

**Staff Report Summary of Comments from *Concepts Newsletter* Review
Point Reyes National Seashore
General Management Plan Update**

Introduction

The National Park Service is in the process of updating the Point Reyes National Seashore (71,000 acres) *General Management Plan* (1980) which will guide management actions in the future. The update includes Golden Gate NRA lands administered by the Seashore in Olema Valley and within Tomales Bay (18,000 acres).

In addition to this public process, the Seashore has been providing background information to assist park management with this update by completing the following planning studies: Trail Inventory and Condition Assessment, Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, Transportation Management Study, Transit Analysis, GIS Vegetation & Wetland Delineation Map, Cultural Landscape Report, National Register Nomination for Olema Valley Historic District, Fire Management Plan, Vegetation Map, and Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation and Mapping.

In late November 2003, the National Park Service (NPS) released for public review the *Concepts Newsletter* for the Update to the General Management for Point Reyes National Seashore, including the North District of Golden Gate National Recreation Area administered by the Seashore. These preliminary concepts were generated from scoping meetings and were a starting point for the development of alternatives for public review in a draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

The *Concepts Newsletter* and this staff report is an interim step in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process between the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare and the publication of the draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS). The initial GMP scoping for the development of the EIS was conducted for a 60 day period that ended on November 30, 1999. A staff report that summarizes public comment from this original scoping period is available on the park's website www.nps.gov/pore.

The *Concepts Newsletter* was available for public review until February 20, 2004. This Staff Report consolidates the major issues brought up by the public. It does not list all the specific comments made by the public. Letters and comments received have been placed in the administrative record for this project and will be used for future reference by the park's GMP Planning Team.

Review of *Concept Newsletter* Comments

To ensure that all comments and/or issues raised in letters or oral comments received during the review period were noted and summarized, all the letters and comments were reviewed by the GMP Interdisciplinary Planning Team on March 14, 2004. Comments from the public meeting were collected on large format sheets then typed up and consolidated into the summary list.

Comments and/or issues that shared a common theme were consolidated to the extent possible, and then listed under major issue headings.

Next Steps in the Planning Process

During the coming year, the NPS project team will develop alternatives for public review in the draft GMP/EIS. These alternatives will be developed from information obtained from studies conducted, past research, and the public involvement to date. The draft GMP/EIS will be made available for public review. From public input, a final GMP/EIS will be developed and used as the long-term planning document for the National Seashore and the north district of GGNRA. The NPS projects that the draft GMP/EIS will be available in late 2005 or early 2006.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Following is a summary of public comments received during the public comment period on the *Concepts Newsletter* for the Update to the General Management for Point Reyes National Seashore, including the North District of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

The summary includes both written comments received during the review period and verbal comments from the public meeting held on January 14, 2004 at the Red Barn Classroom where 120 people attended. There is some overlap as individuals may have attended the meeting as well as provided written comments. Appendix 1 contains the verbal comments made at the public meeting.

Over 950 letters, emails, and faxes were received during the review period – including letters from agencies, organizations, and individuals. This included 20 letters from organizations and 957 faxes, emails, and letters from individuals.

Summary of Comments from the Concepts Newsletter Scoping

Land Use Planning

The following is a summary of public comments related to relationships with adjoining public lands, park actions affecting local communities, wilderness, transportation issues, regional planning, and zoning inconsistencies.

- Continue agricultural activities
- Supports agriculture but not grazing
- Establish Marine Protected Areas and study any impacts
- Concern over vehicle/traffic congestion

- No new wilderness designation
- Expand agricultural use in Olema Valley
- Increase wilderness areas/eliminate corridors for contiguous wilderness
- Support organic and sustainable agriculture
- Reduce cow effluent into Tomales Bay
- Develop annual ranch plans
- Support grazing management that creates parcels recognizing a percentage of native species composition
- Remove fences around park
- No ranching diversification
- Support to establish an archeological protection zone
- Concern about dairy impacts on water quality
- Return past ranch lands to grazing
- Secure livelihoods of ranch families in Seashore
- Adapt non-used buildings to overnight accommodations
- No further expansion on ranching
- Delineate grazing areas to support preservation/restoration of native habitat
- Support of changing zoning south of Five Brooks from *Natural* to *Cultural Landscape*
- Limit or phase out mariculture activities where harmful
- More clearly define “sustainable agriculture”
- Opposed to development of cultural landscape
- Against the establishment of Marine Protected Areas

Resource Issues

The following is a summary of concerns/issues raised by the public. The issues include concerns related to cultural resources, prescribed fire management, management of federally threatened and endangered species, and use and management of Tomales Bay.

- Inventory and protect historic and archeological sites
- Establish Marine Protected Areas and study any impacts (also in Land Use Planning)
- Support for (even increase efforts) control of invasive species
- Support control of exotic deer
- Support further reintroduction of elk
- Support for restoration of salmon
- Restore the wetland at Wilkins Ranch
- Inventory significant historic sites
- Emphasize natural over cultural resource preservation
- Leave resource unimpaired
- Establish fire history

Visitor Needs

The following is a summary of concerns/issues raised by the public. The issues include concerns related to changing visitor demographics, concession services, and visitation and visitor needs.

- Preserve trail system and restore closed trails
- Preserve Stewart Horse Camp and parking for horse trailers
- Enhance recreational uses and connect with trails in Marin County
- Do not decrease trails access for bicycles
- Expand bike access along Coast Trail

- Close trails to bicycles/support for hiking trails
- Recognize European explorers (include a trail from KPVC to Drake's Cove)
- Opposition to developed campgrounds
- Objection to any actions that would increase tourism
- Add a hostel in Olema Valley
- Restrict kayak use on Drakes Bay
- Limit horse use
- No new trails
- Expand public education opportunities
- Support for ranch activities at Pierce Point (e.g. a demo ranch)
- Don't encourage additional visitor use
- Increase horse-boarding facilities
- Against access to wilderness
- Expand shuttle services within park
- Manage uses of Tomales Bay more strictly
- Expand bike access to Gallagher Ranch (Gallagher is in private ownership)
- Allow only hiking trails at Wilkins Ranch
- Protect peace and quiet
- No bike trail in Giacomini Marsh

Miscellaneous Concepts

The following is a summary of concerns/issues raised by the public:

- Develop areas of voice control for dogs (off-leash areas too)
- Establish birth control limits on exotic animals

- Review accomplishments/changes from 1980 GMP
- Supports scientific evaluation of grazing in Olema Valley
- Concept #2 doesn't go far enough
- Acquire the Vedanta property
- Support for proposed concept 6 developed by Preserve Historic Olema Valley
- Remove non-historic buildings