

EXISTING RECREATIONAL USE
IN
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
AND
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

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National Park Service
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INTRODUCTION

Much of the land included in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area is parkland that has been open for public recreation for years and in some cases generations. Distinctive patterns of recreation have evolved that reflect both the Bay Area's considerable social diversity and the enormous physiographic diversity of the parklands.

The social and physical environments of a park are integrally linked. Neither can be altered by planning decisions without having an effect on the other. The impact of planning alternatives can only be determined when existing recreation uses and their social implications are properly understood.

An initial survey of the existing recreational activities was undertaken during August and September of 1975 by Rolf Diamant of the Golden Gate/Pt. Reyes planning team and Nancy Stone of the GGNRA maintenance staff. The survey consisted of a series of conversations with park personnel working within the legislated boundaries of GGNRA. The staffs of GGNRA, Pt. Reyes National Seashore, San Francisco Department of Parks & Recreation, and the California State Parks participated in the survey. Park staff whose jobs put them in daily contact with the public were interviewed including lifeguards, park technicians, maintenancemen, park police, recreation staff, and rangers. This report contains their observations and perceptions of park use.

OCEAN BEACH

(This summary is based on the university research of Nancy Stone, NPS maintenance staff; interviews with Jim Fosse, NPS maintenance staff; Herb Thompson, assistant superintendent, San Francisco Parks Department.)

On a regular basis, despite the weather or season, certain traditional recreational behavior patterns are displayed on this beach. Some of these patterns have persisted for a long time and are associated with specific activities such as surfing or fishing; others are linked to specific areas such as the sidewalk promenade or the parking lot.

Individuals may change with time, but patterns of use have persisted.

Literally from sunrise to sunset, people are attracted to Ocean Beach. All ages, sexes, minority groups, ethnic cultures, and socio-economic classes are represented in this beach population. The numbers of users correspond generally to the weather conditions. Fog, wind, and low temperature discourages most beach use. Warm, sunny days will increase the numbers which will increase again on weekends and holidays. A seasonal increase in numbers, despite San Francisco's poor summer weather, probably occurs due to vacation schedules, tourists patterns, and traditional concepts of summer. Daily use begins very early, somewhat dependent on tides; peaks between 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. barring any sudden change in weather, and falls off quickly after sunset.

Ocean Beach itself consists of a stretch of sand extending from below the Cliff House to about the foot of Sloat Boulevard, a distance of approximately 3½ miles. By far, the most heavily used portion is the

length of beach paralleling the paved parking lot from Balboa Street to Lincoln Boulevard. It is marked by the concrete seawall structure that separates the beach from the highway.

Surfing, picnicking, sunbathing, wading, frisbee, dog walking, jogging, and fishing are observed frequently. No lifeguards are provided, but signs are posted on the seawall warning users of dangerous conditions. Rip tides and heavy surf along the coast makes swimming hazardous. According to posted signs, swimming and bathing are illegal.

Structural sections of the seawall provide built-in divisions of space along the back part of the beach. Visitors orient themselves accordingly and there are few spatial conflicts.

Passive and sedentary activities such as sunbathing, reading, listening to a ball game, watching people, and practicing yoga occur mostly within the divisions of the seawall. Individual territories are subtly or not so subtly defined by physical objects, posture and position within the segment, and may indicate a willingness to share the space.

More active activities such as walking, jogging, swimming, frisbee, baseball, football, volleyball, surfing, looking for sea shells, and flying kites occur near the waterline where the sand is harder and more space is available. This section of beach only becomes crowded on hot, holiday weekends three or four times a year.

The Northern Beach

The seawall is roughly divided in half by a vehicle ramp leading to the beach across from the end of Kennedy Drive. The beach north of the ramp

displays a different pattern of use than the southern half. The northern corner, including the seawall and the parking lot, is known as Kelly's Cove and is the traditional surf spot. Changing ocean conditions produce surfable waves elsewhere along Ocean Beach and surfers certainly take advantage of all rideable waves. However, the corner area is the nucleus of surfing territory. It is conspicuously marked by surfboards, wetsuits, fires, graffiti, dogs, cars with surf racks as well as surf people, and other paraphernalia of the surfing subculture. Even without waves, there are usually surfers in their cars or hanging around the seawall watching the wave conditions. Observers are attracted to the seawall here to watch both the surfers themselves and the surfing activity near the water.

South of Kelly's Cove to the ramp is an area frequented by young people, alone or in groups. When Playland-at-the-Beach existed, the area was dominated, especially on weekends, by Blacks and other minority groups. Although fewer in number, Blacks, Chicanos, and Orientals still gather in this area and use the beach here for extended family or group picnics. These affairs often include games, a lot of food, and require a great deal of space. Traditionally, this is also the site of the bongo and conga players who on warm weekends perform for a young, racially mixed audience. Typically, groups and individuals are spaced closer together and many visitors hang around the sidewalk or perch on the seawall to watch and comment on the nearby activity.

The Sidewalk

Above the seawall and paralleling the paved parking lot is the sidewalk or esplanade. Many users, especially seniors, regularly walk from one end

of the promenade to the other several times. Alone or in groups of two's or three's they stop, greet one another, continue on or linger, and converse awhile along the seawall. They rarely leave the sidewalk except when they leave the beach.

Benches are located along the route. Some are in need of repair and additional comfortable benches would be welcomed. Planting beds are untended and presently contain no vegetation. The sidewalk, especially south of Kelly's Cove, on a warm Sunday afternoon becomes a fashion parade with the judges, admirers, and commentators perched along the seawall. Crowding is common and litter is abundant. Bicyclists and skateboarders also use this linear space. The base of the ramp and along the seawall above has become a bicycle rest area with a high turnover rate. The proliferation of ten-speed bicycles, combined with rental bikes from around Golden Gate Park and large groups of kids on sting rays all seem to end up here as they exit Golden Gate Park.

The Southern Beach

The portion of Ocean Beach south of the ramp is less territorial, less densely spaced, and more oriented towards single adults, couples, and families.

The southern portion of Ocean Beach is much less frequently used. Many of the users are from adjacent neighborhoods. Fishermen, joggers, dog walkers, and surfers also utilize this end of the beach. No litter cans are provided. Parking is prohibited along the Great Highway. Visitors must either park along nearby residential streets and walk across the highway or park near the access tunnel at Judah Street or Taraval Street.

Occasionally, both cars and motorcycles will get onto the beach forcing many a surprised beachgoer to scramble to safety. Similar complaints have been heard about horsemen up from Pacifica.

South of Lincoln Boulevard are sand dunes which form the division between road and beach. The heavy seasonal onshore winds along the coast cause this sand to shift and relocate on the Great Highway, in neighboring yards, and residential streets. Residents of the area are very vocal and complain regularly about the sand build-up. Several times a year, the Great Highway is closed to traffic due to sand accumulation. The San Francisco Department of Public Works is presently responsible for the removal. Although various sand breaks and plantings have been tried in the past to control the movement, none have been successful.

The Parking Lot

Paralleling the seawall, the parking lot separates the lanes of the Great Highway. Although not actually within the park, use of this area is integrally tied to the beach scene.

It is a popular spot to read, eat lunch, or watch the weather.

Some recreational vehicles use this lot to park overnight. Among the regular users are certain individuals who, despite the weather, never leave their cars. One fellow seems to live in his camper truck with three dogs. Together, they move between the back of the camper and the front seat of the truck.

The parking lot area across from Balboa Street has been a traditional place for single men in vans and pickups to gather, sometimes with the surfers, to socialize and drink beer. At present, there are no litter cans

in the lot and debris accumulates very quickly.

