted in placement of rock revetments and rubble along the property line, and in some cases, encroachment upon the public beach.

Sandy beaches extend from the northern boundary of Sunset State Beach to the mouth of the Pajaro River. The beach sands have varied considerably in width over the years as the sea level rises and the adjacent sand cliffs erode. The beach sands are unconsolidated and well-sorted by the winnowing action of the surf. Thin, discontinuous lenses of fine-grained dark sands are relatively common in the back beach area. The beach sands vary in thickness, but are generally less than 15 feet thick.

## Soils

Sunset State Beach has a diversity of soil phases and land types: coastal beaches, dune land, Baywood loamy sand, Clear Lake clay, and Elder sandy loam.

The coastal beach land type occurs on narrow sandy beaches and adjacent sand dunes and consist of sand, gravel, cobbles, or boulders, or a mixture of these. Coastal beaches are exposed during low tides and inundated at high tide. Drainage is very poor to excessive; erodibility is high.

Dune land is a miscellaneous category consisting of sloping to very steep terrain derived from wind-deposited sand. Drainage and permeability are very rapid. The wind erosion hazard is high, especially in areas where native vegetation has been removed. Dune land is the most extensive soil type within Sunset State Beach.

Baywood loamy sand, 2-50 percent slope, is an excessively-drained soil that has formed in stabilized sand dunes. The surface layer is typically dark grayish brown and brown, slightly to medium acid, and 21 inches thick. The subsurface layer, about 6 inches thick, is pale brown and slightly acid. Permeability is rapid. Shrink-swell potential is low. Erodiability is low. Baywood loamy sand occurs inland from the dune land at Sunset State Beach.



Clear Lake clay has formed on level alluvial floodplains and in basins derived from sedimentary rocks. Clear Lake soils are poorly drained, with low permeability and a very shallow water table. There is no erosion potential. The surface layer is 18 inches thick and very dark gray, as is the subsurface layer. This soil has a high shrink-swell potential. Clear Lake clay underlies the seasonal pond and marsh ecosystem adjacent to Watsonville Slough.

Elder sandy loam derives from alluvium and is found on gentle slopes (0-9 percent) in Sunset State Beach. The surface layer is approximately 31 inches thick, grayish brown and dark grayish brown, medium acid to acid sandy loam. Grayish brown, slightly acid sandy loam and loamy sand form subsurface layers. Hazard of erosion is slight to moderate. Elder sandy loam is characterized by moderate permeability and slow to moderate runoff. Shrink-swell potential is low. This soil occurs in the northeastern corner of the unit adjacent to Sunset Beach Road.

### Plant Life

Sunset State Beach has four major vegetation types which have been divided and mapped as eight plant communities. The vegetation types and the percent coverage within the unit are listed below:

Coastal Woodland/Forest	20%
Coastal Scrub	56%
Coastal Strand	9%
Riparian	15%

The most diversity is found within the coastal scrub, which is composed of three communities.

The coastal woodland/forest vegetation type is dominated by three tree species: eucalyptus (Eucalyptus globulus), Monterey pine (Pinus radiata), and Monterey cypress (Cupressus macrocarpa). Eucalyptus is located near the northern entrance and at Palm Beach. The dense canopy cover and the asphalt and concrete paving preclude development of any significant understory. The pine and cypress occur in the campgrounds. Their understory includes the following shrubs: coyote brush (Baccharis pilularis), seaside woolly sunflower (Eriophyllum staechadifolium), sea fig (Carpobrotus aequilaterus), and Hottentot fig (Carpobrotus edulis).

Coastal scrub occurs on the stabilized sand dunes between the ocean beach and the upland coastal terrace. The vegetation forms a dense shrub cover. Dominant species include mock heather (Haplopappus ericoides), bush lupine (Lupinus arboreus), beach sagewort (Artemisia pycnocephala), and seaside woolly sunflower.

The coastal strand vegetation type occurs adjacent to the ocean beach; it is dominated by the non-native European dune grass (Ammophila arenaria) in the vicinity of the day-use parking area. Native species which characterize this vegetation type include beach bur (Ambrosia chamissonis) and sand verbena (Abronia umbellata).

The riparian vegetation type is represented by salt marsh and riparian communities at Sunset State Beach. The salt marsh community is located near Palm Beach, and is dominated by coast gumplant (Grindelia latifolia), pickleweed (Salicornia virginica), and coastal salt grass (Distichlis spicata). The riparian community occurs south of the campground in a wet, freshwater area. Dominant species include willow (Salix sp.), California bulrush (Scripus californicus), and broad leaf cattail (Typha latifolia).

The introduction of exotic species to Sunset State Beach has played a major role in altering the native vegetation. Of the eight plant communities described, four are dominated by exotic species. The planting of three tree species -- blue gum, Monterey pine, and Monterey cypress -- has altered the habitat found on the coastal terrace. Other influences on the natural vegetation include inholding and adjacent land development and heavy recreational use which has resulted in a large sand blowout on the coastal terrace in an area that has been partially revegetated.

One rare plant occurs within Sunset State Beach. Grindelia latifolia ssp. latifolia (coastal gumplant), listed by the California Native Plant Society as a rare plant, is locally abundant in the salt marsh community at the south end of the unit. The coastal salt marsh, coastal freshwater marsh, and coastal dune scrub are considered sensitive plant communities by the Natural Diversity Data Base.

Sunset State Beach supports a large number of exotic species, many of which have displaced native species. The unit plant list shows 38 percent exotic species. Two species are significant threats to native plant communities. European dune grass has displaced native species in the coastal strand vegetation type. Hottentot fig, also known as ice plant, has displaced native species throughout the unit. There is an ongoing program of ice plant removal underway at the unit.

#### Animal Life

The diversity and complexity of biotic communities at Sunset State Beach supports a variety of animal life. Principal biotic communities at this unit are coastal strand, coastal scrub, salt marsh, freshwater marsh, eucalyptus forest, and Monterey pine woodland.

Coastal strand encompasses the beach and littoral zone. Shorebirds and gulls commonly forage in the intertidal zone and can be observed on the beach in areas of wave action. Heermann's and California gulls, willets, sandpipers, and marbled godwits are representative of the coastal strand biotic community. Harbor seals may use the beach as a "haul-out" area (place of rest). The mouth of the Pajaro River forms a large sandy delta that provides a roosting area for many shorebirds and pelagic species. Some birds that occur in this area include the California brown pelican, an endangered species, and Caspian, elegant, and royal terns. The low dunes adjacent to the beach within Sunset State Beach are dominated by European beach grass. This grass provides food and habitat for small mammals and birds. Mammals occurring in this biotic community include deer mice and brush rabbits. Birds occurring in this biotic community are represented by the white-crowned sparrow and song sparrow. Shorebirds may occasionally nest in the grass. Reptiles include the black legless lizard, the northern alligator lizard, and the coast garter snake.

Vegetation in the reardune area of the dune system is composed of medium to tall shrubby species which form a dense, closed canopy community. The diversity of vegetation provides abundant food and cover, and nesting sites for many animals. Mammals are represented by the mule deer, raccoon, and deer mouse. Birds that utilize coastal scrub include Brewer's blackbird, song sparrow, and wren. Amphibians and reptiles are represented by the Pacific tree frog, northwestern fence lizard, and northern alligator lizard.

Coastal scrub community is represented by a dense monotypic stand of coyote brush with open mosaics of sea fig and Hottentot fig. It is adjacent to a Monterey pine woodland. The woody shrubs, with an herbaceous understory, provide habitat for many mammals and birds. Mammals in this community are represented by the dusky-footed wood rat, California vole, and brush rabbit. Birds include the rufous-sided towhee, song sparrow, and Anna's hummingbird. The southern alligator lizard, western fence lizard, and Pacific gopher snake are reptiles representative of this biotic community. Relatively moist microhabitats can provide sites for amphibians such as the Pacific tree frog.

Watsonville Slough is located at the southern end of the unit adjacent to Palm Beach. A coastal salt marsh borders this slough and shows zonation from low to high ground. Species which occur in this biotic community include the cinnamon teal, savannah sparrow, meadow mouse, and raccoon.

A freshwater marsh is located at the south end of the unit inland from the low coastal dunes. The northern portion of the freshwater marsh is dominated by arroyo willow thickets. There is an open pond in the southern end of the marsh. The overall dense growth pattern and varying heights of vegetation form a complex biotic community. The pond contains numerous forms of algae, plankton, snails, worms, and aquatic insects. The dense emergent vegetation provides habitat for many birds. Birds such as cinnamon teal and mallard often forage in the pond and nest in the cattails and bulrushes. Other birds include American bittern, red-wing blackbird, long-billed marsh wren, and savannah sparrow. California voles, western harvest mice, and striped skunks occur in the drier parts of the marsh. Amphibians and reptiles include the Pacific tree frog and coastal garter snake.

Eucalyptus trees occur in a large grove at Palm Beach. At the north end of the unit, eucalyptus and Monterey cypress form a dense stand. The dense canopies and heavy litter layer of these tree species preclude understory development. Although wildlife is not abundant in this community due to the low diversity of vegetation, monarch butterfly clusters are reported on eucalyptus and Monterey cypress in this area.

Monterey pine was planted in the campground area to provide shelter. Monterey cypress and Bishop pine also occur in the overstory. The understory consists of several species of shrubs. The diverse species and canopy heights provide foraging, resting, and nesting sites for various birds and mammals. Birds include the chestnut-backed chickadee and Steller's jay. Mammals are represented by the California pocket mouse and pinyon mouse. The monarch butterfly is also reported on pines of the unit.

Sunset State Beach contains potential habitat for the federally-listed, endangered, Smith's blue butterfly and the state and federally-listed, endangered, California least tern. Among species of special concern, Sunset State Beach is known to provide habitat for the northern harrier, snowy plover, California black legless lizard, and monarch butterfly.

Aquatic habitats within Sunset State Beach, primarily at the Pajaro River mouth and near Watsonville Slough, provide habitat for at least sixteen fish species. Most of these species are euryhaline and usually are found where fresh and salt waters are mixing. A unique species collected only from Sunset and Zmudowski State Beaches is the arrow goby. These fish are usually associated with protected embayments and were not reported as having been collected from the mouth of the Pajaro before. The tidewater goby, a federal candidate species, has occurred historically at the mouth of the Pajaro River. Habitat for this species may still exist within the unit. Only two species collected or reported as collected from here were essentially freshwater species: the introduced brown bullhead and the native prickly sculpin. Both species can tolerate moderate salinities. Other common species that can be found here include threadfin shad, Pacific herring, steelhead, mosquitofish, topsmelt, threespine stickleback, striped bass, shiner perch, tidewater goby, longjaw mudsucker, yellowfin goby, staghorn sculpin, and starry flounder. The mud crab and the opossum shrimp were also collected here.

The Pajaro River mouth lagoon is an important natural area. It is an important habitat for invertebrates and fish, and provides breeding and foraging habitat for snowy plovers, American avocets, black-necked stilts, brown pelicans, and a wide variety of other bird species. The level of the lagoon determines the level of Watsonville Slough, which is partially within Sunset State Beach and adjacent to Palm Beach. To lower the lagoon level, the Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works occasionally breaches the sand bar separating the lagoon from the Pacific Ocean. This is done to prevent flooding of roads and agricultural fields, and to reduce mosquito breeding. Because of recent discoveries by biologists that the management of river mouth lagoons can have significant effects on fish and invertebrate populations, Santa Cruz County has formed the Pajaro River Task Force to develop an enhancement plan for the lagoon. The task force has agreed to interim criteria for breaching the lagoon until the enhancement plan can be completed.

### Marine Life

Located within Monterey Bay, the marine environment off Sunset State Beach is within the Central California Seascape Province, a region of characteristic geological and biological features extending south from San Francisco Bay to Point Conception.

The marine ecosystem consists of two principal environments, benthic and pelagic. The pelagic zone is the open water from the surface to the sea floor. The benthic zone is the ocean floor and is defined on the basis of depth, substrate, and tidal influences. There are two significant benthic zones at Sunset State Beach, intertidal and subtidal.

The intertidal benthic zone is the sandy beach area between high and low tides. This zone is limited in biological productivity due to the daily exposure to the atmosphere and the constantly shifting sand. Nevertheless, some species, primarily burrowing animals, occur here. The most common burrowing animals are blood worms and the mole crab. Scavengers, primarily beach hoppers, are also present. When the tide is in, several fish utilize this habitat including surf perch, diamond turbot, and round stingray. When the tide is out, the major vertebrates are foraging shorebirds such as willets and sanderlings.

The subtidal benthic zone extends from the lowest tide line to a depth of 30 feet and is primarily composed of unconsolidated sand. The dominant species which dwell within the substrate are polychaete tube worms. Species which dwell on the substrate include dungeness crab and short-spined sea star. Fish that commonly occur in this zone are sanddabs, California halibut, and starry flounder.

The pelagic environment provides habitat for floating and swimming organisms. Floating organisms include the phytoplankton, zooplankton, crustaceans, jellyfish, and copepods. Fish in this zone include surf perch, rockfish, and night smelt. Marine mammals occurring occasionally in this zone include harbor seals and California sea lions. A number of inshore seabirds such as western grebe, surf scoter, Caspian tern, and gulls also utilize this zone.

The State-listed, threatened, Guadalupe fur seal may occasionally forage near Sunset State Beach (a small male was found beached in Monterey Bay in 1977). The federally-listed, threatened, southern sea otter occurs in Monterey Bay and may occasionally be seen from the unit as it migrates between kelp beds, its preferred habitat. Many of the fish and birds which inhabit the marine environment off Sunset State Beach are of ecological, recreational, and commercial importance.

## Ecology

Many small ecosystems occur in the coastal environments of Monterey Bay. These small systems are interrelated by physical and biological components.

Streams, bluffs, and cliffs contribute sediments to marine ecosystems, which are then redistributed by littoral and ocean currents. As a result of the current pattern in Monterey Bay, the benthic marine environment at Sunset is sandy. Nutrients associated with these sediments are important to marine life in the nearshore zone. Upwelling of cold bottom waters, however, provides the greatest source of nutrients. These nutrients enhance the biological productivity in nearshore marine ecosystems. Because of the upwelling, Monterey Bay is one of the richest marine basins in California.

Estuarine ecosystems develop in partially enclosed water bodies where marine and fresh waters mix, such as lagoons, sloughs, river mouths, and protected bays. Estuaries can be considered a complex "edge effect" between terrestrial and aquatic systems and fresh and salt water environments, and are very

productive biologically. Abiotic factors affecting the estuary are numerous and include topography, type of substrate, fresh water inflow, tidal prism, and the resulting salinity and temperature regimes. Gradients often develop that greatly influence the distribution of organisms in the estuary; the gradients develop as a result of localized factors influenced by elevation, salinity, and tidal exposure.

With extensive agricultural and residential development in areas surrounding Sunset State Beach, the natural ecosystems in the unit become more important as vestiges of the natural condition, and as significant habitat for specific plants and animals. Sunset State Beach has been identified as an important natural area by the California Natural Areas Coordination Council (CNACC). The unit has an excellent representation of the beach and dune environment, progressing from "...fixed dunes through mobile dunes, beach berm, intertidal, and subtidal areas". The CNACC also lists the Pajaro River mouth as a significant natural area, primarily for its roosting value to various seabirds.

### Cultural Resources

#### Archeology

No prehistoric or historic archeological sites were located at Sunset State Beach during a complete field survey and literature search. No visible surface remains are present at the historic sites of Camp Goodall and Port Rogers/Port Watsonville, though buried archeological deposits and features may be present. Old pier pilings are reportedly visible at low tide offshore at the Port Rogers site.

#### Ethnography

The Indians who lived along the coast from San Francisco Bay to Monterey Bay are generally referred to as Costanoan, though the name Ohlone has had more common usage in recent years among native descendents. The names are an abstraction for a linguistic family of eight distinct languages. Three different languages were spoken on Monterey Bay: Awaswas from Aptos upcoast to Davenport, Mutsun in the Pajaro and lower Salinas River valleys, and Rumsen from Marina south to Point Sur.

Marine resources provided items for trade to inland neighbors, primarily mussels, abalone shells, salt, and dried abalone. Pinon pine nuts and obsidian were obtained as imports. Beached whales, sea otters, and sea lions were roasted and eaten. Mussels and abalone were gathered, though this resource was probably never abundant along the sandy bay from Aptos to Monterey.

The seven missions in Ohlone territory had cataclysmic and devastating effects on the native population and traditional culture. The Indians living around Monterey Bay were drawn into missions at Santa Cruz, San Juan Bautista, and San Carlos. No ethnographic sites or place names are known for lands within Sunset State Beach.

## History

Gaspar de Portola's 1769 expedition, and the Rivera-Palou and Hezeta and Palou expeditions of 1774 and 1775, initiated Spanish occupation and missionization of the Monterey Bay area. Simultaneously with orders for mission secularization in 1834 came requests for Mexican land grants. Within a few years, the present-day beach units in Santa Cruz County were almost entirely taken up in a series of these grants.

Ranchos San Andreas and Bolsa del Pajaro, granted to Joaquin Castro and Sebastian Rodriguez in 1833 and 1837, respectively, originally encompassed present-day Sunset State Beach. San Andreas incorporated the northern section and Bolsa del Pajaro the southern section of the present-day beach unit.

In 1852, John H. Watson and D. S. Gregory, filing an adverse claim to an undivided one-half interest in the 5,500-acre Rancho Bolsa del Pajaro, laid out a townsite which was to become the future "Apple Center of the World" -- Watsonville. In 1860, Watson's claim was overruled and Pajaro confirmed to its original grantee, Sebastian Rodriguez. Nevertheless, Watsonville was well underway.

Although the California Land Commission confirmed the 8,911-acre San Andreas grant in 1851 to the executors for Joaquin Castro's estate, Guadalupe and Juan Jose Castro, the patent was not issued until 1876. By that time, American settlers, interested in farming the land and exploiting its natural resources, had claimed sections of the grant. In 1877, the U.S. District Court awarded 1,598 acres, including the northern section of present-day Sunset State Beach, to Titus Hale and 104 other individuals. Hale's 98.8-acre parcel, which was sold the following year for \$2,750 in gold coin, underwent a series of 19th-century transactions. It was eventually purchased by Leslie A. Kester of Kings County on February 12, 1919 for \$10.00 (subject to a \$27,000 mortgage payable to former owner Christine Sandholt). Nineteen years later -- February 1938 -- Kester sold his farm complex to William and Agnes Van Laanen, and her parents, the Kelleys. The house, which dated from the turn of the century, had been empty for two years and the barn badly needed repair.

In 1983, Agnes Van Laanen sold an eight-acre parcel, containing her residence and six farm buildings, to the State of California as an addition to Sunset State Beach. She has continued to reside on the property as a tenant. Mrs. Van Laanen, 92 years old, recently discussed her memories of the buildings and life on the Van Laanen farm over the last 50 years.

The Van Laanens operated the farm as a dairy, owned approximately 30 head of cattle, and raised and sold calves. In addition, Mrs. Van Laanen's mother raised chickens and sold eggs. Her father maintained a large vegetable garden.

Although Mrs. Van Laanen is uncertain of the actual age of the house and barn, she was told that the house is older than the barn. This information is corroborated by a 1948 appraisal report of the property which dates the redwood house -- a utilitarian single wall redwood frame structure -- from approximately 1898, and the redwood barn from approximately 1908. The Van Laanens constructed a milk house, pump house, and second barn which was utilized for auto storage.

Mrs. Van Laanen recalls Civilian Conservation Corps building activity at Sunset Beach and troop maneuvers during World War II. During that period, the Army brought troops in on the Van Laanen's road from nearby Camp McQuaide to practice maneuvers on the Van Laanen property -- a practice which required the family to remove their cows from the pastures from time to time. In 1952, the Van Laanens separated and Mrs. Van Laanen began truck farming.

Sunset State Beach is also the site of several important 19th and early 20th-century shipping points and beach resorts. Early day Pajaro Landing, located near the mouth of the Pajaro River, underwent several major transformations. The 19th-century shipping firm -- Goodall, Perkins and Company -- acquired the landing in 1868 and built a new wharf and warehouse. Goodall's enterprise served as a major shipping point for Pajaro Valley produce until the Southern Pacific line began to take over freight movement in the 1880s. Charles Ford leased the property in 1881 and created a popular new seaside resort -- Camp Goodall -- which enjoyed popularity into the 20th century. In 1919, William Locke-Paddon purchased the resort, changing its name to "Palm Beach".

Half a mile above Camp Goodall, another port sprang into existence briefly at the turn of the century. In 1903, W. J. Rogers of Russell and Rogers, San Francisco lumber dealers and ship owners, inaugurated Port Rogers to provide steamship service between San Francisco and Watsonville. Renamed Port Watsonville in 1904, and hailed as one of the most important seaports on the Pacific Coast, the port, in fact, did not prosper. Attempts to create a tent city resort called Calpaco also floundered, and in 1913 the port officially went bankrupt.

In 1931, the State of California acquired its initial 159-acre parcel to create Sunset State Beach. The purchase was made possible with funds provided by the first State Park Bond Act which was approved in 1928.

In 1936, the CCC paved Shell Road and constructed the north picnic ramada and masonry stoves, which are still in use. Four years later, in 1940, they built 25 campsites at Pine Hollow. In 1948, the first ranger was assigned to Sunset, and plans were approved for the beach picnic ramada.

In 1960, San Franciscan Gardner Mein sold the 128-acre Palm Beach area which included the former Camp Goodall and Port Watsonville properties, to the State for \$124,000. This acquisition included all the land south of the lower picnic area, the entire beach frontage to the Pajaro River, and a 25-acre parcel at the end of Beach Road.

In 1983, Agnes Van Laanen sold her approximately eight-acre farm complex to the State.

#### Historic Structures and Sites

Sunset State Beach contains two historic sites with remaining standing structures, the Van Laanen farm complex and the north picnic ramada. The Van Laanen farm complex consists of seven buildings: a turn-of-the-century redwood frame residence, a turn-of-the-century redwood frame barn, a post-1938



barn which served as a garage, and a post-1938 milking shed, pump house, and two storage sheds. The North Picnic Ramada, constructed by the CCC in 1936, is typical of CCC 1930s rustic park architecture. This post-and-beam hipped shingle roof structure protects 16 milled redwood picnic tables. Three-square corners support the square log roof beams and hipped roof. The lower beach ramada, constructed in 1948, is not included among the historic resources.

Sunset State Beach contains two other historic sites without any surviving structures: Port Rogers/Port Watsonville, a turn-of-the-century port venture which failed, and Camp Goodall, a 19th-century resort venture built on the site of Pajaro Landing, a mid-19th-century Monterey Bay landing.

### Esthetic Resources

The two overlooks at Sunset State Beach provide excellent views of Monterey Bay. The forest vegetation in the campground provides a calm, restful scene, while the large dune formation to the south provides visually stimulating elements of contrast. The historic Van Laanen farm complex with its gardens and landscape is another esthetic resource. Primary negative scenic elements at this unit include the poorly screened agricultural operations adjacent to the campground, the radio towers at Palm Beach, and adjacent residential developments.

Positive auditory features at Sunset State Beach include the generally prevailing quiet, the sounds from the bay and, in the campground, the sounds of birds and insects. Negative features include the sound of low-flying planes and helicopters and the unpredictable sounding of a siren from the agricultural operation immediately adjacent to the campground.

Periodically, agricultural odors are a problem; these include the pungent odor of rotting crop residues and the smells of various agricultural chemicals.

### Recreation Resources

The coastal area of Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties is one of the major recreation destinations in California. This area was the destination for roughly one out of 20 recreation trips (4.6 percent) within the state by Californians in 1980. These trips brought 5,760,000 recreation visitors to the two counties, not including local residents and visitors from out of state. In addition to these "destination" visitors, this area is very popular with persons touring through or enroute to another destination.

Visitation to Sunset State Beach has averaged more than 390,000 person-days annually. Camping accounted for 37 percent of this use. Summer accounted for 53 percent of total attendance, fall for 15 percent, winter for 12 percent, and spring for 20 percent.

Twenty-one major recreation activities currently occur at Sunset State Beach; of these, nine are strongly dependent on the ocean or ocean beach and eight are dependent on other natural resources of the unit. Recreation activities which are primarily dependent on the ocean or sandy beach -- board surfing, body surfing, swimming, sunbathing, beachcombing, surf fishing, beachball,

volleyball, and sand sculpture -- are of high statewide significance. Painting, photography, bird watching, other nature study, esthetic appreciation, kite flying, and model sailplanes are also of statewide significance at this unit.

## Resource Policy Formulation

### Classification

Sunset State Beach has been a unit of the State Park System since 1931. The unit was classified as a State Beach by the State Park and Recreation Commission in November 1962. The Public Resources Code defines 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.

### Subclassification

The Classification Act (Section 5019.50 et seq., Public Resources Code) establishes several categories of units that may be included within the boundaries of another unit of the State Park System. These include the natural preserve, cultural preserve, and state wilderness categories.

As part of the General Plan for Sunset State Beach, a 40-acre natural preserve subclassification is recommended. This natural preserve boundary encompasses the freshwater marsh south of the campground. This subclassification acknowledges the importance of the wetland and establishes certain protections for the resources. The California Public Resources Code for the natural preserve classification (PRC 5019.71) is quoted below in its entirety:

5019.71. Natural preserves consist of distinct areas of outstanding natural or scientific significance established within the boundaries of other state park system units. The purpose of natural preserves shall be to preserve such features as rare or endangered plant and animal species and their supporting ecosystems, representative examples of plant or animal communities existing in California prior to the impact of civilization, geological features illustrative of geological processes, significant fossil occurrences or geological features of cultural or economic interest, or topographic features illustrative of representative or unique biogeographical patterns. Areas set aside as natural preserves shall be of sufficient size to allow, where possible, the natural dynamics of ecological interaction to continue without interference, and to provide, in all cases, a practicable management unit. Habitat manipulation shall be permitted only in those areas found by scientific analysis to require manipulation to preserve the species or associations which constitute the basis for the establishment of the natural preserve. (Added by Stats. 1978, Ch. 615.)

