

Redwood

National Park

National Park Service
US Department of the Interior



Redwood National Park Trail and Backcountry Management Plan

**Redwood National Park
Del Norte and Humboldt Counties
California**

Redwood National Park Trail and Backcountry Management Plan

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Redwood National Park Trail and Backcountry Management Plan

Introduction

Redwood National Park is one of four individual parks that comprise Redwood National and State Parks (RNSP). The four parks—Redwood National Park, Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, and Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park—are jointly managed as RNSP to improve protection of resources and opportunities for visitors to enjoy those resources. These parks offer opportunities for exploration and recreation in redwood forests, seashores, prairies, oak woodlands, and stream and river valleys along the coastline of northwestern California.

Trail systems were developed over the years to serve each of the four individual parks that are now managed cooperatively as RNSP. There are currently only a few trails linking the park units that comprise RNSP or connecting with trails outside the parks.

In 1999, the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) began planning to expand the RNSP trail system. The existing RNSP trails will serve as the nucleus of an expanded system of park trails and trail links to regional trails in Del Norte and Humboldt counties.

The 2000 GMP/GP called for a comprehensive trail plan to guide development of an expanded trail system for the parks and for a backcountry management plan to describe policies and regulations governing visitor use of the backcountry in Redwood National Park. Regulations governing use of backcountry and trails on federal lands within RNSP are found in the Superintendent's Compendium, which is updated annually.

The expanded trail system will

- provide visitors with opportunities to visit the full range of park resources by foot, horseback or bicycle;
- provide access to primitive or backcountry camping areas;
- reduce barriers and provide opportunities for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians of all abilities; and
- provide safe and enjoyable recreation for all trail and backcountry users; and
- integrate existing trails with new trails and with the other RNSP trails and with trail systems outside these parks.

Cooperative Planning and Management of RNSP Trails and Backcountry

Redwood National Park was created by Congress in 1968. Three California state parks established in the 1920s—Prairie Creek Redwoods, Del Norte Coast Redwoods, and Jedediah Smith Redwoods—are included within the 1968 congressionally designated national park boundary. Congress expanded the national park in 1978, with most of the new lands added in the Redwood Creek basin.

In 1999, the NPS and CDPR completed the joint RNSP General Management Plan/General Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement/Plan (1999 GMP/GP FEIS/R) to manage the four parks units as a single park for better protection of resources and to improve opportunities for visitors to use and enjoy the parks. The GP/FEIR was approved and adopted in 1999 by the California Park

and Recreation Commission. The NPS issued a Record of Decision (ROD) in 2000 approving the GMP/FEIS.

In 2002, CDPR acquired 25,000 acres in the Mill Creek watershed between Del Norte Coast and Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Parks. These lands were added to Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park in 2004. In 2005, Congress adjusted the Redwood National Park boundary to encompass the newly acquired state park lands. An amendment (GPA) to the 2000 RNSP GMP/GP to outline management for the Mill Creek lands was approved and adopted in October 2010.

The trail and backcountry management plan (TBMP) was initiated before the Mill Creek lands were added to RNSP. Specific CDPR proposals for trail development and backcountry use in Mill Creek will require additional planning and public input. All trail development in the California state parks within RNSP will require compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under

How the Plan Was Developed

The NPS and CDPR sought input for this plan from the public, park and other agency personnel, agency directives, policies, and guidelines, and applicable laws and regulations. Trail users, interested members of the public, federal, tribal, state and local agency personnel, park staff, and local residents contributed written comments and suggestions and raised issues and concerns in public meetings.

Public scoping for trail development and backcountry use was initiated in the fall of 1999. Scoping included public meetings, requests for written comments given out at the meetings, and discussions with agencies, organizations and individuals. Public comments from the 1996 Davison Ranch and the 1999 GMP/GP planning processes also served as a source of information. Public meetings for the TBMP were held November 8-10, 1999 in Arcata, Orick, and Crescent City. Forty-five people provided written comments and suggestions that were considered in developing alternatives for trail development.

Conservation Planning for the Trail and Backcountry Management Plan

An environmental assessment for the Trail and Backcountry Management Plan (TBMP EA) was released for public review in April 2009 and approved through a Finding of No Significant Impact in June 2009. The development described in this TBMP is the alternative selected for implementation after public review of the TBMP EA. As site-specific designs and layouts for trails, trailheads, and backcountry camps are developed, compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and additional consultations will be completed prior to construction of these facilities. Planning and construction of trailheads will require additional compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act to analyze site-specific impacts.

The EA is tiered off the 1999 GMP/FEIS. The GMP called for preparation of a comprehensive trail and backcountry management plan to guide the development of an expanded trail system, specify the locations of primitive camping areas, and prescribe policies and regulations for the use of backcountry areas by hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act—Appendix H in the TBMP EA summarizes potential effects on historic properties and outlines NHPA compliance

actions that might be needed. Consultation with the California SHPO under the NHPA and with tribal governments including tribal heritage preservation officers (THPOs) will be conducted when site-specific planning commences. The NPS will consult with the Yurok THPO in lieu of the California SHPO in accordance with 36 CFR 800.2(c)(2), for any trail routes that are within the recognized boundary of the Yurok Reservation. Planning and construction of trailheads will also require additional compliance with NEPA. The NPS will use the NEPA process to meet its obligations under Section 106 NHPA for construction of trailheads.

Compliance with the Endangered Species Act—Detailed descriptions of mitigations for possible effects on the California brown pelican, Oregon silverspot butterfly, marbled murrelet, bald eagle, western snowy plover, and northern spotted owl from implementation of the TBMP are contained in the US Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion (USFWS BO) file number 8-14-2003-1517, dated January 31, 2007 and valid through 2017.

The NPS consulted with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the possible effects from implementation of the TBMP on the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast coho salmon, California Coastal Chinook salmon, the Northern California steelhead, and designated critical habitats for these species (NMFS BO file number ARN # 151422SWR03AR8825, dated September 17, 2007.) NMFS concluded that implementation of actions in the TBMP is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of these species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of their designated critical habitats in the park.

The NPS has already implemented the conservation recommendation included in the NMFS BO to minimize or adverse effects on coho salmon from use of the existing Mill Creek Horse Trail which. Since 2005, two creek fords on the Mill Creek Horse Trail have been seasonally closed to protect coho salmon and other anadromous salmonids during spawning runs. The southern ford is closed from October 15 to May 31. The northern ford is closed October 15 to May 15.

Designation of Bicycle Routes—Existing maintained bicycle routes in RNSP include Prairie Creek/Davison/Lost Man Creek bike trail between Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Davison Ranch, Berry Glen, and the Lost Man Creek picnic area; Streelow Creek Bike Trail between the Davison Bike Trail along Prairie Creek and Davison Road; Lost Man Creek-Holter Ridge bike trail; the Ossagon Trail in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park; the Last Chance section of the historic Coastal Trail south of Crescent City from Enderts Beach to US Highway 101; and the Little Bald Hills Trail from Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park through Redwood National Park to Six Rivers National Forest along the South Fork of the Smith River. Roads open to bicycle use include those open to public or administrative vehicle use such as the Schoolhouse Peak Lookout Road, as well as those open to vehicle use by permit such as the Tall Trees Grove Access Road.

The B-Line Bicycle Trail and the Coyote Creek Bicycle Loop were part of the TBMP selected action. These bicycle routes will be established on existing roads maintained for administrative vehicle use.

Unless specifically closed to bicycle use by announcement in the Superintendent's Compendium, all park roads open to vehicles are also open to bicycles under general regulations found in 36 CFR 1.5 without the need for rule making under 36 CFR 4.30 (a). Roads in Redwood National Park specifically closed through announcement in the Compendium generally are those roads within the areas zoned in the 2000 GMP as "Backcountry Non-Mechanized" or as "Primitive" that lie primarily within areas of old growth redwood forests within the Redwood Creek watershed. Management zoning established through the 1999 GMP/FEIS and 2000 ROD

prohibits mechanized forms of visitor transport for recreation in primitive zones and backcountry non-mechanized zones.