Although litter is common everywhere along Ocean Beach, certain areas are worse than others. The sand and seawall contain quantities of broken glass. Garbage cans are situated along the seawall at every stairway, but many visitors leave their trash on the beach. The beach is also plagued by pollution.

San Francisco has a combined system so that both street runoff and home sewage is carried together. With heavy winter rains, all excess sewage runoff over the plant's capabilities is dumped directly into the ocean and much of it noticeably ends up on the beach.

The only public facilities on the beach are a single drinking fountain and one set of underground restrooms located at the foot of Cabrillo Street. The stairs restrict use by seniors or the handicapped. Many people regard these sunken restrooms, as well as the pedestrian tunnels under the highway, as unsafe and threatening environments and generally avoid them.

San Franciscans have grown up with Ocean Beach; its social diversity and its problems. The majority of its users are local residents who care very much about the beach. They are familiar with the way the social environment works, and act accordingly with surprisingly little conflict.

BAKER BEACH

(This summary is based on interviews with Lee Shenk, park technician; John Martini, park technician; Roy Getty, maintenance foreman; Hank Snyder, maintenanceman; Bruce Collier, recreation staff; Jayne Anthony, recreation staff; Theresa Gensler, recreation staff.)

Baker Beach is perhaps the most successful unit of the GGNRA. Since it was one of the very first areas to pass into federal management, the results of two years of intensive maintenance, site improvements, and programming have transformed the former military Baker Beach into the city's most popular ocean recreation area. Despite the relative smallness of the beach, it attracts a broad cross section of visitors. Blacks, whites, and orientals all use the beach.

The National Park Service itself is partly responsible for the heterogeneity of the beach. The Special Populations Summer Day Camp run by the recreation division of the GGNRA has introduced hundreds of senior citizens to the Baker Beach environment. Senior groups attending the camp situated in Battery Chamberlain came from all over San Francisco, particularly from minority and low-income neighborhoods. This program was a textbook example on how to encourage a special population of people, seniors, to regularly use an existing recreation facility to which they had never been before. The seniors came to the beach with the company of their peers on NPS chartered buses and were met by an enthusiastic NPS staff who had prepared a program for their visit. What would otherwise have been first seen as a foreign, inaccessible, and possibly insecure environment became a friendly, accessible, and receptive place. Information was distributed about public transportation to the beach, particularly the Muni #28 which has a bus

stop above the beach and the seniors were encouraged to return there on their own; and a number have been coming back.

Sunbathing, jogging, fishing, and walking are among the most popular activities at Baker Beach. Joggers appear at the beach in the early morning and return in the late afternoon. Sunbathing occurs on the beach and also in the open area located behind the main parking lot. The Park Service recently graded and covered this area with sand. Because of the wind protection afforded by surrounding trees, this location is now favored by sunbathers. The parking lot east of Battery Chamberlain is used primarily by fishermen who are the frequent users of the beach. Even on cold foggy days (more often than not) you can find fishermen on Baker Beach. Fishermen, many of Japanese ancestry, arrive early in the morning and sometimes do not leave until ten or eleven o'clock at night. Baker Beach even draws some fishermen from Marin county who are attracted by what is considered the beach's superior fishing potential.

Baker Beach has been the only public beach in San Francisco on which dogs are permitted. In an attempt to minimize the impact of dogs on the beach, the National Park Service imposed a 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. curfew on dog walking. Although some local dog owners obey the curfew, there seems just as many dogs, stray or otherwise, on the beach during the day. However, maintenancemen on the beach have received few complaints and the failure of this dog restriction has been little noticed by the visiting public.

Because of the soft sand, Baker Beach is a good place to take young children. Groups of children visit the beach in the late mornings. For example, Baker Beach is visited by the Mission Childcare Consortium.

Because of the congenial atmosphere of the beach, single people can go to the beach without being hassled or feeling out of place.

There are no structures on the beach. However, Park Service maintenance has built several wide drainage culverts under the main parking lot which emerge out from the sand somewhere in the middle of the beach. The sand around the exposed mouth of these culverts has been washed away, creating small water carved depressions. In good weather, each of these depressions is quickly occupied by family units who covet the privacy and protection from the wind that these shelters provide.

The more secluded eastern end of the beach exhibits signs of less conventional recreation. Remnants of beach fires and scattered beer cans can often be found at the end of the beach. There have been fire rings placed on the beach but they have been washed away by waves.

There are approximately two dozen picnic tables scattered in the trees above the beach area. These tables are regularly used on weekends. The picnic area is often visited by black families. In 1974 there was a volleyball standard set up in the open area behind the parking lot. This was a popular activity for beach users as well as picnickers; however, the equipment is no longer available.

Many of the visitors who come to Baker Beach on a regular basis, especially during less crowded weekdays, never leave their automobiles. They remain in their parked cars to eat their lunch, watch ships come in, enjoy the view, or at night, neck with their dates. Mail trucks, telephone trucks, Army vehicles, and even San Francisco police cars are regularly observed "hanging out" during the afternoons. The parking lot is even used by

people to do mechanical work on their cars (occasionally draining their oil onto the ground).

On a three-day holiday weekend, the parking lots will be jammed to capacity and cars will park bumper to bumper on the road shoulder all the way up to Lincoln Boulevard.

Restrooms are conveniently located near the parking lot. However, the only water faucet is located in the woods and the public telephone is almost impossible to find. Also, the restrooms are sited so that they block off a view of the Golden Gate Bridge for many people in parked cars.

Some indiscriminate overnight camping does occur at Baker Beach. U.S. Park Police discourage recreational vehicles from remaining overnight, although occasionally some do. Sleeping bags are rolled out once in awhile near the New Mine Casement and on the graded open area.

On the whole, there are very few enforcement problems at Baker Beach and the safe and friendly atmosphere is enjoyed by both visitors and staff alike. The Park Service has received repeated compliments on the beach's management from the public. Baker Beach is our best example to date on how the National Park Service has been able in a short time to significantly upgrade the recreational and aesthetic quality of San Francisco's shoreline.

LAND' END

(This summary is based on interviews with Roy Getty, maintenance foreman, Land's End; Jim Fosse, maintenanceman; John Bird, maintenanceman; S. Joseph Cicoria, U.S. Park Police.)

Two parking lots are located at Land's End. Though quite a few people drive into the lots, few ever wander far from their automobiles. Both the Merrie Way lot and the Memorial lot have scenic vistas and most people come to look at the view, watch the ships come in, and photograph friends. More and more of these visitors are national in origin; sight-seers and tourists. Maintencemen working in these lots are beseiged with visitor's questions about directions to the Legion of Honor Museum and the Golden Gate Bridge. Visitors also request information about camping and motel accommodations as well as the types of activities offered in the Land's End area. There are no restrooms or drinking fountains for visitors in either lot.

Merrie Way Lot

The parking lot at Merrie Way overlooks Seal Rock. Sunset viewing is especially popular here. At night it becomes a "lover's lane" and park police report some problems with peeping Tom's. The lot is not lighted and there are occasional thefts at night from parked cars.

Recreation vehicles are prohibited from staying all night and park police patrol these lots nightly. Many of the visitors, when asked to move, just go on to the paved parking lot along Ocean Beach or into the lots at Sloat Boulevard. Some campers with sleeping bags illegally spend the night in the wooded area north of the Merrie Way lot.

Litter around the lot has decreased with the provision of NPS garbage cans. However, the prevailing winds often blow litter from adjacent areas outside the park into the Merrie Way lot. Additionally, many people still use this area as a dump for car parts, unwanted furniture and yard debris, and also as a spot to change their engine oil.