#### Declaration of Purpose

The purpose of Sunset State Beach is to make available to the public beach-oriented public recreation opportunities, and to protect and perpetuate the coastal dune environment and coastal wetlands, including the native plant and animal associations. The prime recreation resource is the ocean beach.

The function of the California Department of Parks and Recreation at Sunset State Beach is to provide and maintain facilities and to provide public services to assure that high quality public recreation opportunities are available in a natural setting. The department shall also manage the coastal dune and wetland resources for their perpetuation.

#### 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 Sunset State Beach. This zone includes the adjacent agricultural lands where management practices, particularly the use of pesticides and fertilizers, affect the quality of air and groundwater within the state beach. The department is also concerned with activities within the residential areas adjacent to the unit, including the Pajaro Dunes Colony, where construction of rock walls affects the sandy beach area within the unit.

In addition, the department is interested in all lands, no matter how far away, whose use and development adversely affect the unit's resources and features. Air pollution and acid rain are regional problems which affect the unit's resources and may be created by changing land uses on distant lands. The damming of rivers and the building of breakwaters and other structures along the coast, which disrupt littoral sand movement and may increase coastal erosion, is another problem affecting the unit.

## Resource Management Policies

Resource management in the State Park System is governed by laws contained in the Public Resources Code and the California Administrative Code, and is further guided 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 clearer management guidelines. Directives that are especially pertinent to the management of resources within Sunset 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
- #64 Standards for Historic Restoration

Directives #18 and #19 are particularly relevant to planning issues for the State Beaches along Monterey 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, and to promote the use of expendable or movable facilities where the expected useful life is limited due to their location 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 the policies, directives, and laws that apply statewide, the following resource policies have been developed for Sunset State Beach:

#### Landslides and Coastal Erosion

Landslides have been mapped in the terrace and dune deposits along the sea cliff in the northern portion of Sunset State Beach. These slides occur as a result of toe removal by ocean waves and subsequent readjustment of the unconsolidated materials which comprise the uplands. Surface and subsurface runoff, devegetation, and surface-disturbing activities also contribute to shallow-seated failures. Some residential structures may be threatened by slope failures along the sea cliffs.

The southern portion of Sunset State Beach is a very narrow strip consisting entirely of the sandy beach. The Pajaro Dunes Colony, a residential area, is immediately inland from the State Beach. During storm periods over the last several years, residences within the Colony have been exposed to damage from storm-generated ocean waves. Efforts to protect the structures from damage have included placement of riprap on the beach in front of the homes. In some cases, this riprap has been placed on State Beach property, occupying beach areas formerly available for recreation activities. The "edge" effect of protective devices on adjacent unprotected areas (i.e., Palm Beach) is not known. The effect could be a narrower usable land base, as the unprotected areas receive additional erosive energy.

Policy: The department shall work with local residents to minimize the negative effects of adjacent land uses on Sunset State Beach. The department recognizes the concerns of adjacent landowners but, in general, State Beach property shall not be utilized to protect structures on private property.

#### Monitoring Erosion and Sand Loss

Beach erosion and sea cliff retreat have been recognized as serious threats to public facilities and use of coastal units of the State Park System. Additional baseline information on erosion rates is needed to evaluate site specific proposals for additional facilities, resource management, and visitor safety.

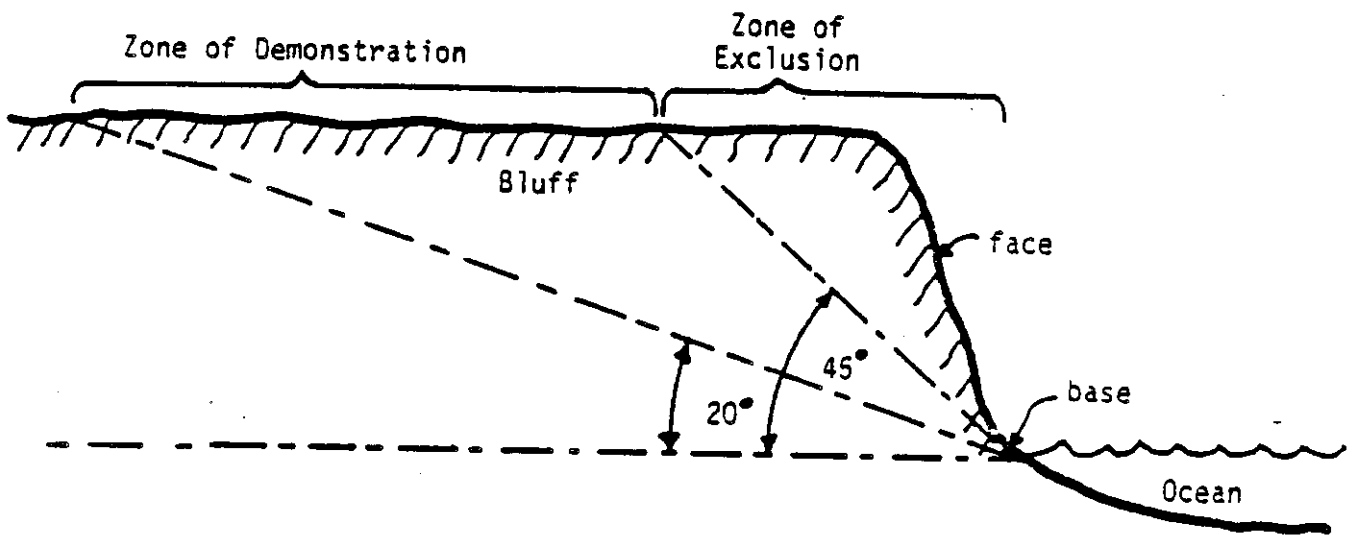
Policy: A monitoring program shall be established at Sunset State Beach to document: 1) landslides, 2) gully development, 3) pavement cracks or building cracks from differential settlement, and 4) beach elevation and width. The monitoring program should include the comparison of recent and historical aerial photos, ground photos with explanations, and installation of permanent monuments, if necessary. The program should be coordinated with the U.S. Geological Survey (which has already begun a beach monitoring program), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Boating and Waterways, and the University of California at Santa Cruz.

### Bluff Setbacks

Seacliff retreat is an ongoing process that should be taken into consideration when designing and placing facilities near cliff edges. To protect investments in facilities and assure public safety, it is a sound principle to establish setback zones -- both "zones of exclusion", where development is limited to expendable or movable facilities, and "zones of demonstration", where permanent facility development is allowable if stability and geologic suitability can be demonstrated.

Policy: A "zone of exclusion" shall be established to include the base, face, and top of all bluffs and cliffs extending inland to a plane formed by a 45-degree angle from the horizontal at the base of the cliff or bluff. No new structures shall be constructed within this zone unless they are either movable or expendable. Existing facilities, including buildings and campsites, may remain in use, subject to regular inspections by field personnel in coordination with the department's geologist. A zone of demonstration shall be established in the unit to extend inland from the zone of exclusion to the intersection of the ground surface with a plane inclined 20 degrees from the horizontal from the toe of the cliff (see Figure 1).

Figure 1  
Zones of Demonstration and Exclusion



## Shoreline Protective Devices

It has been suggested that segments of Sunset State Beach be protected by riprap, revetments, seawalls, or other structures to protect State Park System or private developments. Public pressure to allow the proliferation of such devices can be expected, as the hazards increase and the beach continues to erode. Structural protection measures are not generally consistent with the objectives for resource management within the State Park System. In certain circumstances, however, when the State Park System facility is of greater necessity and importance than the impacted natural and recreational resources, structural protective measures may be appropriate.

Policy: Structural protective measures for State Park System facilities shall be undertaken only if non-structural measures (i.e., relocation of facility, setback, redesign, or beach replenishment) are not feasible. If a protective structure is built (i.e., riprap, rock revetment, seawall, etc.), the structure shall not:

- 1) Significantly reduce or restrict beach access;
- 2) Adversely affect shoreline processes and sand supply;
- 3) Significantly increase erosion on adjacent properties;
- 4) Cause harmful impacts on vegetation, wildlife, or fish habitats;
- 5) Be placed further than necessary from the development requiring protection; or
- 6) Create a significant visual intrusion.

## Sand Replenishment

The beach at Sunset State Beach has narrowed in recent years, as upcoast developments have interrupted the exchange of beach- and cliff-derived sediments to the beach. Also, severe storms in recent years have removed some of the buffering sand wedge below the cliffs, carrying the beach sand to deep water and possibly into the Monterey submarine canyon. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Boating and Waterways are embarking on a Monterey Bay erosion study, in cooperation with the Department of Parks and Recreation, U.C. Santa Cruz, and the U.S. Geological Survey. These studies are primarily data collection efforts; however, they will be oriented to developing solutions to perceived problems. One potentially beneficial solution to increased erosion and loss of land base and valuable structures would be to supplement the wave-buffering beach with appropriately-sized sand materials from offshore or inland sources.

Policy: DPR shall coordinate with the various agencies studying storm damage and beach erosion problems of Monterey Bay to develop regional non-structural solutions to the erosion problems. Beach replenishment should receive serious consideration as an ongoing, non-destructive solution that will also result in a greater recreational land base.

## Paleontological Resources

There are no known paleontological resources at Sunset State Beach. Pleistocene fossils could possibly be found within the dunes; however, it is not likely, since the dynamic dune environment is not conducive to preservation of the record of former life forms.



Policy: If eroding bluffs and/or shifting sands reveal a fossil locality within Sunset State Beach, the department shall determine the find's significance and take appropriate protective action.

## Groundwater:

### Quality

Aquifers within the Pajaro Valley groundwater basin are open to the Pacific Ocean. Under normal conditions, as long as groundwater flows seaward, saltwater will not intrude into groundwater basins. However, if the water table is lowered by overpumping to, or below, sea level, a landward hydraulic is established which permits seawater to move inland. Saltwater has intruded into wells in Sunset State Beach and coastal Monterey County. Current monitoring in northern coastal Santa Cruz County shows no saltwater contamination. Because nitrate levels in excess of State and Federal drinking water standards are reported for Sunset State Beach, water sources are posted as unsafe. Agricultural runoff is believed to be the source of this nitrate contamination.

Policy: The department shall work with the State Water Resources Control Board and with appropriate agencies in the County of Santa Cruz to develop water management plans designed to reduce groundwater overdraft and to reduce or eliminate nitrate pollution of the groundwater basin at Sunset State Beach.

### Quantity

The maximum safe yield from groundwater basins in the central coastal region of California has been reached. Water demand for Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties exceeds the rate at which groundwater is replenished. Continued overdraft of groundwater will result in degraded water supplies. By the year 2000, urban, wildlife, and recreation water requirements are expected to exceed safe yield by approximately 134 million acre-feet/year. Consequently, no further development of groundwater is possible in the Soquel Valley, Pajaro Valley, and Salinas Valley hydrologic basins.

Policy: In order to minimize depletion of the central coastal groundwater basins, the department shall work with the State Water Resources Control Board and appropriate agencies in the County of Santa Cruz to develop surface water sources for Sunset State Beach.

### Pesticides

Aerial and ground application of pesticides on the agricultural fields adjacent to Sunset State Beach has the potential to negatively affect the health of employees and visitors, as well as native plant and animal life.

Policy: The department shall work with adjacent landowners and local government officials to minimize the potential for accidental pesticide applications on Sunset State Beach.

## General Vegetation Management

It is the goal of the Department to preserve and perpetuate representative examples of natural plant communities common to the unit and the region. The plant communities at Sunset State Beach have been influenced by residential development on both inholdings and adjacent lands, adjacent agricultural development, heavy recreational use, and invasion by exotic species. The net results of such impacts and alterations include the loss of vegetation and sand, unnatural community structures, alteration of the extent and distribution of many native species, and the invasion of exotics which create deleterious competition with native species.

Policy: The primary objective of vegetation management shall be to manage toward a natural condition with minimum disruption to natural processes or appropriate recreational activities. The secondary objective shall be to restore and perpetuate the native plant communities that prevailed in the area prior to Euro-American influences. The highest priority for this protection and restoration of native vegetation will be in the coastal dune and wetland communities.

## Coastal Dune Management

Dune systems are composed of unconsolidated sand that has been transported from the beach environment by strong onshore winds and are stabilized with vegetation. Human activities in the dunes can destroy the vegetation and thereby destabilize the dunes. Typically, once vegetation is removed, a dune blowout forms where steady sand movement makes natural revegetation of the area very difficult. If human use of a blowout area continues, natural revegetation is virtually impossible.

Coastal dunes provide important plant and animal habitats. Many species are endemic to this habitat type. The use of coastal areas for residential, agricultural, and industrial purposes has destroyed most of the native coastal dune habitat in California. Heavy recreational use has lowered the quality of the dune habitat in many areas. Along Monterey Bay, most of the remaining natural dune environment is within units of the State Park System. The continued existence of coastal dunes, and the species living within this habitat type, are dependent upon the effective stewardship of the coastal dune resource by the department.

Policy: Human activities within the dunes shall be regulated to prevent destruction of the natural dune environment. Hiking, horseback riding, model plane gliding, and other recreation uses shall be restricted to designated areas and routes. Destabilized areas within the dunes shall be revegetated. The highest priority for dune stabilization and revegetation in this area will be where continued erosion threatens recreational facilities. In order to maintain the genetic integrity and diversity of California native plants, revegetation efforts shall utilize native plants from local populations.

## Riparian Zone Management

Riparian areas, defined by multi-layered hydrophilic vegetation along watercourses, are one of the most productive habitats in California, yet they have undergone considerable alteration. Concentrated use in these zones results in vegetation trampling and obliteration, soil erosion, and water pollution.

An undisturbed riparian plant community typically includes a variety of height classes. When subjected to concentrated use, this multi-layered community structure is often eliminated.

Overall, 70-90 percent of all original riparian ecosystems in the United States have been destroyed. The majority of those in California have been altered beyond repair. The Resources Agency of California has adopted a policy to deny authorization to any project that will fill or otherwise harm or destroy riparian areas.

Policy: Riparian areas shall be protected to the maximum extent possible from any activity which results in trampling and loss of vegetation, or which restricts development and perpetuation of a multi-layered community structure.

## Rare and Endangered Plants

The Monterey Bay area is rich in rare, endangered, and endemic species. Of eighteen rare plant species known to occur in the bay's coastal strand and scrub habitats, seven have been confirmed to occur in State Park System units. Grindelia latifolia ssp. latifolia (coastal gumplant) is known to occur within Sunset State Beach.

Protection of rare and endangered species habitat is an important objective in the statewide management of the State Park System. Rare and endangered plants can be inadvertently destroyed by development of facilities, maintenance programs, visitor use, or other activities. This is especially true when the exact population locations, habitat requirements, and tolerances are not known.

Policy: Rare and endangered plants found within Sunset State Beach shall be protected and managed for their perpetuation.

Systematic surveys for rare and endangered plants shall be made throughout the unit. If any rare or endangered species is found, all populations shall be mapped, and management plans developed for their protection and perpetuation.

Prior to any site-specific development or heavy use activities, additional surveys shall be made during the flowering season for rare or endangered plants in the areas that will be impacted.

## Landscaping

Exotic species can detract from the natural appearance of the State Beach, escape into the wild and displace native species, have less habitat value for native wildlife, be more prone to insect attack and disease, and require permanent irrigation and greater maintenance costs.

Policy: 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.

#### Freshwater Marsh

The freshwater marsh located south of the campground and north of Palm Beach is perhaps the most important ecological feature within Sunset State Beach. This marsh is extremely productive with a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

The marsh provides excellent habitat for amphibians and reptiles. The California newt, Pacific tree frog, red-legged frog, western pond turtle, and aquatic garter snake are all likely to occur in the marsh.

Bird life in and around the marsh includes mallard, cinnamon teal, and pied-billed grebe in open water areas; American bittern, long-billed marsh wren, and common yellowthroat in the dense vegetation; and predators including northern harrier and red-tailed hawk. Mammals in the marsh include muskrat, striped skunk, raccoon, and long-tailed weasel.

Policy: The freshwater marsh within Sunset State Beach shall be considered for designation as a Natural Preserve.

#### Coastal Wetlands

A small but important coastal salt marsh exists near Palm Beach. This ten-acre wetland is bisected by Watsonville Slough and is the widest and largest contiguous area of wetland along the slough. A tide gate just east of Beach Road stops all tidal influence from this point upstream. California's coastal wetlands have been severely reduced in extent and value through filling, draining, and diking for agricultural use or development. The remaining thin border of wetlands adjacent to Watsonville Slough is evidence of the effect these practices have had on wetlands in the area. Within the wetland area at Palm Beach are two radio transmitting towers, associated supporting wires, ground systems, and a building. The foundation of these structures displaces wetland plants and may interfere with groundwater hydrology of wetland soils. The superstructure and supporting guy wires of the towers may interfere with the flight patterns of shorebirds and waterfowl entering or leaving the wetland. Maintenance activities on these structures may disrupt animals using the marsh.

Policy: The coastal wetland bordering Watsonville Slough at Palm Beach shall be protected to the maximum extent possible from any activity which results in the net loss of acreage or habitat value. The department shall evaluate all options to increase habitat values. Should additional wetland acreage become available, the department shall consider options for acquisition and stewardship of these important resources. No new, replacement, or removal of underground radio antennae facilities shall be allowed in the wetland. Antennas, superstructures, and guy wires shall be removed as soon as practicable. Any removal of radio facilities, or maintenance of existing facilities that could disturb the wetland, shall be carefully controlled, reviewed, or monitored by department ecologists.

## Wildlife Management

Animal life is an important part of natural ecosystems and adds interest and variety to the park experience. Protection and perpetuation of natural wildlife population is a major management objective at Sunset State Beach.

Policy: Altered wetlands and other important wildlife habitat areas shall be restored as nearly as possible to conditions that would have existed had natural ecological processes not been disrupted. Whether or not restoration of natural conditions is possible, the department shall avoid significant imbalances in natural wildlife populations caused by human actions. If it is necessary to regulate animal populations, the methods used shall be based upon sound principles of ecosystem management, and shall avoid disturbance to other natural values of the unit.

### Wildlife Requiring Special Management Consideration:

Sunset State Beach contains potential habitat for the federally-listed, endangered, Smith's blue butterfly and for the state and federally-listed, endangered, California least tern. The tidewater goby, a federal candidate species, occurred historically at the mouth of the Pajaro River. Four additional listed species may forage near the unit or be observed from the unit: the brown pelican (state, federal: endangered); the Guadalupe fur seal (state, federal: threatened); the gray whale (federal: endangered), and the southern sea otter (federal: threatened).

Many species of special concern occur within Sunset State Beach. These animals are so designated by the California Department of Fish and Game due to a statewide reduction in breeding status or suitable habitat, or other threats to populations. Other species are of special scientific, educational, or interpretive interest. These species include the monarch butterfly, the northern harrier, the snowy plover, and the California black legless lizard. Other species of special concern may be observed from the unit, including the common loon, the double-crested cormorant, the California gull, and the elegant tern. Protection of sensitive species is an important objective in the statewide management of the State Park System.

Policy: Animal species that are endangered, threatened, or of special concern within Sunset State Beach shall be protected and managed for their perpetuation. Systematic surveys for these species shall continue to be made throughout the unit, and suitable habitat, where it exists, shall be perpetuated. If any sensitive species is found, a management plan for its perpetuation and protection shall be developed. Prior to undertaking any site-specific projects or heavy-use activities, additional surveys shall be made in the areas that will be affected.

### California Least Tern

The California least tern (*Sterna albifrons browni*) is listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Once populating breeding grounds on beach sites from Monterey Bay to Baja California, the California least tern now

nests at only 25 sites between the San Francisco Bay and the Mexican border. Most of these sites are threatened by human activities, and the California least tern is facing extinction due to the continuing destruction of feeding and nesting habitat.

The California least tern nests from late May through August in loose colonies that cannot withstand disturbance. Nesting habitat requirements include relatively flat areas of sand or dried mud with little or no vegetation, and a body of shallow water with a good supply of small fish nearby. Potential habitat for this bird is found at Sunset State Beach.

A recovery plan for the California least tern, as well as its habitat, has been prepared by the USFWS. A primary objective of this recovery plan is to protect, enhance, and manage the California least tern in order to help assure survival of the species.

Policy: The department shall continue to survey potential California least tern habitat at Sunset State Beach for nest sites. If nests are found, the department shall work with the USFWS and the CDFG to protect this endangered species. The department shall also work with the USFWS to implement the California least tern recovery plan to restore and enhance degraded California least tern habitat, and to induce colonization of new areas.

#### Tidewater Goby

The tidewater goby, a federal candidate species, is endemic to the California coast where they are found in coastal estuaries having water of low salinity and a sandy substrate. Tidewater gobies have disappeared from 30 percent of their known range since 1940, a result of wetland destruction from filling, draining, and pollution, as well as from the disruption of hydrologic conditions on which this species depends.

Policy: The department shall continue to survey the Pajaro River and adjacent Watsonville Slough within Sunset State Beach for the tidewater goby. If a population is located, the department shall work with the USFWS and the California Department of Fish and Game in developing a management plan to perpetuate this population of tidewater gobies.

#### Smith's Blue Butterfly

Smith's blue butterfly (Euphilotes enoptes smithi) is listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as an endangered species. This butterfly is restricted to coastal Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo counties, and is endangered by destruction of its habitat. Smith's blue butterfly occurs on inland dunes of ancient beach sands, in serpentine grassland, in coastal sand dunes, and on chaparral on cliff faces. The larval stage of Smith's blue butterfly feeds exclusively on two species of buckwheat, Eriogonum latifolium and E. parvifolium. Potential habitat for Smith's blue butterfly occurs at Sunset State Beach.

A recovery plan for Smith's blue butterfly has been developed by the USFWS. A primary objective of this recovery plan is to protect, manage, and enhance Smith's blue butterfly populations in order to help assure survival of the species.

Policy: The department shall continue to survey potential Smith's blue butterfly habitat at Sunset State Beach to determine if the butterfly is present in the unit, or if the habitat is suitable for species introduction. If Smith's blue butterfly occurs in this unit, the department shall work with the USFWS to perpetuate this population as addressed in the recovery plan. If Smith's blue butterfly does not occur in the unit, although habitat is deemed suitable to support the species, the department shall consult with the USFWS on the possible introduction of this species into Sunset State Beach.

### Monarch Butterfly

Well known for its attractive color and migratory habits, the monarch butterfly is of great scientific and interpretive interest. With a nearly worldwide distribution, the monarch butterfly is not in danger of extinction. However, the North American populations are vulnerable due to their overwintering strategy of congregating in large flocks in small areas. Because the phenomenon of the North American migration could be lost in the near future, the conservation of monarch butterfly overwintering sites has been designated as a top priority of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. The monarch butterfly is also listed on the international treaty known as the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

One of the two populations of monarchs in North America migrates annually south through the Pacific states to a limited number of overwintering sites along the California coast. The butterflies are attracted to groves of Monterey pine, Monterey cypress, and eucalyptus in Sunset State Beach where they can find roost sites protected from the elements, near a source of water, and which provide a ready supply of nectar.

Policy: The Monterey pine, Monterey cypress, and eucalyptus groves at Sunset State Beach shall continue to be surveyed during the winter roosting season of the monarchs, heavily-used groves shall be identified, and suitable habitat shall be perpetuated. The department shall support research into the ecology of the monarch butterfly. A resource management plan shall be developed and implemented to promote the perpetuation of the monarch butterfly within Sunset State Beach. Trees that are roost sites for monarch butterflies shall not be removed unless suitable additional habitat capable of supporting monarch colonies is established. An exception to this policy may be made a tree removed under the department's tree hazard guidelines.

### CCC Picnic Ramada

The CCC post-and-beam picnic ramada is significant as a representative example of the rustic construction technique utilized by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the California State Park System during the late 1930s.

The North Picnic Ramada was constructed by the CCC in 1936. The Beach Picnic Ramada, constructed in 1948, closely resembles the North Picnic Ramada. The original shake roof, which was vandalized for firewood, has been replaced with asbestos shingles. The Beach Picnic Ramada is not considered an historic resource.

Policy: The North Picnic Ramada and the associated masonry stoves shall be maintained in their present condition or restored to their original condition as recreational and historic resources.

#### Van Laanen Farm Complex

The Van Laanen Farm Complex, located near unit headquarters, consists of seven structures, two of which date from the turn of the century. The Van Laanen farm complex is significant as a representative example of utilitarian single-wall wood-frame farm structures found throughout early 20th-century rural California. Although the complex is in deteriorating condition and lacks the architectural significance necessary for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, the farmhouse, barn, and milk house appear to be worthy of maintenance and preservation. They are an esthetic resource for all park visitors who pass the main entrance. The buildings and landscape are a potential interpretive resource as well.

Policy: The Van Laanen farmhouse, barn, and milk house shall be maintained for their historic and interpretive value. The farmhouse exterior should be restored to its circa 1920s appearance. Structure interiors may be modified for interpretive purposes or other adaptive uses.

#### Camp Goodall and Port Rogers/Port Watsonville

Although no historic features or artifacts remain on the surface of these sites, archeological deposits may remain buried in the sand dunes.