In addition to the specific bicycle trails mentioned above, many miles of roads are open to bikes under existing NPS rules and regulations. These roads were not shown or discussed in the TBMP because no change in their status is being proposed, because they are not maintained specifically for bicycle use, and because their status as roads may change over time as watershed restoration activities are completed and as the NPS completes a road management plan. Roads that are closed to bicycle use are or will be signed as closed.

The 2009 EA for the TBMP describes impacts associated with use and maintenance of trails. The effects of bicycle use of roads are the same as the effects of vehicle use and maintenance. Based on analyses conducted for use and maintenance of individual roads, these effects have been determined to be negligible for all resources other than listed threatened species and minor to moderate for listed species in some locations. Through on the impact analyses in the EA, the NPS determined that bicycle use of existing roads open to and maintained for vehicle access will not result in unacceptable impacts to natural or cultural resources and that this use is consistent with the management zoning for the developed, frontcountry, backcountry mechanized, transportation, and Bald Hills zones described in the 1999 GMP/FEIS and the 2000 ROD.

Impacts from use and maintenance of existing roads by bicycles on listed threatened or endangered species were analyzed in the biological assessments submitted to the USFWS and NMFS for the TBMP. The USFWS and NMFS concurred with the NPS determination that there are no additional impacts on listed species from bicycle use of roads open to and maintained for administrative motor vehicle use.

Coastal Zone Management Act Compliance—All or parts of several trails, one trailhead, and one backcountry camp will be within or near the California Coastal Zone. Federal lands are excluded from the Coastal Zone permitting process but projects on federal lands are subject to the federal consistency review to determine whether the project is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the California Coastal Management Program. The NPS will prepare consistency determinations for review by the California Coastal Commission when site-specific designs become available. Construction of the Crescent Beach loop, the Redwood Creek Nature Trail, the Skunk Cabbage backcountry camp, and the trailhead near Wilson Creek are subject to federal consistency review by the Commission.

National Park Trails

RNSP trails maintained for visitor use are listed in Appendix A.

New trails that will be constructed are identified in the TBMP EA by a name that reflects the general location and a letter, e.g. East Side Trail (M). Final trail names will be chosen after construction. The maps show existing trails and the proposed routes for new trails; new trails are identified with a letter.

The NPS will construct 7 hiking trails totaling 14.6 miles and establish two bike trails totaling 10.3 miles. One new trail described in the TBMP, the Berry Glen Trail (Trail W), was completed in 2010.

Hiouchi Flat Trail, 0.7 miles. Trail A. This ADA-accessible trail will skirt the north bank of the Smith River to connect the Jedediah Smith state park campground with the Hiouchi residential and commercial area. No specific trailheads have been proposed to serve this trail. This trail might be constructed separately or in conjunction with NPS-CDPR visitor center proposed in the 1999 GMP/GP at Hiouchi Flat across Highway 199 from the existing NPS information center.

Rellim Ridge-Coastal Trail Connector, 1.7 miles. Trail G. This trail creates a connection between inland trails and the California Coastal Trail at Crescent Beach. This trail is needed to link the Coastal Trail to the Pacific Crest Trail and will be part of the Coast-to-Crest Trail. A pedestrian crossing of Highway 101 will be established at the western end of this trail somewhere between Hamilton Road and Enderts Beach Road. Any highway crossing will require coordination with and an encroachment permit from the California Department of Transportation.

Crescent Beach Loop, 0.7 mile. Trail H. This trail creates a short, fully accessible interpretive loop in the Crescent Beach visitor use area. A boardwalk will raise the trail above the wetlands in the area and allow on-site interpretation of coastal wetlands and other coastal resources and processes. This trail will most likely be constructed in conjunction with redesign of the Crescent Beach picnic area, which will serve as the trailhead. The existing segment of the California Coastal Trail at Crescent Beach will be incorporated to create the loop from the picnic area.

B-Line Bike Trail, 4.5 miles one-way. Trail L. This road skirts the boundary of the national park in the Lost Man Creek watershed. The B-Line bike route will begin on the eastern park boundary where the existing Holter Ridge Bike Trail turns east and south, and will follow the former Simpson Timber Company B-Line [not the former Louisiana-Pacific Corporation B-Line west of Redwood Creek] along the park boundary where the Highway 101 bypass intersects with the old Cal-Barrel Road. Because of the safety and construction issues associated with establishing a trailhead in the vicinity of the controlled-access freeway, this route will not be a loop trail. The Lost Man Creek trailhead will serve as the trailhead for the B-Line bike trail.

East Side Trail, Trail M. This segment of the East Side Trail will run 7 miles through and adjacent to old growth from the junction of the Emerald Ridge and Dolason Trails to join the Lyons Ranch Trail (Trail Q2) to be constructed.

Redwood Creek Beach Nature Trail, 0.3 miles. Trail O. This short interpretive trail will be a fully accessible boardwalk trail connecting the Redwood Information Center with the Redwood Creek Picnic Area. It will be part of the California Coastal Trail. The information center and the picnic area will serve as trailheads.

Lyons Ranch Trail, 1.7 miles. Trail Q2. This trail will connect the East Side Trail (Trail M) terminus at the new Copper Creek backcountry camp to the Bald Hills Road by constructing a new segment between the camp and the Lyons Ranch Road. This trail will use the existing Lyons Ranch trailhead off the Bald Hills Road.

Coyote Creek Bike Trail, 5.8 miles. Trail U. Ranch Road, Rock Fork Road, and Lower Rock Fork Road in the Coyote Creek watershed will be designated as a bike route in the Bald Hills area of the park. Bicyclists can travel along the Bald Hills Road back to the Lyons Ranch Trailhead for a bike loop.

Skunk Cabbage North Trail, 1.1 miles. Trail X. The trail will begin at the Elk Meadow Trailhead and run along the north side of Skunk Cabbage Creek to meet the existing Skunk Cabbage Trail, which is a segment of the Coastal Trail. The Berry Glen Trail completed in 2010 and Skunk Cabbage North Trail will be the links between the East Side Trail and the Coastal Trail. This trail will connect to the Trillium Falls Trail and run from that trail along the north bank of Skunk Cabbage Creek to connect with the existing Skunk Cabbage segment of the Coastal Trail where it crosses the headwaters of Skunk Cabbage Creek. This configuration will allow the Elk Meadow trailhead to serve as the primary trailhead for the Coastal Trail in this area and reduce the safety hazard for vehicles trying to turn left across Highway 101 at the 35 mile-per-hour curve at Robinson Road. The existing Robinson Road trailhead will be retained for additional access to the Coastal Trail.

National Park Trailheads

New trailheads will be constructed at Wilson Creek in Del Norte County and at the A-9 Deck off the West Side Access Road in Humboldt County. Existing trailheads at the Mill Creek Horse Trail near Howland Hill Road in Del Norte County and the Lyons Ranch trailhead on the Bald Hills Road in Humboldt County will be redesigned to improve vehicle access.

Wilson Creek Trailhead will be located on the east side of Highway 101 north of the mouth of Wilson Creek to serve the existing segment of the Coastal Trail and the DeMartin primitive camp. It will incorporate existing paved roads that formerly served private residences in this area or will be located at Wilson Creek. The Wilson Creek trailhead will have a capacity for three recreational vehicles (RVs) and seven passenger vehicles. The proposed new trailhead will be accessed from Wilson Creek Road if the new location does not use the existing abandoned roads.

A-9 Deck Trailhead will be constructed on a former logging deck located along the West Side Access Road on the southwestern edge of the national park. This trailhead will provide a staging area for equestrians and hikers using the west side horse trails and backcountry camps at Fortyfour Creek and Elam Creek. The A-9 trailhead will have a capacity for 15 RVs or trailers and 15 passenger vehicles.

Redesign Lyons Ranch Trailhead—The present entry to the Lyons Ranch trailhead off the Bald Hills Road will be redesigned to eliminate the sharp steep curve at the Bald Hills Road and to provide better sight distance for vehicles entering and exiting the parking area. Although large vehicles and trailers are not currently recommended on Bald Hills Road, the parking area might be designed for access by large vehicles to account for future improvements to the Bald Hills Road. If possible, the parking area will be located below the ridge top to reduce the visibility of the trailhead from the Bald Hills Road. Moving the parking area will increase protection of cultural resources in the Bald Hills Archeological District. The Lyons Ranch trailhead will have a capacity of 10 passenger vehicles.