Memorial Parking Lot

The San Francisco Memorial parking lot (Inspiration Point) has no traffic or parking control and young skateboarders racing through the lot result in occasional chaos.

Land's End Trails

The steep cliffside trails of Land's End are lightly used. They attract visitors interested in hiking, climbing, and some picnicking. Dog walking and surf fishing are also popular. Parallel trails honeycomb the steep cliffs which are badly eroded and unstable, and a visit to Land's End can be a rather hazardous exploration. Many of the trails and areas of Land's End are not for the inexperienced or unprepared walker-stroller. Each year visitors have to be rescued from cliffs or pocket beaches that can disappear with incoming tides.

Use of Land's End is particularly affected by usually persistent wind and fog. The physical quality of the terrain limits both the activities and the number of visitors to the area. However, it is also precisely these facts which attract certain users to Land's End.

Social Environment of Land's End

This area displays certain very specific social characteristics which have evolved over a period of time. The users of Land's End are primarily men. The social reality is that Land's End is a homosexual meeting place and socializing area with quite a wide reputation. The natural character of the environment provides many private, small spaces off the paths for their encounters. As the number of gay users has increased in recent years, so has their territory and the visibility of their numerous meandering routes, some of which terminate at the one fairly accessible beach. On any sunny day, but especially on weekends, this beach is a social area and often crowded with sunbathers (some nude) and observers.

Normally the beach is rocky and subject to wind, so low barricades have been fashioned to clear the sand and provide shelter from the wind. Park police have reported no complaints about nudity at the beach and since it is a secluded spot, they do not interfere.

As more people learn about the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the social diversity of visitors to Land's End will no doubt change. Even today, there are more straight couples and families visiting the entire area than only a few months ago when it was transferred into the park. However, along with traditional recreational uses, some rather unconventional behavior not ordinarily encountered in NPS parklands will continue to occur and should be acknowledged in the preparation of a plan.

FORT MASON

(This summary is based on interviews with Lee Shenk, park technician; John Martini, park technician; Michael Crahan, maintenanceman; Hank Snyder, maintenanceman.)

Although the headquarters of the park is located in Fort Mason, the area still receives relatively light visitation. Despite National Park Service presence, the image of Fort Mason as an off-limits military base has proven hard to dispel. Special programs at Fort Mason such as the "Fourth of July Circus" and "People of 1776" have substantially assisted in the reincarnation of Fort Mason as a public park. Even though use of the fort as a whole has not jumped dramatically, regular patterns of use for the pier area, the promenade, and the picnic green have been established and the number of new users is slowly increasing at these locations.

Fishermen have really entrenched themselves around the Fort Mason piers. Piers #2 and #3 as well as the Alcatraz Pier at the foot of McDowell Avenue are among the most popular fishing piers in San Francisco. The bulk of the fishing and crabbing occurs upon Pier #2, with moderate use of the end of Pier #3, Alcatraz Pier, and along the rocks to the east. The density of use in the lower pier area (piers 2 and 3) tends to vary from weekends to weekdays. The weekday "regulars" are primarily males between the ages of 40-65, most of whom are retired and live in the city. The weekend users have a greater age distribution, from retirees to children; with primary users between the ages of 25-40. Women are in the minority at all times; 10% of the weekday users, 25% of the weekend users.

The fishermen appear to be mainly blue-collar workers; a great many of foreign ancestry, i.e., Italian, French, and Chinese. On weekends, nearly half the fishermen are oriental. At all times, many foreign languages can be heard. Fishermen at the end of the piers have asked the Park Service for night lighting, a phone, convenient toilets, and a rain shelter or awning. Presently, toilets exist at the foot of the piers but fishermen will seldom walk all the way back from the end of the pier to use them. Many are afraid to leave their fishing tackle and gear unattended for any length of time. Instead, they urinate against the pier building.

The east side of Pier #3 is officially closed off to fishermen because of loose pilings and the need for railings. However, fishermen go ahead and use the pier anyway (the sign has been vandalized) because it is relatively sheltered from the wind and provides an excellent view of Aquatic Park. Fishermen seem oblivious to NPS trash cans; both Piers 2 and 3 are littered with debris and fish remains. Shortcuts down the hill to fishing locations, especially above the Sea Scout Building, have created serious erosion problems.

Joggers, bicyclists, and strollers (including a few out-of-town tourists) come up the east end of McDowell Avenue from Aquatic Park to follow the waterfront and sit along the wall to enjoy the view of the bay. Secluded from the noise of the city and the rest of Fort Mason, the small landscaped picnic area near Battery San Jose overlooks a magnificent view of the Golden Gate. A park within a park, this area is still relatively undiscovered although NPS employees are finding it more difficult to find an empty table during lunchtime.

Guided walks of historic Fort Mason are given by the Park Service on weekends. Visitors are mainly local people (walks are announced in the Sunday paper); an afternoon tour may average 10-12 people. Occasionally, visitors will happen on the headquarters building and will stop and seek information. As visitation increases, the need for a more complete visitor service center at Fort Mason will be necessary. Presently, there is only an information desk. The most common visitor question is concerning the availability of camping accommodations in the Bay Area. There is no camping permitted in Fort Mason. However, several RV campers appear to spend the night next to the park headquarters building and right across from the Park Police Headquarters. No enforcement of the camping ban is evident.

Much of Fort Mason is relatively open, covered only with the scattered foundation debris of razed temporary buildings. No organized recreation takes place in this "no man's land". However, these areas have a beautiful view of the bay and a variety of unstructured recreation occurs among the scattered concrete ruins. Lovers, sunbathers, meditators, and others have found a place for themselves in the broken terrain. These people often do not fit into a planned, highly structured park environment and Fort Mason and Land's End, both in the GGNRA, may be their last refuge in the city.

ANGEL ISLAND

(This summary is based on interviews with Robert Short, Angel Island State Park Supervisory Ranger; Pete Orchard, Ranger; Charley Sheidler, Maintenance Foreman.)

The primary attraction of Angel Island as indicated by all of the staff interviewed is the undeveloped quality of this island which is situated in the middle of a dense urban scene. The semi-secluded, auto-free environment draws mainly regional visitors who come to the island for the boat ride, picnicking, and hiking. A 360 degree panorama from the top of the island is afforded those who walk to the summit of Mt. Livermore. The flora and fauna of the island is another appealing feature to visitors. During the summer, ferry boats operate daily from Tiburon and San Francisco and on weekends from Berkeley. During the winter, all use is restricted to weekends. Private boats can also dock and use the island facilities.

Since there is only one entrance point and access is only by boat, typically this island will turn suddenly from a quiet empty place to a crowded, active scene in a matter of minutes. On any pleasant weekend day, boatloads of 300-400 people are common and the daily visitor population can easily reach 4,000-5,000. Attendance may have decreased this year according to maintenance staff who base their estimate on the amount of garbage hauled off the island.

Visitors exhibit a wide range of ages from very young school kids to senior citizens. The Tiburon ferry usually brings in middle income

white families from Marin. The number of minorities, particularly of Asian background are coming to Angel Island on the San Francisco ferry. The Chinese community is particularly interested in the old detention center and immigration station located on the island. There are still characters on the inside walls written by early immigrants.

Groups of handicapped persons (blind and mentally retarded) occasionally visit the park. Restrooms are equipped for their use.

There have been many visitor complaints heard about the infrequency of boat service, particularly the ferry from the East Bay which only runs during the summer. One boat leaves Berkeley at 10 A.M. and one boat returns at 4:15.