Policy: As part of any plans for construction or ground disturbance, archeological testing or monitoring shall be conducted to identify and evaluate possible remains of Camp Goodall and Port Rogers/Port Watsonville.

#### 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 laws, unit classifications and declarations of purpose, and by 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 or regional or statewide significance.

Based on the preceding factors, allowable use intensities for lands within Sunset 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 zone includes the dune areas that are dominated by native plants and wetland environments. The moderate intensity zone is the sandy beach where the environment can withstand heavy use but is subject to ocean wave attack. The high intensity zone consists of relatively level land that is currently dominated by exotic plant species.

Some existing facilities, such as the beach day-use area, are incompatible with these use intensity categories, but may be retained.



# LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

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## LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

This element of the General Plan addresses the existing and proposed land uses and development at Sunset State Beach. The recommendations and guidelines for future development are based on an evaluation of the resource sensitivities and constraints, unit operational and visitor needs, with consideration for the expressed interest and concerns of the public and various governmental agencies.

### Existing Conditions

Sunset State Beach consists of two developed use areas, the Sunset Beach area and the Palm Beach area, which are connected along the beach, but have separate vehicle access. The main unit entrance is at the west end of Sunset Beach Road, providing access at the north unit boundary. This right of way is shared by park visitors, private residents, commercial farm vehicles, and unit personnel. Presently, the entrance is controlled at a small kiosk situated near the day-use parking lot, located beyond the unit office and maintenance facility. From this location, unit personnel directs traffic to the campgrounds, beach, and day-use areas, or to the private residences.

Land use includes residential and park maintenance structures, historic farm structures, campgrounds, day-use parking, restrooms, and picnic facilities. This unit includes a narrow sand beach with 18,000 linear feet of shoreline and extensive sand dunes ranging in elevation from 40 to 200 feet. A freshwater lagoon is located in the central portion of this unit, and the Watsonville Slough bisects state property adjacent to Palm Beach.

The land use surrounding Sunset State Beach is dominated by agriculture and three adjoining private residential developments: (a) an inholding near the unit entrance, the Sunset Beach Subdivision; (b) the Shorebirds Condominiums, located between Sunset and Palm Beach; and (c) the Pajaro Dunes Complex, located south of Palm Beach to the Pajaro River mouth. Most of the private developments and public recreation facilities in this area were constructed on the sand dunes prior to the provisions of the California Coastal Act of 1976.

### Existing Facilities

#### North Beach Day-Use Facilities

The day-use parking lot at the north beach provides space for a total of 60 cars, located at the west end of Sunset Beach Road. Parking spaces are developed along the bluff, at the picnic ramada, and near the entrance kiosk, which double for campsite registration parking and enroute camping. A grove of tall eucalyptus trees occupies the central portion of this parking area, which includes four picnic tables and barbecues.

Parking areas are presently bisected by the entrance road and accessways to private residences and the beach. The north beach receives only moderate use due to the limited parking and restroom facilities. A small comfort station is built near the CCC picnic ramada, located across the road from the entrance kiosk. This ramada is used infrequently for family or group picnicking, due to its remoteness from the beach and windy conditions.

Beach access is provided from this parking lot by a short stairway and emergency vehicle concrete ramp approximately 200 feet to the beach. Some permanent and temporary bluff fencing is presently used for erosion control and slope revegetation efforts. Additional fencing is needed to further restrict access down the slope and onto private property.

### Van Laanen Farm Complex

The Van Laanen farm residence and six remaining structures are located on state property near the park entrance. This property was purchased by the state as an inholding at Sunset State Beach. Mrs. Agnes Van Laanen still resides in the house that was built in 1898. This residence remains in good condition. The condition of the barn and other structures varies from good to poor.

The farm complex is situated in a highly visible open area, at a lower elevation from surrounding lands. The native vegetation is reestablishing itself around the old farm buildings and provides an esthetic entry to the park in contrast to surrounding agriculture and new development.

Visitor use is presently limited to an existing trail through this area, connecting the dunes campground and entrance kiosk.

### South Beach Day-Use Facilities

The south beach day-use area is located in the sand dunes, south of the campgrounds and adjacent to the beach. Beach access is provided by two boardwalks and random trails from the parking lot and picnic sites. The existing parking lot provides space for 110 cars and a vehicle turnaround. A comfort station was built at this parking lot in 1948 and presently serves beach users, along with portable toilets. A large picnic ramada, also constructed in 1948, includes 16 tables for family or group use. An additional 18 picnic tables are located behind the foredunes, along this narrow parking lot.

Convenient parking and easy access to the beach make this a popular day-use area. A portion of Shell Road, south of this day-use area, is county-owned but managed for park purposes under a 1969 agreement, with terms and conditions for gated access. This road is closed to traffic, other than for emergency and authorized vehicle use, and is presently used for access to overflow parking areas during peak-use periods. This road lies adjacent to a freshwater lagoon that contains significant plant and wildlife habitat values. A privately owned water tank is located in the southeast corner of this area, as an inholding within the state beach, and serves adjacent private developments.

During the past few years, the department has undertaken revegetation efforts to stabilize dunes heavily impacted by human activities. Random trails extending from the campground, roads, and parking lots were fenced off, and sand ladders and boardwalks have been constructed. Resource management policies of our department, and the provisions of the 1976 Coastal Act severely limit further development of facilities in the coastal dune environment.

## Campground Development

Sunset State Beach includes a total of 90 campsites plus one group camp for 50 persons. Campsites are developed in three areas: Dunes Camp (26 sites), Pine Hollow Camp (27 sites), and South Camp (37 sites). A combination restroom/shower building was constructed in each camp to serve overnight use.

In 1940, the Civilian Conservation Corps built 25 campsites at Pine Hollow. These sites differ from existing campsites in the other campgrounds because the campsite parking spurs are neither paved or well defined. Random parking and clustering of tents have heavily impacted the soils and vegetation in this camping area. Today, this campground is popular with campers who like the open unconfined campsites. A designated bike/hike camp is also located here.

A campfire center was built in the Pine Hollow campground in 1965. This facility is centrally located with easy access by roads and trails from other campgrounds. A recent evaluation of this facility identified a need to upgrade the projection screen and stage platform, seating, providing disabled parking and wheelchair access, and improve tree and shrub planting for windbreak and screening of this facility.

A group camp for 50 persons, located immediately south of Pine Hollow, was recently improved with concrete walks and eating areas designed for wheelchair accessibility. Parking space is limited, and two portable toilets presently serve this site.

Dunes Camp and South Camp are fully developed and do not appear to have any significant problems. Camping is sometimes impacted by the adjacent agricultural land use and activities. Poor boundary fencing encourages trespassing, and occasional pesticide spraying may result in campsite evacuation for safety precautions. In addition, the existing trees have reached mature height and no longer provide vegetative screening between campsites and agricultural land.

## Unit Operations and Maintenance Facilities

Existing operations and maintenance facilities are located at the main unit entrance on Sunset Beach Road. These facilities presently serve Sunset and Manresa State Beaches and include a small office, maintenance shop, water treatment facility, and greenhouse. An employee residence and garage are also located here. Most of these facilities were constructed in 1948. Additional vehicle and equipment storage facilities are needed to serve existing maintenance needs for this unit and Manresa State Beach.

The primary district maintenance shop located at New Brighton State Beach and the visitor services trailer and mechanics shop at Seacliff State Beach also serve this unit's operational needs.

## Water Facilities

Domestic and irrigation water is provided to the unit from an existing well, located at the park maintenance facility. Water is treated and pumped up to a water storage tank (30 x 57 feet, 100,000 gallons) centrally located in the dunes, then distributed to existing facilities throughout the unit. Access to this facility is from the residence area near Pine Hollow campground.

Nitrate levels in excess of state and federal drinking water standards were reported for Sunset State Beach. During 1988-89, the department constructed a water treatment facility to remove excessive nitrates from the groundwater pumped from an existing 400-foot deep well. The local water agency has performed testing and monitoring of groundwater levels, and groundwater and surface water quality throughout the coastal zone. Indications are that a 600-foot well at this location may produce clean water without costly treatment.

### Palm Beach Day-Use Facilities

The Palm Beach area of Sunset State Beach consists of a 40-car parking lot, 35-car overflow parking area, comfort station with dressing area and outside shower, and 15 picnic sites. As a condition of the 1978 coastal development permit, day-use facilities are presently free to users. Existing boardwalks provide beach access and trail connections from the parking lot to the adjacent Shorebird condominium development. During peak-use periods, visitors park on the county road when parking facilities are full. Development potential within park lands is severely limited by existing land ownership and the sensitive wetlands habitat. Surrounding lands presently include agriculture and additional wetlands.

Palm Beach has two employee residences (one private and one state-owned mobile home) which help provide area surveillance and emergency response. No visitor contact station is provided. These residences are located in a large grove of eucalyptus trees at the edge of a coastal salt marsh. The residence area includes small yards and storage sheds partially screened by an existing wood fence.

### Coastal Salt Marsh - Radio Towers

A small but important coastal salt marsh exists along the Watsonville Slough at Palm Beach. This wetland provides a significant habitat for a variety of plant and animal species. Presently, two radio transmission towers, associated supporting cables, and underground wires are located within this wetland, under a short-term lease agreement with a local radio station. A small transmission building is located nearby. These facilities were in place at the time the state acquired this property.

Historically, coastal wetlands were considered to provide ideal sites for the location of transmission facilities, and the significance of wetland ecosystems was not understood. Maintenance and periodic replacement of ground wires within the wetlands could have a negative impact on the natural resource values of this area.

The current lessee and owners of these facilities have requested a lease extension and indicated that the towers and equipment are outdated and in need of repair. Alternatives were discussed for an improved type of tower and ground system that would reduce the sphere of influence on this area. Current resource management policies call for greater protection of this coastal wetland and improving habitat values. The present five-year lease agreement expires in June 1990, and the Department of Parks and Recreation does not support the continued use of Sunset State Beach properties for radio transmitting facilities.



## Proposed Land Use and Facilities

### Sunset Area

#### Unit Entrance

Sunset Beach Road provides access for park visitors, private residences, and commercial vehicles from adjacent farm lands. This multiple land ownership and use adds confusion for park maintenance operations, visitor control, and law enforcement at the unit entrance. Entry improvements must address the need to reduce conflicts of traffic movements and ensure visitor safety.

PROPOSAL: Realign entrance road to consolidate use areas and maximize beach parking potential. Develop park entry roads and intersections for safe and easier access, separating visitor and non-visitor traffic where possible. The redesign will include a new entrance station with a small office and restroom, parking, turnaround, and recreation vehicle sanitation dump station. The park entrance will be enhanced with additional landscaping and utilities placed underground.

#### North Beach Parking - Sunset Beach Road

This portion of the beach receives only moderate use because of limited parking and restroom facilities. Beach access is provided by a short stairway and 200-foot emergency vehicle ramp from the small parking lot. During busy weekends, beach users park along San Andres Road and walk to the beach (approximately 3/4 mile). A small restroom located near the picnic ramada is not easily accessible to beachgoers. The need for beach parking, visitor safety, bluff stabilization, and reduced trespassing onto adjacent private properties are major concerns for this area.

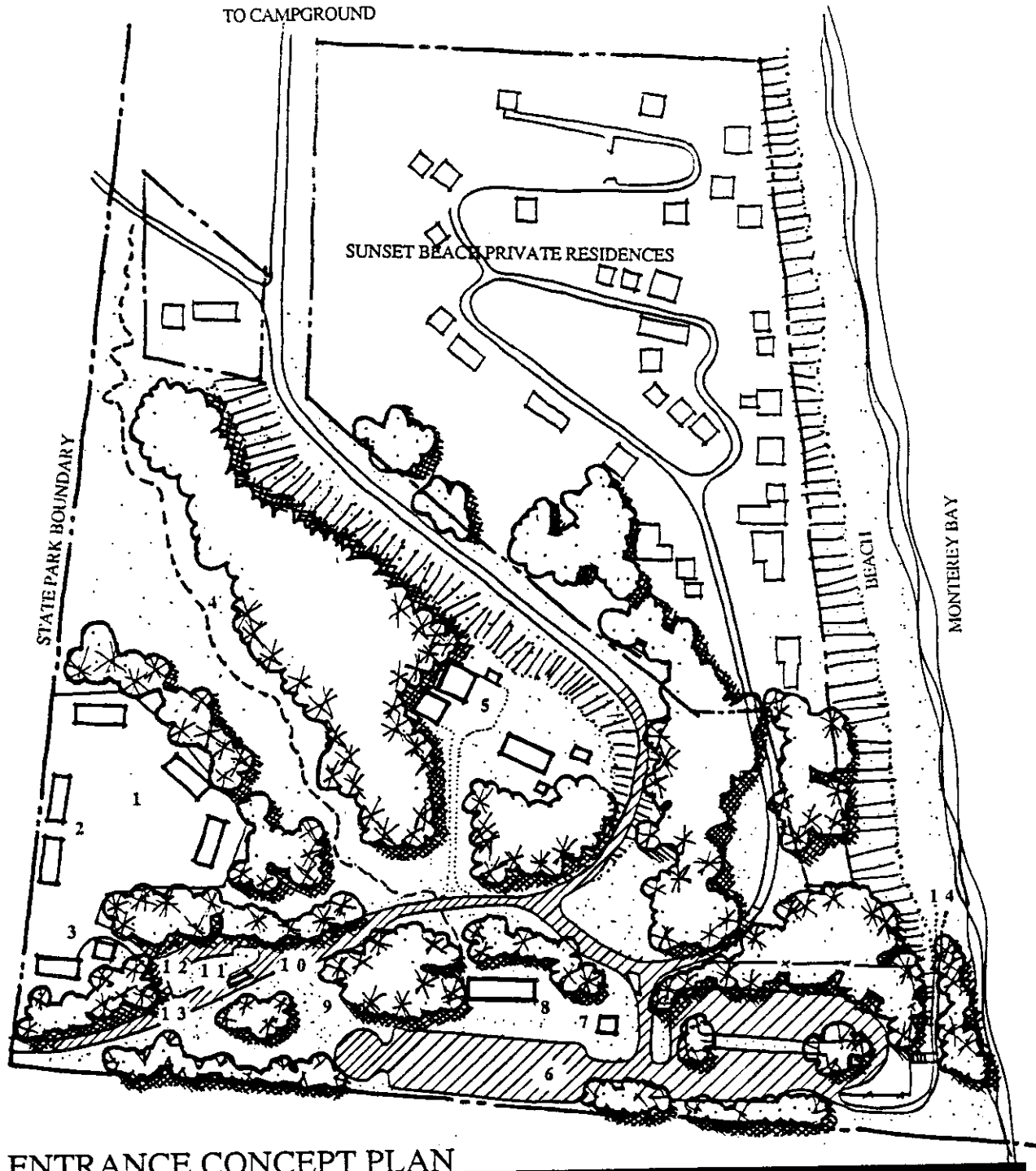
PROPOSAL: Once the entry road is realigned, a new day-use parking lot will be developed for up to 125 cars in the area of the existing roadway and parking lot. Remove existing eucalyptus trees at parking site, revegetate and stabilize bluff, and construct bluff fencing with picnic tables and benches. Future management considerations for north beach access and parking may include the use of metered parking to facilitate a separate access for private residences and authorized vehicle use at the entry before the contact station.

#### North Beach Picnic Ramada

The north picnic ramada is considered historic as it represents an example of the rustic, rough-hewn park structures constructed during the 1930s. It is located near the entrance kiosk, surrounded by lawn, and has barbecues and a small restroom facility. Although family and group picnic facilities are in demand, this ramada is not frequently used due to its remote relationship to beach view and access, and separation by the busy entry road from other day-use facilities. Visitor parking is provided along the entrance road, just ahead of the entrance kiosk, and vehicles backing into the roadway create a potentially hazardous situation.

## Facility Inventory Listing

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APPROX. YEAR CONSTRUCTED</u>
<u>Buildings</u>		
Entrance Kiosk	Sunset Beach Road	1960
Park Office	Park Entrance	1948
Utility Building	Service Yard - three vehicles	1948
Storage Building	Maintenance Shop	1975
Pump House	Well and Water Treatment	1987
Pump House	Residence No. 2	1973
Water Tank	Residence Area (30 x 57)	c. 1948
Residence No. 1	Park Entrance	1948
Residence No. 2	Sunset	1948
Residence No. 3	Sunset	1948
Mobile Home	Palm Beach	1979
Trailer Pad (2)	Palm Beach	1978
Trailer Pad (1)	Shop Area	1969
Comfort Station	North Picnic Area	1968
Comfort Station	South Beach	1948
Comfort Station	Palm Beach w/dressing area	1978
Combination Building	Dunes Camp	1966
Combination Building	Pine Hollow	1977
Combination Building	South Camp	1961
Residence	Van Laanen Home	c. 1898
Barn	Van Laanen Farm Complex	c. 1908
Milk House/Creamery	Van Laanen Farm Complex	c. 1940
Pump House	Van Laanen Farm Complex	c. 1952
Storage Building (2)	Van Laanen Farm Complex	c. 1951
Garage	Van Laanen Farm Complex	c. 1940
<u>Roads, Parking, Trails</u>		
Parking Lot	Palm Beach (40 cars + 35 unpaved)	1978
Parking Lot	South Beach (110 cars)	1954
Parking Lot	North Beach (60 cars)	1949
Parking Lot	Park Office (9 cars)	
Trails	Various (7,500 LF)	1954
Boardwalks (2)	Palm Beach (6 x 320 LF)	1978
Boardwalks (2)	South Beach Picnic	1983
Sand Ladder	Dunes Camp (3 x 661)	1983
Roads	Various (3.45 miles)	c. 1954
<u>Campgrounds and Picnic Sites</u>		
Campsites	Dunes Camp (26 sites)	1948
Campsites	Pine Hollow (27 sites)	1940
Campsites	South Camp (37 sites)	1948
Bike Camp	Pine Hollow	1981
Group Camp	South Camp (50 persons)	1981
Campfire Center	Pine Hollow	c. 1965
Picnic Sites	Palm Beach (15 tables)	1978
Picnic Sites	South Beach (18 tables)	1978
Picnic Sites	North Picnic (4 tables)	1978
CCC Ramada	North Picnic (16 tables, 6 BBQs)	1936
Beach Picnic Ramada	South Beach (16 tables)	c. 1948



**ENTRANCE CONCEPT PLAN**  
**SUNSET STATE BEACH**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Expand maintenance yard                          | 8 Retain existing CCC ramada                      |
| 2 Existing structures                              | 9 Expand picnicking                               |
| 3 Retain existing residence and garage             | 10 New road alignment                             |
| 4 Existing trail                                   | 11 New contact station                            |
| 5 Van Laanen farm retain for interpretive purposes | 12 New turn around and trailer dump station area. |
| 6 Expand parking                                   | 13 Remove existing office building                |
| 7 New comfort station                              | 14 Emergency vehicle beach access                 |

PROPOSAL: Maintain picnic ramada in its present condition as a recreational and historic resource. With realignment of the entrance, the site planning shall consolidate this picnic facility with new day-use parking and open space and include a new comfort station with compatible architecture. Develop improved bus drop-off and visitor parking to serve family and group picnicking.

#### Van Laanen Farm Complex

The Van Laanen Farm Complex consists of seven remaining structures and garden and is locally significant as a representative example of utilitarian single-wall wood frame farm structures found throughout early 20th century rural California.

PROPOSAL: The Van Laanen home should be restored to its c. 1920s appearance and used for interpretive purposes. The barn and milk shed/creamery will be stabilized and preserved in their present condition, and the remaining farm structures studied for their potential preservation, maintenance, or removal. Maintain a trail corridor through this area, and manage the portion surrounding the farm complex as scenic open space.

#### Campground Development

Camp spurs are paved in both Dunes Camp and South Camp. However, Pine Hollow Campground presently allows camp vehicle parking in areas off the road, with opportunity for tent clustering. Although popular with visitors, this activity results in a significant loss of vegetation affecting soil compaction and plant growth. The group camp and campfire center are also located in this area. Both require additional parking and designation for the disabled. The group camp includes concrete walks, picnic facilities, and portable restrooms accessible to the disabled. No permanent restrooms have been constructed.

The campgrounds were developed in a relatively narrow land base between the main park road and adjacent agricultural lands. Existing Monterey pines, originally planted for screening and buffer at the unit boundary, no longer serve this purpose. The tall trees and broken fences provide little visual or physical barriers for campsites.

PROPOSAL: Pine Hollow Campground will be rehabilitated, to delineate camp spurs and specific parking locations. Maintain Dunes Camp and South Camp with existing number of campsites. Construct new fences along the unit boundary, and revegetate with native shrubs and smaller trees for improved campground screening. Construct a combination building and develop parking for ten vehicles, including recreation vehicle and disabled parking spaces at the existing group camp. Rehabilitate campfire center and provide parking and provisions for disabled access.

Develop two additional group camps for 25 persons each, north of Dunes Camp between the entry road and agricultural land. Vehicle access will be developed from the main road, or from Dunes Camp. Develop parking for seven vehicles at each camp, with one combination restroom/shower building.

## Beach-Level Parking and Picnic Facilities

Day-use parking, restroom, picnic facilities, and boardwalks are constructed in the dunes near the beach. These facilities are popular attractions for beach users and receive heavy use. Facility maintenance and dune stabilization are continuous efforts affected by this type of recreational use within a dune system. A restroom and picnic ramada are located at this parking lot.

PROPOSAL: Maintain existing parking and picnic facilities. Rehabilitate or construct new comfort station and maintain the beach picnic ramada. Hiking, model plane gliding, and other recreation uses shall be restricted to designated areas and routes. Destabilized areas within the dunes shall be revegetated with native species. Boardwalks and emergency vehicle beach access shall be maintained.

## Freshwater Marsh

The freshwater marsh, located south of the campground and north of Palm Beach, is rich with a diversity of flora and fauna. The overall dense vegetation and open pond form a complex biotic community and significant wildlife habitat. Shell Road currently provides dune patrol and emergency vehicle access through this area to Palm Beach, and serves for overflow beach parking during busy use periods.

PROPOSAL: The freshwater marsh within Sunset State Beach shall be proposed for classification as a 40-acre natural preserve, between Shell Road and the unit boundary to the east. Interpretive signing, boardwalks, and nature trails for bird watching and other interests are the only facilities allowed. Shell Road, adjacent to this preserve, will be maintained for trail, bicycle, and authorized vehicle access only.

## Operations and Maintenance Facilities

The existing buildings and service yard at the Sunset Beach Road entrance currently provide for the minimal needs of this unit and Manresa State Beach. However, aging facilities and resource management efforts will require a larger maintenance facility in the future to satisfy increasing park demands at both units. The employee residence provides an opportunity for quick emergency response and full-time surveillance of the entrance and expanded maintenance facilities and the office building serves for visitor contact when the kiosk is not staffed.

The unit maintenance area is in an excellent location with easy vehicle access and good potential for future growth. However, buildings are visible from all surrounding areas, with the greatest visual impact being the material and equipment storage areas. Service access and parking are developed at the unit entrance, with maintenance and patrol vehicles interacting with visitor traffic.

PROPOSAL: Remove existing unit office building and develop office space in one existing residence near the campground, or in conjunction with existing and proposed maintenance and visitor services buildings. The maintenance yard shall be secured with fencing. Landscaping and fencing

shall be used to screen structures, equipment, or material storage in view from surrounding areas and create a more "park like" setting at the unit entrance. Overhead power lines shall be placed underground. Additional buildings may be constructed at this location to serve Sunset State Beach operations.

#### Water Facilities

Domestic water is currently treated by dionization which has been a costly process. This water treatment process is necessary to remove excessive nitrates from the groundwater at the 400 foot depth, and has required frequent monitoring and attention.

PROPOSAL: Using test data provided by the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency, explore drilling a deeper well to the 600+ foot aquifer where clean water may be found. Savings in maintenance time and operating cost may largely offset much of the well development cost. Encourage water conservation efforts and recycling of water whenever feasible and approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

#### Palm Beach Area

##### Day-Use Facilities

The Palm Beach area currently provides free coastal access and receives predominant use by non-English speaking populations from the Watsonville area. The existing parking lot, developed between the salt marsh and eucalyptus grove, provides parking for 40 cars with a 35-car overflow parking area. However, day-use recreation demands for this area far exceed available parking facilities.

PROPOSAL: Redesign and expand a portion of the existing parking lot to develop an additional 20 parking spaces. This increase would require removal of about ten eucalyptus trees. Maintain existing trails, boardwalks, and picnic and restroom facilities. Continue dune revegetation, stabilization efforts, and control of exotic plant species. Bilingual wording will be incorporated in all directional and interpretive signing.

##### Coastal Salt Marsh - Radio Towers

California's coastal wetlands have been severely reduced in extent and value through filling, draining, and diking for agricultural use or development. Continued maintenance of existing transmission facilities may disturb wetlands vegetation or disrupt animals using this marsh.

PROPOSAL: This plan recommends the ultimate removal of the radio transmission building and tower superstructures, and protection of this coastal wetland. The department shall evaluate all options to increase the size of the wetlands within state property and improve the habitat value by limiting or screening bordering activities.

## Employee Housing

Three employee residences and three trailer pads with two mobile homes are located within Sunset State Beach; one residence and trailer pad are located at the unit entrance, two other residences are located near the campground, and the two mobile homes located at Palm Beach. Currently, all residences provide for staff housing and some area surveillance and emergency response.

The department's statewide housing study determined that two residences at Palm Beach and one residence at Sunset are necessary to provide essential public service at this unit.

### Sunset Area

PROPOSAL: This plan recommends that the existing residence near the north entrance remain at this location, with vegetative screening and driveway adjustments required by the new entrance road alignment. The two residences near Pine Hollow campground will be considered for other uses such as camp host, office space, camp store, and for interpretive purposes.