Redesign Mill Creek Horse Trail Trailhead—The Mill Creek Horse Trail trailhead off Bertsch Avenue east of Crescent City will be redesigned to accommodate horse trailers safely and efficiently. Trailhead redesign will also include consideration of a new access road to the trailhead from Howland Hill Road that avoids residential areas. The Mill Creek Horse trailhead will have a capacity for 15 RVs or trailers and 15 passenger vehicles. Equestrians will be encouraged to use the Mill Creek trailhead that will accommodate stock trailers and large vehicles more easily than the Little Bald Hills trailhead off Howland Hills Road near Stout Grove.

West Side Access Road

About 6.5 miles of the West Side Access Road from the park boundary at Hiltons Road near Orick will be opened to public motor vehicle use to the new A-9 Deck trailhead. The road will provide access to the equestrian trails and backcountry camps on the west side of Redwood Creek. All roads leading off the A-9 deck will be gated to prevent unauthorized motor vehicle access.

Backcountry Use

Regulations governing use of the RNSP backcountry are found in the Code of Federal Regulations, Titles 14 and 36 (14 CFR & 36 CFR). These general regulations apply to all national parks and are intended to protect park resources and visitor safety.

Regulations specific to Redwood National Park are found in the Superintendent's Compendium of Designations, Closures, Permit Requirements, and other Restrictions. The Compendium provides park-specific details that expand upon general regulations found in the CFRs. Park-specific regulations describe areas open to backcountry camping and overnight parking, numbers of sites and lengths of stay allowed in camps, backcountry permit requirements, food storage techniques to keep wildlife from obtaining human food, noise levels allowed in old-growth forest, campfires, sanitation, pets, requirements for stock use, and designated off-road bicycle routes.

Backcountry Camps and Dispersed Camping

Backcountry includes those areas without road access or not accessible by private motor vehicle. The national park allows dispersed backcountry camping along the Redwood Creek corridor. Almost all camping occurs on the gravel bars in the Redwood Creek channel because the dense vegetation and lack of flat ground in the forest edges make camping off the gravel bars difficult.

Two new backcountry camps will be constructed. Backcountry camp locations were selected based on reasonable proximity to existing or proposed trails, the availability of potable or treatable water within a reasonable walking distance of the camp, sufficient level ground with stable soils suitable for construction and far enough from a water source to meet sanitation standards for pit toilets, and vegetation to provide shade during hot summer months and to provide an esthetically pleasing experience. Where a trail is long enough to offer more than one day's hike, such as the Coastal Trail or the East Side Trail, locations were chosen to be within an easy day's hike from a trailhead or another camp.

Skunk Cabbage Creek Backcountry Camp will be near the headwaters of Skunk Cabbage Creek along the section of the Coastal Trail near the southern end of Gold Bluffs Beach, approximately 0.4 miles south of the point where the Coastal Trail turns inland into the forest. This camp will be in Sitka spruce forest set back from the coastal bluffs and will have 4 sites.

Copper Creek Backcountry Camp will be located on the south end of the East Side Trail. It will have 5 sites.

Fortyfour Creek Backcountry Equestrian Camp on the Orick Horse Trail on the west side of Redwood Creek will be relocated to the G-6-1 Road to improve resource protection and visitor safety and to provide an adequate stock water source, and redesigned to improve accessibility for visitors of all abilities.

Backcountry Camping Permits

All camping in the backcountry camps, horse camps, and dispersed camping areas in Redwood National Park will require a free NPS permit.

The relation between visitor use and the numbers of corvids (jays and ravens) along the section of Redwood Creek between the mouth of McArthur Creek upstream to Bond Creek has been studied since 2005. Corvids are known to prey on eggs and nestlings of marbled murrelets, a threatened species that is assumed to occupy the old growth forest along this section of the creek. Beginning in 2010, dispersed camping will no longer be allowed along about 4 miles of the lower Redwood Creek gravel bars from approximately 0.25 mile below the mouth of McArthur Creek upstream to Bond Creek. If the study shows no relation between corvid populations and presence of campers, the camping closure might be lifted. Dispersed camping on the gravel bars along Redwood Creek will be allowed to continue upstream of Bond Creek to the park boundary, except within 0.25 mile either side of the Tall Trees Grove.

Proposed State Park Trails

The following trails were proposed through trail planning conducted jointly with California State Parks trail managers. Specific proposals for trail development and backcountry use in California state parks within the RNSP boundary will require additional site-specific planning under CDPR policies and requirements for compliance with CEQA.

Aubell-Boy Scout Tree Trail-Hatton Trail Connector, 8.0 miles. Trail B. This would be a major trail skirting the western edge of the Redwood Heritage State Wilderness Area in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park. This trail originates at the proposed Aubell Ranch trailhead, crosses the existing Boy Scout Tree Trail at Jordan Creek, skirts the northwest side of Redwood Heritage State Wilderness, crosses the west and south forks of Clarks Creek, and joins the existing Hatton Trail opposite Simpson-Reed Grove. It would link with the Hatton Trail to create a hiking loop around most of the state park. This trail would be served by proposed trailheads at Aubell Ranch and at Highway 199/Elk Valley Road.

Camp Lincoln-Walker Hole Connector, 1.8 miles. Trail C. This trail connects Camp Lincoln historic site with Walker Hole on the south bank of the Smith River. Camp Lincoln would serve as a trailhead on the western boundary of the state park.

Lieffer-Ellsworth-Peterson Trail Connector, 0.3 mile. Trail D. This trail connects the existing Lieffer Loop-Ellsworth trail with the Peterson trail by crossing Walker Road in Jedediah Smith RSP. It would link existing trails in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park to create a longer route. The existing trailhead on Highway 199 at the Simpson-Reed Grove would serve as the trailhead

Mill Creek Horse Trail-Little Bald Hills Trail Connector, 4.5 miles. Trail E. This is one of three links needed to connect the California Coastal Trail at Crescent Beach with the Pacific Crest Trail in Siskiyou County via the Kelsey Trail. The other links between the Coastal and Pacific Crest trails are a portion of the existing Rellim Ridge-Mill Creek connector trail and the Rellim Ridge-Coastal Trail connector.

Stone Lagoon Horse Trail, 3.0 miles. Trail N. This trail originates on state park land near a privately-owned recreational facility at Stone Lagoon and ascends the ridge toward the national park boundary on the west side of the Redwood Creek watershed. It would provide equestrian

access to the horse trails and camps in the national park. This trail is intended to connect with the West Side Access Road and the A-9 deck trailhead in the national park on the ridge separating the Redwood Creek basin from McDonald Creek, which drains into Stone Lagoon. Completing this trail requires acquisition of or an easement across private land separating state and national park lands.

State Park Trailheads Considered

Additional trailheads are being considered to serve proposed trails in the following state park locations. Trailhead development would be subject to additional site-specific planning and compliance with the CEQA under state park planning requirements.

Intersection of Highway 199 and Elk Valley Road—A trailhead at the intersection of Highway 199 and Elk Valley Road to provide access to the proposed Aubell-Boy Scout Tree-Hatton Trail connector which would skirt the western edge of Jedediah Smith state park south of Highway 199. There is an existing parking area at this location but no trail.

Aubell Ranch—Aubell Ranch to serve the proposed Aubell-Boy Scout Tree-Hatton Trail connector. The County of Del Norte recommends in its 2000 General Plan update that a trailhead be constructed as part of future development of the Westlog mill site, which is located off Elk Valley Road between Aubell Ranch and Highway 199. The County proposal is not part of the RNSP trail plan proposal and is subject to future planning under Del Norte County planning regulations.

Other Actions Considered in the TBMP EA

Several proposals were considered during the development of the TBMP. These proposals were dismissed from analysis in the TBMP EA for reasons described under each proposal.