Visitor use of Angel Island is predominately by groups--couples, families, and organized groups. Individual visits are actually unusual and rangers remarked that it was curious or even suspicious to see a person alone.

Generally, users fall into two broad activity categories. Those more urban visitors who arrive to picnic, play games and socialize. Not prepared or inclined to move about much, they expect a city park type of environment and often inquire about the availability of alcohol (drinking is very popular on the island), and food. Quite a few callers ask if there are swings and other playground equipment on the island, indicating parents want to bring young children. Most of these visitors go no further than Ayala Cove close to where they are dropped off by the ferry. The other major category of visitor is the daypacker

prepared to hike to various trails to explore different areas around the island or bicycle around its outer perimeter.

Foot trails and fire roads encircle the island and several hiking routes are available. Safety is a consideration of the park staff and visitors are cautioned to stay on the trails due to the presence of poison oak, the hazards of old evacuated military buildings, and easily eroded cliffs which could prove dangerous to the inexperienced or very young. Accidents on the island, however, are generally minor and serious falls or rescues are rare.

Harbor Tours, the carrier concession from San Francisco and East Bay, seems to be systematically trying to discourage people from bringing bicycles to the island. Responding to telephone inquiries, Harbor Tours instructs callers that only six bicycles are permitted on a ferry. This limitation is erroneous and not part of its contract with the State. Until recently, bicycles were averaging about 15 per boat on weekends. Rental bicycles are no longer available supposedly because of the high accident rate which occurred when there was a rental concessionaire. Many users were inexperienced and the rental bicycles were not properly maintained which contributed to accidents.

The new elephant train, a concession also owned by Harbor Tours, had complained about bicycles interferring with its operation.

All visitors to Angel Island have access to the elephant train excursion (cost \$1.50 adults/75¢ children) around the perimeter of the island. Leaving from Ayala Cove, it offers an hour long continuous loop ride

with no intermittent stops. It operates four times a day on weekends and three times a day on week days. However, this is not a shuttle service and this schedule only applies if there is a minimum of 6 adults or 12 children per run. On some week days, the ride is only provided once or twice a day. Seniors use the facility often and can reserve the ride.

A unique aspect of this island in spring and early summer is the large number of Bay Area school groups which visit for recreational rather than educational purposes. Waiver of the entrance fee for such groups makes this trip economically feasible and popular. Daily, during this period, chartered boats with 300-500 school kids (from pre-school to 12th grade) arrive on the island. Typically, the group will remain at the main picnic area at Ayala Cove although leaders often take some of the group on short hikes. Few groups request guided walks from the rangers.

This number of school kids daily does have an adverse impact on the immediate environment. Rangers attempt to minimize the affect by addressing the school groups about regulations and hazards while still on the boat. They also request that they carry out their own garbage and eat all bag lunches in the picnic areas. However, with the great number of kids and despite precautions, litter is a regular occurrence. Often the school group scatters shortly after arrival which makes adequate supervision very difficult and leads to accidents. Kids climbing the hills instead of using the trails contribute to erosion of the surrounding area. The limited ranger staff is not sufficient for

adequate patrol and assuming this task means ignoring their other responsibilities. Vandalism of property is more common with inner city high school groups. The snack bar, often closed during the spring, has been broken into on occasion by high school kids. Presently a quota of 500 school kids per day has been initiated. After this number, the entrance fee for additional groups is no longer waived. This measure of control is only partially effective. Some groups merely pay the additional 25¢ per person and come anyway by charter.

Located near the ferry landing at Ayala Cove, the food concession does a brisk business. It is open 7 days a week during the summer, weekends during the rest of the year. The concessionaire sometimes opens up for large school groups at other times. Approximately one-fourth of all callers to the park headquarters will ask if they can buy food on the island. No alcoholic beverages are sold and by the terms of the concession's contract with the State, no pop-top cans are sold.

Ayala Cove

Most visitors to Angel Island after leaving the ferry boat remain in Ayala Cove, the primary picnic spot, site of the ranger station, and origin of the elephant train ride around the island. Picnic tables are secured on a first come first served basis and are actually chained in position to break up the open space and discourage any games on the lawned area. On busy weekends, games such as touch football, softball, or volleyball may develop. Players are warned to stop by rangers who suggest they go on to Camp Reynolds, approximately a mile from the Cove, if they want to continue to play. A "no games permitted in picnic area" policy is enforced though frisbees are overlooked.

Because picnic tables are at a premium, the grassy area becomes crowded with picnickers sitting on the lawn. Many visitors never travel any further. Senior citizens especially tend to stay a shorter time and some come to the island just for the boat ride.

Dispersion of users from Ayala Cove to other less crowded areas is an ongoing task because many are concerned about returning in time for the last departing boat. If the elephant train service were allowed to make stops and pick-ups on its loop around the island, it might aid in dispersing users to other areas. Additional docking facilities would also help this situation. Ayala Cove beach is used for some swimming although the activity is limited due to cold water and discouraged because of heavy currents, no lifeguard services, and probable polluted water. Wading in the water is the most common water activity.

Fishing from the guay is also popular, particularly with Asian-Americans who are regular weekend users even during the winter.

The impact of this area is due to heavy use. Although the lawns get tramped and dried out on weekends, they do recover during the week.

Litter is controlled by regular maintenance but poses a constant threat. All visitors are encouraged to carry out their own garbage due to the huge task and expense of providing this service. Large groups are the worst offenders in this respect. The surrounding hills show the effects of visitors, especially kids, not using the trails.

Deer, attracted by the garbage, browse too heavily on low vegetation.

Because no natural predators exist on Angel Island, its deer population has reached at least 200. Many are attracted to the Ayala Cove area by the food and appear to be tame. Visitors feed them, pet them, and encourage this behavior. However, they are infested with parasites and are a source of poison oak. They pose a potential hazard to small children as a frightened deer could kick or step on a child. They also browse on garbage having learned to pull the plastic liners out of garbage cans and their manure is all over the lawned picnic area.

Presently the ranger staff is small with four State park rangers and one park aid. They provide guided nature walks and slide shows on weekends. Maintenance staff consists of four permanent positions with three seasonal park aids. Two restroom facilities are conveniently located at the Cove and the food concession is also nearby.

East Garrison

This area is set aside by reservation only for groups over 50 people.

A wide range of groups and organizations (from the Velvet Turtle Bar to the Cornell Club) avail themselves of this facility offering barbecue pits (only one barbecue is located at Ayala Cove), tables, pit toilets, water, baseball diamonds, and a volleyball court. However, this area is a considerable distance from the ferry terminus at Ayala Cove. North Garrison Pier, only 150 yards from this group area was used for docking ferries from the East Bay until it was damaged in 1974. Harbor Tours refuses to make the estimated \$25,000 in repairs to put the pier back in operation. Use of the group area has decreased since the dock was closed,

as groups now have to hike 1 1/2 miles from Ayala Cove and with all their equipment to use the island's only group facility.

Camp Reynolds (West Garrison)

Within an easy twenty-minute walk from the ferry boat landing, this area is also used by various small groups but cannot be reserved. Picnic facilities are available along with a grassy meadow for games and a small beach. The hike from Ayala Cove to Camp Reynolds is often recommended to visitors by the park staff.

Mount Livermore

Foot trails lead to the summit of Angel Island, Mt. Livermore. Activity here is more dependent on weather conditions. Pit toilets, picnic tables, and water is available but use is very light. There are never more than 20-30 people atop Livermore at one time.

An additional summit route for the elephant train might transport visitors who wish to take photographs but who are unable to hike this distance.

