



United States Department of the Interior

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7617

September 14, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

The National Park Service (Park Service) and California State Lands Commission (CSLC) have received approval for implementation of the selected alternative outlined in the **Giacomini Wetlands Restoration Project** *Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Statement* (FEIS/EIR) and are planning to begin construction this fall, including ranch building demolition and removal of the south levee of the East Pasture.

On June 28, 2007, the California State Lands Commission approved the Giacomini Wetlands Restoration Project EIR for certification, and the Notice of Determination (NOD) was subsequently issued on July 9, 2007. Following close of the 30-day No Action period on July 30, 2007, the Regional Director for the Pacific West Region of the Park Service, Jon Jarvis, signed the Record of Decision (ROD) for the EIS on August 16, 2007. The ROD is available on the park website at www.nps.gov/pore.

In the interim, the Park Service, CSLC, and its funding and construction partner, Point Reyes National Seashore Association (PRNSA), initiated planning and permitting for construction of the restoration component of the project. (Funding is still being sought to implement the public access component: The Park Service currently has at least three (3) separate federal and private grant applications pending.) PRNSA has contracted with the consulting firm of Winzler & Kelly Consulting Engineers to provide project and construction management services.

Phase I Construction: Currently, the agencies are planning to construct Phase I of the project in fall 2007. Phase I will principally involve removal of agriculture infrastructure and conditions (e.g., scraping of manure disposal pastures), as well as enhancement/creation of freshwater marsh and ponded areas for the federally threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*) as mitigation for ongoing and projected losses of existing freshwater marsh habitat from increases in salinity. Construction is anticipated to start in late-September and to run through November 30, 2007, in certain non-wetland portions of the 2007 Project Area. Ultimately, the start and end-dates are dependent on many factors, including permitting, construction contracting, weather, and other logistical issues.

Construction Hauling: As discussed in the FEIS/EIR, construction will involve hauling of non-soil and possibly soil materials to off-site disposal sites at either landfills or quarries on the Point Reyes Peninsula. The Park Service and its partner agencies have worked with the engineering firm, Kamman Hydrology & Engineering, Inc., and Winzler & Kelly to refine hauling routes with the goal of having the least possible impact on adjacent residences and commercial operations. A map showing proposed hauling routes is enclosed. At this time, hauling to the quarries from the Giacomini Ranch East Pasture is anticipated to involve use of 5th Street, B Street, State Route 1, Levee Road, Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, and Pierce Point Road. Hauling to landfills will involve use of 5th Street, B Street, 4th Street, State Route 1, Point Reyes-Petaluma Road, and potentially Novato Boulevard. Hauling operations within the Project Area will be limited to the hours of 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, with weekends permissible only with special authorization from the Park Service and partner agencies. Hauling operations for 2007 are **not** anticipated to result in any traffic delays or road or lane closures.

Public Availability of Construction Schedule: A schedule of construction activities will become available following selection of a construction contractor in mid-September. We will be working with the Construction Manager of Winzler & Kelly Consulting to provide and regularly update a construction schedule on the Seashore's web page (www.nps.gov/pore). In addition, the public may contact the Construction Manager, Aaron Arellanes of Winzler & Kelly, at (415) 464-5162, if they have any concerns, issues, or questions regarding construction.

Temporary Trail Closures: Trail users should be aware that, at some point between late September and late October, the informal trail on the southern portion of the Giacomini Ranch East Pasture will need to be closed temporarily to allow for removal of a portion of the levee. In addition, the Olema Marsh trail and potentially the parking lot for Olema Marsh may also need to be temporarily closed. We will post information about trail and parking lot closures on the Seashore's website (www.nps.gov/pore) and at trail and road entrances at least one week prior to closures.

Opportunities for Volunteering: Once the earthmoving components of Phase I are completed in October-November 2007, the Park Service anticipates several additional months of revegetation activities should it receive the necessary permits. While revegetation will involve use of outside contractors, we also hope that some of you might participate in these activities. Revegetation will involve planting of thousands of plants that were specifically grown for this project through use of local seed and vegetative material. We hope to involve individuals, school, and other groups in this effort, so, please, if you are interested, send an email to Leslie Adler-Ivanbrook at Leslie_Adler-Ivanbrook@partner.nps.gov, and we will keep you updated on our revegetation schedule.

Phase II Construction: If you cannot join us this year, we will be doing revegetation and other activities next year, as well. In fact, following completion of Phase I of the project, the Park Service, PRNSA, and CSLC will begin planning for Phase II, anticipated to start in spring or early summer of 2008.

Public Access: As noted earlier, the Park Service has currently applied for funding from at least three (3) sources for implementation of the public access facilities as shown in the selected alternative. In addition, the Park Service is beginning to discuss with the County of Marin the potential for development of additional public access facilities on the southern perimeter of the Project Area through additional scoping and compliance. More information on this planning effort should be available this fall.

We would really like to thank all those who have participated and provided feedback throughout this planning process. Without you and your support, there would be no project, and we hope that you feel as proud as we do of this achievement.

Sincerely,

Don L. Neubacher
Superintendent

Enclosures