Redesign the Little Bald Hills Trailhead—A proposal to redesign and enlarge the Little Bald Hills trailhead in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park to accommodate horse trailers was considered but rejected in favor of redesigning the Mill Creek Horse Trailhead. Redesigning and enlarging the Little Bald Hills trailhead for easier access by large vehicles would adversely affect old-growth forest and large redwood trees. The Mill Creek Horse Trailhead is located in a previously disturbed area outside of old-growth redwood forest. It has more convenient access by paved road and is easier and safer to negotiate with a stock trailer than the Little Bald Hills trailhead off Howland Hill Road, a narrow winding unpaved road through old-growth redwood forest.

Accessible Camp near the Redwood Creek Trailhead—A proposal to construct a fully accessible camp downstream of the creek crossing nearest the end of the lower Redwood Creek Trail was considered. This proposal was rejected because there was no site level enough to provide accessible toilets while meeting setback distance from the creek under the sanitation codes. North Coast Region Water Quality Control Board standards and Humboldt County sewage disposal regulations for on-site sewage disposal systems require a setback of at least 100 feet from a perennial stream, measured from the edge of the ten-year floodplain. Areas far enough from the creek to comply with water quality standards are too steep to meet accessibility standards.

Relocate the Nickel Creek Backcountry Camp—The Nickel Creek backcountry camp with five sites receives the highest annual average number of overnight stays of any NPS backcountry camp. The camp is within easy walking distance of the trailhead and attracts some users who engage in inappropriate uses and activities inconsistent with intended use of the area as a national park trail and backcountry camp. Some users camp illegally along the trail between the trailhead and the camp. People camping illegally on the beach near Nickel Creek intrude on interpretive programs conducted on the beach. The Nickel Creek camp was moved to its current location in 1980 from a nearby location that is an archeological site listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The site is subject to adverse effects from looters and illegal camping. Resource damage attributable to illegal activity was reduced by the first relocation but continues. A proposal to relocate the camp a second time to a point along the Coastal Trail about one mile south of its existing location was considered. The proposed new location did not meet the criteria used to select sites for new backcountry camps. The closest available location with relatively level ground on which to construct campsites would not provide a high quality backcountry camping experience due to lack of a water source and poor esthetic surroundings in second growth forest. It was determined that it would be more cost-effective to provide additional law enforcement patrols of the existing location and to protect the site using structural techniques than to relocate the camp a second time.

Backcountry Camping without Permits—An alternative in which permits would not be required for overnight use in the backcountry was considered but rejected based on concerns about safety and resource protection. Requiring permits provides a margin of safety for visitors. Permits allow rangers to locate campers more easily in case of emergency or if search or rescue is needed, to determine if vehicles parked overnight at trailheads belong to campers, to provide information on the relationship between visitor use and resource impacts, and to inform campers if a backcountry camp is already full. Permits allow the NPS to monitor use levels to determine if demand is high enough to warrant additional camping facilities and to compare the number of campers with the degree of impact at camps.

Dispersed Camping Fire Permits—Allowing ground fires by permit in the dispersed camping area proposed under the maximum development alternative analyzed in the TBMP EA was considered but rejected because of the risk of wildfire from uncontrolled campfires.

Previous Park Trail Recommendations and Planning

Trails are one of the recreational opportunities many visitors seek in a park. Some trails are destinations in themselves while other trails provide access to park features or serve interpretive purposes. Trail systems can develop from historic trails and roads that predated a park, or can be designed and constructed specifically as a park experience or to reach a particular area. All trail types are found in RNSP.

Previous studies, reports, and plans about the RNSP trail system are summarized here in chronological order beginning with the establishment of Redwood National Park in 1968 and continuing up to the completion of the 1999 RNSP General Management Plan/General Plan.

Historic Roads, Trails and Transportation Routes

The earliest recommendations for trails in the national park were contained in an overview on area history completed shortly after the national park was established (Bearss 1969). This overview recommended that that several old roads and historic trails important in the settlement of the area be located, preserved, interpreted, or re-established if possible. Many of these recommendations have been carried out. Some observations from the study still pertain to current trail planning and construction and are paraphrased below.

Historic trails afford an opportunity for interpreting man's struggle to cope with the environment. Trails were difficult to open and roads, until the advent of huge power earth-moving equipment, next to impossible to build. Roads and trail constitute an important and invaluable element in the story of man and the redwoods. This is a facet of the area's history that can be interpreted on site, because portions of the old trails and roads are extant. Important sites meriting preservation and interpretation are:

- the portion of the Crescent City Plank Road between U.S. 199 and Peacock's Ferry;
- Peacock's and Catching's [1/2 mile upstream of the mouth of Mill Creek at Hiouchi] ferries;
- the portions of the Kelsey Trail that are today's Bald Hill Road [in Del Norte County, not Humboldt County] in the area known as Little Bald Hills in Sections 22 and 23, Township 16 North, Range 1 East;
- the extant sections of the Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road along Damnation Ridge and Ragged Ass Hill [at Cushing Creek]—the remains on Damnation Ridge are especially interesting, because you can still feel the puncheons just below the surface; and
- the five miles of Redwood Highway constructed in the 1920s and abandoned in the 1930s, running along the cliffs and skirting the head of Damnation Creek.

Portions of three historic roads and trails—the Crescent City Plank Road, the Kelsey Trail, and the Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road—have already been incorporated into the RNSP trail system. The Coast-to-Crest Trail will connect to the modern Kelsey Trail in the Smith River National Recreation Area. The proposed state park trail connecting Camp Lincoln to Walker Hole would re-open part of the historic route from Crescent City to Jacksonville, Oregon.

The Kelsey Trail—The Kelsey Trail between Crescent City and Yreka is one of the oldest established trails in northern California. The Kelsey Trail is a product of economic interdependence and cooperation between the pioneers of early-day Del Norte and Siskiyou counties. The trail was constructed in 1855 as the primary wagon supply route from Crescent City to mining camps in the Klamath Mountains near Yreka. The last commercial pack train used the trail in 1909.

The trail began south of Crescent City and proceeded up Howland Hill, crossing Mill Creek near the site of Nickerson Ranch by a route now mostly obliterated by road-building and logging. From Nickerson Ranch, the trail converged with another trail, and ascended "Bald Hill" [Little Bald Hills]. The Little Bald Hills Road was constructed on the bed of the original route for about three miles and is now incorporated into the Little Bald Hills Trail in RNSP. From Little Bald Hills, the trail descended either to Rocky Ford on Rock Creek at its junction with the South Fork of the Smith River, or remained on the ridge and descended to the South Fork at Shallow Ford. Old maps used to determine the location of the trail in eastern Del Norte County are suspect because of fraudulent land surveys that were made in the early 1880s.

The original route between Rock Creek and the start of the modern South Kelsey National Recreation Trail is affected by mining, logging, and South Fork Road along the river. About 12

miles southeast of Rock Creek, the USFS established the South Kelsey National Recreation Trail and South Kelsey Trailhead on the Upper South Fork of the Smith near Horse Creek. The trail crosses the Siskiyou Wilderness to Harrington Lake on the Del Norte/Siskiyou county line, follows the crest of the Kelsey Range to the wilderness boundary at Bear Lake, and descends to the Elbow Springs trailhead in the Klamath River drainage. The South Kelsey trail ends at the Elbow Springs trailhead. The original trail route has not been re-established between Elbow Springs and the beginning of the Kelsey National Recreational Trail.

Between Elbow Springs and the Kelsey National Recreation Trail, forest roads and State Route 96 provide access to the eastern and western segments of the original trail. Thornton Memorial Bridge now crosses the Klamath River at Independence south of Ferry Point. Only a short portion of the Kelsey National Recreational Trail near Titus Ridge is a hiking trail. The rest of the route is primarily on forest roads between the Klamath River and the Sulphur Springs and Norcross trailheads. From the Norcross trailhead, the trail ascends to Bear Lake where it intersects the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. After crossing the Pacific Crest Trail, the Kelsey Trail ends at the Kelsey Trailhead near the Kelsey Creek ranger station on the Scott River.

