

# Summary of Scoping Comments Prisoners Harbor Coastal Wetland Restoration

## National Park Service Channel Islands National Park

### Introduction

The National Park Service (NPS), in accordance with provisions in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), conducted public scoping for the Prisoners Harbor Coastal Wetland Restoration Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Public scoping is held early in the NEPA process to seek public input on the range of concerns, issues and alternatives that should be addressed in the EIS. This summary informs the public on the extent and nature of the comments received by the NPS during public scoping.

### Background on Public Scoping

A preliminary public input meeting was conducted at Prisoners Harbor on Santa Cruz Island on April 5, 2007. Thirty-three interested individuals, experts, and partners were invited. Twenty-one non-NPS individuals attended. The agenda for the meeting included introductions, site orientation with an informal walking tour of the site, followed by a round-robin discussion with opportunity to ask questions and express concerns (Table 1, Table 2).

Table 1. Informal walking tour included NPS experts stationed at specific locations to answer questions.

LOCATION	TOPIC	DISCUSSION	EXPERT
A. Road to Archeological site	Hydrology	Removing levee, changes in hydrology	Mike Martin
B. Eastern edge of corrals	Wetland Restoration	Restoration method, removing and relocating fill, revegetation	Joel Wagner
C. Warehouse	Historic District	Cattle/sheep corrals	Ann Huston
D. Archeological site	Archeological site	Location and extent of Archeological site	Kelly Minas
E. Seating area	Environmental Compliance	Public Input to the NEPA process	Marie Denn
F. Beach	Natural Resource Values	Backbarrier wetland, history, ecological benefits	Kate Faulkner,

Table 2. Major issues and concerns expressed during the on-island site visit.

MAJOR ISSUE	CONCERN	NAME
<b>Visitor Experience</b>	Control visitor impacts (mischief, vandalism) using boardwalks, viewing platforms	Alex Brodie, IPCO
	Control and educate the public so no damage is	Freddie Romero,

	done to arch site	Chumash
	Educate visitors to reduce potential for disturbance or desecration of arch site	Julie Tumamait, Chumash
<b>Historic Resources</b>	Reduce size of corrals to 55', this creates buffer, reduces potential visitor impacts, and preserves part of corral	Tony Brown, SCIF
<b>Natural Resources</b>	Don't extirpate harvest mouse during construction Plan for desirable wetland species Do not lose human history Plan for veg. management in corrals Control Kikuyu grass Campground near wetland will affect wetland re:buffer	Paul Collins, SB Museum of Natural History
	Potential for increased sedimentation and/or decreased run-off should be included in the model	Lyndal Laughrin, UC Natural Reserve System
	Eucalyptus are a recent occurrence and disrupt water budget	Lotus Vermeer, The Nature Conservancy
	Avoid extirpation of harvest mouse during construction	Charles Drost, U of N. Arizona
<b>Archeological Resources</b>	Preserve arch site, preserve levee adjacent to arch site, add berm to south side of arch site	Jeanne Arnold, UCLA
	Removing levee may impact arch site	Freddie Romero, Chumash
<b>Park Planning</b>	Should not proceed without GMP	Marla Daily
<b>Maintenance</b>	Potential long-term maintenance needs Earth moving concerns, deposition of fill Potential for water impacts to road and arch site	Earl Whetsell, NPS Channel Islands National Park

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS and conduct public scoping was published in the Federal Register on June 11, 2008. On June 12, 2008, a press release announcing public scoping was distributed to the Ventura County Star and the Santa Barbara News-Press, as well as 73 other media outlets, including newspaper, radio stations, and television stations. The press release explained the public scoping process, announced two public open houses, and provided the web address for Channel Islands National Park and NPS park planning. The NOI and press release were posted on the park website. A notice of the public scoping open houses was printed in the Ventura County Star on June 23, 2008 and in the Santa Barbara News-Press on June 23, 2008.

The NPS mailed approximately 240 public scoping announcements with the time, date, and location of the public open houses.

Approximately nine members of the public attended the public open house at Channel Islands National Park Headquarters and approximately 13 members of the public attended the public open house at the Santa Barbara Public Library.

The 45-day public scoping period closed July 27, 2008.

### Public Response to Scoping

Five individuals or private organizations hand delivered or emailed comments regarding the Prisoners Harbor Coastal Wetland Restoration Project. Commenting organizations included The Nature Conservancy and the Santa Cruz Island Foundation. No comments were received from federal or state agencies. Four letters supported wetland restoration, one letter expressed concern about park planning and the impacts of levee removal, another letter wanted to see support for the project from the Chumash.

The following table consolidates scoping comments under major issue topics.

ISSUE TOPIC	COMMENT	
<b>Park Planning</b>	Enabling legislation does not mandate restoration of island conditions to pre-European times	Marla Daily
	Park should not undertake Prisoners Harbor Coastal Wetland Restoration without a current General Management Plan	Marla Daily
<b>Historic Resources</b>	Support for relocating the scalehouse and removing the corrals	Joel Justin
	Concern that removing the levee will cause irreparable harm to archeological site, historic warehouse, and corral system	Marla Daily
	Supports designing the wetland to prevent damage to road and warehouse during flooding	Joel Justin
<b>Archeological Resources</b>	Support for making the archeological site visible with signage	Joel Justin
	Chumash tribe should support the project	Chuck Graham
<b>Wetland Restoration</b>	General support for restoring wetland and riparian ecosystems	The Nature Conservancy Allison M. Mares (sp.?) Chuck Graham

<b>Eucalyptus removal</b>	Supports removing eucalyptus	Joel Justin
<b>Visitor experience</b>	Would support a “nature” trail with signage describing wildlife, Chumash and ranching history along the perimeter of the wetland	Joel Justin

Written comments received by the NPS are available for review at Channel Islands National Park. Notes from the April 5, 2007 site visit are available for review at the NPS park planning website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.