Beaches

Weather conditions do influence the use of Angel Island, but it is relatively fog-free and parts are protected from the wind. However, the beach at Quarry Point and Perle's Beach are not well protected from wind. Quarry Point Beach is a long sandy beach used for swimming and sunbathing. Nude sunbathing is overlooked if it is isolated and discreet. Swimming is not recommended because of the raw sewage discharge from residences at East Garrison which is dumped into the bay through an outfall only 25 feet off of Quarry Beach.

Unofficially rangers discourage park visitors from swimming because of dangerous tides and bay pollution but don't specifically mention the sewage. The only septic tanks on the island are at the ranger headquarters and public restrooms at Ayala Cove. It appears that the leaching field is directly under the picnic area as the smell of sewage was noticeable there.

Another popular beach is Perle's Beach. Although less protected from wind and weather, this beach does have a spectacular view of San Francisco and is used for walking and beachcombing.

Camping

Although many individuals and small groups inquire about camping facilities, it is generally not permitted. There are a few exceptions made with certain organized groups who are allowed to camp in designated areas during winter. In exchange, they have to do conservation work on the island.

Fire is permitted in two designated areas. Illegal fires only occur occasionally but potential fire damage is very high and available fire fighting equipment is limited. Procedures for fighting a large fire require additional personnel from Tiburon via the island launch.

Additional equipment must be obtained from Fort Baker via the LCM. The round trip would take an hour.

From Tiburon, Angel Island is very visible and sounds are distinctly audible. Anything unusual occurring on the island will generate phone calls from the mainland.

MARIN HEADLANDS

(This summary is based on interviews with Ray Murphy, area manager; Marin Headlands; Bill Mote, maintenance foreman; Dennis Savage, maintenanceman; Jim Lester, supervisory ranger; Steve Gazzano, park technician, park technician; Boyd Burtnett, park technician; Eric Mart, park technician; Luke McCann, supervisor, Marin Headlands resident camp; Margaret Brook, camp staff; Gail Tomita, camp staff.)

This geographically diverse area is becoming more and more popular despite seasonally severe weather conditions. The introduction of the summer #32 bus from San Francisco to Fort Cronkhite and growing public awareness of the park is increasing the number and diversity of visitors to the southern headlands.

Use is now primarily concentrated at two points--the Rodeo Valley (including Rodeo Beach) and Hill 129. A substantial increase in public use of the Tennessee Valley area is anticipated with the acquisition of the Whitter property.

Rodeo Valley (lagoon and beach)

Access is directly via the tunnel from Highway 101 or more indirectly from Conzelman Road. Sufficient parking is available west of the ranger station; however, more parking may be required next to the newly completed foot bridge that spans the lagoon.

Users exhibit a wide age range. Many school groups and organizations visit the area as do elderly people who arrive by bus from San Francisco. With

good weather, there is heavy weekend visitation. Night use is minimal.

Passengers from the #32 bus include many senior citizens and are usually racially mixed. Many of the riders are inappropriately dressed for the weather and terrain. Seniors have been observed arriving in their Sunday best including high heels. When they debus at the parking lot there are no benches or receiving area where they can stop, rest, and orient themselves. Many cross the road to the north section of the beach where they will spend the rest of their visit while others walk down the road to the ranger station for guided tours. Some visitors are not adequately dressed for the tours. Also, many who desire to go on those tours starting on Hill 129 cannot, since there is no transportation to the site several miles away. There are frequent requests for shuttle service. Many bus visitors are surprised there are no refreshments available; the only drinking water is available at the ranger station some ways from the beach. The ranger station in fact has become a waiting room for bus passengers as there is no other shelter provided near the parking lot.

Rodeo Beach

This popular beach has two units--the northern unit is larger, very accessible, and most heavily used. The southern part is smaller and is accessible from the north by climbing a hill. It can also be reached from above by car with a hike down to the beach. Both beach areas are used for sunbathing, picnicking, beach sports (frisbee and volleyball), rock collecting, beachcombing, water activities, and dog walking. Despite volleyball's popularity, no poles are provided on the beach. Because of the more difficult access, younger people tend to gather in the south beach.

There is some nude sunbathing. The beach accommodates the present number of users with no adverse impact. Visitors have expressed their pleasure with Park Service management, especially since the provision of restroom facilities, picnic tables, and improved maintenance.

Some visitors, however, are still not aware of the change in jurisdiction from military to Park Service. A remark was overheard recently which referred to the mounted rangers as "soldiers on horses." Many visitors have requested that some refreshments be made available, if only a mobile canteen on weekends and holidays.

The swiftly shifting weather conditions on the beach contribute to misuse of the small portable toilets as changing rooms. A "changing clothes" facility may be considered since the restrooms are being used for this purpose, which contributes to congestion.

Volleyball is a popular beach activity and poles could be situated at a site on the north unit.

Complaints have been received concerning dogs, particularly their litter and dog fighting on the beach. It has been suggested that dogs be permitted on the south beach only.

Rodeo Lagoon

This area has been traditionally used as a bird watching area though hiking along the lagoon is another common activity. In the past, fishing was permitted and the lagoon was stocked, but "meat fishing" (fishermen would tail the fish and game trucks) and litter badly impacted the lagoon.

Swimming and boating in the lagoon would be incompatible with the predominate activity of bird watching.

The recent construction of a foot bridge over the lagoon may increase the number of people in the area. An eastern stairway providing access to the ranger station from the direction of the foot bridge is needed.

Hill 129/Conzelman Road

Because of the panoramic view afforded, this area is a favorite for photographers, tourists, and others who want to take advantage of this unparalleled vista. Daytime traffic is often heavy on Conzelman Road and circulation can become a mess. Conzelman Road from Hill 129 west is one-way and many motorists at Hill 129 who do not wish to continue turn around while others are attempting to park or stop for the view. A "service vehicles only" sign which is for the service road up to Hill 129 is often misinterpreted as referring to Conzelman Road west of Hill 129.

When Conzelman Road is closed from the east during Army maneuvers, fishermen who want to reach the fishing area east of Bonita Cove have to drive up the road the wrong way from the west. There is presently no visitor services facility at Hill 129 (no drinking water either) despite very heavy use.

Night use along Conzelman Road is frequent as visitors enjoy the sunset and the lights of the city. It is also a popular "lover's lane".

Inland Areas--Gerbode, Tennessee Valley, Green Gulch

Comprising the balance of the Marin Headlands, these areas are the least used. The main activity is hiking, but no direct route paralleling the coast from south to north is yet available. The Whitter Ranch in the Tennessee Valley is still private and off-limits to hikers.

A limited system of trails now exists but the area has great potential for becoming the south end of one long coastal trail north to Point Reyes.

The principle conflicting use in this area is that of off-road vehicles. ORV's obtain illegal access into the park from the end of Rodeo Avenue as well as a number of small roads presently kept open for service vehicles. There are no barriers across the roads and intruding ORV's are unhindered except for an infrequent encounter with ranger or park police patrols. The impact of the ORV's on the land is considered serious. Some of these "back entrances" to the park have also been utilized as dump areas. Packs of wild dogs have been running and killing deer throughout the area. Several local dogs are also suspected of running deer. The Marin Headlands NPS staff recommended dogs not be permitted on trails.

Hang gliding is presently permitted in the Gerbode. This is the only authorized site for the sport in the park.

