



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Point Reyes National Seashore
Point Reyes, California 94956



L7617

June 13, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Park Service (NPS) and California State Lands Commission (CSLC) have prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS/EIR)/ **Giacomini Wetlands Restoration Plan** for Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore. In 2000, the Park Service acquired the Waldo Giacomini Ranch for the purpose of wetland restoration. Because the Project Area is in the Northern District of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), it is managed by Point Reyes National Seashore (Seashore).

We would like to thank those organizations and individuals who provided early scoping feedback and those who sent comments on the Draft EIS/EIR. Responses to comments submitted during the public comment period on the Draft EIS/EIR are included in this document. This *Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report* (FEIS/EIR) evaluates four alternatives for restoring wetlands and wetland functionality and incorporating public access opportunities that do not impact wetland function, as well as the No Action Alternative (e.g., closure of the dairy and discontinuation of intensive agricultural management). The primary purpose and objectives of the proposed project include: restoring hydrologic and ecological processes and functions in a significant portion of the Project Area; emphasizing actions that would benefit the health of the entire Tomales Bay watershed and not just the Project Area; and incorporating opportunities for experiencing and enjoying the restored wetlands that do not conflict with the project's purpose.

The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report* (DEIS/EIR) was circulated for public review and comment for approximately 60 days, with the public comment period ending February 14, 2007. Responses to comments submitted to the Park Service and CSLC by agencies, organizations, and individuals during the public comment period are included in Chapter 5. Where necessary, additional information has been added to Chapters 2 (Alternatives), 3 (Affected Environment) and 4 (Environmental Consequences and Mitigation Measures) of the FEIS/EIR to improve description of alternatives and analyses of potential impacts and address specific public comments.

Principal differences between the draft and final EIS/EIR include change in the preferred alternative, slight modification to Alternative D, and slight changes to impact determination. Based on agency and public comment, the Park Service decided to select Alternative D rather than Alternative C as the lead agencies' preferred alternative in the FEIS/EIR. Alternative D is the lead agencies' preferred alternative, because it best meets the purpose of restoring wetlands

while also meeting the agencies' objective of providing public access opportunities that allow visitors and residents to experience and enjoy the restored wetland. Alternative D is also the environmentally preferred alternative, because it provides the most restoration. Alternative D has been slightly modified to improve restoration potential and access opportunities, without causing more than a negligible change in the level of impacts.

During the comment period, it became clear that certain elements of the southern perimeter trail require further planning and analysis, and was therefore considered "not ripe for decision" by NEPA standards. While Alternative D does not include a non-vehicular bridge across Lagunitas Creek, as was proposed under Alternative C, the Park Service would commit to working in the future with the County of Marin and other agencies on development of additional access facilities on the southern perimeter, including a potential trail along Levee Road and Green Bridge, extension of a trail to Inverness Park, and/or construction of a non-vehicular bridge across Lagunitas Creek at the site of the old summer dam through a separate planning process. Alternative D also includes addition of an ADA-compliant access to be provided at the White House Pool County Park.

The FEIS/EIR is available on-line from the Seashore's website at http://www.nps.gov/pore/parkmgmt/planning_giacomini_wrp.htm. To spare precious natural resources and costs to the park, we encourage you to view the plan digitally. If you wish to obtain a CD or hardcopy version of the document, you may email pore_planning@nps.gov (in subject line type: Giacomini Wetlands Restoration Plan) and a copy will be mailed to you.

In conjunction with this release, the CSLC board will consider certification of the FEIS/EIR at their meeting scheduled for June 28, 2007. This meeting is noticed at the CSLC web site <http://www.slc.ca.gov> and is included with this mailing.

With consideration of all public and agency comments, and following careful review of the FEIS/EIR, the Regional Director, Pacific West Region will make the final decision on the proposed plan. A record of Decision may be signed by the Regional Director not sooner than 30 days after the EPA's publication of the notice of filing of the FEIS/EIR in the Federal Register. Notice of the final decision will also be posted in the Federal Register and on the park's web site and a press release will be sent to local and regional newspapers. Following approval of the Giacomini Wetland Restoration Project, the official responsible for implementation will be the Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore.

Sincerely,

Don L. Neubacher
Superintendent

Enclosures