### Palm Beach Area

Presently, two mobile homes (one private and one state owned) are located at Palm Beach for area surveillance and emergency response. Both are located adjacent to the parking lot and the coastal salt marsh.

PROPOSAL: This plan recommends that the trailer pads remain at Palm Beach for employee residence. Improved fencing and landscaping to visually enhance this area shall also be considered.

## Aquatic Service Facilities

A permanent lifeguard tower is necessary to coordinate the aquatic program at this unit. This tower would provide communications for the portable lifeguard stations on the beach as well as provide beach coverage for early and late hours and during the off season. Refer to Operations Element for further discussion regarding visitor and aquatic safety.

PROPOSAL: A lifeguard tower is proposed at a location on the service road near the bluff water tank. Parking and storage area will be included.

## Potential Land Additions

The land use proposals of this plan are not dependent on new land acquisition. However, the plan does discuss potential use if adjacent land becomes available for acquisition. The following discussion and all other comments regarding land acquisition are intended for long-range planning purposes only, and do not represent a commitment for acquisition.

Camping and beach use is extremely popular and is a major focus at this unit. The existing land uses were evaluated during this planning process for potential expansion of this high demand activity at Sunset State Beach.

However, the sensitive dune and wetlands environment within the state beach substantially limits that potential. The land use adjacent to Sunset State Beach is predominantly agriculture with some park land bordering residential property and other wetlands.

#### Adjacent Agricultural Lands and Wetlands

Protection of active agricultural lands by the Coastal Act and the Local Coastal Plan limits the protection to consider expansion beyond the existing park boundary. However, if in the future, lands adjacent to the campground or the north day use parking area become available, they should be considered for acquisition. Property evaluations should include coordination with the agencies responsible for local coastal planning to determine the potential recreation use of such property, or need for protection of wetlands habitat areas. Adjacent land can serve as a logical expansion of adjacent campground loops and screen planting, expansion of beach access facilities, as well as improved resource management.

#### Residential and Private Property Inholdings

Several residences and private-owned properties remain as inholdings within Sunset State Beach. Those properties located within the immediate view from park roads, campgrounds, and the beach can have a positive, or negative impact on the overall park setting. The department is concerned about their future use and potential impact on state beach properties.

The department should continue to work with adjacent private land owners and county coastal planners, to ensure appropriate land management and/or development of these areas. If any inholdings become available for future acquisition, the department should evaluate them for possible addition to Sunset State Beach.

#### Shell Road

The gated portion of Shell Road adjacent to the proposed natural preserve is managed by the department for park purposes under the provisions of a 1969 agreement with the County of Santa Cruz. The department should work with the county to obtain the county's formal abandonment and quitclaim of their interest in this particular section of Shell Road.



# INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

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## INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

### Interpretive Considerations

At the present time, Sunset State Beach's interpretive opportunities include a Civilian Conservation Corps-constructed picnic ramada, a campfire center, vista points along the sand dune boardwalk, the Van Laanen Farm, an exhibit panel structure at the beach picnic ramada, single-panel structures at the dune trailhead near the campground and the picnic site on the road to the beach, and a road in the area of the fresh and saltwater marshes and ponds. Of these facilities, the only ones being utilized for interpretive purposes are the campfire center and the exhibit panel structures. The other facilities have not been developed to their full capacity.

The present interpretive activities available for visitors to Sunset State Beach include campfire programs, nature walks, a Junior Ranger program, and reading of the interpretive panels.

An important consideration in the interpretation of Sunset State Beach is the large number of non-English speaking visitors that use Sunset State Beach, especially the Palm Beach area of the park. Any interpretation in this area should at least be bilingual to include Spanish and English versions.

### Interpretive Period

The department will interpret the flow of history at Sunset State Beach from geologic times to the present.

### Interpretive Themes

Several themes are appropriate for interpretation at Sunset State Beach. These themes cover both the natural and cultural history of the beach and its present-day condition. The themes are:

#### Primary Themes:

- Rebuilding the natural garden
- A bill for every purpose
- Building grain-by-grain
- Living with the shifting sands
- Staying safe at the beach
- A secret watery world

#### Secondary Themes:

- Happy as a clam - for a while
- Building to last
- Echoes of good times
- Peaceful farm life on the coast

### Expanded Themes

#### Primary Themes:

Rebuilding the natural garden: Over time, the constant use of the dunes by visitors for recreation has caused erosion, as well as blowouts of sand. Steps are now being taken to correct the damage. Seeds and seedlings of dune

vegetation are being planted in barren areas, and foot traffic is restricted to specified areas and a boardwalk through the dunes. These measures, with public cooperation, will soon restore the dunes to their natural beauty.

A bill for every purpose: The shorebirds that visit Sunset State Beach and the Pajaro River mouth come to feed, rest, and breed. A greater understanding of the kinds of food these birds eat can be gained by observing their bills and where they are feeding. Those with long bills probe deep into the sand for the small creatures who live there. Those with short bills peck through the windrows of kelp and along the edges of the waves for crustaceans and marine worms. The birds also follow their food as it moves up and downstream at the Pajaro River, and up and down the banks with the tides.

Building grain-by-grain: Sand dunes along Monterey Bay have formed over time by the combined forces of wind and waves. The sand deposited on the beaches by the waves is blown inland by the wind until it comes to rest against vegetation or other obstructions. The grains gradually build up to form dunes. Sunset State Beach's dunes are very easily eroded. Over time, there has been significant erosion from human use.

Living with the shifting sands: The seemingly barren sand dunes are home to many varieties of plants and animals. The adaptations these organisms have made to the constant wind and lack of moisture are similar to those of desert organisms. Indeed, some of them live nowhere else. An understanding of these organisms will help the visitor to better understand the dunes.

Staying safe at the beach: Sunset State Beach is a popular recreation beach. Wind surfing, swimming, and other ocean-oriented sports occur here. But, the seemingly quiet waters of the ocean off Sunset State Beach hide rip currents and undertows that can turn an afternoon at the beach into a tragedy.

A secret watery world: The small fresh and saltwater marshes and ponds on the downcoast end of Sunset State Beach are quiet, yet full of life. The presence of an abundance of plant life and small aquatic creatures such as plankton, snails, worms, and insects attracts many birds and small mammals. The freshwater pond is seasonal, present in the winter and spring. The salt marsh, however, exists year-round. The marshes and ponds are popular birdwatching places for visitors.

#### Secondary Themes:

Happy as a clam - for a while: At one time, the Pismo clam was common on the Monterey Bay shoreline. As mentioned below, clambakes were part of the entertainment at Camp Goodall. Clamming was as prevalent as fishing. Clamdiggers took their six-tined potato forks to the beaches and probed in the sand for the hard shells of the mollusks. Heavy harvesting by humans and pollution have depleted the clam population so much that, today, few clams are found in this part of the state. The Pismo clam was also an important food for the sea otter.

Building to last: From 1935 to 1941, the Civilian Conservation Corps was active in the Santa Cruz area. These young men, employed by the federal government, worked all over the country developing parks and forest areas. Within the California State Park System alone, more than 10,000 man years of

labor were put into park development work. At Sunset State Beach, the CCC was responsible for the construction of the north picnic ramada, some masonry stoves, and 25 campsites in Pine Hollow. The ramada, stoves, and campground are still in use, and stand in evidence of the quality workmanship of the CCC.

Echoes of good times: The beaches of Santa Cruz County have long attracted tourists, both for sightseeing and for recreation. Camp Goodall, a popular seaside resort, was located at the site of the present Sunset State Beach, near the mouth of the Pajaro River. Interested persons could find space for short-term tenting. Camp Goodall was noted for the extensive clam beds in the vicinity, and clambakes were frequent occurrences. The bathing beach was often lined with people, in the bathing costumes of the time, playing in the surf and sunning themselves on the shore.

Peaceful farm life on the coast: Within Sunset State Beach is an enclave of the past. The Van Laanen farm, currently occupied by Mrs. Van Laanen, was begun in the 1880s and was purchased by Mrs. Van Laanen's parents in 1938. The Kelleys, Mrs. Van Laanen's parents, operated a dairy, raised turkeys and chickens for market, and maintained a large garden. Mrs. Agnes Van Laanen discontinued the dairy in the early 1950s, and went into truck farming. Today, the farm property is owned by the state and operated as part of the state beach, but the farm buildings remain to remind visitors of what once was the typical landscape of this coast. Mrs. Van Laanen continues to reside on the farm property.

#### Proposed Interpretation

##### Facilities and Media:

It is proposed that one sand dune boardwalk be adapted for use as a self-guided interpretive trail. To do this, interpretive panels should be installed at the vista points. Potential themes for these panels are: "Rebuilding the natural garden," "building grain-by-grain," and "living with the shifting sands." In addition to these panels, numbered posts along the boardwalk could be keyed to text in a brochure that interprets the sand dune ecology and the views seen from the boardwalk.

The small fresh and saltwater marshes and ponds at the south end of Sunset State Beach are popular feeding and resting stops for waterfowl and consequently are popular with birdwatchers. A boardwalk in this area would prevent accidental trampling of the fragile marsh plant life and could include a birdwatching platform in a quiet area. A small interpretive area could be incorporated into the birdwatching platform in the form of a grouping of exhibit shelters and a seating area.

A brief examination of the Van Laanen farm buildings led to the following conclusions: the barn and milk shed/creamery should be stabilized and preserved in their present condition, with barriers erected for public safety and appropriate equipment exhibited inside, if available. The Van Laanen home exterior should be restored to its c. 1920s appearance and used as a small house museum to house interpretive displays on the history and natural history of the park. Space is not sufficient for large meetings or audio-visual programs. All the buildings and building sites should be signed to indicate

their original purpose and approximate construction dates. Use of the remaining structures will be determined upon completion of an historic structures survey and individual building evaluation.

The CCC-constructed north picnic ramada should be retained and repaired in kind when necessary. The structure should be signed to interpret its history.

The development of the new day-use area near the entrance to the park will create a new entry point for visitors. Exhibit shelters should be installed in this area to introduce and interpret Sunset State Beach to the visitors. Panels could be rotated on a seasonal basis as appropriate.

The campfire center is in need of rehabilitation. Currently, the projection booth is too far from the screen, the screen needs to be enclosed for security and safety, rows of seats are too far apart, and windbreaks are needed for the comfort of the visitors. These improvements, and others as needed, should be undertaken.

Because of the high percentage of Spanish-speaking visitors who frequent the Palm Beach area of the park, bilingual signing and interpretive panels and programs are recommended for that area. Interpretive panels regarding the beach and dune-related themes are proposed for this area.

#### Visitor Activities

The present campfire programs, nature walks, and Junior Ranger program should continue. In addition, docent or ranger led walks could be conducted in the marsh areas.

It is recommended that a Junior Lifeguard program be instituted at the park. The program could meet at the group picnic ramadas, as well as on the beach.

#### Interpretive Concessions

There are currently no interpretive concessions operating at Sunset State Beach (see Concessions Element).

#### Interpretive Associations

Members of the Monterey Bay Natural-Historical Association occasionally volunteer at Sunset State Beach to conduct interpretive walks. This practice should be continued and additional volunteers sought who are interested in this specific park. If there is space for a small docent-operated store in the Van Laanen house, when the house becomes available to the department, such a use would be appropriate. A docent-operated store would sell books, postcards, and other interpretive materials related to the park's natural and cultural history.

#### Interpretive Collections

There are no interpretive collections associated with Sunset State Beach.

## Recommendations

### Research Needs:

Further research is needed on the Van Laanen farm, and its occupants, for specific exhibit and program recommendations.

### Interpretive Priorities:

- Encourage volunteerism and greater participation in interpretive programs, specifically for assistance at Sunset State Beach.
- Initiate a Junior Lifeguard program.
- Place bilingual panels and signs at Palm Beach.
- Rehabilitate the campfire center.
- Place interpretive signs/panels at the CCC-constructed picnic ramada.
- Install exhibit shelters in the north day-use area near the park entrance.
- Install interpretive panels at the vista points along the dune boardwalk.
- Produce a self-guided trail brochure for the dune boardwalk.
- Develop the marsh and pond birdwatching and interpretive complex.
- Develop a ranger explorer program.
- Develop interpretive programs and exhibits at Palm Beach with primary focus to Hispanic community.





# CONCESSIONS ELEMENT

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## CONCESSIONS ELEMENT

### Purpose

The purpose of the Concessions Element, which is part of the General Plan for a park unit, is to evaluate existing and potential concessions in accordance with the Public Resources Code, Section 5080.03 et. seq., and the classification of the park unit.

Public Resources Code, Section 5080.03(c) states:

"With respect to any unit of the State Park System for which a general development plan has been approved by the commission, any proposed concession at that unit shall be compatible with that plan."

### Objectives

The objectives of the Concessions Element are to:

1. Examine previous or existing concessions within the unit.
2. Examine current and future concession needs of the visitor.
3. Examine park needs for any development, services, etc., which may be included in a concession contract.
4. Recommend appropriate concessions for the park unit in accordance with Public Resources Code, Park and Recreation Commission policy, and the findings presented in other elements of the General Plan.
5. Examine a concession's relationship with cooperating associations, docent groups, and any other nonprofit organizations affiliated with the park unit.

### Scope

The Concessions Element is a guide to assist in the development of concessions within state parks. The Concessions Element should provide direction as to the appropriateness of a concession within a specified unit, and to ensure consistent management practices.

The intent of a concession is to provide the public with goods, services, or facilities for a specified period of time which the department cannot provide as conveniently or efficiently. Concessions should not create an added financial burden and, whenever possible, reduce costs and/or generate revenue to aid in the maintenance of the State Park System. Concessions shall not be entered into solely for their revenue-producing potential.

It is the policy of the department to cultivate and encourage small businesses, including those that are ethnic and minority-owned/operated, as concessionaires within the State Park System.

It is the department's policy to generally avoid entering into convenience-type concession agreements for facilities, products, or programs that are already adequately provided for a short distance outside state park unit boundaries.

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.

#### Concession History and Current Services

Mobile food unit service has been offered at Sunset State Beach occasionally over the past few years on a seasonal basis under short-term contracts.

#### Concession Recommendations

Mobile food units can provide adequate service under short-term contracts as the need arises. Should the need for services increase at some time in the future, a longer term contract could be entered into through the public bidding process.

As camping at Sunset State Beach increases in popularity, a campstore may be considered at an appropriate location near the campground. There are no such services at this time in the immediate vicinity of the park.

While it is impossible at this time to predict all potential concession activities for Sunset State Beach, specific proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis for feasibility and appropriateness.

# OPERATIONS ELEMENT

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## OPERATIONS ELEMENT

Sunset State Beach is operated as part of the Pajaro Coast District. Administrative services are provided from the district office, which is currently located in Aptos, California. Visitor services and maintenance are provided from New Brighton and Seacliff State Beach. Volunteers are active in the interpretation of the unit's features.

### Goals and Objectives

Sunset State Beach is noted for its campgrounds, sand dunes, and beaches. Public recreation at the unit includes camping, hiking, nature study, picnicking, sunbathing, and water-oriented sports. The department's operational goal is to provide protection that is appropriate and necessary to maintain visitor safety and perpetuate features and resource values at Sunset State Beach.

### Primary Operational Objectives

- A. To provide a high quality visitor experience to a diverse population including:
  - 1. Secured area for vehicles.
  - 2. Safe and clean day use areas.
  - 3. A viable information, orientation, and interpretive service.
  - 4. On-the-spot emergency care.
  - 5. Equipment for visitor use that is functional and safe.
  - 6. Areas that are removed from daily annoyances.
  - 7. Activities that allow visitor participation.
  - 8. A fair fee collecting process.
  - 9. An environmental educational experience to groups and individuals.
  
- B. Protection of natural resources by:
  - 1. Completing a comprehensive fire management plan.
  - 2. Developing an ongoing resource management plan.
  - 3. Controlling non-native vegetation that is not important and revegetate with native vegetation.
  - 4. Limiting visitor impact on natural areas through trails, fencing, and signs.
  - 5. Maintaining a vector control program.
  - 6. Maintaining an ongoing sign program.
  - 7. Yearly tree hazard inspections.

### Recommendations

#### Maintenance

For maintenance purposes, Sunset State Beach is currently administered as part of the South Sector within the Pajaro Coast District. Currently, the staff at Sunset State Beach also maintains Manresa State Beach.

Sunset State Beach contains a small maintenance facility for equipment and supplies used by both housekeeping and maintenance personnel. The space is limited, and some interior alterations have been made to accommodate equipment

needs necessitated by new campground construction at Manresa State Beach. Maintenance vehicles, heavy equipment, and visitor services vehicles are based at the primary district maintenance shop located 12 miles away at New Brighton State Beach. All vehicle maintenance is done at Seacliff State Beach.

#### Recommendations

Facility maintenance and housekeeping shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to meet standards for public health and safety, to maintain public and department expectations for cleanliness and appearance, to meet security requirements, and to preserve historic structures for visitor use and interpretation.

To accommodate the vast maintenance needs of Sunset State Beach, an alternative maintenance facility or expansion of the existing site facilities is recommended.

Additional staff and equipment will be needed to meet the increased demands for campground and day use facilities and to provide regularly scheduled beach cleaning (sand-sifting). This will help provide a clean, hazard-free environment for visitors.

Trail, roadway, pedestrian, and disabled accessways will be developed and maintained to provide safe and convenient access throughout the unit.

The water and sanitation facilities/systems will be maintained at a level to provide adequate and safe water and sanitation.

Future development of day use and camping facilities will consider disabled visitor needs.

#### Law Enforcement

Sunset State Beach has moderate to serious law enforcement problems. Common violations include drug and alcohol related crimes, auto burglaries, theft, vandalism, drunk driving, sexual assaults, indecent exposures, and domestic violence. These problems occur predominantly at Palm Beach.

The Sunset area includes a family-oriented campground and day use picnic area. With family use, there is not an extensive law enforcement problem in this area. However, thefts occur and non-visitor use of park facilities is a operational problem.

State park peace officers in this unit receive law enforcement assistance from the Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department and the Santa Cruz County Narcotics Enforcement Team. State park peace officers, in turn, provide assistance to the Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department and Narcotics Enforcement Team in apprehending suspects, conducting investigations, public safety training, and assisting with surf and vessel rescues. The ability for public safety response is required 24 hours per day 365 days per year.

#### Recommendation

Regular public safety patrols and investigations will be performed to establish a law enforcement presence, prevent crime, and apprehend violators.



A crime prevention program will continue and will be required in this unit to reduce drug and alcohol use, vandalism, theft, burglary, and other adverse activities affecting the visitor security and the integrity of unit resources and facilities. Citizen education and participation will be essential toward preventive action.

As public visitation, recreation, and law enforcement concerns increase at this unit, peace officer staffing, equipment, and training needs are recommended for public safety and officer safety at this unit.

### Visitor and Aquatic Safety

The Aquatic Safety Task Force prepared a report in September 1988 that indicates aquatic users of the Pajaro Coast can be exposed to rip-currents, piers, jetties, and hazards of the rivermouth areas. The report states that proper mitigation includes signage, interpretive panels, junior ranger/junior lifeguard programs, community school programs, and provisions of lifeguard personnel. Rip-currents and a rivermouth exist at Sunset State Beach. Therefore, provisions for the appropriate mitigation have been discussed in both the Interpretive Element and the Land Use and Facilities Element.

The 18,000 feet of sandy beach is one of the main attractions to this unit. This beach is popular for various types of aquatic activities, such as swimming, surfing, windsurfing, body surfing, kayaking, fishing, and boating.

Beach access to this beach unit is extensive, including three day use parking lots, a 90-campsite campground, and several hundred beachfront homes and condominiums. This has produced year-round beach and aquatic activity, with extensive aquatic use during the spring, summer, and fall months.

Large surf regularly occurs at this unit, with a corresponding increase in the size and frequency of rip currents. Fatalities have occurred at this unit due to these conditions and the lack of understanding of these dangers by a large percentage of the day use visitors using the Palm Beach area.

The shallow water directly adjacent to this beach attracts fishermen both onshore and by boat. This has created conflict and injury with swimmers and waders.

Currently, there is seasonal lifeguard service assigned to Sunset State Beach, with a lifeguard tower at both Sunset and Palm Beaches.

### Recommendation

The unit's geographical makeup, combined with increased use and visitation, necessitates increased aquatic safety coverage.

Lifeguard service by seasonal lifeguards is needed to meet year-round aquatic safety needs of this unit. A minimum of four portable lifeguard towers are recommended.

A seasonal aquatic patrol unit is desirable to provide backup response for the lifeguard towers during high-use periods and for preventive aquatic patrol during the "off season".

As visitor and aquatic recreation increases at this unit, aquatic seasonal staffing and equipment needs may also increase for public safety at this beach.

A lifeguard headquarters facility is needed to coordinate the aquatic program in the South Sector. One potential site for this facility is at Sunset State Beach, located on the service road at the bluff water tank. Alternative sites may exist at other units and shall be evaluated during the implementation of the Pajaro District Aquatic Safety Program.

Bilingual signs have been designed and placed strategically at this unit for the primary benefit of the local Hispanic community. This program will be maintained and enhanced as needed.

To assist this department in meeting its goals in public safety and improve community relations, a youth awareness program should be implemented in the Palm Beach area of this unit. This program will be target primarily the youth in the local Hispanic community, with future expansion to the inner cities throughout the Bay area. The scope of this program will be marketing the State Park System with emphasis on beach safety.

### Special Considerations

#### Palm Beach Area

Separate public access is provided to the Palm Beach area. Day use parking and picnic facilities at Palm Beach are currently free to users, with no entrance station or monitored access.

Parking and traffic conditions along Beach Road and Shell Road are difficult to manage during peak use periods and busy weekends. Free day use imposed by the State Coastal Commission as a condition of the coastal development permit, along with limited size parking facilities, compounds this parking situation. This area receives predominant use by Spanish speaking visitors from the Watsonville Hispanic community. Spanish bilingual signing is proposed and special communication skills are needed by staff working at the Palm Beach area.

#### Palm Beach - Radio Towers

Privately developed radio transmission towers are situated within the wetlands area of Palm Beach, under lease agreement with our department. Periodic facility maintenance and operation by private owners requires special consideration for potential impacts on resources and their management. Continued use of state beach wetlands for transmission facilities is not recommended.

#### Pajaro River Mouth/Watsonville Slough

The water level of the river mouth lagoon and Watsonville Slough are affected by a sand bar which naturally builds up and blocks the river mouth. This causes the slough to rise and flood areas along Shell Road, Beach Road, and the Palm Beach access.

The sand bar is occasionally breached to prevent flooding of roads and agricultural fields, and to reduce mosquito breeding. However, this can have a significant effect on the fish and invertebrate populations in the lagoon.

Even though the river mouth is within Zmudowski State Beach, the issues affecting the river mouth's management primarily affect Sunset State Beach and Santa Cruz County; therefore, Pajaro Coast District staff have been the primary department representatives on the Pajaro River task force formed by Santa Cruz County. Proper management of the lagoon is a vital concern to the department.

The department shall work with Santa Cruz County and appropriate state and local agencies toward proper management, protection, and enhancement of the Pajaro River mouth, and its associated natural values.

### Agriculture

Sunset State Beach is bordered by agricultural fields. The County Agricultural Pesticide Inspectors closely monitor and regulate pesticide spraying. Campsite closures and evacuation plans are activated when site conditions pose a health problem for visitors and park employees. The eastern park boundary does not provide a dense vegetative or physical "buffer zone" between the campground and farm labor camp and agricultural fields. Increased patrols, new fencing, and additional barrier planting should be implemented along the eastern park boundary.

### Public vs. Private Access

Several private residences are developed as an inholding within Sunset State Beach. Sunset Beach Road is in multiple ownership and provides the only access to these residences and the state beach and campground facilities. This combined use of the park entrance creates potential conflicts between private vehicles and visitor traffic. Special management considerations and vehicle control measures may be necessary. Additional entrance signing and implementation of proposed entrance facilities will reduce conflicts.

### Structures in the Zone of Exclusion

Structures have been developed within what is currently the "zone of exclusion" (see Figure 1). These structures are primarily single-family homes on private property. Some of the structures may be at risk from future landslides, though no homes have been lost to date. Cliff-top and bluff instability may threaten adjacent structures and is a regional problem that extends well beyond the vicinity of Sunset State Beach.

The department shall continue to work with adjacent residents and landowners, and appropriate local, regional, and state agencies to identify and propose solutions which will reduce any existing hazards associated with the presence of structures within the zone of exclusion. If the opportunity becomes available, the department should participate in an interagency task force to develop regional approaches to this problem.

### Vegetation Management

The operations staff will be responsible for both removing non-native plants and for revegetating with native plants. Tree hazard control will continue for visitor safety.

### Animal Control

Unit staff will remove and control dogs, ground squirrels, and feral cats that endanger visitors and native wildlife. Staff should receive appropriate training in this area, and be provided with specialized equipment.

### Volunteerism

A docent program (currently under the management of the Monterey Bay Natural-Historical Association) will continue as appropriate. Volunteers could assist in conducting guided walks and talks and give presentations to various groups. Interpretive displays could be maintained by volunteers. The district's Ranger Explorer program should be continued and encouraged.

Other volunteer projects could be accomplished by this organization, such as native plant revegetation, trail clearing and maintenance, and fence or stair building.

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ELEMENT

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## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ELEMENT

The general plan, with all its elements, constitutes an environmental impact report (EIR) as required by state law (Public Resources Code Sections 5002.2 and 21000 et seq.). The Environmental Impact Element will discuss the topics usually discussed in an EIR.