Group Day Use Facilities

There are presently no group day use facilities at the Headlands. However, the ranger station receives frequent requests from groups and organizations

for group sites. The Headlands staff has recommended Fort Barry Parade Grounds and Bonita Cove as sites well-suited for reserved group use. Both areas are large enough for picnic tables and barbecue facilities, and are sheltered from the wind and relatively private for group use. In addition, the Fort Barry Parade Grounds has drinking water and good condition hard surface basketball courts.

Bicycle Access

It is now illegal to enter Rodeo Valley by bicycle via the tunnel from Highway 101. Nevertheless, many bicyclists and bicyclist handbooks suggest running the tunnel anyway. A particularly dangerous situation exists when buses are in the tunnel. The tunnel itself is in need of paint and improved lighting. The only other access is via Conzelman Road; a very strenuous climb few cyclists attempt.

STINSON BEACH

(This summary is based on interviews with Denzo Verado, supervisory ranger Mt. Tam/Stinson Beach; Bill Schaffer, maintenanceman; Gary Bischoff, maintenanceman; Don Amorie, maintenanceman; Scott Tye, lifeguard.)

Visitation to Stinson Beach has decreased in the last three years as more people are probably going to Rodeo Beach, the beaches of Point Reyes, and the San Mateo coast.

This ocean front beach still draws heavily from the region--especially in good weather. A long natural sandy beach, it is well suited for aquatic and beach activities such as swimming, body surfing, sunbathing, volleyball, jogging, and fishing. Surfboards, rubber mats, rafts, and even kayaks are seen frequently. A wide range of ages and social backgrounds are represented by the 6,000-8,000 good weather weekend visitors. Families seem to prefer Stinson to Muir Beach. School groups frequent the beach during the week in early summer. Senior citizens, arriving by Golden Gate Transit, are infrequent. Many regular users are local youth who congregate in the central most heavily used area near the parking lot, the snack bar, the restrooms, and the lifeguard tower. A volleyball court is set up here. Other active games like football and frisbee are re-directed to either ends of the beach on days with high visitation. Behind this central area is a sheltered grassy picnic facility with grills and tables.

The north and south ends of the beach are used less than the central area and receive the overflow on crowded days. These areas are not protected

by a lifeguard. Bus tours stop at the south end of the beach due to the proximity of the parking area. During winter this lot is often flooded.

In the past, fire rings were located on the south end of the beach but every winter waves would cover them with sand. They have now been relocated in the dune area above the beach to eliminate the hazard of hot coals being dumped in the sand. Also, park staff disliked having rings on the beach because of the number of bottles broken on them.

This long stretch of state park beach is abutted on the north end by a similar county beach. With this amount of available space, few conflicts develop and the beach is a noticeably friendly and peaceful place.

Four seasonal lifeguards now patrol an expanded central area of the beach but not to the perimeters of the north and south end. The patrolled area is marked by flags. Lifeguards feel this is only a minimum number to adequately cover the beach. On nice days, many visitors are in the water but ocean conditions can be hazardous due to the presence of rip tides along the coast. Presently there is no system to alert visitors of current ocean conditions. Lifeguards provide constant visitor contact, first aid, and marine life interpretive programs for school groups. Some accidents also occur along the rocks on the unprotected southern end, and lifeguards must respond to these rescues. Although the State cannot prohibit the use of innertubes, users are warned of this hazard in these waters.

Although dogs are not allowed on Stinson Beach, no dog regulations are enforced on the county beach to the north. Visitors to Stinson Beach with

dogs are asked to leave or move on to the county beach. Local resident dogs do trespass on Stinson Beach and contribute to the litter on the beach. Animal bites on the beach are on the increase. One half to two thirds of the dogs on Stinson Beach are either local dogs or are from the county beach. There is a high sign mortality on the beach. The first signs to go are always the no-dog signs. Local residents from Stinson Beach have occasionally kicked in the walls of the restrooms as apparent retaliation of park harassment of their dogs.

Restrooms on the north and south ends of the beach are locked in the evening but the central bathroom has no doors and is accessible 24 hours a day. Stinson Beach closes at sunset and no area patrol is provided. Restroom plumbing and walls and the lifeguard towers are occasionally subject to vandalism.

Indiscriminate camping by local west Marin "hobos" and Highway One hitchhikers takes place on the beach or in the dune area, especially in good weather. The number of campers averages from a few on a summer weekday up to fifteen on a given weekend. After initial warnings, a \$15.00 fine can be issued. Campers with fires are fined \$50.00.

Red Rocks Beach is south of Stinson Beach and separated from it by rocks. This has become an unofficial nude beach since it is fairly secluded and only accessible by a steep $\frac{1}{2}$ mile trail. A parking turnout along Highway One marks the location. Although Red Rocks is part of the State park, the State is disposed to officially ignoring the beach's existence even though park staff on Stinson have suggested Red Rocks to occasional

nude bathers at Stinson. Although the beach itself is clean, the spectator traffic on the overlooking cliffs has added considerably to the litter in the area.

MOUNT TAMALPAIS, MUIR BEACH, KIRBY COVE

(This summary is based on interviews with Denzil Verado, supervisory ranger, Mt. Tam State Park; Bill Schaffer, maintenanceman; Gary Bischoff, maintenanceman; Don Amoril, maintenanceman.)

There are basically two types of visitors to Mt. Tam; the day hiker and the motor touring tourist. Many of the vehicular sightseers are national visitors who have just come from Muir Woods and have driven to the top of the east peak of Mt. Tam to take in the Bay Area panorama below. Although some may walk the short loop around the summit, most visitors remain in or near their cars and stay a short time. Approximately 20% of the visitors to East Peak are there for the first time.

On the other hand, the most common activity of the regional visitor to Tam is hiking on the park's more than thirty miles of trails. Groups such as the Sierra Club and the Tamalpais Conservation Club regularly hike the park. Among the day hikers, there is a significant number of hardy senior citizens who hike up to five miles a day on the Tam trails.

Rock climbing has become so popular on the east peak of Mt. Tamalpais that climbers must wait in line for rocks on weekends. An increasing number of bicyclists are using the narrow access road and the rivalry for space between bicycle and motorists can develop into a safety hazard. Local horsemen regularly use the fire roads of Mt. Tam. A popular ride is from Frank's Valley to Pan Toll.

There are only sixteen campsites in the park located at Pan Toll.

Campgrounds at Tam and Kirby Cove are reserved through Ticketron. State

park personnel were very pleased with the reservation system. One problem is, however, that on most maps Tamalpais is depicted as a typical State park facility with camping but without the type, number, and availability of overnight accommodations. Many visitors with recreational vehicles hauling trailers drive the long mountain road seeking a campsite after a hard day's drive only to find that Mt. Tamalpais has one campground at Pan Toll with sixteen camp sites which are ordinarily booked year-round. Many visitors must then head back down the road. A lack of accommodations forces many tired motorists to pull off these narrow roads to spend the night. Maintenance has also identified as many as 50 indiscriminate campsites in the back country. There is a group campground at Alice Eastwood that can be reserved by school groups. Park rangers can usually give interpretive talks to approximately 35-40% of the groups who visit.

Use of Mt. Tamalpais is primarily day use and the area above Pan Toll is closed down at sunset. This gate entrance is guarded until sunrise, and night access is only allowed to Air Force personnel employed at the radar station on the summit (who, incidentally, pay for a park employee to guard the gate all night).

Approximate visitation to Mt. Tamalpais in 1971-72 was 1,200,000 and in 1972-73 it was 860,000. In 1973-74 it was up again to 1,200,000. This high visitation influences both the park and its visitors. Many areas are crowded and parking facilities are limited. Cars are pulled off the roads at trailheads and scenic areas. Parking lots such as Rock Springs can easily fill up, and parking can overflow onto fragile vegetation. The maintenance staff also reports a number of thefts and break-ins.