A continuing local interest in re-establishing the historic Kelsey Trail on its original route prompted two studies by NPS personnel in the early 1980s (Evanow 1980, USDI NPS 1983). Evanow's 1980 report described the original route as closely as could be determined from historic maps and descriptions, coupled with on-the-ground reconnaissance. In 1980, portions of the original Kelsey Trail had not been re-established or located since historical times. Since then, the South Kelsey Historical Trail and the Kelsey National Recreational Trail have been established through the Siskiyou and Marble Mountain wildernesses and other adjacent U.S. Forest Service lands, and portions of the original Kelsey Trail have been relocated in the South Fork of the Smith River drainage. Trails through the Mill Creek Watershed in Del Norte Redwoods State Park will link the Coastal Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail by connecting to the modern Kelsey Trail segments.

In 1983, Redwood National Park planners marked possible routes for re-establishing the Kelsey Trail through NPS land with the ultimate goal of connecting the Coastal Trail with the Pacific Crest Trail (the Coast-to-Crest Trail). Much of the original Kelsey Trail alignment and historic fabric (primarily trail ruts and tree blazes) in what is now RNSP has been obscured by logging and road development. The 1983 alignment approximated the historic route but incorporated grades more suitable to a modern hiking trail to provide a safer, higher quality hiking experience, lower maintenance costs, and fewer adverse impacts on sensitive soils and rare plants. A portion of the 1983 route became part of the current Little Bald Hills Trail.

In 1980, remnant sections of the original Kelsey Trail existed on USFS lands but had not been preserved or identified as a recreational hiking trail. Logging, mining, or road building on the historic route would have obliterated much of the historic trace. Creation of the Siskiyou and Marble Mountain wildernesses in the early 1980s ensured that most of the route was preserved. The USFS established the South Kelsey National Recreation Trail and the Kelsey National Recreation Trail on much of the original route.

In 1983, NPS trail planners attempted to incorporate remnants of the Kelsey Trail into what is now the Little Bald Hills Trail. Parts of the original wagon trail were still visible but other parts had been incorporated into a motor vehicle road that was being converted into a hiking trail. The historic route passes in and out of RNSP lands. The original trail route was constructed strictly as a transportation route without regard to resource impacts or providing a pleasant or esthetic hiking experience. The grades on the historic trail route are generally steeper than modern trail

standards so the route of the Little Bald Hills Trail was moved off the Kelsey Trail route to accommodate hikers. NPS trail planners constructed a trail entirely within the parks that approximates the original route, is easier to walk and maintain, and is more esthetically pleasing.

The Trinidad Trail—Bears (1969) identifies two “Trinidad Trails,” both constructed in 1850. One trail served as a supply route between the town of Trinidad in Humboldt County and the mines on the Klamath River. This route used Indian trails and headed up the coast, turned inland from the eastern side of Big Lagoon, crossed Redwood Creek at the Tall Trees Grove, and continued to Elk Camp Prairie. From Elk Camp, the trail passed along the crest of the Bald Hills to French Camp, where the trail forked, one branch descending to the Klamath River at Martin’s Ferry and the other branch continuing into Hoopa Valley. The section of trail between Big Lagoon and Elk Camp was abandoned after construction of the Bald Hills Road at the end of the 19th century. This portion of the trail from Elk Camp to the Tall Trees Grove was re-opened by Arcata Redwood Company in the mid 1960s following the discovery in 1963 of what at the time was the world’s tallest tree. While the trail from Trinidad to the Klamath has lost its integrity where it was reopened by Arcata Redwood Company as a logging route, it still possesses historical significance. Portions of the historic trail near the Tall Trees Grove remain intact.

Another “Trinidad Trail” eventually became part of the Crescent City-Trinidad Road. This trail paralleled the beach from Trinidad to the southern part of Gold Bluffs Beach. It then forked, with one branch continuing up the beach and the main trail ascending the ridge north of Major Creek, turning eastward at the Yurok village of Espau to Boyes Prairie, then swinging west and rejoining the other trail at the northern end of Gold Bluffs. The trail then paralleled the coastline as far as the mouth of the Klamath, on essentially the same route as today’s Coastal Drive (formerly part of US Highway 101).

Jedediah Smith National Historic Trail Study—In 1984, the NPS studied trapper and explorer Jedediah Smith’s 1828 route from San Jose, California to Fort Vancouver, Washington to determine if the route merited preservation and interpretation as a significant historic trail. Smith’s route extended from the Sacramento and Trinity River Valleys along the Pacific Coastline, through the Smith and Willamette River Valleys to present-day Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, in Vancouver, Washington on the Columbia River. This trail, as well as Smith’s 1826-27 routes through Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and southern California, was found to be ineligible for National Historic Trail status because Smith’s routes did not become historic routes of travel with far-reaching effects on broad patterns of American culture, nor does the route have significant potential for public recreational use or historic interest based on historic interpretation and appreciation. The trail was found not to qualify for national scenic trail designation because much of the route passes through areas of private land in intensive economic use or through terrain generally not appealing or appropriate for the types of trail use intended to be provided on National Scenic Trails.

National and State Park Trail Planning Prior to the 1999 GMP/GP

Trails that now form the nucleus of the RNSP trail system were first proposed in earlier management plans. Early plans often describe trail routes that have been partially completed. Other proposals are still valid but were never constructed because of lack of funding. Some of these incomplete routes and proposals are included in this comprehensive RNSP trail plan. Plans that addressed trail planning and development are the 1985 Redwood State Parks General Plan, the 1984 Backcountry Trail Plan for Redwood and Skunk Cabbage Creeks, and 1996 Davison Ranch Development Concept Plan.

The East Side Trail—The 1978 legislation expanding Redwood National Park called for development of foot trail access to the Tall Trees Grove on the east side of Redwood Creek (PL 95-250 (16 USC §79m(b)(4), 92 Stat 171). This trail is referred to as the East Side Trail. The legislation specified that “one route shall, unless shown by the Secretary [of the Interior] to be inadvisable, principally traverse the east side of Redwood Creek through the essentially virgin forest, connecting with the roadhead on the west side of the park east of Orick.”

The East Side Trail as envisioned in the legislation was a continuous trail route on the east side of Redwood Creek that traversed old growth forest. As a result of consultation with the USFWS on an early draft of the TBMP alternatives, the NPS determined and the USFWS concurred that a new trail primarily through old growth redwood forest would adversely affect marbled murrelets and northern spotted owls, both listed as threatened species. New segments of the East Side Trail selected through the TBMP planning process were modified to reduce or avoid adverse effects on threatened species.

The Redwood Creek Trail was established in the late 1960s by converting former logging roads to a hiking trail. Although the Redwood Creek Trail provides a hiking route from “the roadhead on the west side of the park east of Orick” (PL 95-250; 92 Stat 171) to the Tall Trees Grove, much of the current Redwood Creek Trail is on the west side of the creek and does not pass through old growth forest, as envisioned in the park expansion legislation. The Redwood Creek Trail requires two creek crossings, which makes the trail unusable, unsafe, or inconvenient as a hiking route to the Tall Trees Grove when stream flows are high or when the temporary bridges are not in place during the summer season.

The Emerald Ridge trail in the vicinity of the Tall Trees Grove and the Dolason Trail are considered extensions of the East Side Trail because they provide foot access to the Tall Trees Grove. Although these segments are not part of the East Side Trail as it is described in the legislation, they are considered a continuation of the East Side Trail because they create a continuous hiking route along the east side of Redwood Creek.

1985 Redwood State Parks General Plan—The previous state park general plan called for a trail connection from Elk Valley Road to the West Rim Trail in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, and for development of a trailhead in the Aubell area. CDPR is considering a trailhead at Aubell Ranch and a trail that skirts the western edge of the state park and the designated state wilderness.

