

**Comment Letter 4: Board of the Inverness Ridge Association, Inverness, CA. Anthony Prud'homme, Director.**

Don Neubacher  
 Superintendent  
 Point Reyes National Seashore  
 Point Reyes, CA 94956  
 ATTN: FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

RECEIVED
Point Reyes National Seashore
APR 5 '04
INVERNESS RIDGE ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 342
Inverness, CA 94937
APR 19, 2004
SUPT.
ASST. SUPT.
SPEC. PK. MGR.
LAW ENFORCE.
RES./SCIENCE
RANGE CONSR.
FIRE MGT.
INTERP.
CULT. RES.
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CONTRACTING
PERSONNEL
BUDGET

Dear Don:

The Board of the Inverness Ridge Association wishes to thank you and the PRNS staff for the fine work in developing a fire management plan for the Point Reyes National Seashore, and the Northern District of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Three members of the IRA Board (Bill Carlin, Anthony Prud'homme, and Mary Anne Warren) attended the March 18 workshop on the Draft Fire Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement, and found it to be both helpful and informative. We appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Of the three approaches discussed in the draft statement, we strongly support Alternative C, which is also the alternative preferred by the Park. Alternative C has many advantages, of which three appear to us to be salient.

The first advantage of Alternative C is that it permits fuel reduction to be done on up to 3,500 acres, as compared to 2,000 under Alternative B, the other option that is being seriously considered. We understand that Alternative C is estimated to permit the reduction of hazardous fuels to proceed at a rate that will accomplish a significant reduction in the risk of catastrophic fire within 13 years—as compared to 23 years under Alternative B. For those who live close to the park, this represents a substantial gain in safety, especially given the rapid regrowth in the areas burned in the 1995 Vision Fire. As we know from the work that we have done on our own properties, and in and around Paradise Ranch Estates—much of it with funding from the Wildland Urban Interface grants that the Park has generously provided—it is also more cost-effective, and produces a more aesthetically attractive result, if the regrowth areas are thinned before the Bishop pines become too large.

The second advantage of Alternative C is that it calls for more vegetation control (by mechanical methods only) along the Inverness Ridge Trail, from Limantour Road to the top of Mount Vision. For those of us in PRE, this is a crucial safety

**Comment  
4-1**

**Comment 4-1.** The Inverness Ridge Association supports Alternative C, the preferred alternative of the NPS. Alternative C has three advantages:

- a) Permits fuel reduction on a greater amount of acres, thereby proceeding in the reduction of hazardous fuels at a more rapid rate and allows Bishop pine regrowth stands to be thinned while still small.
- b) Allows for more fuel reduction along the Inverness Ridge Trail, and
- c) The accelerated pace permitted under Alternative C allows the NPS and adjacent WUI communities to benefit from the current availability of federal funding for fire hazard reduction programs.

***Response to Comment 4-1.*** Comment and preference noted.

factor. Creating more defensible zones will greatly improve the chance of stopping fires in this area. We greatly appreciate the work that has already been done on the part of the Inverness Ridge Trail that is our emergency exit, from the end of Sunnyside Road to Limantour Road, and we support similar maintenance of the portion of the trail between the end of Sunnyside and the summit of Mount Vision. If this portion of the trail can be made more passable to emergency vehicles, this will also improve the odds of stopping a fire before it reaches PRE, Inverness, or Inverness Park.

**Comment  
4-1  
continued**

The third advantage of Alternative C, which was noted at the March 18 workshop, is that federal funding appears to be available now for fire management projects in and around PRNS and GGNRA. Since this opportunity may be of limited duration, we think it desirable to proceed with all due speed. We are confident that the expertise of the PRNS staff will ensure that the work will be done without damage—indeed, with some gain—to the beauty of the landscape, and the health of native plant and animal species. In this regard, Ismael Gutierrez and his crew are also a great resource, as they have become highly skilled and efficient in thinning vegetation with minimal disturbance to birds, animals, and endangered plants in the area.

Thank you again for all the time and thought that has gone into developing a fire management plan, informing the community about the alternatives under consideration, and requesting feedback.

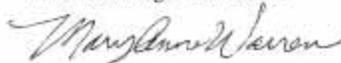
**Comment  
4-2**

Incidentally, we were pleased to learn that there will be an e-mail list for those who wish to be informed about dates and locations for prescribed burns, and (with permission) we will let our members know how to get on the list.

Sincerely yours,



Anthony Prud'homme, President  
Inverness Ridge Association



Mary Anne Warren, Secretary  
Inverness Ridge Association

**Comment 4-2.** The membership of Inverness Ridge Association would like the opportunity to be apprised of the availability of email notification lists for prescribed burning.

***Response to Comment 4-2.*** The Education Specialist for the Fire Program will continue to advertise the availability of the NPS email notification list notifying residents of upcoming fire management activities that could affect the local community, including the Inverness Ridge Association and other local homeowners' groups.