When a point has been adequately discussed in another element of this general plan, it is mentioned in this element by reference to that discussion to avoid redundancy.

### Summary

Following are the major environmental effects that will result from the implementation of this project, and the major mitigation measures that will reduce or eliminate those environmental effects. Mitigation measures will be monitored.

In general, the proposals at Sunset State Beach will benefit the unit's environment and improve facilities for the public.

### Project Description

The Resource Element, the Land Use and Facilities Element, the Operations Element, and the Concessions Element in this plan propose how the unit will be used, how resources will be protected, and what facilities will be constructed.

### Description of the Environmental Setting

Refer to the Resource Element for a description of the natural and cultural environment of this unit. The Land Use and Facilities Element and, to a lesser degree, other elements also describe the existing natural environment and human influences on the environment.

In addition to those descriptions of the local environmental setting, please note the following:

#### Air Quality

Air quality along the Monterey Bay coast is generally good because of the influx of clean air off the Pacific Ocean. The Salinas II Monitoring Station records in 1988 indicated that gaseous and particulate pollutants were below state and national standards during the period when records were kept. Records at other Central Coast monitoring stations substantiated these findings, but their records were less complete. However, the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution District is currently not attaining the standards for ozone. On five days during September and October, but only at the Hollister Station, the California Ambient Air Quality Standards were exceeded. The less-stringent Federal Standards were not exceeded.

## Traffic Circulation and Parking

Access to the main entrance of Sunset State Beach is via Sunset Beach Road, which connects with San Andreas Road and then Beach Road to State Highway 1 about four miles to the east. Access to the Palm Beach unit is via Beach Road from State Highway 1 and the City of Watsonville. (See the Land Use and Facilities Element for details on circulation at the entrance and within Sunset State Beach.)

## Public Services

Water, sewer, telephone, and electric services are provided to this unit. The Palm Beach unit is connected to a local sewer system. The rest of the unit is on a septic tank - leachfield system.

(See the Operations Element for existing public safety, law enforcement, and aquatic safety procedures, and personnel responsibilities and capabilities.)

## Significant Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project

Most of the proposals as described in the Land Use and Facilities Element and the Resource Element will ameliorate existing adverse conditions at Sunset State Beach. Several possible significant effects to the environment, which already exist or may be caused by the project, are:

Soils and Geology: The state beach's soils consist mainly of sand dunes complex (see Resource Element). The proposed project includes features that will protect the dunes. Human use, unless mitigated, could cause beach erosion and sand dune erosion. Likewise, proposed construction could denude areas of the dune and make the dunes more susceptible to wind erosion.

The closest segment of the San Andreas Fault is located approximately nine miles northeast of Sunset State Beach. No damage to facilities was reported at this unit as a result of the October 17, 1989 earthquake.

Energy: The use of energy by construction equipment will be a short-term effect. Long-term energy uses will include maintenance, emergency and patrol vehicles, and vehicles driven by the public to reach the unit.

Vegetation and Wildlife: Some native vegetation and wildlife may be minimally affected by proposed project construction and, intentionally or unintentionally, by the public. The coastal gumplant (Grindelia latifolia ssp.) is listed as a rare plant by the California Native Plant Society. It is not on state or federal lists, however. It is abundant locally in the salt marsh community at the south end of the state beach.

Many species of wildlife use or visit the area (see Resource Element). The California brown pelican, an endangered species, occurs in the area. The beach contains potential habitat for the federally endangered Smith's blue butterfly and the endangered least tern. Among species of special concern, Sunset State Beach provides habitat for the northern harrier, snowy plover, and the California black legless lizard.



The plan proposes that selected eucalyptus trees will be removed to provide more day use beach parking at both the main unit and the Palm Beach unit. Other exotic plants may be removed and replanted with native species.

The state-listed, threatened, Guadalupe fur seal may venture near the beach, and the federally listed, threatened, southern sea otter has been seen offshore. Offsite influences and development and uses within the unit are a potential threat to these resources.

The Resource Element describes in detail a plan for how the vegetation and wildlife will be managed at Sunset State beach.

Cultural: The Resource Element discusses the standing historic structures and historic sites. No prehistoric archeological sites were located during a literature search or field survey of the unit.

Traffic Circulation and Parking: The Land Use and Facilities Plan proposes ways to alleviate the existing entrance problems at the main entrance. The new design should separate public recreation use from local private homes where feasible, increase visitor parking, and improve esthetics.

Esthetics: The Resource Element describes this topic. Several visual unesthetic features are in the area, such as the radio towers near Palm Beach, overhead powerlines, and the agricultural fields. Agricultural pesticide drift sometimes affect park visitors.

Public Services: This plan proposes continued services. (See Operations Element and Interpretive Element.)

Recreation Safety: Certain hazards exist for the unwary recreationist. These include ocean or surf hazards such as rip currents, tides, and unexpected high waves. Winter storms and rare tsunami conditions are especially dangerous. There are also hazards on the cliffs and bluffs (see the Operations Element). Pesticides from nearby agricultural fields could be a hazard to state beach users, especially in the campground area.

### Mitigation Measures

The resource management policies in the Resource Element should be referred to for guidance on the protection of the unit's natural and cultural resources. Several mitigation measures are specified here.

Soils and Geology: Proposed roads, parking area, and trails in the state beach and trails in the proposed natural preserve will be designed so that water runoff will not erode soils. Design features such as boardwalks and landscaping with native vegetation will help prevent soil erosion.

Signs and fencing will be installed to keep people off the cliffs, bluffs, and fragile sites.

Beach erosion is a regional and statewide problem. The department will work with the Corps of Engineers and other agencies in finding long-range solutions. (See Resource Element policies.)

Energy: Use of construction machinery will be minimized to conserve energy.

Vegetation and Wildlife: Resource policies in the Resource Element for plants and animals will be followed. Removal of trees for resource management or facility development purposes that are known to be used by monarch butterflies for roost sites will not occur until alternative habitat suitable for perpetuating overwintering activities in the area can be assured.

Rare and endangered species will be protected from the public by limiting or restricting public use. The proposed freshwater lagoon natural preserve will help protect sensitive plant and wildlife habitats. Resource Element policies will also protect wetlands at Palm Beach.

Exotic species will be removed in favor of native species of plants.

Cultural: The Land Use and Facilities Plan Element proposes to stabilize and preserve the remaining Van Laanen Farm Complex as much as possible. Some of the buildings may be stabilized or restored and used for adaptive use such as interpretive use. The CCC-built north picnic ramada will be preserved. Other cultural features are indicated in the Land Use and Facilities Element, the Resource Element, or the Interpretive Element.

Esthetics: The proposed project will improve esthetics throughout the developed area.

The project will: 1) rehabilitate areas that have received heavy use that has left visual scars on soils; 2) construct new facilities that are visually attractive; 3) design access and trails that will protect cliffs, dunes, wetlands, and vegetation and will look attractive; and 4) landscape and screen with an emphasis on native vegetation.

Visitor Safety: Unit personnel will help visitors needing emergency attention. Signs warning visitors about surf conditions, or that a lifeguard may not be on duty, will be prominently displayed.

The Department shall work with the adjacent landowners and local government officials to minimize the potential for accidental pesticide application on Sunset State Beach.

Interpretive displays and unit personnel will assist in informing the public.

Traffic Circulation and Parking: The proposed Land Use and Facilities Element will improve the traffic circulation and provide more parking for both units of Sunset State Beach. This will help mitigate the demand for parking during some of the peak days.

Any Significant Environmental Effects That Cannot Be  
Avoided if the Proposal is Implemented

Most environmental problems can be effectively mitigated, as described in this plan. Traffic problems on peak days will be one problem that cannot be mitigated. These occasions would be infrequent, and this is not considered a significant effect.

### Alternatives to Proposed Project

The preferred alternative is described in this plan. None of the alternatives seriously considered differ significantly from the proposed plan. Consideration was given to camping near the entrance, free day use at the north beach parking lot, and separate private road access to inholdings. These alternatives, if implemented, may cause greater law enforcement problems and impacts to existing resources by reducing visitor control in this area.

Other alternatives would be variations of the proposed plan. For example, there could be variations in the size of the parking lots and road alignment.

The No Project alternative was also assessed. All existing problems described in this element would probably be exacerbated by this alternative.

### Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of the Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

The proposed short-term uses of the unit will be similar to present uses. The proposed project should be a long-term solution to the needs of the public for parking, beach access, improved maintenance, and visitor protection. In addition, the natural and cultural resources will be better protected.

### Any Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes if the Proposed Project is Implemented

None.

### Growth-Inducing Impacts of Proposed Project

This project will not increase permanent human population in the area. The number of parking spaces being proposed exceeds the existing number. Parking infrequently reaches capacity, and does not have a significant impact.



COMMENTS AND RESPONSES  
GENERAL PLANS AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENT  
NEW BRIGHTON, SEACLIFF, AND SUNSET STATE BEACHES  
SCH #86011401

Review copies were provided to the following on and subsequent to February 7, 1990. The review period ended on March 23, 1990.

State Clearinghouse (10 copies)

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta, House of Representatives  
The Honorable Byron Sher, Member of the Assembly  
The Honorable Eric Seastrand, Member of the Assembly  
The Honorable Henry J. Mello, Member of the Senate  
The Honorable Sam Farr, Member of the Assembly  
Wallace J. Rothbart, Caltrans District 4  
Bruce Elliott, California Department of Fish and Game  
Rick Hyman, California Coastal Commission  
Debbie Townsend, State Lands Commission  
Larry Pearson, Associate Planner, City of Santa Cruz, Planning and Community  
Development  
David Laughlin, Chief, Housing and Community Development, County of Santa Cruz  
Steve Russell, Director, Capitola Planning Department  
Jim Lang, Director, City of Santa Cruz  
Alyse Jacobson & Laurie Marcus, California Coastal Conservancy  
Benton Angrove, Director, Santa Cruz County Parks Department  
Sierra Club Coastal Task Force, c/o Carl Larson  
U.S. Heritage, Conservation and Recreation Service  
Devon Bates, Regional Coordinator, California Coastal Commission  
Ed Inai, State Lands Commission  
Southern Pacific Transportation Company  
La Selva Beach Improvement Association  
Pajaro Dunes Homeowners Association, South  
Cypress Townhouse Project Committee  
Pajaro Dunes Shorebirds  
Rio Del Mar Improvement Association  
Place de Mer Townhouse Association  
Pot Belly Beach Club  
Santa Cruz Historical Society  
Seacliff Park, Inc.  
Council of Improvement Associations  
Seacliff Beach Association  
Santa Cruz County Hostel Society  
Santa Cruz Archeological Society  
Santa Cruz County Horsemen's Association  
Sand Dollar Beach Homeowners Association  
Sunset Beach Homeowners Association  
Sunset Beach Erosion Committee  
Santa Cruz Chapter - Sierra Club  
Jacqueline O'Connor, President, Seacliff Beach Homeowners Association  
Rose S. Costa, Friends of the Pier  
Alex K. Peabody, California Association of Lifeguards

Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Stoessel, Seacliff Park Association  
 Steve Matarazzo, Santa Cruz County Planning Department  
 Joan Stoker Rost, Sierra Club  
 Santa Cruz Public Library, Attention Debora Jones  
 Santa Cruz Sentinel, Attention Barbara McKenna  
 Santa Cruz Transportation Commission, Attention Linda Wilshusen, Executive  
 Director  
 John Lane, Biologist, Santa Cruz City Museum  
 Katherine Snow, Monarch Project  
 Brad Gordon, California Native Plant Society  
 Chairperson, Monterey Bay Natural Historical Association  
 John McEnery, Seabright Homeowners Association  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge  
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Port District, Attention Roderick A. Chisholm II  
 Watsonville Planning Department  
 Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments  
 Dr. Robert Mark, Sierra Club State Park Task Force  
 Gail Kobetich, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services  
 James D. Carson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services  
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Point Reyes Bird Observatory  
 Robert Elliot  
 Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities, Attention Mike Molesky  
 Joan Scanlon, MENHA  
 The Honorable Robley Levy, Supervisor, County of Santa Cruz  
 Leon Mattingly (Sunset only)  
 Julie Goodnight, Coastal Conservancy (Sunset)  
 George McNeely (Sunset)  
 Norman Case (Sunset)  
 Ken T. Schantz

A notice announcing the location of copies of the documents for public review was published in the following newspapers:

The Santa Cruz Sentinel  
 The Register - Pajorianian

Documents were available at the following locations for public review:

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

Watsonville Public Library  
 310 Union  
 Watsonville, CA 95076

Santa Cruz Public Library System  
 Branciforte Library  
 230 Gault Street  
 Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Santa Cruz Public Library System  
 Aptos Library  
 7695 Soquel Drive  
 Aptos, CA 95003

Department of Parks and Recreation  
 Pajaro Coast District  
 101 Madeline Drive  
 Aptos, CA 95003

Department of Parks and Recreation  
 Central Coast Region Headquarters  
 2211 Garden Road  
 Monterey, CA 93940

Comments were received from the following agencies, organizations, and individuals:

California Coastal Commission, Central Coast Area Office  
Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission  
California Recreational Trails Committee, William Bliss  
Sierra Club Ventana Chapter, John Stonum Chair, Santa Cruz Regional Group  
Sunset Beach Improvement Association, Margaret Felts, Secretary  
Aptos Neighbors Association, Peter Carr, President AHA  
New Brighton Beach Action Coalition, Pat Manning, Chair  
Save Our Shores, Michael J. Humenik, Chair  
Barbara G. McGee (petition with 20 names)

G-3074R





**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

CENTRAL COAST AREA OFFICE  
640 CAPITOLA ROAD  
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062



March 21, 1990

California Department of Parks & Recreation  
Resource Protection Division  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Subject: Preliminary General Plans for: New Brighton,  
Seacliff and Sunset State Beaches

Attention: James Doyle - Environmental Review Section

Dear Mr. Doyle:

The California Coastal Commission staff has reviewed the Preliminary General Plans for the three state beaches and offer the following comments.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

While the Coastal Commission concurs with the General Plan's broad environmental review, a detailed environmental analysis must be conducted for all significant individual development projects pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Coastal Commission will continue to take part in this review as a responsible agency. All subject units are in Communities with certified Local Coastal Programs (LCP's), therefore, the final documents should include a section on permit procedures for all new developments. All proposed developments, such as a new entrance facility, will have to comply with the Coastal permit procedures of each respective LCP. In addition, cumulative environmental impacts of each project should be in compliance with the LCP's and CEQA. 1

A general review of policies consistent with Section 3.0 of the Santa Cruz Local Coastal Plan (SCLCP) dealing with hazards should be discussed with an emphasis placed on Section 3.1.9 in response to the October 17, 1989 earthquake. 2

Slope stability and erosion concerns should be consistent with the policies under Section 3.2 of the SCLCP. In addition, when determining zones of exclusion the review should include the analysis required by Section 3.3.6 of the SCLCP.

The final documents should identify a project time frame and priority list as well as a more detailed analysis of each proposed project. 3

NEW BRIGHTON STATE BEACH

The Coastal Commission acknowledges the need for a new entrance road and entrance facility. The proposal for such an entrance, however, is vague and unclear. A concrete plan for the construction as well as a time-frame for this project should be identified for the final document. The new road entrance should also be analyzed relative to traffic and circulation. 4

Currently no bicycle paths exist along the entrance road. The interim development plan for the existing entrance road needs to include such paths, especially near and under the trestle. In addition, the park as a whole contains no visible bicycle trails. The SCLCP's policies fully support development of bicycle trails throughout state beach systems. New trail proposals should be included in the final documents. In addition, adequate indicative signing should accompany all new trails and roads. 5

Improved beach access for the Loop A campsites (southern sites) should be considered. The proposed new access stairway from the campground (Loop C) to the beach-level restroom facility needs to be constructed in a way to avoid additional bluff erosion as well as to withstand such erosion when it naturally occurs. 6

The landscape restoration program discussed on page 29 needs to be more clearly identified and developed. The timing of this project should also be indicated. The need for hazard signing along the beach at the north-end cliffs has intensified since the October 17, 1989 earthquake and should be included in the final document. 7

A forest management plan component needs to be addressed as a means of providing butterfly protection. The pruning of eucalyptus tree branches, discussed on page 62, does not identify the impacts of such pruning on the Monarch butterfly habitat. While the department encourages continued public and private management and protection efforts for the Monarch butterfly habitat (page 45), the plan does not identify a possibility for additional acquisition of land or of creating a Natural Preserve designation. Such possibilities should be discussed in the final document. 8

Greater emphasis should be placed on a more extensive beach shuttle service, this is supported by Section 4.14.1 of the SCLCP. 9

SEACLIFF STATE BEACH

Improvements to the entrance road and entrance station were proposed on page 41, however, no clear plans for the project were discussed. The final document should contain a detailed analysis of the proposed entrance road. Such a path should be included in the entrance improvement project. 16

The bluff adjacent to the entrance kiosk is susceptible to excessive erosion due to human trampling. A protective fence could ameliorate this problem. 17

The General Plan should include impacts of the October 17, 1989 earthquake. Page 68 briefly acknowledged the occurrence of cliff erosion and tree felling as a result of the seismic activity. Much more detailed analysis of the long term impacts would be included in the final document. The analysis should include a discussion of possible slide prevention measures. 18

No clear, long-term restoration plans, including revegetation and restabilization projects were identified. Bluff restabilization should be a top priority.

The current seawall maintenance program does not conform to shoreline structure development criteria (see attachment). A more in-depth analysis of the shoreline protective device alternative (pages 24 & 33) is needed for the final document. The 1984 report, which estimated annual cost of "maintenance repair and replacement" to be \$150,000, is not clearly stated. In addition, the revenues have been lower and the costs greater than the 1984 estimates. Some consideration should be given to possible alternative seawall designs, to be implemented when continued seawall maintenance and storm damage repairs become infeasible or if actual collapse occurs. 19

Would redesigning a portion of the existing day-use parking area upcoast from the visitor center to accommodate large recreational vehicles, as proposed on page 42, cut down on day-use potential? This is not clearly stated in the proposal. Due to past storm damages to recreational vehicle campsites on the beach, the Coastal Commission strongly encourages putting future RV/campsite facilities in the undeveloped overflow parking area set back from the cliffs and screened by heavy vegetative buffer from the adjacent residential areas. 20

A possible pier extension was briefly mentioned on page 44. A detailed discussion of such a possibility needs to be included in the final document before any judgement of the appropriateness of the project can be formulated. 21

Public parking and beach access along Beach Drive from Beach Island to the south-end beach restrooms should be developed. This half mile strip is currently under-utilized by the general public due to the lack of public parking. 22

The text of the final document should include a discussion of how open space easements are utilized consistent with the Allowable Use Intensity map on page 77. 23

SUNSET STATE BEACH

Currently no designated bicycle trails exist on the entrance road or throughout the park. An interim bicycle path should be designated on the existing entrance road. A path should also be included in the new entrance road project. New trail proposals throughout the park should be included in the final document. In addition, adequate indicative signing should accompany all new trails and be added to the existing trails.

38

In response to Section 5.3.3 of the SCLCP, the bicycle trail connecting Palm Beach to Sunset Beach should be expanded and proper signing should be provided. A possible bicycle link through Pajaro Dunes to the mouth of the Pajaro River should be included in the final document as required by Section 4.15.14 of the SCLCP. This mile stretch of state beach appears private due to the "locked gate" development at Pajaro Dunes.

The final document should cite Section 5.1.3 of the SCLCP which is consistent with the proposal to expand overnight camping sites and RV spaces in appropriate locations. Further discussion is needed, however, for the two new group camps north of Dunes Camp.

39

Present development encroachments upon the public beach are mentioned briefly on pages 16 and 27. Such encroachments are inconsistent with Sections 3.3.8 and 4.3.3 of the SCLCP. A more detailed analysis on protection of private property as well as State Park facilities in accordance with LCP policies is needed. Structural alternatives are not warranted for the present or planned park facilities.

40

A discussion of a possible vegetation screen from the Shorebirds condominium complex should be included in the final document.

Trail access across the sand dunes should be limited and revegetation of this area initiated in order to prevent possible dune blowouts. Day use picnic areas should have designated boardwalk crossovers.

41

The protection policy for the Monarch butterfly, discussed on page 39, is not clear. Perhaps tree removal should be tied to a forest management plan component.

42

The final document should include a discussion of the possibility of extending the multi-lingual interpretive panels and signs to the entire unit and possibly to the other units.

43

Palm Beach -- A boardwalk extending from the parking lot to the beach should be included in order to prevent dune erosion. A revegetation project should be initiated in the buffer area between the parking lot and the Watsonville Slough.

44

California Department of Parks & Recreation  
March 21, 1990  
Page 5

Reference Map -- The Department of Parks and Recreation manages the Pajaro River lagoon as part of Zmudowski State Beach. It should be referenced as a significant wetland affecting the Watsonville Slough complex adjacent to Palm Beach.

45

With consideration of the above comments these State Beach General Plans provide excellent public recreational opportunities while protecting the natural resources that make the areas desirable for recreational use. If you have any questions or if we can be of assistance, please call.

Sincerely,



David Loomis  
Assistant District Director

DL/11/cm

Attachment

cc: Dianne Guzman, Planning Director, Santa Cruz Co.  
Susan Tupper, Planning Director, Capitola  
Ray Jenkins, Dist. Superintendent, D.P.&R., Pajaro Coast  
Dick Felty, Regional Director, D.P.&R.

4380A



CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION  
CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT  
701 OCEAN STREET, ROOM 310  
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060  
(408) 426-7390



March 30, 1987

TO: ALL INTERESTED PARTIES  
FROM: EDWARD Y. BROWN, DISTRICT DIRECTOR  
RE: WHAT IS NECESSARY BEFORE WE FILE AN APPLICATION FOR A SHORE PROTECTION STRUCTURE

#### Ownership/Boundaries

The submitted plans should show the applicant's property boundaries in relation to the project limits. In addition, if there is not a sandy beach, i.e., tide pool areas or cliff with little beach and frequent waves, the plans must indicate the location of the Mean High Tide Line. And, in any case, if it is available, the Mean High Tide should be shown and the date(s) it was established.

If the project extends onto an adjoining property, the adjoining owner should be invited to apply, or the applicant must show a legal right to use the property. In addition, the applicant shall demonstrate the authority to comply with condition of permit approval on the adjoining parcel pursuant to Coastal Act Section 30601.5.

#### Plans

The project plans must be prepared or certified by a registered professional engineer with expertise in shoreline processes. Normally, this means a civil engineer or engineering geologist. On occasion, this can be a structural engineer or soils engineer if they have experience in coastal engineering.

A benchmark should be established on the plans and on the site. This benchmark must be in relation to the standard of MSL or NGVD, Mean Sea Level or National Geodetic Vertical Datum. Beach contours at 1 foot intervals shall be provided. Construction access shall be indicated with any special considerations noted.

#### Geotechnical Report

The report must be prepared by a registered professional engineer or engineering geologist as described in the section of Plan above. For small projects (for example, adding some rock to an existing wall above the toe and the beach) a short report, i.e., letter, is acceptable. This is also the case if a prior thorough investigation has been done and only an update is necessary. For most projects, however, a full report that is prepared according to the standards set by the Division of Mines and Geology, (see their Note #44, Guidelines for Preparing Engineering Geology Reports; copy attached) with some added features:

- \* Design wave height
- \* Maximum expected wave height
- \* Frequency of overtopping
- \* Normal and maximum tidal ranges
- \* Erosion rate with/without protection device
- \* Effect of structure on adjoining property
- \* Potential/effect of scouring at base
- \* Design life of structure/maintenance provisions
- \* Alternatives to the chosen design including "no project"
- \* Maintenance provisions including methods and materials

In addition, the engineer must certify that the structure is designed to withstand storms comparable to the winter storms of 1982-83, pursuant to Commission direction for such verification on all projects.

1668A



SIERRA CLUB Ventana Chapter  
Santa Cruz Regional Group  
P.O. 604  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
PO 942896  
Sacramento CA 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

New Brighton State Beach General Plan was reviewed by the Regional Group. At the February meeting of the Executive Committee the group discussed the plan, commended the process and plan, and made the following comments:

**COMMENDS THE PARK PLAN in these areas:**

**POTENTIAL LAND ADDITIONS** The priority one status given to the acquisition of the Porter Sesnon Property as one with outstanding scenic and natural values and excellent potential for park and recreation programs.

**LAND USE AND FACILITIES**

Development of a new access road to the park for improved access and the interim modifications to improve drainage and traffic circulation.

Reorganization of the campground and campfire areas. The plans will provide more and better camping with addition of needed group camping.

Landscaping with native plants is excellent. The plans for the campground, for the bluff near Park Ave, and for interpretive themes emphasizing natives are good and should be emphasized. Some nice natives are found in the bluff area according to Dave Bockman.

Fencing and improvement of access from Park Ave by steps/ramp from the street near the bus stop.

Removal of employee residences.

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MAR 2 1990

INTERPRETATIVE ELEMENT

New campfire center

Junior lifeguard and junior ranger programs

CONCESSIONS: Restrict to mobile units. Concession or stores appear to be needed only at Sunset State Beach due to the distance from groceries for bike campers.

OPERATIONS: Protection of Monarch butterfly migration sites.

**CONCERNS / MONITOR** Interpretation: Construction and installation of interpretative panels, signs and exhibit shelters should be done with moderation. Signs can be detrimental to appreciation of beautiful areas.

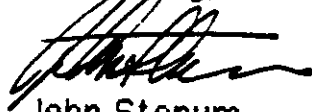
10

Overflow campground in parking area is designated for off season. Why? Will this become a permanent campground for RVs. Is overflow camping less needed at high season?