1984 Backcountry Trail Plan for Redwood and Skunk Cabbage Creeks—The national park backcountry trail plan guided development of trail based on concepts proposed in the 1980 general management plan for Redwood National Park. The trail program focused on hiking and equestrian trails in the Skunk Cabbage and Redwood Creek basins in the southern part of the national park. Backcountry use in the Redwood Creek corridor including equestrian camps, dispersed camping, and camping on Redwood Creek gravel bars was established as described in the 1984 trail plan. The plan identified cultural resource concerns south of Mussel Point as an obstacle to routing the Coastal Trail through this area to connect with the Coastal Trail segment that ended at Skunk Cabbage Creek. The 1984 plan also discussed a problem linking the East Side Trail to the Coastal Trail in this area due to lack of park-owned land along Highway 101 where a highway crossing was needed. Nor did the NPS own the land identified as a potential crossing between Skunk Cabbage Creek and Berry Glen using the Arcata Redwood Company’s old log bridge over Prairie Creek. Since 1984, the NPS has acquired the land adjacent to

Highway 101 needed to link the Coastal Trail and East Side Trail, replaced the old bridge, and constructed a trail that incorporates the new bridge and terminates at Highway 101 opposite Berry Glen. This trail plan proposes to link the Coastal and East Side trails using a route first suggested in the 1984 plan.

The 1984 Redwood National Park Backcountry Trail Plan identified a problem attempting to link the Coastal Trail at Skunk Cabbage Creek with inland trails along Redwood Creek because of a lack of park-owned land needed to designate a Highway 101 crossing point and because of cultural resource concerns about the proposed trail route south of Mussel Point. The Berry Glen hiking trail would link the Coastal Trail with inland trails. The proposed state park equestrian trail between Stone Lagoon and the A-9 Deck trailhead on the western boundary of the national park would also serve as links between the Coastal Trail and inland park trails.

1996 Davison Ranch Development Concept Plan— In 1996, the NPS prepared a development concept plan for the Davison Ranch area in the southern part of the national park. The approved plan called for twenty-two miles of hiking, equestrian, and bicycle trails, with a major trailhead to serve these trails. The Elk Meadow Trailhead was completed in 2001 on the site of the former Arcata Redwood Company Mill B. Four of the trails have been constructed: the Davison Bike-Hike Trail linking Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park to the Elk Meadow Trailhead completed in 2001; the Trillium Falls Trail through the old-growth redwood groves on Skunk Cabbage Hill completed in 2001; the Berry Glen Hike-Bike Trail on the old logging road paralleling US Highway 101 between Berry Glen and the Lost Man Creek road in 2004; and the Berry Glen Hiking Trail from Berry Glen to Lady Bird Johnson Grove completed in 2010.

Regional Trail Planning

One of the purposes of the TBMP is to establish links between RNSP trails and trails outside park boundaries. This section describes the links between existing and proposed RNSP trails and between RNSP trails and trails outside the parks to create an integrated regional trail system.

Links Between Park and Regional Trails

This section describes proposed trails that would connect existing trails within RNSP to other trails within the parks and to trails outside RNSP. All construction is subject to site-specific planning and compliance under either NEPA or CEQA, as applicable, subject to the requirements of the responsible agency.

Links to Trails Outside RNSP

Coast-to-Crest Trail—Two of the best-known long-distance trails in the western US, the California Coastal Trail (Coastal Trail or CCT) and the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (Pacific Crest Trail or PCT), can be linked by construction of trail segments between the Little Bald Hills Trail, Mill Creek Horse Trail and the Rellim Ridge-Coastal Trail connector from the Crescent Beach area of Redwood National park.

Construction of a trail linking the California Coastal Trail with the Pacific Crest Trail would create a route circling the entire state of California. Both the California Coastal Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail originate in San Diego County. For information on the routes of California Coastal Trail and the PCT, see www.californiacoastaltrail.org and www.pcta.org.

The California Coastal Trail is proposed as a continuous trail along 1,200 miles of California coastline. About half of the trail is completed. Around 44 miles of the Coastal Trail are established in RNSP, including the segments of Coastal Drive and Gold Bluffs Beach Road that are open to motor vehicles.

The PCT lies about eighty miles east of RNSP. The PCT follows the crest of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade mountain ranges for more than 2,600 miles from Mexico to Canada. The California section of the PCT was completed in 1993.

Both the CCT and the PCT are considered to be continuous hiking trails in the sense that a trail route is designated, although there may be gaps in the trail or obstacles such as highways or large water bodies to cross. There are also gaps in the CCT where topography prevents the trail from passing directly along the shoreline or where private land must be crossed or bypassed. Both the CCT and the PCT require hikers to cross interstate and other highways or use highway bridges to cross bodies of water such as the Klamath River or San Francisco Bay at the Golden Gate. Long-distance hikers plan their trips knowing that these long-distance trails are not perfectly continuous.

Coast-to-Crest Link—The Rellim Ridge-Coastal Trail connector trail is needed to link the Coastal Trail at Crescent Beach with the Rellim Ridge hiking trail, the Mill Creek Horse Trail, and the Little Bald Hills Trail. The Little Bald Hills Trail in Six Rivers National Forest reaches the South Fork of the Smith River at the Paradise or Rock Creek trailheads on South Fork Road. A hiker continuing up the South Fork of the Smith River along South Fork Road reaches the South Kelsey Historical Trail in Six Rivers National Forest and the Kelsey National Recreational Trail in Klamath National Forest. The latter trail intersects the Pacific Crest Trail in the Marble Mountain Wilderness in Siskiyou County.

The USFS will reconstruct four segments of the historic Kelsey Trail along the South Fork of the Smith River in the Smith River National Recreation Area that will allow hikers and equestrians to cross mostly forest lands rather than hiking along South Fork Road (USFS 2007). These segments include the Boulder Creek Trail segment along the South Fork of the Smith from Paradise Flat to Canthook Creek; the Canthook Creek Trail segment along Canthook Creek from its confluence with the South Fork of the Smith River to Hurdygurdy Creek; the Hurdygurdy Creek Trail segment from the Canthook Trail intersection to its intersection with the Big Flat Trail; and the Big Flat Trail from the Hurdygurdy Trail intersection to its terminus near the Big Flat campground. Slightly less than a mile of the Boulder Creek Trail would use the county road. The Hurdygurdy Trail requires major reconstruction as most of the old historical sections have been obliterated. The Big Flat Trail will follow Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines to meet the Architectural Barriers Act. The Canthook Creek Trail requires a low water crossing of the South Fork of the Smith River. An alternative route that would not require a river crossing is also proposed. The Redwood Flat Trail from the Canthook Trail to the intersection with Forest Road 15N58 would allow year-round use of the trail; the Canthook Trail would be used primarily in summer and fall at low river flows.

The South Kelsey Historical Trail begins on the upper South Fork of the Smith River in Six Rivers National Forest about eight miles southeast of the Rock Creek trailhead for the Little Bald Hills Trail. The South Kelsey Historical Trail ends at the Elbow Creek trailhead a few miles west of the Klamath River. Hikers can follow forest roads to State Highway 96 and cross the Klamath River on the Thornton Memorial Bridge near Independence Creek. A few miles of forest roads bring a hiker to the Kelsey National Recreation Trail, which crosses the Pacific Crest Trail at Bear Lake in the Marble Mountain Wilderness.

Links Between the Coastal Trail and Inland Park Trails—Trail links will be established between the Coastal Trail and inland trails in the northern and southern parts of RNSP. These trails will cross U.S. Highway 101 where pedestrians can cross safely. The NPS and CDPR will coordinate with Caltrans to designate, develop or construct trail crossings of public highways.

A pedestrian crossing is proposed in Del Norte County about 4 miles south of Crescent City in the vicinity of Crescent Beach to link the Coastal Trail to the Pacific Crest Trail. The NPS established a crossing in Humboldt County at Berry Glen south of Davison Road about 2 miles north of Orick to link the Davison Bike-Hike Trail to the Berry Glen Bike-Hike Trail.