A continuing trail maintenance program to curb erosion currently exists for the thirty miles of trails in the Mt. Tam area. Winter rains can turn shortcuts and side trails into ruts and creeks. Check dams are being used by maintenance to successfully stop the flow of water and create steps for the hiker. Many of the trails were once cow trails and are poorly sited. Since these presently require such constant attention, maintenance suggests relocation of these older trails.

Serious damage from fire has not yet occurred but the sizable amount of forest litter and common evidence of indiscriminate camping makes the fire potential quite high.

Heavy use of the area generates a lot of garbage. Regular maintenance can control the situation along the road, the trails, and in open areas where many visitors gather. However, much of the debris is thrown from autos and ends up in inaccessible canyons. These areas are patrolled 3-4 times a year. Several park areas were once traditional dumps and still show the effects of this use.

Dogs are not allowed on the trails of Mt. Tamalpais and must be on leash in all developed areas. Despite these prohibitions, many deer are killed or hurt by dogs every year. Some of the dogs responsible for these attacks are local dogs who run loose and have come to the area from the surrounding towns. Staff estimates that approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the deer born each year are killed for sport by domestic dogs.

Boot Jack

Boot Jack was a group camp facility and is now a day use picnic area. Located

on a steep hill, the heavy use of this site has caused considerable erosion. Maintenance has recommended removal of this site to a more suitable flat location in Frank's Valley.

Trojan Point

Trojan Point is an undesignated use area on a bare knoll about 2/3 the way up to Rock Springs on Southside Drive. Proliferation of trails has eliminated much of the natural short grass of this hill.

Pan Toll

Pan Toll is the only campground in the park and the sixteen sites are in almost constant use despite frequent cold and wet conditions. Providing a more suitable site for camping would allow the area to recover from continued heavy use.

Bolinas Ridge

Although the ranger staff reports no adverse activities along the ridge top, maintenance personnel site frequent use of recreational vehicles and motorcycles in this area. As a temporary control measure, stumps have been located paralleling the State park (west) side of the road. On weekends, many cars park on the road shoulder.

Mountain Theater

The State carefully scrutinizes all requests for use of the theater after the disastrous KFRC rock concert in 1968 when 35,000 tickets were sold even though there was only parking for 1,000 cars. The State Park's District

Office in Corte Madera now books all events, mostly of modest size. Use of the Marin Municipal Water District parking lot is available upon request.

Steep Ravine

The State recently raised the rent on the controversial cabins from \$40.00 to \$250.00 a month. Park staff claimed that all rental agreements will be terminated and the cabins vacated by October 1, 1975. There is a natural sulphur hot spring down near the beach at Steep Ravine. Most people, however, have rarely ventured down to the area because until now, Steep Ravine has had the appearance of a private community.

Kirby Cove

Isolated from Mt. Tamalpais, this small State beach in the Marin Headlands is manned in the summer by a single seasonal park aid who collects fees, cleans restrooms, picks up garbage, and performs minor maintenance duties. Rangers rarely have time to patrol the area and rely on National Park Service police for occasional assistance. Kirby Cove has three group campgrounds available by reservation. Fishing at the cove is a popular activity for senior citizens. Seniors can call the State park during the off season and get the combination to the gate to fish at Kirby Cove. The combination is changed weekly.

Muir Beach

This beach at the end of the former Green Gulch Ranch is now operated by a concessionaire. A fee of \$1.00 is charged for day use parking. The parking lot is continually flooded by winter waves and maintenance staff advises

raising the level of this lot. Cars parked along the access road will be ticketed. Visitors to this beach are local or regional and traditional beach and water activities occur here. Redwood Creek, which empties into the lagoon, is a natural spawning area for salmon and fishing is popular. Dogs are allowed on the beach. The artificial sand dunes behind the beach were formed to hide a previous dump site. The resident population of Muir Beach is protective and possessive of this area. Concern is vocally expressed regarding any change or development.

POINT REYES/GGNRA NORTH UNIT

(This summary is based on interviews with John Sansing, superintendent, Point Reyes; Don Cameron, chief of maintenance; Ron Thoman, chief of interpretation; Scott Evans, ranger; Jim Jordan, ranger; Thomas Tschohl, ranger; Pat Ervin; Cindy Curtain.)

Use of Point Reyes is increasing although visitation is mainly regional and almost entirely concentrated on weekends. Most people come to the beaches and weather is an important factor. Traditionally, summer has been a time for the heaviest beach use but because of the persistent summer fog at Pt. Reyes this is not always true. Peak visitation also occurs during Washington's Birthday and at the beginning of the wildflower season in early April.

The scenic drive to Pt. Reyes is as much a part of the appeal of this area as the other activities such as hiking and beach use. Golden Gate Transit buses from San Francisco carry an increasing number of visitors, especially senior citizens, to Pt. Reyes. Many of them ride the shuttle bus to Drake's Beach or Limantour Beach. Senior visitors who remain at Bear Valley generally stay close to the information station near the bus stop. No food or refreshments are available. If they have arrived unprepared, the nearest store is in Olema Valley or Pt. Reyes station; too far to walk. Many visiting seniors are reluctant to leave the headquarters complex, insecure in the wilderness surroundings. In response, park staff have even brought in picnic tables from the Bear Valley Trailhead closer to the visitor center. Basic orientation facilities for visitors presently exist at Bear Valley and Drake's Beach. This latter beach facility might be more suitably

located at Ottinger's Hill (north of Inverness) since this junction is the primary entrance to the northern Point Reyes area.

The small information station at Bear Valley now often handles over 1,000 people a day.

Interpretive services are limited by a lack of facilities. A summer slide orientation presentation was offered in a nearby administration building but visitors found it difficult to find. No visitor center exists for special programs. Roving interpreters are utilized on beaches and trails.

Camping

Four designated hike-in campgrounds are available by reservation. Point Reyes does serve as an ideal training ground for novice backpackers of the Bay Area. Because of its convenient access to the regional visitor, the relatively short trail distances of the area are utilized for practice by many beginners. Point Reyes is, in a way, a training ground for the Sierras. Quite a few campers come up just to shake down new equipment, especially rain gear.

On weekends there are three times as many requests for camping permits as there are sites. All reserved permits must be picked up by 10 a.m. If you don't have a reservation, you can usually get in on a cancellation if you sign up on a waiting list by 9 a.m. During the summer and fall, campsites are booked up as much as two months in advance.

There have been as many as 300 citations for illegal non-permittal camping on a weekend. Almost half of the illegal camp sites had fires.

An early morning ranger patrol for illegal campers occurs daily. Many campers, even with permits, prefer not to camp in designated sites. Complaints are frequently heard about noisy and disruptive groups at campgrounds, particularly Boy Scouts. Occasionally campers have to abandon designated sites to seek protection from the wind, particularly Wildcat Camp. Often kids are dropped off at Point Reyes by their mothers. Having failed to apply for a permit, they are cited for illegal camping and have no way home.

Beach camping is prohibited because of the danger of being trapped by tides, but it occurs all the same. Favorite spots are at the waterfall at Alamo Creek, Sculpture Beach, and McClures Beach.

To eliminate much of the illegal camping now occurring, a permit system for back country camping is recommended by many rangers. All permitted backpackers could then be advised of the fire danger and the need for maintaining dry camps. Beach camping would still be prohibited since changing tidal conditions present a hazard to those camping on coastal beaches. This permit system for undesignated sites would also allow many backpackers to experience the area on an individual rather than a group basis. The present campgrounds could be utilized as group camps.