11

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,



John Stonum

Chair Santa Cruz Regional Group



save  
our  
shores

P.O. Box 1560 · Santa Cruz, California · 95061

James M. Doyle  
Environmental Review Section  
Dept. of Parks and Recreation  
PO Box 942896  
Sacramento, Ca. 94206-0001

Mar 23, 1990

Dear Mr. Doyle,

Save Our Shores has reviewed the preliminary general plan for New Brighton State Beach. We are in general agreement with most of the plan's recommendations, but wish to call your attention to one issue in the plan-potential land additions. We applaud your designation of the 66 acre Porter-Sesnon property as the "priority 1" land acquisition site for annexation to the state beach. However, we believe the plan should give more discussion to this property than is now provided by the single page of text on this subject.

Serious consideration should be given to the New Brighton Beach Action Coalition's plan for an Outdoor Environmental Learning Center/Interpretive Center use on this property. Their plan uses the term "Environmental Discovery Center" and is a more innovative proposed use of the land than now proposed in the State Beach General Plan. The Discovery Center concept is based on a cooperative partnership among State Parks, Santa Cruz County Office of Education, the County of Santa Cruz, and possibly the City of Capitola. This arrangement could provide for land acquisition funds beyond those available to state parks for such purposes.

SOS therefore recommends you contact the New Brighton Beach Action Coalition to thoroughly understand their "Discovery Center" proposal and include it as part of the text on possible uses of Porter-Sesnon land in your final New Brighton Beach General Plan document. Also please advise us of any public hearings on New Brighton, Seacliff, and Sunset State Beaches plans.

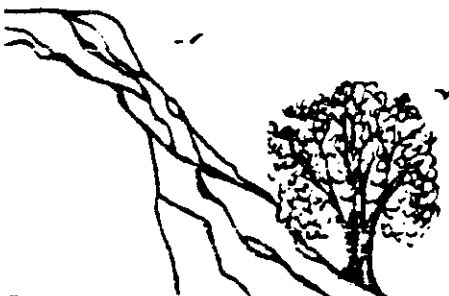
Sincerely

Michael J Humenik, Chair

cc: New Brighton Beach Action Coalition  
County Supervisor Gary Patton  
County Supervisor Robly Levy  
Capitola Mayor Jerry Clarke

99 RECEIVED

MAR 27 1990



# NEW BRIGHTON BEACH ACTION COALITION

March 20, 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94206-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle,

Members of the New Brighton Beach Action Coalition (NEWBBAC) support the designation of the Porter-Sesnon property as a Priority 1 use for potential land additions in the New Brighton State Beach General Plan.

NEWBBAC is a coalition of local citizens' organizations and individuals dedicated to the public use and preservation of the Porter-Sesnon land. Affiliated groups include Save Our Shores, Aptos Neighbors Association, Live Oak Community Association and the (San Lorenzo) Valley Women's Club. Formed in June, 1988, after the overwhelming defeat of Measure A (Wingspread), NEWBBAC began a community effort to determine a feasible alternative for the property that would allow for the greatest possible public benefit while keeping it as close to its natural state as possible.

14

Last month, after spending several months interviewing public officials, neighborhood groups, and holding public meetings in order to explore various possible uses for the property, NEWBBAC proposed the idea of an Environmental Discovery Center. I have enclosed our first newsletter, in order to explain more fully our initial ideas as to how the Discovery Center could be developed.

Since the Discovery Center proposal has received widespread support, NEWBBAC would like to propose that the future development of the Porter-Sesnon property as an Environmental Discovery Center be added to the New Brighton State Beach General Plan.

Sincerely,

*Pat Manning*  
Pat Manning, Chair

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MAR 26 1990  
RPD

1849 Dry Creek Road  
San Jose, California 95124  
23 March 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, California 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

I am a member of the California Recreational Trails Committee. I have been asked by the Committee chair to review the Pajaro Beaches General Plans with special emphasis on trail elements. I have done this and have a couple of suggestions.

In the Seacliff State Beach Plan's summary of Land Use and Facility Proposal #10 includes "coordinate trail connections with other city and county regional trail plans." This is great, but I did not find the basis for the proposal in the body of the plan. Dave Keck of the DPR said that this proposal stems from the possibility of a trail to Seacliff from the Forest of Nisene Marks. I think that somewhere in the body of the Plan there should be a paragraph describing the possibility of the interpark trail (and other trail plans, if appropriate), followed by a proposal or policy supporting the intent of the Department to plan and construct Park trails that connect with regional trails.

The Pajaro Beach Parks are located close to the Bicentennial Coast Bicycle Route, originally developed and mapped by Caltrans; the maps are now available from Bicentennial, a national bicycle touring organization in Missoula, Montana. The maps indicate a Hike/Bike camp at New Brighton State Beach. Mr. Keck said

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MAR 26 1990

15  
that there is such a camp at New Brighton (in a poor location) and that it could be continued in a better place. I urge the continuation of the Hike/Bike-in camp at New Brighton State Beach. In the General Plan the Hike/Bike location should be shown on the Existing Condition map. The better location should be indicated on the Proposed Land Use & Facilities map. The move and continuation of the Hike/Bike camp should be supported in the body of the plan.

Except for these comments, I believe that, given the intent, scope, and structure of the plans, recreational trails are properly addressed in the Pajaro Beach General Plans.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Wm. Bliss

SIERRA CLUB Ventana Chapter  
Santa Cruz Regional Group  
P.O. 604  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061  
March 18, 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
PO 942896  
Sacramento CA 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

The Seacliff State Beach General Plan was reviewed by the Regional Group. At the February meeting of the Executive Committee the group discussed the plan, commended the process and plan, and made the following comments:

**COMMENDS THE SEACLIFF PLAN FOR:**

**IMPROVED ENTRANCE STATION**

Restriction of larger RVs on roadway and parking beyond pier.

Walk in use beach-level day use. NO Vehicles

Comfort station bluff top

Moving district vehicle maintenance function

Removal of employee residences.

Upgrade facilities at the south end of Beach Drive

Restoration of riparian habitat on Aptos Creek

**QUESTION: MORE INFORMATION AND MONITORING NEEDED:**

Bluff parking plan includes walks, benches, picnic tables, and ramadas as well as interpretative panels. Use of native plants is desirable. Overflow parking may be paved for regular use. Possibility of beach shuttle is mentioned. Shuttle feasibility should be explored.

24

Lights on the pier and evening hours for the pier. Intensity of lighting and hours of use are concerns.

25

Need for exhibit shelters on the pier when the interpretative center is

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MAR 22 1990

just off the pier.

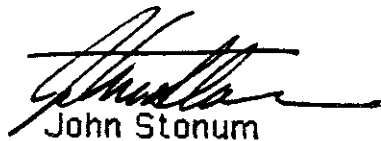
Concession booth should not be rebuilt. A mobile unit should suffice as well as at New Brighton. Seacliff and Rio Beach stores are close and open regularly for groceries and deli service.

27

Overflow off season camping is unnecessary. It seems intended to become a year round expansion of beach-level camping. Such expansion is opposed. Thank you for your consideration.

28

Yours truly,



John Stonum

Chair, Santa Cruz Regional Group



**APTOS NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION**

**Post Office Box 1732  
Aptos, California 95001**

March 18, 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
P. O. Box 942896  
Sacramento CA 94296-0001

Re: Seacliff State Beach - General Plan

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Let us first thank the State Parks Department for their efforts in the handling of the parks in this area. We have found the staff thoughtful and attentive to both the parks and to neighbors of the parks,

This letter is written from the viewpoint of residents of the area surrounding Seacliff State Beach. We are especially concerned with the impact of the General Plan dated January, 1990 on the Seacliff area in particular and the Aptos area in general.

Description of the Resource Element of the Report (pp. 11- 29) and the Land Use and Facilities Element of the Report (pp. 33 - 47) in our opinion do not adequately describe the location of this Seacliff State Beach. It is bordered by residential areas; the Seacliff area on the inland bluff side, Las Olas Drive on the upcoast side, and the Rio Del Mar area on the downcoast side. State Park Drive is the main access from Highway 1 into the residential areas, as well as Seacliff State Beach. We are concerned that this location be kept in mind during the planning process and during implementation of the plan.

We submit these comments on specific items:

1. Moving the maintenance station outside the unit (p. 46). Good. However, we do appreciate the low profile of this facility to the area as it has been operated. Modifications of the perimeter of the Park in this area

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29

are probable, though not mentioned in the Plan. We request that the neighbors across the street be kept in mind when the perimeter is planned. If the maintenance facility is moved, would the area be used for parking? For some type of access by foot? If parking, a screen of shrubs of moderate height might mitigate the impact. We question allowing foot traffic to enter the area from this one block location because of commercial uses across the street.

29

2. Changes are scheduled for the bluff top. We commend improvement of the perimeter and bluff fencing and planting of native shrubs and groundcover. These should not be so tall that they obstruct the view of the homeowners across the street.

Installation of picnic tables, and benches will draw additional users to the bluff top. Installation of a comfort station will do the same thing. We are concerned about people using these facilities at dusk and on into the night. Certain groups of people gather at the wall at the Rio Del Mar Esplanade parking lot bordering the Park. Drinking is visible. Increased law enforcement efforts have reduced but not eliminated these problems. We are concerned that an easily accessible area at the bluff top will result in the same kind of problem. Sleeping in the bluff shrubs has also been a problem. Law enforcement is recognized as a problem (p. 61). Lighting this area would be intrusive to the surrounding area. Increasing the facilities inevitably will increase the necessity for patrolling the area. We think that the Parks Department should recognize and provide for increased patrolling of this area. Additionally, the more structures there are in the area whether tables, benches or ramadas, the more difficult it is to patrol the area.

30

We question the adviseability of Ramadas for the bluff top area. This is a foggy coastal area. Sun protection is sometimes required, but not a prevalent problem. Ramadas would create added structures which may affect patrolling. They also create a feeling of structural development which is not appropriate to the park. We suggest consultation with a design consultant before installing ramadas.

3. The General Plan (p. 44) also mentions lights on the pier. Currently, the pier is closed at dusk. First, if lighted, the lights should not be intrusive. They are mentioned in the General Plan as "low level." We support this, if lights are installed. Certainly the sodium vapor or arc

31

type of lights should be avoided. .

Second, does this mean that the pier will be open at night? The safety hazards would be significantly increased. And night use of the park also has the same law enforcement problems mentioned above. If lights are installed, we think they should be low level plus the patrolling of the area should be increased.

31

Very truly yours,



Peter Carr, President AHA

cc: Mr. Ray Jenkins District Superintendent  
Pajaro Coast District Headquarters  
7500 Soquel Dr.  
Aptos, CA. 95003



BARBARA G. MCGEE

179 SEACLIFF DRIVE • APTOS, CALIFORNIA 95003

March 12, 1990

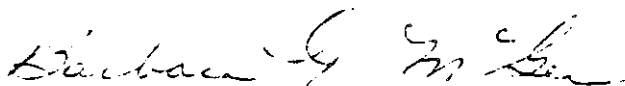
James M. Doyle  
Supervisor, Environment Review Section  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, Ca 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Enclosed please find Petition in protest to the Proposal  
for BLUFF PARKING EXPANSION.

Please have this Proposal canceled from general plan as  
stated in Petition attached.

Sincerely,



Encl. 1

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MAR 14 1990

James M. Doyle - Supervisor, Environment Review Section  
 California Department of Parks and Recreation  
 P.O. Box 942896  
 Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Dear Sir,

This is a Petition in protest to the Proposal for BLUFF PARKING (expansion) including groundcover, walks, benches, picnic tables, and ramadas as well as the proposed comfort station near the existing stairway which is intended to serve the bluff top facilities.

We believe that such a proposal infringes on our privacy as well as imposes a threat to the environment which we as homeowners have come to appreciate and enjoy. This property exists in the middle of a restricted residential zone with properties valued in many millions of dollars. Such a proposal will increase noise, smell, as well as bring many persons trespassing on our private property not to mention the "pollution" to our unobstructed view of one of nature's LAST remaining gifts... Monterey Bay.

We urge that this proposal be abandoned since it produces minimal value for citizens and maximal destruction of a beautiful existing natural facility.

<u>Barbara G. McLean</u> 179 Seacliff Drive Aptos, CA 95003	<u>Mrs &amp; Mrs Jud H. Zorn</u> 101 San Ramon ST APTOS, CA Mrs. Ann Zorn
<u>310 Seacliff Drive</u> Aptos, CA	<u>193 E. Seacliff Dr Aptos</u> Mr & Mrs. Mark Yellin
<u>122 Seacliff Drive</u> Aptos	<u>106 San Ramon Ave</u> Aptos, CA 95003
<u>James Gabriel</u> 158 Seacliff Aptos	<u>Mr &amp; Mrs Mary Comarillo</u> 186 E. Seacliff Dr. Aptos, CA 95003
<u>Mr &amp; Mrs Michael Correa</u> 170 Seacliff Dr Aptos	<u>Paul D. Lewis</u> 183 Seacliff Aptos, CA 95003
<u>Mrs. Mrs. William Byrd</u> 194 E. Seacliff Dr. Aptos CA	<u>Mrs &amp; Mrs C. Davies</u> 202 East Seacliff Dr. Aptos, CA 95003
<u>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Jose L. da Silva</u> 216 Seacliff Dr. East, Aptos, CA.	<u>Bob Bunn</u> 206 Seacliff Dr E Aptos, CA 95003
<u>Mr &amp; Mrs Ronald J Brown</u> 218 Seacliff Dr Aptos CA 95003	<u>Mr &amp; Mrs John Brown</u> 214 Seacliff Dr Aptos CA 95003
<u>Mr. &amp; Mrs. BRIAN QUILL</u> 208 E. Seacliff Dr, Aptos 95003	<u>Mr &amp; Mrs Harwood G. Kollay</u> 181 Seacliff Drive E, Aptos, CA 95003
<u>Yvonne Miller</u> 204 Seacliff Dr E Aptos 95003	<u>Mrs &amp; Mrs David B. Sgum</u> 212 Seacliff Dr Aptos CA 95003

SIERRA CLUB Ventana Chapter  
Santa Cruz Regional Group  
P.O. 604  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

March 18, 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
PO 942896  
Sacramento CA 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

The Sunset State Beach General Plan was reviewed by the Regional Group. At the February meeting of the Executive Committee the group discussed the plan, commended the process and plan, and made the following comments:

**COMMEND/SUPPORT**

**RESOURCE ELEMENTS:**

Groundwater overdraft. Saltwater has intruded into wells in Sunset state beach and coastal Monterey County. Nitrate levels are in excess of drinking standards. Water is posted as unsafe. Park will work with Santa Cruz county and with State Water Resources Control Board. This effort is important and is to be encouraged

Aerial and ground application of pesticides needs attention as a potential hazard. Continued strengthened efforts are to be urged.

Dune revegetation efforts have been successful and should be continued using native plants.

**LAND USE:**

UNIT ENTRANCE: needs to be realigned to separate visitor and non visitor traffic, to provide for safe pedestrian movement.

**RECEIVED**

MAR 22 1990

111

CAMPGROUNDS: Develop two additional group camps. This is appropriate and needed.

INTERPRETATIVE priority to develop programs and exhibits at Palm Beach with primary focus to Hispanic Community.

CONCESSIONS Sunset Beach is a designated bike campground. A campstore seems to be important especially for bike campers. It would be used by other campers and dayuse visitors as an grocery service is at a great distance.

RADIO TOWER Support not renewing the lease.

**RECOMMENDATION:** PATH FROM THE LEVEE BIKE TRAIL TO THE BEACH

46

Thank you for your consideration of the Sierra Club comments.

Yours truly,



John Stonum  
Chair, Santa Cruz Regional Group



March 19, 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
 Environmental Review Section  
 California Department of Parks and Recreation  
 P.O. Box 942896  
 Sacramento, CA 94286

RE: General Plans for Sunset, Seacliff, and New Brighton State Beaches

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission (SCCTC) staff thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the draft general plans for Sunset, Seacliff and New Brighton State Beaches. Staff has reviewed these plans and made comments below. Additionally, staff concurs with the comments submitted by the SCCTC Bicycle Committee under a separate cover.

**SUNSET STATE BEACH**

- 1. Land Use and Facilities Element should identify existing bicycle facilities. | 47
- 2. When redesigning campsites, retain current number of hike and bike campsites. | 48
- 3. Plan for accessible wheelchair paths to the beach area and shoreline. | 49
- 4. Incorporate projects which bring parking areas and restrooms into compliance with the California State Accessibility Standards, Title 24 Manual (Office of the State Architect). | 50

**SEACLIFF STATE BEACH**

- 1. Land Use and Facilities Element should identify existing bicycle facilities. | 34
- 2. Incorporate extension of State Park Drive bike lanes into entrance road improvement.
- 3. Include bicycle parking when upgrading Rio Del Mar parking facilities. | 35
- 4. Plan for accessible wheelchair paths to the beach area and shoreline. | 36
- 5. Incorporate projects which bring parking areas and restrooms into compliance with the California State Accessibility Standards, Title 24 Manual (Office of the State Architect). | 37

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**MAR 26 1990**

- RPD

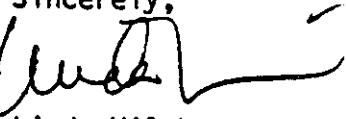
NEW BRIGHTON STATE BEACH

1. Land Use and Facilities Element should identify existing bicycle facilities.
2. Provide for separation or accommodation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic according to CALTRANS Highway Design Manual Bikeway Planning and Design Criteria when designing new trails.
3. Plan for accessible wheelchair paths to the beach area and shoreline.
4. Incorporate projects which bring parking areas and restrooms into compliance with the California State Accessibility Standards, Title 24 Manual (Office of the State Architect).

12

13

If you have any questions, contact Jack Witthaus of my staff at (408) 425-2951.

Sincerely,  
  
Linda Wilshusen  
Executive Director

LW/jw  
A:statebch

cc: AMBAG

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Dept. of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942895  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

March 14, 1990

Dear Mr. Doyle,

Thank you for the Draft Environmental Report on Sunset State Beach and we wish to submit the following comments:

Sunset State Beach is one of the earliest to preserve coastal environment in North Monterey Bay area and to protect the sweeping panoramas of its natural beauty.

It has been adequately managed and cared for - never overwhelmed by public access to picnic and camping areas.

Wildlife has been maintained among trees and shrubs: birds, butterflies, wild animals native to the area. Homeowners have been feeding quail for many years.

Trees and shrubs, natural vegetation, have been protected.

Above points must be considered when expansion of public use is being proposed in the plan for the future.

There will be a necessary expansion of staff to watch and protect the environment.

Expansion of the main parking lot to the size proposed will change the ambience of the area by crowding it with many more visitors.

Issues of concern:

Many more garbage cans and fire rings will be needed.

The 200 ft. bank must be watched constantly to prevent beach users from climbing up it since it has been so destabilized since the earthquake of Oct. 17, 1989. Most of the bank has no fencing to protect it.

The regular cleanup of trash on the beach will have to be increased. We now often find broken glass, styrofoam cups and other picnic garbage left by visitors.

We hope this projected change will enable Sunset State Park to continue to offer intrinsically the same thrilling experience it always has.

Sincerely,



Margaret Felts, Secretary  
Sunset Beach Improvement Association

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MAR 16 1990

RPD

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Margaret Felts  
14 Sunset Drive  
Sunset Beach  
Watsonville, CA 95076



## OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH

1400 TENTH STREET  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

March 23, 1990

James M. Doyle  
State of California  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001Subject: General Plans for Sunset, Seacliff and New Brighton State Beaches  
SCH# 86011401

Dear Mr. Doyle:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named environmental document to selected state agencies for review. The review period is closed and none of the state agencies have comments. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call Nancy Mitchell at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. When contacting the Clearinghouse in this matter, please use the eight-digit State Clearinghouse number so that we may respond promptly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David C. Nunenkamp", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David C. Nunenkamp  
Deputy Director, Permit Assistance

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MAR 26 1990



**ASSOCIATION OF MONTEREY BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS**

MAIL ADDRESS: P O BOX 190, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA 93942 • TELEPHONE (408) 373-6116  
OFFICE LOCATION: 977 PACIFIC STREET

March 12, 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896

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**STATE LANDS COMMISSION**

LEO T. McCARTHY, *Lieutenant Governor*  
GRAY DAVIS, *Controller*  
JESSE R. HUFF, *Director of Finance*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
1807 - 13th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
CHARLES WARREN  
Executive Officer

File Ref: SD 90-02-26 (3)

April 2, 1990

Mr. James M. Doyle  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks & Recreation  
P. O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Doyle:

Staff of the State Lands Commission (SLC) has reviewed the Preliminary General Plans for Sunset State Beach, Seacliff State Beach, and New Brighton State Beach. Based on this review, we offer the following comments.

As these documents are Preliminary General Plans and specific projects are not proposed, staff has not determined the exact extent of SLC ownership at this time. However, you should be aware that the SLC has an ownership interest in lands waterward of the last natural ordinary high water mark. Examples of such ownership are the mouths of the Pajaro River, Watsonville Slough and Valencia Creek as well as the Pacific Ocean. Areas no longer subject to tidal action because of artificial influences remain subject to State sovereign ownership. Therefore, the SLC should be notified of any activities proposed in such areas.

The areas in and near the mouth of the Pajaro River are subject to State Lands Commission lease PRC 4742 and Exchange Agreement AD 54. Furthermore, title to portions of the Pajaro Dunes area below the last natural ordinary high water mark along the Pacific Ocean are under the jurisdiction of the SLC and along Watsonville Slough are subject to the Public Trust Easement which is administered by the SLC. This interest is a retained property right effecting the above lands which were sold pursuant to Tideland Surveys 2 and 3 (Santa Cruz County).

Additionally, you should be aware that waterways that are physically navigable in fact are subject to a public navigational easement. This easement allows members of the public to navigate and exercise incidences of navigation including, but not limited to boating, rafting, fishing, sailing, rowing, fowling, and other water related uses in a lawful manner.

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MR. JAMES M. DOYLE

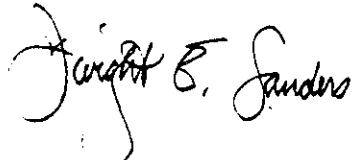
April 2, 1990

Page 2

This action does not constitute nor shall it be construed as, a waiver of any right, title, or interest of the State of California in any lands under its jurisdiction.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact Curtis Fossum at (916) 322-2277.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dwight E. Sanders". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

DWIGHT E. SANDERS, Chief  
Division of Research  
and Planning

DES:maa

cc: Curtis Fossum





BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
(408) 425-2201

# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

GOVERNMENTAL CENTER

701 OCEAN STREET SANTA CRUZ CALIFORNIA 95060-4069

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(FOURTH DISTRICT)

FRED KEELEY  
(FIFTH DISTRICT)

April 3, 1990

James M. Doyle, Supervisor  
Environmental Review Section  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: SUNSET, SEACLIFF AND NEW BRIGHTON STATE BEACHES' GENERAL PLANS, INCLUDING THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORTS

Dear Mr. Doyle:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Sunset, Seacliff, and New Brighton State Beaches General Plan, including the Draft Environmental Impact Reports. For your review, I have attached my letter of September 20, 1989, which includes my initial comments from the proposed drafts. I am very pleased to see that many of my concerns regarding aquatic safety have been addressed in the preliminary general plan documents.

My concerns fall into two categories:

1. I am very pleased to see included in the General Plans the recognition of the need of aquatic services in these three units. Previously omitted in the first draft, Sunset State Beach General Plan now includes the recognition of the need for aquatic services, in addition to a seasonal lifeguard program and a lifeguard headquarters. I am very pleased with this addition and it is my sense that it will clearly assist in reducing the number of drownings and incidents on this stretch of coast.

It is my understanding that the Department of Parks and Recreation has hired a new aquatic specialist working out of Sacramento for the northern coast districts. I believe these general plans could benefit from a review by the aquatic specialist on the technical aspects of this report, in addition to adherence to the findings of the Department of Parks and Recreation's Aquatic Safety Task Force report.

2. The possible use of meter parking at the platform parking lot at Rio del Mar State Beach will unnecessarily restrict public use and access to the beach. This is an area of beach access currently available to the public without charge, and it is one of the few remaining areas in the State Parks system in Santa Cruz that is so available. Generally, crowded conditions do not prevail here, and it does not seem appropriate to charge beach access fees.

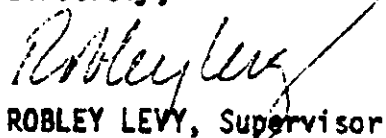
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April 3, 1990  
Page 2

Thank you for taking these comments into consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any clarification. I look forward to the public review of this document in May of this year.