Coastal Trail-Redwood Creek Basin Link—The Berry Glen Trail from Highway 101 south of Davison Road up to Lady Bird Johnson Grove north of Orick will begin directly across Highway 101 from one terminus of the Davison Hike-Bike Trail and will allow hikers to travel between the coastal and inland trails in the southern part of RNSP. The Berry Glen Trail will be the northwestern end of the East Side Trail. By constructing the Berry Glen Trail, hikers on the west side of Highway 101 will be able to reach the East Side Trail from the Elk Meadow Trailhead or from Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park via the Davison Trail. The Coastal Trail connects to trails in Prairie Creek state park and can also be reached via Davison Road. Constructing the Skunk Cabbage North trail will create a more direct hiking link between Coastal and East Side trails by connecting the existing Skunk Cabbage section of the Coastal Trail to the Berry Glen trail segment of the East Side Trail via the Trillium Falls Trail.

Humboldt Lagoons State Park-Redwood National Park Link—The Stone Lagoon Horse Trail proposed by CDPR would provide equestrian access from near the Stone Lagoon Visitor Center to the WSAR and the A-9 Deck trailhead to be constructed in the national park. This trail would provide another connection for hikers between inland trails in Redwood Creek and the Coastal Trail at Humboldt Lagoons State Park.

Humboldt County-Orick Levees—The 1979 Humboldt County Trails Plan proposed that a multi-use trail be constructed on the Orick flood control levees. Establishing this connection through the town of Orick to inland park trails and the Coastal Trail via the Redwood Creek levees requires agreement among private landowners whose land borders the levees, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Humboldt County, and other agencies and individuals. This proposal is outside the scope of this plan and would require site-specific planning and design accompanied by appropriate environmental compliance documents. The 2011 Humboldt County Coastal Trail Implementation Strategy produced by the Redwood Community Action Agency outlines a strategy for incorporating the levees as part of the Coastal Trail.

Del Norte County

A goal of the 2000 Del Norte County General Plan Update is development of a system of interconnected hiking, riding, and bicycling trails and paths suitable for active recreation, transportation and circulation. The Del Norte Local Transportation Commission updated the Del Norte County and Crescent City Bicycle Facilities Plan in 2002.

Del Norte County Bike Routes—Other possible links between park trails and trails outside the parks include connections between roads and trails in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park and bicycle routes in Crescent City and in Del Norte County east of Crescent City. The County has signed Humboldt and Howland Hill Roads as designated bike routes that connect with Enderts

Beach Road. Enderts Beach Road provides access to Crescent Beach and to the Last Chance/Nickel Creek segment of the Coastal Trail that is open to bikes. From Howland Hill Road, the bike route would continue on Douglas Park and South Fork Roads.

Between South Fork Road and Gasquet, the county proposal is derived from a US Forest Service proposal to designate a mountain bike trail on six miles of the old route of Highway 199 (“Old Stagecoach Road”) on the southeast side of the Middle Fork of the Smith River. This route would connect two existing routes, one from Crescent City to Hiouchi and the other from Gasquet to O’Brien, Oregon.

The California Coastal Trail north of Crescent Beach includes both pedestrian and bike routes along the coast on Del Norte County lands and in Crescent City. The County bike route follows existing roadways along the coastline and turns off Highway 101 onto Enderts Beach Road, where it enters RNSP.

The proposed Hobbs-Wall Multi-Use Trail would convert a former railroad right-of-way into a trail connecting downtown Crescent City (in the vicinity of RNSP headquarters building) to RNSP via Howland Hill Road. The goal of the trail is to enhance safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, including commuters; improve trail linkages between Crescent City and the parks; and provide a trail for visitors to explore Crescent City and Del Norte County destinations including the Elk Creek wetlands, Elk Valley Casino, and RNSP. The initial concept is a pedestrian and bike trail, with future plans for an equestrian segment from Elk Valley Road to Howland Hill Road, which could then connect to the Mill Creek Horse Trail.

A proposed “Coast-to-Caves Trail” for bicyclists and/or hikers would link the Coastal Trail at Crescent Beach in RNSP with Oregon Caves National Monument in southern Oregon via the Smith River National Recreation Area. This trail is included in the 2002 update of the Del Norte County/Crescent City Bicycle Facilities Plan. The trail would use Enderts Beach Road and Humboldt Road near Crescent Beach to reach Howland Hill Road, and continue over Howland Hill to Douglas Park Road and its intersection with South Fork Road. A new six-mile trail would be constructed on Smith River NRA land between South Fork road and Gasquet on the old route of Highway 199 (“Old Stagecoach Road”) on the southeast side of the Middle Fork of the Smith River. The proposed Hobbs-Wall Multi-Use Trail would intersect the Coast-to-Caves Trail at the corner of Howland Hill and Humboldt Roads, creating a link with downtown Crescent City.

Designating Douglas Park and South Fork Roads as bike routes would create a proposed bike route along the South Fork of the Smith River on South Fork Road from Douglas Park to Big Flat. Designating South Fork Road as a bike route creates a loop for mountain bikes through Little Bald Hills via Paradise Trailhead on South Fork Road to Little Bald Hills Trail and back to South Fork Road via Howland Hill and Douglas Park Roads.

The 2000 Del Norte County General Plan Update identifies Parkway Drive, Aubell Lane, and the Westlog mill site as possible sites from which to develop trail access into Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park. The county general plan further identifies the Westlog mill site on Elk Valley Road as a potential visitor destination area. General plan policies indicate that a public access easement from Elk Valley Road to the RNSP boundary should be part of a development permit. The easement would allow development of public parking and a trailhead to connect to a trail into Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park. The most likely trail connection would be to the Boy Scout Tree Trail. CDPR is considering a trailhead at Aubell Ranch.

Humboldt County

The County of Humboldt initiated planning for recreational trails in the late 1970s with the 1978 Humboldt County Recreational Trails Plan, which was a sub-element of the Recreation Element of the 1984 County General Plan. The 1990 North Coast Area Plan (NCAP) (the section of the Humboldt County General Plan for management of areas within the Coastal Zone) describes general policies for recreation, access, and resource protection that apply to coastal areas south of RNSP. Many of the proposed trails in RNSP in Humboldt County were based on suggestions from these early plans. Portions of the General Plans are updated as needed; a major update is on-going as of February 2011.

The Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) revived trail planning in Humboldt County in 1999 with an interest in updating the 1978 county trail plan. RCAA, in conjunction with the Humboldt County Planning Department, formed the Humboldt County Trails Coalition to bring together agencies, organizations, and trail users to facilitate and promote development of integrated trail networks between communities and recreational areas. RCAA obtained funding for planning for trails along the Eureka waterfront and began site-specific planning, design, and construction of some trails, notably the Coastal Trail. The Trails Coalition is formulating conceptual plans for several types of multi-use trails, including water trails in county waterways, lagoons, and Humboldt Bay.

RCAA completed the Humboldt County Coastal Trail Implementation Strategy in January 2011. The strategy summarizes all trail planning in Humboldt County between 1978 and January 2011. Trail proposals from the 2009 Redwood National Park Trail and Backcountry Management Plan are included in the implementation strategy, as well as additional coastal routes needed to link the park trail system with the community of Orick and California State Park lands at Humboldt Lagoons State Parks south of the national park. The Coastal Trail is in place throughout most of RNSP.

The 1979 county trail plan urged the NPS to designate a Coastal Trail route. It is county policy that the Coastal Trail follow existing public lands and public beaches but move inland to the nearest available public route in situations when there would be substantial conflicts between trail use and private land ownership. The 2011 Coastal Implementation Strategy identifies physical, cultural, and ownership issues to be resolved for establishment of a continuous coastal trail route in Humboldt County.

The NCAP established county policies to support recreational development in RNSP, the adjacent state parks and commercial recreational development on private lands adjacent to both RNSP and Humboldt Lagoons State Park. Several NCAP policies are relevant to trail development in RNSP. One policy supported development of a trail to the Tall Trees Grove from the area at the south end of Stone Lagoon. Two additional policies recommend development of a trail between Dry Lagoon in Humboldt Lagoons State Park and RNSP in conjunction with the Redwood Trails private commercial recreational development on the east side of Highway 101 at McDonald Creek, opposite in Humboldt Lagoons State Park. One terminus of a proposed trail Stone Lagoon Horse Trail would be very close to the Redwood Trails RV Park, also known as the Little Red Schoolhouse. The Stone Lagoon Horse Trail would provide equestrians with access to the horse trails on the west side of Redwood Creek in RNSP. Hikers could reach either the Coastal Trail or the inland trails in the Redwood Creek basin, including the Tall Trees Grove. Continuous hiking trail access to the Tall Trees Grove from Stone Lagoon would only be possible at low flows or during the summer when seasonal footbridges are in place across Redwood Creek.

