

Chapter 5 – Consultation and Coordination
Response to Comments



State of California • The Resources Agency

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

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Ruth Coleman, Director

April 7, 2005

Don L. Neubacher
Superintendent
Point Reyes National Seashore
Point Reyes, California 94956

Dear Superintendent Neubacher:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Non-Native Deer Management Plan Environmental Statement (EIS).

California State Parks manages property in close proximity to both Point Reyes National Seashore (Tomales Bay State Park) and to Golden Gate National Recreation Area (Mount Tamalpais SP, Marconi State Historic Park, and Samuel P. Taylor SP). These State and Federal parks make up a landscape level reserve of statewide significance that protects the natural resource values representative of the Coastal Steppe Mixed Forest Province. Given this proximity, and the population models presented in the Draft Plan, it seems highly likely that California State Parks will become populated by non-native deer if prompt corrective actions are not taken. Non-native deer have already been reported to occur in Tomales Bay State Park according to a Natural Resources Condition Assessment our Department conducted in 2001-02.

Similar to the National Park Service, California State Parks is mandated to protect and preserve native ecosystems. The presence of non-native animals is generally inconsistent with the Department's mission of maintaining native species and natural systems. It is the general policy of California State Parks that non-native animals not be maintained in the State Park System except to fulfill unit-specific State Park management goals.

The non-native deer population clearly competes with native deer populations and with other species for food, water, and cover. The non-native deer populations also have deleterious impacts on soils, water quality, and vegetation. Diseases known to be present in the non-native deer population must be prevented from spreading to native wildlife to the extent feasible.

California State Parks supports the preferred alternative, Alternative E, in the Draft Non-Native Deer Management Plan. To not undertake, or to delay, action to control the population of axis and fallow deer would perpetuate and exacerbate the problem so that an even more extensive and expensive control effort involving the eradication of more animals would be required.

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document. If you have any questions, please call Cynthia Roye, Associate State Park Resource Ecologist, at (916) 653- 9083.

Sincerely,



Richard G. Rayburn, Chief
Natural Resources Division

cc: Diablo Vista District
North Bay District