Sincerely,



ROBLEY LEVY, Supervisor  
Second District

RL:lg  
Attachment

cc: Senator Mello  
Assembly Member Farr  
Ray Jenkins, Superintendent of Pajaro Coast District

6220T

Response to comments on General Plans for Seacliff, Sunset, and New  
Brighton State Beaches. SCH# 86011401

California Coastal Commission - Response to General Comment and New  
Brighton State Beach

1. The level of specificity for the environmental assessment in the General Plan is broad and general. Further environmental assessment will be performed whenever specific construction or management programs are proposed. If significant environmental impacts differ from those specified in the general plan further environmental documents will be filed. The Department will adhere to the Local Coastal Plans and file for coastal development permits issued by the county or Coastal Commission as required.
2. The additional sections of the SCLCP will be quoted in the appendix of the final document. The Department will work with the California Coastal Commission and Santa Cruz County and adhere to recommendations concerning hazards as outlined in the LCP for consistency with the Local Coastal Plans.
3. The General Plan is a guide for the Department's actions for the subject State Park System unit over the next 15 - 20 years. There is no guarantee the project will be budgeted, or how much or in what order it will be implemented. (Also see Response No. 1)
4. The traffic conditions as outlined under Unit Entrance, page 36, demonstrate the need for improvements to the existing entrance and eventually a new entrance. The existing road is narrow and experiences flooding in the drainage area under the railroad trestle. When the specific project is budgeted, a more detailed plan and specific environmental assessment will be done. (Also see Response No. 1)
5. The Department does not usually designate bicycle lanes on park roads. Bicyclists are welcome to use roads but must be aware of motor vehicles and pedestrians.
6. The Department will construct the stairway being careful not to cause erosion or bluff instability. The existing stairway and bluff trail near loop A will be closed. We feel that the location of the proposed beach access stairway and distance from Loop A campsites is not excessive, and that additional stairways would be unnecessary.
7. The Department recognizes the need for maintaining hazard signing along the beach for visitor safety and prevention of further bluff erosion. Page 26 and 29 discusses the bluff setback policy and vegetation plan. There is an ongoing project of bluff stability and replacing existing plant

species with native plant species, except for the vegetation that serves as overwintering habitat of the Monarch butterfly.

8. Pages 41-45 describes potential land additions, including New Brighton Gulch, an area where Monarch butterflies have been observed. Page 30 states a policy about Monarch butterflies and their habitat protection. This policy states: " The Monterey pine, Monterey cypress, and eucalyptus groves at New Brighton State Beach shall continue to be surveyed during the winter roosting season of the monarchs, heavily-used groves shall be identified, and suitable habitat shall be perpetuated. Tress that are roost sites for monarch butterflies shall not be removed unless suitable additional habitat capable of supporting monarch colonies is established. An exception to this policy may be made for a tree removed under the department's tree hazard guidelines. The department should support research into the ecology of the monarch butterfly . A resource management plan shall be developed and implemented to promote the perpetuation of the monarch butterfly within New Brighton State Beach."
9. The Department supports more beach shuttle service. The City of Capitola presently uses a 4-acre parcel adjacent to the unit along McGregor Drive, which is used for parking and a shuttle to Capitola Beach. This parcel is listed in the plan as a priority 2 potential land addition because of its location as an inholding and has value for unit entrance alternatives and present use.

#### Sierra Club

10. We agree that signs and exhibit shelters should be carefully designed and constructed with moderation. These interpretive projects will enhance the experiences of the park visitor and increase their awareness for visitor safety and resource protection.
11. There is an increasing demand for camping on the Santa Cruz Coast. Retired persons and families with preschool children are camping more often with recreation vehicles during the off-season months, when beaches and campgrounds are not as crowded .

The general plan proposal for RV camping is not intended to reduce day-use parking spaces or create a new permanent campground. Recreation vehicles who use this area for overflow camping must be self-contained.

Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission

12. (see response No. 5) Pages 39 and 90 discusses a plan to have a separate walkway for pedestrians under the railroad trestle.
13. New facilities will be developed and made accessible for the disabled, including some campsites, restrooms, and campfire center. The emergency vehicle access ramp to the beach is also available for vehicle access by the disabled. Wheelchair access to the water can be achieved with the use of specially designed beach mats. Subsequent documents will discuss access for the disabled in greater detail when specific projects are budgeted for construction.

Save Our Shores and New Brighton Action Coalition

14. The General Plan purposely does not discuss in detail various potentials for property that is not in the State Park System.

California Recreational Trails Committee

15. Provisions for Hike/ Bike camping exist at New Brighton State Beach and will be shown in the final plan.

California Coastal Commission - Seacliff State Beach

16. (See response No. 4)
17. Temporary fencing has been placed along the blufftops for visitor safety and resource protection since the October 17, 1989 earthquake. These areas are being monitored and studied by department Geologist and Resource Ecologist to determine stability and required measures.
18. The Department is monitoring the bluffs and will take appropriate actions. Signs, fencing, and revegetation will be considered.
19. Further analysis of the seawall would occur at such time that it would need replacing. An environmental assessment on new construction, including a no construction alternative, would be done in compliance with CEQA and the SCLCP. Revenues are increasing, as table 2 on page 36 indicates. The \$400,000 revenue figure should be reached in the next few years.

20. No, the proposed RV parking in the day-use area adjacent to the existing camping would not compete with day users and day-use potential. This proposal would only occur during the off-season. The suggestion for RV camping on the unpaved parking area near the residential area would be unacceptable to Aptos residents living nearby. From a management standpoint, it would be better to keep all overnight use in one area, and encourage blufftop parking by day users to reduce the amount of beach-level traffic.
21. As stated on page 44, a pier extension should be considered because the ship Palo Alto continues to deteriorate and may someday be closed for visitor access. The proposed pier could be used to observe the historic concrete ship and interpret its history, as well as for fishing, walking, and observing nature (also see response No.1).
22. Beach Drive in this area is a county road bordered by private property and sandy beach. The State doesn't have sufficient property here to construct additional parking spaces or restroom facilities.
23. The open space easements include property not owned in fee by the state, but are managed by the Department for open space and resource protection.

#### Sierra Club

24. The Department plans to use native plants for landscaping in the bluff area. The Department is in favor of the beach shuttle system and will work with the county, but the Department does not propose its own shuttle system. Whenever the specific project is budgeted, it will be determined if any portion of the overflow parking area will be paved. (see response No. 1)
25. The pier lighting project would be designed for visitor safety and not intended to extend hours of use. Lighting will be low intensity and used only during hours of park operation and for emergencies.
26. The exhibit shelter on the pier would help interpret the ship's history, and Monterey Bay marine life and natural resources. Interpretive panels would be unobtrusive. There are periods when the visitor center is closed, so outside information and exhibit panels become very important for visitor safety and enjoyment.
27. A permanent concession building would be more uniform in appearance with other park structures than a mobile unit. It would serve to sell bait and other needed items.

28. The proposed overflow camping would not be permanent for year-round use. It will only occur during the times when the state beach facilities are underutilized. There is a high demand for recreation vehicle campsites during the off-season from retired people, people that don't have children in school, and coastal travelers enroute to other destination areas.

Aptos Neighborhood Association - Peter Carr

29. The needs of the neighborhood will be recognized in the planning for Seacliff SB. As indicated in the plan, a permanent unit office with vehicle storage will remain, including a small storage structure for supplies and tools. Landscaping and screening will help improve the appearance of the State Beach, including the entrance area, parking lot, and areas within view from the neighborhood.

30. The comfort station will be beneficial to the bluff top area, since there is none at the present time. We recognize law enforcement problems in the area. The park staff and the County Sheriff deputies are coordinating their actions to improve law enforcement in this area. The plan outlines crime prevention programs and the need for increased staff to control the problem better. The Department shares your concern for protection of coastal views and will attempt to construct facilities so that they will be as unobtrusive as possible. At the same time, facilities will be built and landscaping provided that will be easy to maintain and provide for area surveillance. The Department is aware of the crime problems in the area and will increase patrols and continue to work with the County and local citizens in keeping these problems under control. Designated use areas also tend to improve area surveillance.

31. (see response No. 25) Yes, the plan proposes that the pier will be lighted with "low level" lights and will provide safety lighting for fishing access in the early morning hours and at sunset.

32. The plan will not increase the total number of parking spaces in the bluff area. The proposed total parking is 600 cars, or approximately 15 cars fewer than is presently available in the paved and unpaved bluff parking area. The bluff top area will be made more esthetic because of improved landscaping, walks, paths, picnic tables, and ramadas. The proposed comfort station will be designed and located so that it will not obstruct views of the coast and Monterey Bay. The entire area will continually be patrolled, cleaned up, and maintained efficiently by the Department. The district vehicle maintenance function, presently located near the entrance, will be removed (see response No. 29). The

area will be made more esthetic to park visitors and the neighborhood alike. The area will be kept cleaner and more sanitary with the proposed facilities and programs. The Department does not believe that the implementation of the project will cause an increase in trespassing and crimes to private properties in the area.

California Recreational Trails Committee

33. A description of potential trail connections from Seacliff State Beach will be included in the final plan. The Department does not proposed to construct or develop regional trails outside the state beach.

Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission

34. (see response No. 5)
35. This proposal of bicycle parking will be considered. (see response No.1)
36. Accessible wheelchair paths are being proposed to the beach and shoreline. Future development of day-use and camping facilities will accommodate disabled visitor needs.
37. The Department does comply with Title 24 .

California Coastal Commission - Sunset State Beach

38. Bicycle use is permitted on park roads and must comply with California vehicle Code regulations. Park roads are narrow and will not allow designation of a separate bike lane. No special designated striping will be made. Shell Road will be open for bicycle use through the park and will provide access from Palm Beach to the south beach day-use facilities. Trail signing will be used to direct bicyclist for connections to other regional coastal trails outside this unit. The Department will comply with Section 4.15.14 of the SCLCP.
39. The final plan will cite the Section 5.1.3 of the SCLCP, in the appendix of this plan. The proposed group camps north of Dunes Camp are discussed on Page 52.
40. Sections 3.3.8 and 4.3.3 of the SCLCP will be cited in the final plan. The Shorebird and Pajaro Dunes housing developments were established before CEQA and the Coastal Act. The Department policy is generally not to allow seawalls on state beach property.



41. We agree. The Department has constructed boardwalks for the public to cross over the dunes to the beach. There is also an ongoing revegetation program that utilizes native dune plant species, to prevent sand blow-outs as well as for replacement of exotic species.
42. The policy on page 39 states that the habitat for the Monarch butterfly will be protected. (see response No. 8, stated policy) A resource management plan will be developed for this state beach as so stated.
43. The suggestion that the entire unit and other units have multi-lingual interpretive panels and signs is a good one and will be considered.
44. Boardwalks and revegetation projects already exist. Boardwalks are

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Response to Margaret Felts - Sunset SB

51. Yes, it is true the the plan proposes to increase the number of parking places near the main entrance to Sunset State Beach considerably from 60 up to 125 total spaces. It should also be noted that at present there are many visitors who park outside the state beach along San Andres Road approximately 3/4 mile from the beach. The proposed parking will help alleviate much of the roadside parking that occurs. This will result in better traffic flow, increased protection of personal vehicles, a cleaner roadside, and more convenience to the public. The plan also proposes to revegetate and stabilize bluff areas with native vegetation and provide fencing of the area for visitor safety. Fencing between the parking area, edge of the bluff, and adjacent private property will encourage direct beach access. In addition, the Department will maintain the beach and add facilities for visitor use as needed.

**FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE  
FOR GENERAL PLANS  
NEW BRIGHTON, SEACLIFF, AND SUNSET STATE BEACH**

Most environmental problems can be effectively mitigated, as described in this plan. Traffic on peak days will be one problem that cannot be fully mitigated.

**Soils and Geology:** As stated in the Resource Elements, new facilities will not generally be constructed in the zone of inclusion. An exception is the RV campground at the northwest end of Seacliff State Beach that is protected by a wooden seawall. It will be replaced and repaired as long as it is cost effective.

Proposed roads, parking area, and trails in the State beaches and trails will be designed so that water runoff will not erode soils. Design features such as boardwalks and landscaping with native vegetation will help prevent soil erosion.

Signs and fencing will be installed to keep people off the cliffs, bluffs, and fragile sites.

Beach erosion is a regional and statewide problem. The Department will work with the Corps of Engineers and other agencies on finding long-range solutions. (See Resource Element policies.)

**Energy:** Use of construction machinery will be minimized to conserve energy.

**Vegetation and Wildlife:** Resource policies in the Resource Elements for plants and animals are as followed.

Exotic species will be removed, i.e., Monterey pine, and eucalyptus trees, except where Monarch butterflies overwinter, in favor of native species of plants. This will result in more sunlight, screening, and a correct representation of native plant species in the area.

**Cultural:** The Land Use and Facilities Plan Elements propose to preserve the historical features in the units, such as the historic ramadas, Diablo stoves, and use of the historical residences for interpretive use.

**Esthetics:** The proposed project will improve esthetics throughout the developed areas.

The project will: 1) rehabilitate areas that have received heavy use which has left visual scars; 2) construct new facilities that are visually attractive; 3) design attractive access and trails that will protect cliffs and vegetation; 4) landscape and screen with an emphasis on native vegetation; 5) improve Aptos Creek and remove riprap at Seacliff State Beach; 6) improve appearance of bluff and parking areas at Seacliff State Beach; and 7) remove dense exotic vegetation, except where Monarch butterflies overwinter.

Finding of Significance  
General Plans for  
New Brighton, Seacliff, and Sunset State Beaches  
Page 2

Beach Safety: Unit personnel will help visitors needing emergency attention. Signs warning visitors about surf conditions, or that a lifeguard may not be on duty, will be prominently displayed.

The proposed project will provide more sanitary facilities for the public, with provision for the disabled (see Operations Element regarding Visitor Safety).

Interpretive displays and unit personnel will assist in informing the public.

Traffic Circulation and Parking: The proposed Land Use and Facilities Element proposes to improve the traffic circulation. Improvements will be made for the disabled, and for emergency vehicle access.

#### Mitigation Monitoring

At the time specific features of the General Plans are budgeted, detailed environmental assessments will be made including methods to monitor the mitigation efforts. Appropriate departmental staff will monitor construction, visitor use and in general protect natural and cultural resources of the units.

APPENDIX



APPENDIX  
CONFORMANCE TO LOCAL COASTAL PLAN POLICIES

Various state and local plans that addressed issues relevant to Sunset State Beach were reviewed in preparing this plan. Following are policies and programs from the Santa Cruz County LCP Land Use Plan, with specific reference to state parks and Sunset State Beach:

POLICIES

- 4.1.2 The following are designated as primary public access: South County (primary public accesses which have existing basic improvements and law enforcement necessary for state and regional publicity) Sunset State Beach and Palm Beach.
- 5.4.2 Recommend, encourage, and support each of the following acquisitions:
  - h. Manresa State Beach South and Sunset State Beach: acquisition of the remaining intervening private beach.
- 5.4.4 Require adequate maintenance and management programs concurrent with all state parks development projects and park master plans.

PROGRAMS

- 4.15.14 Improve and complete recreational bicycle/pedestrian loops in the South County coastal area:
  - a. Complete Watsonville-Pajaro Dunes-Sunset Beach bicycle route loop.
- 4.16.11 Develop links between the county and state trail systems in coordination with the state Department of Parks and Recreation.
- 5.3.1 Where appropriate, request state parks and other appropriate public agencies to retain and expand appropriate park and recreational uses such as picnic facilities, camping sites, RV facilities, trails, and shoreline access.
- 5.3.2 Where appropriate, support state parks budget requests for expanded development, management (including adequate law enforcement and maintenance), and use of Santa Cruz County facilities.
- 5.3.3 Support the continuation of existing free facilities provided by state parks. Encourage the provision of additional free facilities. Where user fees must be charged, encourage state parks to continue to provide season passes and a discounted fee schedule for economically disadvantaged groups such as the elderly, or non-profit organizations.
- 5.3.4 Encourage replacement of damaged or destroyed public beach recreation facilities.





## SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES

### 3.0 HAZARDS

#### 3.1 Seismic Policies POLICIES

- 3.1.1 Require a field review by the staff geologist of geological hazards for all new development projects, including the creation of new lots, in designated fault zones. Fault zones designated for review in the Coastal Zone include the Zayante Fault and the state designated Seismic Review Zone on the San Gregorio Fault. Required geologic reviews shall examine all potential seismic hazards including surface rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction and landsliding, and may consist of a staff geological hazards assessment where a more complete investigation is not otherwise required. Investigations of groundshaking hazards will be conducted if required through environmental review of a project.
- 3.1.2  
GP Require a preliminary geological investigation by a registered geologist for single family dwellings in the San Andreas and San Gregorio Fault Zones, and a full geologic investigation by a registered geologist for development proposals other than single family dwellings in the San Andreas and San Gregorio Fault Zones.
- 3.1.3  
GP Require a full geological investigation by a registered geologist whenever a significant potential hazard is identified by a preliminary geologic hazard assessment, and prior to the construction of any new public facility or critical structure within the designated fault zones.
- 3.1.4  
GP Require site-specific full geologic investigation by a registered geologist of all development proposals of more than four residential units in areas designated as having a high or very high liquefaction potential. Proposals of four units and under and non-residential projects shall be reviewed for liquefaction hazard through environmental review and when a significant potential hazard exists a full geologic report shall be required.
- 3.1.5 Require the clustering of development away from potentially hazardous areas and condition development permits based on the recommendations of the site's hazard assessment or full geological investigation.
- 3.1.6  
GP Approve the final density of a development proposal only if it is consistent with the recommendations of the geological reports. Deny the location of the proposed development if it is found that the hazards on the site cannot be mitigated to within acceptable risk levels.
- 3.1.7 Require full geologic investigation prior to the construction of new reservoirs to serve major water supplies. If an unmitigatable hazard exists, relocate the reservoir. New dams shall be constructed according to high seismic design standards of the Dam Safety Act and as specified by structural engineering studies. Smaller reservoirs will be reviewed for potential seismic hazards as a part of the environmental review process.

- 3.1.8  
GP Exclude land within 50 feet of an active or potentially active fault trace from density calculations for land divisions. Require 50-foot setbacks for all residential structures and 100-foot setbacks for all commercial, multi-residential and critical structures from active and potentially active fault traces.
- 3.1.9 Require all new public facilities and critical structures to be designed to withstand the expected ground shaking during the design earthquake on the San Andreas fault.
- 3.1.10  
GP Require the developer and/or subdivider of a parcel in an area of known geologic hazards to record a deed restriction with the County Recorder indicating the hazards on the parcel and the level of prior geologic investigation conducted.
- 3.1.11 Require a minimum parcel size for the creation of new parcels of 20 acres in areas within all State and County designated seismic review zones if proposed building sites lie within the fault zone.

PROGRAM

- 3.1.13 Investigate the feasibility of requiring all new structures within all known fault zones and in areas subject to high or very high liquefaction potential, to be constructed to withstand ground shaking generated up to the design earthquake on the San Andreas Fault.

3.2  
POLICIES

Slope Stability and Erosion

- 3.2.1  
GP Require a geologic hazards assessment of all discretionary permits, including grading permits within areas of known slope instability, in all cases where development is planned on slopes greater than 30%, and for all projects including permits for single family dwellings on existing parcels of record in the designated landslide review area. Such assessment shall be prepared by County staff or a registered geologist may conduct this review at applicant's choice and expense.
- 3.2.2  
GP Require a full geological investigation by a registered geologist when the hazards assessment identifies unsafe geologic conditions in the area of proposed development.
- 3.2.3  
GP Require an engineering geology or a soils report as determined by staff on any proposed grading project where a significant potential hazard has been identified in the area of proposed grading activities.
- 3.2.4  
GP Condition development and grading permits based on the recommendations of the hazard assessment and other detailed soils or geology investigations.
- 3.2.5  
GP Deny the location of a proposed development or permit for grading project if it is found that geological hazards cannot be mitigated to within acceptable risk levels, and approve development proposals only if the project's density reflects consideration of the degree of hazard on the site, as determined by available geotechnical information.

- 3.2.6 GP Exclude land with slopes exceeding 30 percent in urban areas and 50 percent in rural areas and recent or active landslides from density calculations for land division purposes.
- 3.2.7 GP Require clustering of structures away from potentially unstable slopes in landslide-prone areas. Require drainage plans that direct runoff and drainage away from unstable slopes.
- 3.2.8 Prohibit the location of septic leachfields in areas subject to landsliding.
- 3.2.9 GP Require the developer and/or subdivider of a property in an area of known geologic hazards to record a deed restriction with the County Recorder indicating the hazards on the parcel and the level of prior geotechnical investigation conducted.
- 3.2.10 GP Require an engineering report and engineering supervision to ensure effective road reconstruction where there have been washouts or landslides on private or public roads and require geologic and engineering review of all proposed road construction in landslide prone areas.
- (See related policies in Natural Systems Section.)

#### PROGRAMS

- 3.2.11 Designate additional areas, of known slope instability, within the Coastal Zone as Landslide Review Zones. (A staff geologic hazards assessment would thus be required prior to project approval. Recommendations from the report could become permit conditions.)

#### 3.3 POLICIES

##### Coastal Erosion

##### Coastal Bluff Erosion

- 3.3.1 Require a geologic hazard assessment by the staff geologist for all new development proposals within 100 feet of a coastal bluff. A full geologic investigation shall be required if a significant potential hazard to the proposed structure is identified from the assessment. The setback for structures shall be determined from conditions on and adjoining the site. In general, a 50-foot setback shall be maintained, but in no case shall the setback be reduced to less than 25 feet. Projects shall be sited and designed for a minimum 50 year life time as demonstrated by the geologic investigation or hazard assessment report.
- 3.3.2 Allow new development in areas subject to bluff erosion on existing lots of record only under the following circumstances:
- a. Technical report (either a geologic hazard assessment or a full geologic report) demonstrating the stability of the site for a minimum 50 year lifetime.

- b. All development activity (including pools) set back a minimum of 25 feet from the bluff edge. (A greater setback may be required based on the site conditions as determined by the hazard assessment or geologic report.)
- c. The long-term stability of the site is not dependent on the installation of shoreline protection structures except on lots where both adjacent parcels are already similarly protected (i.e., are already fronted by rip-rap).
- d. A deed restriction indicating the potential hazards on the site and the level of prior geologic investigation conducted is recorded with the County Recorder.

3.3.3 Limit shoreline protection measures to structures which protect existing residences, and business or commercial structures, vacant lots which through lack of protection threaten adjacent developed lots, public works, public beaches, or coastal-dependent uses. Permit structural shoreline protection measures only if non-structural measures (i.e., building relocation or change in design) are infeasible from an engineering standpoint or not economically viable. The protection structure must not reduce or restrict public beach access, adversely affect shoreline processes and sand supply, increase erosion on adjacent properties, or cause harmful impacts on wildlife and fish habitats. The protection structure must be placed as close as possible to the development requiring protection and must be designed to minimize visual intrusion. Shoreline protection structures shall be designed to meet adequate engineering standards for the site conditions as determined through the environmental review process. Seawall construction should only be considered where a significant threat to an existing structure exists, where seawalls have been constructed on adjoining parcels, and where rip-rap would not adequately protect the structure. Detailed technical studies may be required to accurately define the oceanographic conditions affecting the site.

3.3.4 Require drainage and landscape plans recognizing potential hazards on the site to be approved by the staff geologist prior to the approval of blufftop development.

3.3.5 Permit reconstruction of structures located on a coastal bluff which are damaged as a result of coastal hazards and loss exceeds 50 percent of their market value in accordance with recommendations from the hazards assessment as well as 3.3.2 (a,b & d). Exemption: Public beach facilities and damage which results from non-coastal related hazards such as fire and replacements consistent with Coastal Act Policy 30610 (g).

#### Beach Erosion

3.3.6 Require a geologic hazards assessment for all new development proposals subject to storm wave inundation. A full geologic investigation shall be required if a significant potential hazard to the proposed structure is identified from the assessment. The setback for structures shall be determined from conditions on and adjoining the site. Projects shall be sited and designed to minimize hazards as determined by the hazards assessment or geologic investigations.

3.3.7 Allow new development in areas subject to storm wave inundation and beach erosion on existing lots of records within existing developed neighborhoods under the following circumstances:

- a. Technical report (either a geologic hazards assessment or a full geologic report) demonstrating that the potential hazard can be mitigated. Mitigations can include, but are not limited to, building setbacks, elevation of the proposed structure and friction pier or deep caisson foundation.
- b. Mitigation of the potential hazard is not dependent on shoreline protection structures except on lots where both adjacent parcels are already similarly protected.
- c. A deed restriction indicating the potential hazards on the site and the level of prior investigation conducted is recorded on the deed with the County Recorder.

3.3.8 Limit structural shoreline protection measures to structures which protect existing residences, and business or commercial structures, vacant lots which through lack of protection threaten adjacent developed lots, public works, public beaches, or coastal-dependent uses. Permit structural protection measures only if non-structural measures (i.e., building relocation or change in design) are infeasible from an engineering standpoint or not economically viable. The protection structure must not reduce or restrict public beach access, adversely affect shoreline processes and sand supply, increase erosion on adjacent properties, or cause harmful impacts on wildlife and fish habitats. The protection structure must be placed as close as possible to the development requiring protection and must be

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- a. Outside the Urban Services Line:
  - o to pocket beaches if there is no other dedicated vertical access;
  - o to long sandy beaches if there is no dedicated vertical access within one-half mile;
  - o to bluffs which are large enough and of a physical character to accommodate safety improvements, and which provide room for public use as a vista point.
- b. Within the Urban Services Line:
  - o from the first public roadway to the shoreline if there is not dedicated access within 650 feet;
  - o through properties inland of the first public roadway if there is evidence that residents have been using the property to gain access to the shoreline, and if closure of the pathway would require residents to detour more than one-eighth mile.
- c. All dedications required shall be consistent with policies 4.5.1 and 4.5.6.

#### 4.3.3

##### Lateral Access

The following policies shall be applied as a condition of new development approval:

- a. No development shall be approved which would interfere with public lateral access along beaches in Live Oak and from New Brighton Beach to the Pajaro River. Where appropriate require dedication of lateral access along the beach to the first line of terrestrial vegetation to the base of the bluffs, where present, or to the base of any seawall. (Also see policy 3.3.3.)
- b. Unrestricted lateral access to North Coast beaches shall be provided where environmental and public safety concerns can be mitigated.
- c. Dedication of lateral access along bluffs where pedestrian and/or bicycle trails can be provided and where environmental and use conflict issues can be mitigated. (Also see policies 4.15.1, 4.15.2, and policy section 3.3.)