The NCAP discusses several other trails that are now constructed or are being improved as funding becomes available. The county also supports facility improvements such as adequate trailhead parking and signing. Specific trails mentioned in the NCAP are Caruthers Cove, Ossagon, and Butler Creek trails in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park.

Two other trails mentioned in the 1978 county trail plan have been completed. The Lost Man Creek trail is in place. Bicycle trails to provide opportunities for bikes to ride off the highway or on trails are either completed (Davison Trail, Holter Ridge Bike Trail, Ossagon Trail, Berry Glen-Lost Man Creek bike trail) or will be established (B-Line bike route, Coyote Creek Bike Trail).

The county plan describes a conceptual trail extending from the Redwood Creek trail to the eastern park boundary and then to Six Rivers National Forest, generally following the Bald Hills Road. The East Side Trail and the Lyons Ranch Trail, which originates at Bald Hills Road, would complete this concept within RNSP.

The Humboldt Bay Water Trail Task Force of the Humboldt County Trails Coalition initiated conceptual planning in 2001 for a water trail around Humboldt Bay. A water trail is similar to a land-based trail, except that trail users travel in boats between points of interest and stops along the trail. The task force is concentrating on identifying and developing public access points, potential campsites, and interpretive materials for Humboldt Bay. The water trail concept could be expanded to a county-wide scale to incorporate existing county facilities at Big Lagoon, state park facilities at Stone Lagoon, and national park facilities at Freshwater Lagoon. The lagoons are smaller than Humboldt Bay and would be expected to support day-trips or limited overnight use where permitted. The bay is large enough to support multiple sites or points of interest over a multi-day trip with several overnight stops. On a regional scale, Lakes Earl and Tolowa in Del Norte County are large enough to develop a longer trail to complement the Humboldt Bay water trail.

RNSP Trail and Backcountry Plan Contributors

- David Bauer, former Park Ranger (Resource Protection), NPS, Orick, CA
- Don Beers, Park Maintenance Supervisor (retired), CDPR, Northcoast Redwoods District, Eureka, CA
- Lynn Erickson-Levi, Motor Vehicle Operator (Trails Leader), NPS, Crescent City, CA
- Dick Mayle, Roads and Trails Foreman (retired), NPS, Requa, CA (NPS team captain)
- Aida Parkinson, Environmental Specialist, NPS, Orick, CA (plan preparer)
- Phil Rovai, State Park Ranger (retired), Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Orick, CA
- Judy Wartella, Physical Science Technician, NPS, Arcata, CA (GIS analyses and maps)
- James Wheeler, Park Ranger (Interpretation), NPS, Orick, CA

Redwood National and State Parks staff

- Karin Anderson Grantham, Cultural Resources Program Manager, Orick, CA
- Keith Bensen, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Orick, CA
- Susan Davis, Park Ranger (Interpretation), Crescent City, CA
- Jim Popenoe, Soil Scientist (retired), Orick, CA
- Andrew T. Ringgold, National Park Superintendent (retired), Crescent City, CA
- Richard C. Sermon, State Park Superintendent (retired), Crescent City, CA
- Howard Sakai, Supervisory Ecologist (retired), Orick, CA
- Ann King Smith, Archeologist (retired), Arcata, CA
- Scott Wanek, former Chief Ranger, Crescent City, CA

Yurok Tribe

- Dr. Thomas Gates, former Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Culture Department, Klamath, CA
- Bob McConnell, Yurok Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Culture Department, Klamath, CA

Other Consultants

- John Ash, Humboldt Bay Water Trail Task Force, Humboldt County Trails Coalition, Eureka, CA
- Brenda Devlin, Wildlife Biologist, Gasquet Ranger District, Six Rivers National Forest
- Diane Mutchie, former Senior Planner, Community Development Department, County of Del Norte, Crescent City, CA
- Tom Hofwebber, Senior Planner, Planning Division of the Community Development Services Department, County of Humboldt, Eureka, CA
- Jennifer Rice, Natural Resources Services, Redwood Community Action Agency (Humboldt County Trails Coalition steering committee), Eureka, CA

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Appendix A- Maintained Trails in RNSP

The following trails are maintained trails in RNSP. Trail lengths have been rounded to the nearest tenth of a mile. Trails on national park lands appear in **bold** type.

r.t. = round trip

TRAIL NAME	MILES	TRAIL NAME	MILES
Ah-Pah Trail	3.6	Lost Man Creek Bike Trail	10.2
Berry Glen Trail	3.0		
Berry Glen/Lost Man Creek Bike Trail	1.0		
Boy Scout Tree Trail (one way)	2.8	Lyons Ranch Trail	2.0
Brown Creek Trail	1.2	Mill Creek Horse Trail	3.2
C.R.E.A. Trail	1.9	Mill Creek Trail (DNCRSP)	1.0
Cathedral Trees Trail	1.4	Mill Creek Trail (JSRSP)	4.5
Circle Trail	0.3	Miner's Ridge Trail	4.1
Clintonia Trail	1.0	Nature Loop Trail (DNCRSP)	0.5
Coastal Trail	43.4	Nature Loop Trail (PCRSP)	1.2
- Skunk Cabbage Section (101 to beach)	4.1	Nickerson Ranch Trail	0.8
- Gold Bluff Beach Section (beach to Ossagon trail)	6.2	Orick Horse Trail	34.0
- Carruthers Cove Section (Ossagon Trail to road)	2.6	- Ridge Loop	7.0 r.t.
- Coastal Drive Section (Carruthers to Flint Ridge)	4.7	- McArthur Creek Loop	14.2 r.t.
- Flint Ridge Section (Coastal Drive to Alder Camp)	3.7	- Elam Creek Loop	20.1 r.t.
- Klamath Section (Overlook to Wilson Creek)	6.4	- Fortyfour Creek Loop	32.3 r.t.
- DeMartin Section (101 to 101)	3.4	- Fortyfour Camp Spur	1.4
- Last Chance Section (101 to NPS/DPR boundary)	8.4	Ossagon Trail	1.6
- Nickel Creek Section (boundary to parking lot)	2.1	Peterson Memorial Trail	0.5
- Crescent Beach Section (parking lot to picnic area)	1.8	Prairie Creek Trail	4.3
Creekside Trail	0.2	Redwood Creek Trail	8.3
Damnation Creek Trail	2.2	Rellim Ridge Trail	3.2
Davison Hike-Bike Trail	2.9	Revelation Trail	0.3
Dolason Prairie Trail	5.8	Rhododendron Trail	7.8
Elk Prairie Trail	1.4	River Beach Trail	0.5
Ellsworth Loop Trail	0.6	Saddler Skyline Trail	1.2
Emerald Ridge Trail	1.2	Self Guided Nature Trail (JSRSP)	0.6
Fern Canyon Loop Trail	0.5	Simpson Reed Trail	0.7
Foothill Trail	2.2	South Fork Trail	0.9
Footsteps Rock Trail	0.5	Stout Grove Trail	0.5
Friendship Ridge Trail	2.8	Streelov Creek Trail	2.8
Hatton Loop Trail	0.2	Tall Trees Trail and Grove Loop	2.2
Hatton Trail	1.7	Trestle Loop Trail	1.1
Hiouchi Trail	2.0	Trillium Falls Trail	2.8
Hobbs-Wall Trail	3.2	Wellman Loop Trail	1.5
Hope Creek/Ten Taypo Trail	3.6	West Ridge Trail	6.8
Hostel/Hidden Beach Trail	2.7	Yurok Loop Trail	1.2
James Irvine Trail	4.5	Zigzag # 1 Trail	0.5
Lady Bird Johnson Grove Trail	1.3	Zigzag # 2 Trail	0.5
Leiffer Loop Trail	0.8		
Little Bald Hills Trail (RNP only)	4.5		
Little Creek Trail	1.0		