Back Country Trails

The extensive trail system of Point Reyes, ideal for regional hikers and horsemen, is actually used quite lightly. Most of the wide trails are former ranch roads so they can accommodate both uses satisfactorily. A popular horse route is from Five Brooks to Wildcat, down the beach to the coast trail, and then back to Five Brooks via the Lake Ranch Trail.

Endurance runners and cross country bicyclists have also been observed using the system. A seven mile loop out of Five Brooks is popular with runners.

Since many of the trails were designed for vehicles, hikers have begun to develop certain shortcuts. Some of them could safely be opened up as alternative trails, particularly the one on Lake Ranch Road between Bass Lake and Palomarin. Besides the Bear Valley Trail, the trail up Mt. Wittenberg is fairly regularly used with an average of between 50-100 hikers on a weekend day.

Beaches

Limantour Beach

Visitation is rapidly increasing at Limantour. The summer shuttle bus service carries hikers from Bear Valley, but many day use picnickers or beach visitors prefer to use their own transportation if they have supplies with them. Many backpackers bound for Wildcat Camp will park at park headquarters and shuttle to Limantour to hike a shorter route to Wildcat. It takes nearly half the summer before people really catch on that there is a shuttle bus running to Limantour. The present parking lot is usually sufficient to accommodate the number of cars. Two or three times a year it will fill up, forcing the overflow of cars to park on the adjacent residential road. However, the turnover (because of the weather) is fairly steady so this situation is temporary. Often it is either too cold or too hot to stay at this beach too long.

The short walk from the parking area to the beach is irregular and very sandy. A wooden boardwalk would provide greater safety and convenience

for senior visitors and handicapped persons. *Amen.*

Visitors have a wide age range. Quite a few senior citizens have been visiting Limantour recently. Although there are many families on the beach, a lot of single people go to the beach. Sunbathing, wading, and picnicking are regular activities. Fishermen are attracted both by the freshwater ponds (upper and lower Muddy Hollow) and the surf fishing. The estero, a protected reserve, provides a good area for bird watching, sometimes from a canoe. Horseback riders use this beach as a point of origin since they can leave their horse trailers in the parking lot. Nude sunbathing is ignored if it is discreet and located away from the main access to the beach. No citation is issued without a visitor complaint.

Dogs are allowed on Limantour Beach and even the leash law is not enforced here. Many dog owners have chosen this beach as an alternative to leaving or not visiting Point Reyes at all, since dogs are prohibited in the back country. There are many complaints about dogs.

Litter is not a major problem due to good maintenance and wave action. There are pit toilets near the parking lot but there is no fresh water available anywhere.

Limantour Beach is ranger patrolled both on horseback and by foot. Rangers indicated that the mounted patrol was much better received and is more effective for visitor contact.

Along the eight mile road leading to Limantour Beach are many vista points well suited for day use picnic sites. When the beach is foggy, these sites

equipped with tables could accomodate visitors waiting for the fog to leave the beach. Occasional beer busts and speeding by local youth are an enforcement problem for rangers on the road and on the beach.

Drake's Beach

Drake's Beach is most popular with families. It is the only beach at Point Reyes with a food concession and visitor center. The beach is also served during the summer by shuttle bus. Minority use has been increasing; primarily people of Asian descent.

Bear Valley Trail

This 4.4 mile trail to the coast is the most heavily used trail in Point Reyes and about half of its users travel the entire distance to the coast. Many visitors are prepared only for a short walk, not a hike, and this very wide trail is a convenient easy grade. Many families with young children and picnic supplies are destined for Divide Meadow for day use only.

With the number of users and the intensity of use, bicyclists and walkers often rival one another for space. Accidents occur in both directions as bicycles pick up speed along downgrades on the trail.

Litter is an ongoing problem along this heavily used corridor.

Palomarin and the Lake Country

An average of 10,000 people a month pass through the park's southern entrance at Palomarin. There is no visitor contact station. The shuttle bus to Palomarin was growing in popularity when it was discontinued in 1975.

Hang gliding is very popular just south of Palomarin at the RCA beach. Palomarin Beach is used by surfers and because of easy access, school groups use this beach for tide pool exploration.

Bass Lake is quickly gaining in popularity as it is directly accessible from the Palomarin parking lot by a 45 minute walk. Freshwater swimming, mostly without suits, is the primary attraction of Bass Lake. There is some indiscriminate camping in the vicinity of the lake. Sunday hikers, both young and old, visit the lake to swim, picnic, sunbathe, and bird watch. Often, this spot is clear when the beach is foggy.

Because of the wilderness proposal, picnic tables and garbage cans have been removed. Although no vehicles can service the area, visitors are cooperative about carrying out their own litter. Presently no drinking water is available but a natural spring exists nearby. The other lakes are much less used since thick brush makes access more difficult.

Nearby Wildcat Camp is being visited by people parking at Palomarin and hiking five miles up the coast usually with a refreshing stop at Bass Lake. Wildcat Camp is also used by horsemen, and the campground has sometimes been covered with manure much to the displeasure of visiting backpackers. The conflicting use of this campground is unresolved.

Olema Valley

Use of this inland area is very light now due to lack of information about accessibility and what is actually open to the public. The presence of fences and cattle discourages use, but new signing may change this.

Many of the remaining structures have been vandalized, particularly the Randall House, which is almost beyond care. Gates are necessary for some lands in this valley since they have become accessible to 4-wheel drive vehicles.

Horsemen using the area often leave gates open and cattle roam to adjacent land. There is growing indiscriminate camping along Bolinas Ridge.

APPENDIX

GUIDE TO DETERMINING
EXISTING RECREATIONAL USE

1. What are the main access points?

Consider: Where people enter

Congestion or access problems

Secondary access points

Parking arrangements

2. What are the main attraction (use) areas?

Consider: Where people go

What do you think is the attraction?

Secondary attraction areas

What do people especially like about the park?

3. What are the social characteristics or composition of people in each of the (attraction) areas mentioned?

Consider: Grouping (single, couple, families)

Age

Ethnic or social background

Spacial self-segregation

4. When are these areas most used?

Consider: Different groups share area at different times

Average length of stay

When is area most heavily used

5. What are the most prominent activities in each attraction area and park in general

Which group does what

What do people bring with them

6. Is the natural environment conducive to people's planned activities?

Consider: Weather

Terrain

7. How do users impact the natural environment?

Consider: Erosion

Fires

Litter

8. How much impact can the land absorb without serious damage?

Consider: Duration of use

Use intensity

After intensive use, closing off land for recovery period

9. Is there ever any tension or conflict between visitors?

Consider: Overcrowding

Use of facilities

Rival activities (e.g., bird watching vs. hang gliding)

Anti-social behavior

Dog problems

10. Can you suggest how these conflicts might be mitigated?

11. Are existing park regulations observed?

Consider: What are they?

How are they communicated

Enforcement problems

Vandalism

12. Do you think the regulations or enforcement should be changed?

Consider: New signs

More/less enforcement

13. Is the designed environment supportive of desired activities?

Consider: Misuse of facilities (e.g., playing ball in a parking lot)

14. Have visitors mentioned any changes they would like to see?

Consider: New facilities

More interpretation

15. How many more people could the park accommodate before existing use patterns would be adversely affected?

Consider: Access

Territoriality

16. Have you spoken with any local residents about the park?

Consider: Neighborhood use

Impact on local area

17. Are there any special facilities for elderly or handicapped use?

18. What specific or general recommendations would you make if you were planning the park?

Consider: Access

Facilities

Activities

19. What would you avoid doing?