##### Acceptance of Dedications

#### 4.3.4

Develop a program in conjunction with the County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services, Department of Public Works, State Department of Parks and Recreation, Coastal Conservancy, and other appropriate agencies for the acceptance offers of dedication required as conditions of coastal development permits, including but not limited to the offers of dedication listed below. Also address the improvement, maintenance, and policing of the accessways.

- 4.12.4 Develop programs and funding which facilitate transit use by providing intermodal transportation or monetary savings such as the bicycle racks on buses and bus pass programs of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District.
- 4.12.5 Request coordinated operations and use of transit facilities by local transit and inter-County carriers.
- 4.12.6 Develop recreational transit services and funding in conjunction with local transit and inter-County carriers, such as park and ride facilities or beach shuttle to recreation areas. Consider any existing large parking areas, such as the Cabrillo College parking lots, as potential park and ride parking facilities.
- 4.12.7 Promote and encourage special recreation oriented transit routes such as the "Elephant Seal Express."

**4.13**  
**POLICIES**

**Rail**

- 4.13.1 Consider the potential for rail use during the review of all new developments.
- 4.13.2 Require that the design of new development near existing rail lines minimize the impact of existing and potential rail system noise.

**PROGRAMS**

- 4.13.3 Update the study of rail passenger service to include the consideration of service to all portions of Santa Cruz County as necessary to reflect changes in energy costs, local policy, and environmental concerns. Emphasis should be placed on study of service between Santa Cruz and Watsonville.
- 4.13.4 Support the addition of a passenger stop at Watsonville Junction for Amtrak's coast route trains.
- 4.13.5 Support the reinstatement of a rail link from the San Francisco Bay Area to Santa Cruz and Monterey around the Santa Cruz Mountains and through the Watsonville Junction.

**4.14**  
**POLICY**

**Parking**

- 4.14.1 Require new recreation and visitor-serving developments in the Coastal Zone to support alternative forms of transportation to the beaches, e.g., bikes, small scale shuttle service.

**PROGRAMS**

- 4.14.2 Provide vehicular access to the beach area in Live Oak, particularly in the area between the Yacht Harbor and 17th Avenue by improving public parking at the following locations:

- 4.15.5 GP Pursue additional state and federal funding for the Bikeway System, including funding to initiate a program to pay for placement of bicycle parking facilities by public and private agencies.
- 4.15.6 GP Provide secure bicycle parking in conjunction with the development of transit shelters.
- 4.15.7 Provide bicycle parking stands (facilities) at all primary public access points and at appropriate neighborhood access points.
- 4.15.8 Provide bicycles at nominal daily rental fees, as part of ongoing County transportation programs, in conjunction with established park-and-ride beach shuttle parking services.
- 4.15.9 Provide for safe bicycle travel along the coastal corridor by developing a coordinated, continuous bicycle route parallel to the shoreline.
- 4.15.10 Post and stripe coastline roads in a manner designed to discourage parked cars from creating hazards for moving bicyclists.
- 4.15.11 Request the State of California and the County of Santa Clara to provide a safe bicycle route between the town of Los Gatos and Santa Cruz County.
- 4.15.12 Provide bicycle lanes or widen shoulders along certain coastal roadways:
- a. San Andreas Road (State Route 1 to Beach Road);
  - b. Beach Road (Palm Beach to Watsonville);
  - c. McGregor Drive (Park Avenue to State Park Drive);
  - d. Sumner Avenue (Rio del Mar Boulevard to Seascape Boulevard, beach parking south of Clubhouse Drive to be preserved, bike lane to be developed on shoulder if possible).
- 4.15.13 Request private and public transit companies' carriers connecting the coastal area with the Santa Clara Valley to provide bicycle carrying services.
- 4.15.14 Improve and complete recreational bicycle/pedestrian loops in the South County coastal area:
- a. Complete Watsonville-Pajaro dunes-Sunset Beach bicycle route loop.
  - b. Extend and link, as much as feasible, New Brighton Beach, Potbelly Beach, and Los Olas Roads.

**4.16**  
**POLICIES**

**Trails**

**General**

- 4.16.1 Establish a system of hiking and bicycle trails and bridges which provides access to and connects the various parks, recreation areas, riparian corridors, beaches, and urban areas. For example, develop trails to link Nisene Marks State Park with Seacliff State Beach. Link the County trail system between the state parks and provide a lateral trail route along the coast.



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES

5.0 RECREATION AND VISITOR-SERVING FACILITIES

5.1 POLICIES Types of Growth in the Visitor Sector

Visitor Accommodations

- 5.1.1 Encourage the provision of a balanced and diverse spectrum of visitor accommodations consistent with available infrastructure, natural and visual resource protection, distribution of facilities to mitigate against adverse impacts and protection and provision of lower cost facilities.
- 5.1.2 Encourage diversification of visitor accommodation types such as hotels, motels, inns, hotels, and resorts.
- 5.1.3 Encourage the provision of additional overnight camping sites and RV spaces in appropriate locations.
- 5.1.4 Encourage small scale lodging facilities, such as inns or bed and breakfast accommodations in appropriate locations. (See 7.1.29 and 7.1.30.)
- 5.1.5 Encourage privately funded development of Visitor-Serving facilities. (See specific Visitor Accommodation policies in Section 7.1.)
- 5.1.6 Prohibit conversion of visitor accommodations in the coastal zone to any non-priority use unless it can be convincingly demonstrated that it is economically infeasible to use the property for any priority use. Absolutely prohibit the conversion of horizontal hotel visitor accommodations in the coastal zone.

Day Use Services

- 5.1.7 Where appropriate, allow the provision of tourist commercial concessions within state parks at appropriate destinations (commercial concessions should not be required at rural, remote beaches). Encourage the provision of tourist commercial services within Special Communities, as follows:
  - a. Davenport: Highway 1 frontage.
  - b. Harbor Area: Commercially designated areas along 7th Avenue.
  - c. East Cliff Village Tourist Area: Commercially designated areas along East Cliff Drive.
  - d. Seacliff Beach Area: Entire Special Community.
  - e. Rio del Mar Flats/Esplanade Area: Esplanade frontage to Stephen Road.

(See also Visual Resources policies 6.8 through 6.14.)

PROGRAMS

- 5.1.8 Where appropriate, request the provision of additional day use facilities at publicly owned beaches and bluffs such as picnicking, viewpoints, and play space. ✓

Boating

- 5.1.9 Request the regulating agencies such as the U. S. Coast Guard and Army Corps of Engineers to permit open water moorings off suitable locations along the County's coastline taking into consideration the following factors:

- o public safety concerns
- o disturbance to the marine environment
- o individual and cumulative visual impacts
- o other communities' experiences with open water moorings
- o interference with other water-related uses

- 5.1.10 Request State Parks to permit small boat uses of State Park beaches consistent with maintaining the safety of other beach users and the character of the beach.

5.2  
POLICIES      Neighborhood Compatibility

- 5.2.1 Require Planned Development permits including mandatory design criteria for all recreation and visitor-serving developments.

- 5.2.2 Specify densities and require, as necessary, site specific performance criteria, including development standards and/or a management plan for recreation and visitor-serving developments.

(See policies 7.1.25, 7.1.28, 7.1.34, 7.1.41, and Table 7.3.3.)

5.3  
PROGRAMS      Protection and Provision of Lower Cost Public Recreation Facilities

- 5.3.1 Where appropriate, request State Parks and other appropriate public agencies to retain and expand appropriate park and recreational uses such as picnic facilities, camping sites, RV facilities, trails and shoreline access.

- 5.3.2 Where appropriate, support State Parks budget requests for expanded development, management (including adequate law enforcement and maintenance), and use of Santa Cruz County facilities.

- 5.3.3 Support the continuation of existing free facilities provided by State Parks. Encourage the provision of additional free facilities. Where user fees must be charged, encourage State Parks to continue to provide season passes and a discounted fee schedule for economically disadvantaged groups such as elderly, or non-profit organizations.

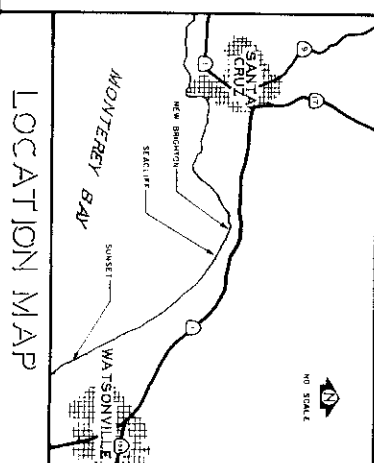
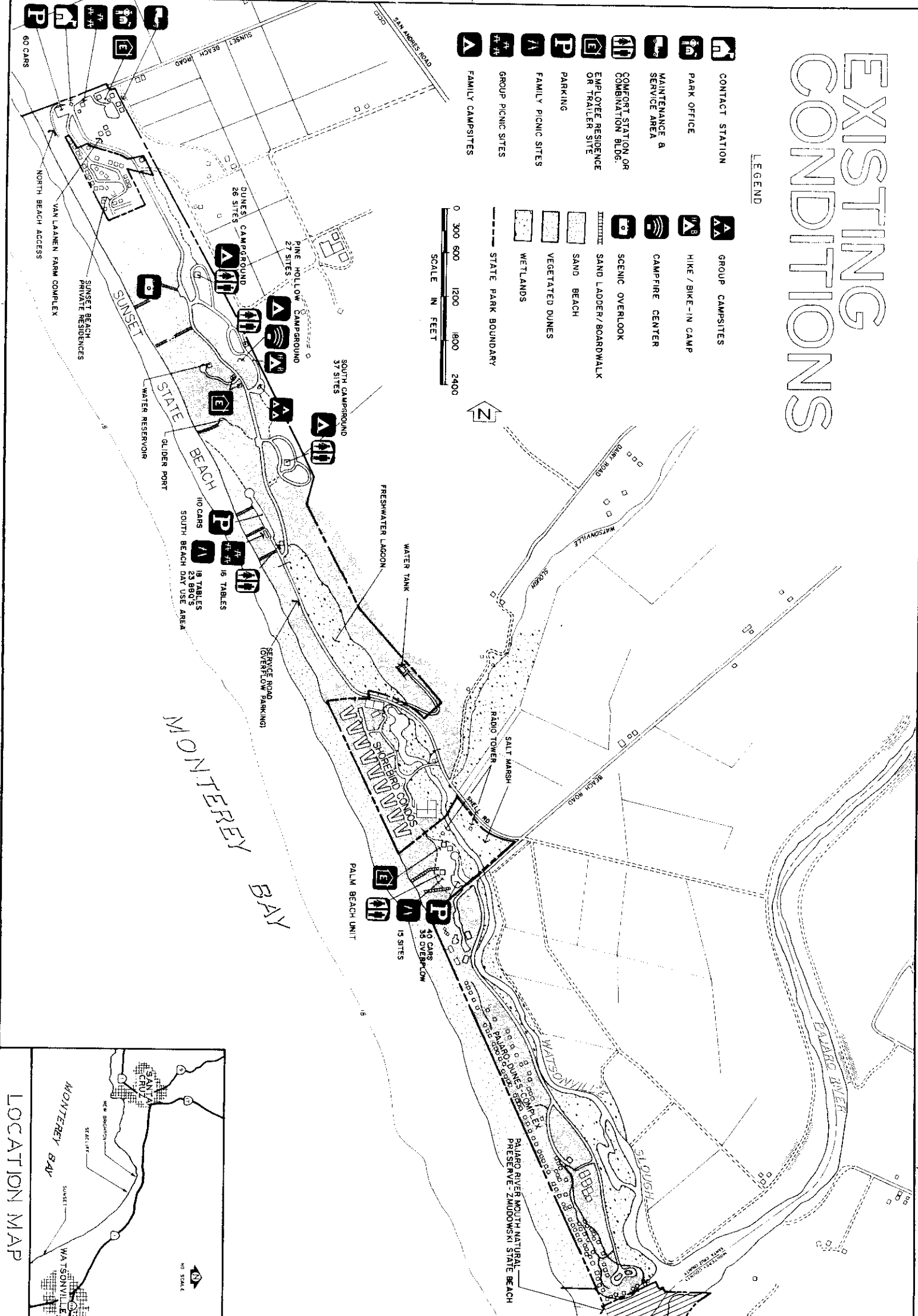
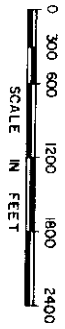
- 5.3.4 Encourage replacement of damaged or destroyed public beach recreation facilities.

MAPS

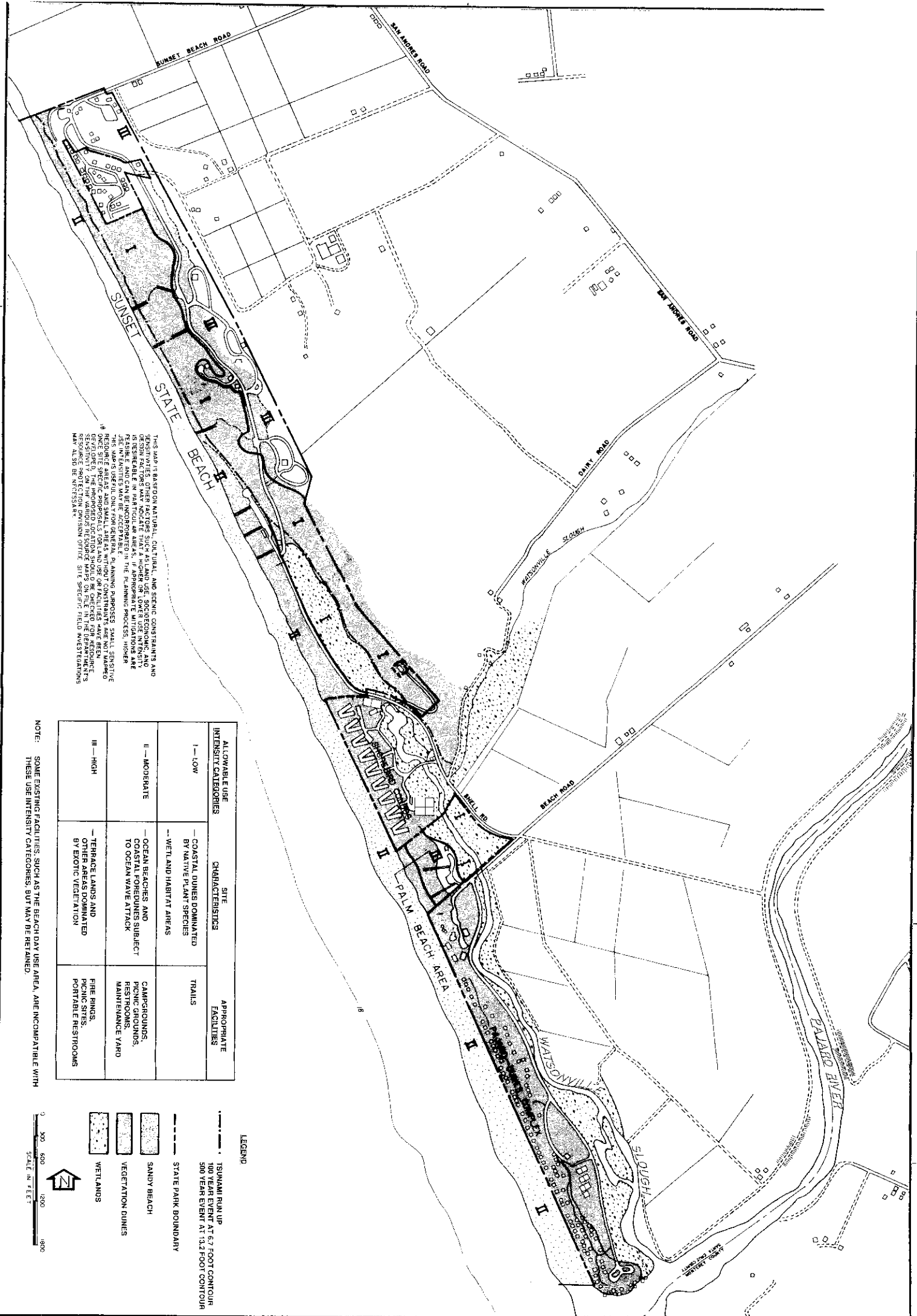
# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## LEGEND

- CONTACT STATION
- PARK OFFICE
- MAINTENANCE & SERVICE AREA
- COMFORT STATION OR COMBINATION BLDG. OR TRAILER SITE
- EMPLOYEE RESIDENCE
- PARKING
- FAMILY PICNIC SITES
- GROUP PICNIC SITES
- FAMILY CAMPSITES
- GROUP CAMPSITES
- HIKE / BIKE-IN CAMP
- CAMPFIRE CENTER
- SCENIC OVERLOOK
- SAND LADDER/BOARDWALK
- SAND BEACH
- VEGETATED DUNES
- WETLANDS
- STATE PARK BOUNDARY



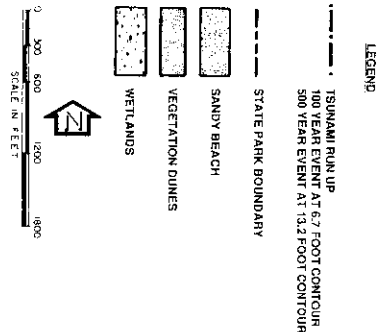
DRAWING NO. <b>24909</b>	SUNSET STATE BEACH <b>EXISTING CONDITIONS</b> GENERAL PLAN-LAND USE & FACILITIES ELEMENT	RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION	REVISIONS	DATE	DESIGNED DAVE KECK
		APPROVED _____ DATE _____			DRAWN BY J. DONALDSON V. FOSTER CHECKED



THIS MAP IS BASED ON NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND SCENIC CONSTRAINTS AND DESIGN FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT LAND USE, SOCIOECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS. THE MAP IS A GENERAL PLANNING TOOL AND IS NOT INTENDED TO BE USED AS A LEGAL INSTRUMENT. THE MAP IS NOT A GUARANTEE OF ACCURACY AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. THE MAP IS NOT A GUARANTEE OF ACCURACY AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. THE MAP IS NOT A GUARANTEE OF ACCURACY AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

ALLOWABLE USE INTENSITY CATEGORIES	SITE CHARACTERISTICS	APPROPRIATE FACILITIES
I - LOW	COASTAL DUNES DOMINATED BY NATIVE PLANT SPECIES WETLAND HABITAT AREAS	TRAILS
II - MODERATE	OCEAN BEACHES AND COASTAL FOREDUNES SUBJECT TO OCEAN WAVE ATTACK	CAMPGROUNDS, PICNIC GROUNDS, RESTROOMS, MAINTENANCE YARD
III - HIGH	TERACE LANDS AND OTHER AREAS DOMINATED BY EXOTIC VEGETATION	FIRE RINGS, PICNIC SITES, PORTABLE RESTROOMS

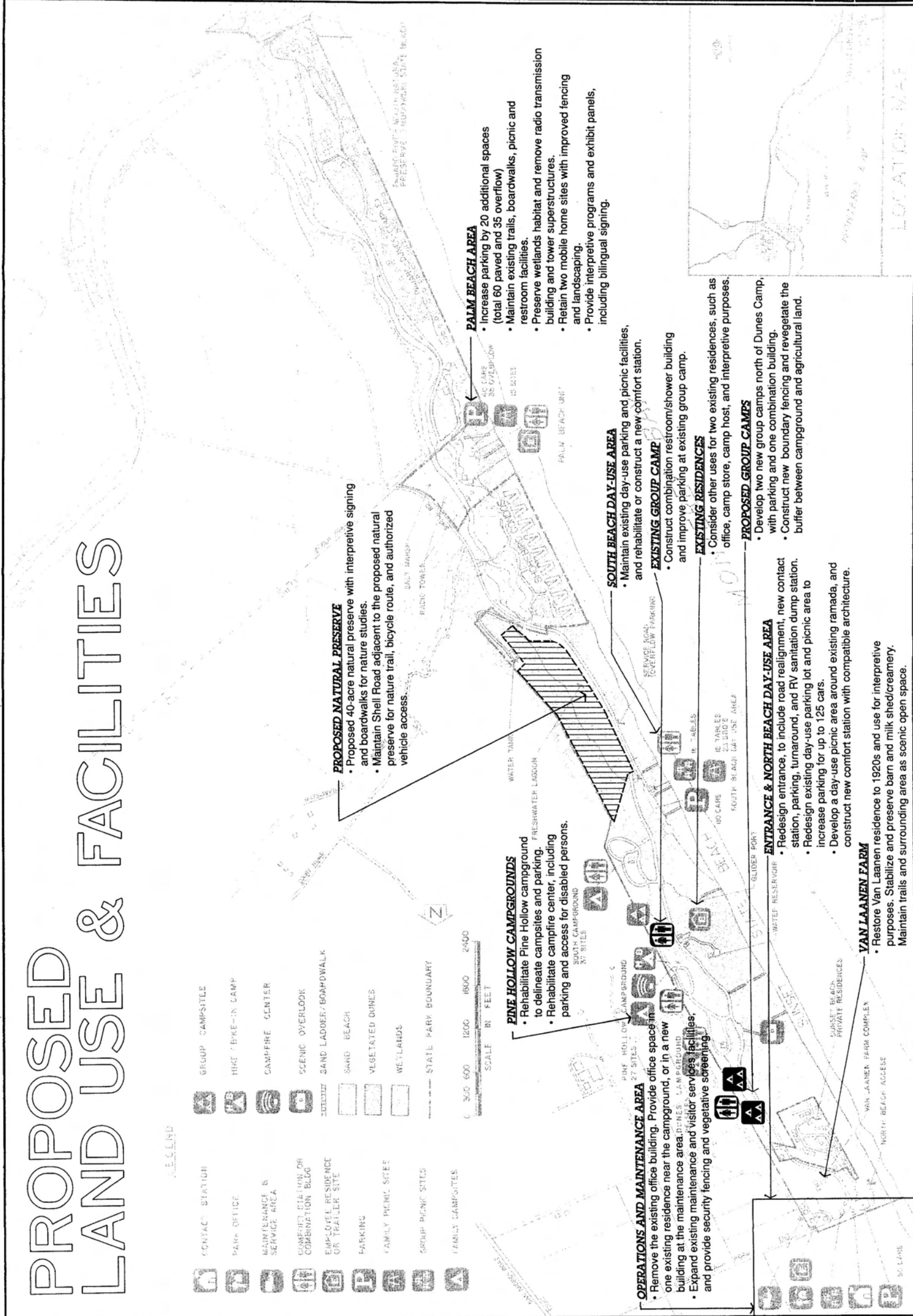
NOTE: SOME EXISTING FACILITIES, SUCH AS THE BEACH DAY USE AREA, ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THESE USE INTENSITY CATEGORIES, BUT MAY BE RETAINED.



# PROPOSED LAND USE & FACILITIES

## LEGEND

	CONTACT STATION		GROUP CAMPSITES
	PARK OFFICE		HIKE / BIKE-IN CAMP
	MAINTENANCE & SERVICE AREA		CAMPFIRE CENTER
	COMMUTER STATION OR COMBINATION BLDG		SCENIC OVERLOOK
	EMPLOYEE RESIDENCE OR TRAILER SITE		SAND LADDER/BOARDWALK
	PARKING		SAND BEACH
	FAMILY PICNIC SITES		VEGETATED DUNES
	GROUP PICNIC SITES		WETLANDS
	FAMILY CAMPSITES		



**PROPOSED NATURAL PRESERVE**

- Proposed 40-acre natural preserve with interpretive signing and boardwalks for nature studies.
- Maintain Shell Road adjacent to the proposed natural preserve for nature trail, bicycle route, and authorized vehicle access.

**PINE HOLLOW CAMPGROUNDS**

- Rehabilitate Pine Hollow campground to delineate campsites and parking.
- Rehabilitate campfire center, including parking and access for disabled persons.

**OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE AREA**

- Remove the existing office building. Provide office space in one existing residence near the campground, or in a new building at the maintenance area.
- Expand existing maintenance and visitor services facilities, and provide security fencing and vegetative screening.

**SOUTH BEACH DAY-USE AREA**

- Maintain existing day-use parking and picnic facilities, and rehabilitate or construct a new comfort station.

**EXISTING GROUP CAMP**

- Construct combination restroom/shower building and improve parking at existing group camp.

**EXISTING RESIDENCES**

- Consider other uses for two existing residences, such as office, camp store, camp host, and interpretive purposes.

**PROPOSED GROUP CAMPS**

- Develop two new group camps north of Dunes Camp, with parking and one combination building.
- Construct new boundary fencing and revegetate the buffer between campground and agricultural land.

**ENTRANCE & NORTH BEACH DAY-USE AREA**

- Redesign entrance, to include road realignment, new contact station, parking, turnaround, and RV sanitation dump station.
- Redesign existing day-use parking lot and picnic area to increase parking for up to 125 cars.
- Develop a day-use picnic area around existing ramada, and construct new comfort station with compatible architecture.

**YAN LAANEN FARM**

- Restore Van Laanen residence to 1920s and use for interpretive purposes. Stabilize and preserve barn and milk shed/creamery. Maintain trails and surrounding area as scenic open space.

**PALM BEACH AREA**

- Increase parking by 20 additional spaces (total 60 paved and 35 overflow)
- Maintain existing trails, boardwalks, picnic and restroom facilities.
- Preserve wetlands habitat and remove radio transmission building and tower superstructures.
- Retain two mobile home sites with improved fencing and landscaping.
- Provide interpretive programs and exhibit panels, including bilingual signing.

