
Reimagine Big Basin Redwoods State Park FEIR Comments

From Cynthia Denny [REDACTED]

Date Tue 6/30/2026 10:15 PM

To State Park and Recreation Commission@Parks <SPR.commission@parks.ca.gov>; Fourt, Will L@Parks <Will.Fourt@parks.ca.gov>; Reimagining Big Basin <reimagining.bigbasin@parks.ca.gov>

 1 attachment (110 KB)

Sierra Club BB FEIR letter 6-2026 submittal.pdf;

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California State Parks
Staff Liaison
State Park and Recreation Commission
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

June 30, 2026

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to this project. The Sierra Club appreciates the considerable effort invested in Reimagining Big Basin Redwoods State Park for both public use and the protection of wildlife—most notably, our sensitive Marbled Murrelet population.

Please find attached a copy of the letter our organization submitted today to Reimagining.BigBasin@parks.ca.gov. We are providing this duplicate copy to ensure it is received in advance of your July 2 meeting in Scotts Valley, CA.

In addition to the attached correspondence, we respectfully request clarification regarding the General Plan Amendments within the Reimagine Big Basin Redwoods State Park FEIR. Specifically, we seek responses to the following questions:

Questions Regarding the General Plan Amendment (Approved May 2013)

On Page 3

Lower Sky Meadow Area – "...with camp store"

1. Is the proposed camp store intended to include the sale of food and beverages?

2. Will operation of the camp store be managed directly by California State Parks or through a concession agreement with a private operator?
3. If a concessionaire is utilized, what requirements, training, monitoring, and compliance measures will be implemented to ensure adherence to Clean Crumbs principles and other wildlife-protection protocols intended to minimize human-wildlife conflicts?

Park Boundary – "Future Acquisition Parcels"

1. Does the reference to "future acquisition parcels" include properties that have already been acquired since adoption of the General Plan Amendment, including the NoraBella property?
2. If so, what environmental review was conducted for the acquisition of the NoraBella property?
3. Why was an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) not prepared or required in connection with that acquisition?

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Lower Sky Meadow (Item 2)

1. Will food and beverages be sold within this area?
2. Is the facility proposed to be operated by a concessionaire?
3. If a concessionaire is anticipated, what mechanisms will be used to ensure that concession operations comply with Clean Crumbs principles, including staff training, monitoring, enforcement, and periodic review?

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Sky Meadow (Item 5) – "Future Old-Growth Structure"

1. Please clarify the meaning of the term "future old-growth structure."
2. Does this term refer to forest stands that are expected to develop old-growth characteristics over time, or does it refer to existing or proposed built structures?
3. If the term relates to forest development, what criteria and timeframe are being used to define and evaluate future old-growth conditions?

Sky Meadow (Item 8)

1. The text appears to shift emphasis from "old-growth forest" to areas "away from the most favorable habitat for breeding in the park." What scientific, ecological, or management considerations prompted this change in terminology and habitat characterization?
2. Is this revision related to recent observations or detections of Marbled Murrelets within or near the Visitor Day Use Area?
3. Have post-fire habitat changes, new survey data, or updated scientific findings altered the understanding of breeding habitat suitability and distribution within the park?

4. If so, what data, studies, or monitoring results support the conclusion that Marbled Murrelets may utilize breeding habitat outside areas previously identified as the most favorable habitat?

We look forward to your response.

Cynthia Denny, Chair

Public Lands Subcommittee

Santa Cruz Group of the Ventana Chapter



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY GROUP

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June 30, 2026

Submitted via email to: Reimagining.BigBasin@parks.ca.gov

Santa Cruz District, California Department of Parks and Recreation
303 North Big Trees Park Road
Felton, CA 95018
Attn: Will Fourt

Re: Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Reimaging Big Basin Redwoods State Park Facilities Management Plan and General Plan Amendments (State Clearinghouse No. 2001112104)

Dear Mr. Fourt,

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club is a national, nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to the exploration, protection, and enjoyment of the wild places of the earth. With over 3.8 million members, online activists, and more than 400 local groups, the Sierra Club has a longstanding commitment to conserving the marbled murrelet and its old-growth habitat in California and throughout the West Coast through various Sierra Club chapter members.

The Sierra Club recognizes the significant amount of good work that has gone into the Reimaging Big Basin Redwoods State Park Project. Long recognized as a jewel in the State Parks System, we support your work in conserving Big Basin Redwoods State Park. We expect that the Project will be able to be implemented with an end result that we can all enjoy.

In our review of the DEIR, the Sierra Club highlighted concerns about impacts to the endangered marbled murrelet habitat. We have reviewed your responses to our comments, seen at pages 2-24 to 2-30 of the FEIR. While we appreciate the direct nature of your responses, we feel that there are still unanswered questions regarding management approaches. For example, in response to our Comment ORG2-07, questioning whether relocation of human activities (and their associated impacts) would actually ever occur, and based upon what criteria or trigger level, Response ORG2-07 appears to restate what had already been presented in the DEIR. To us this concern remains imperfectly addressed.

It is our understanding that the last identified marbled murrelet nest is in the direct adjacency of

the North Escape Gazos Creek Picnic Area. A picnic area site will certainly bring corvids. Response ORG2-07 states that mitigation to corvid impacts “could include temporary restrictions on public access to campgrounds, picnic areas, staging areas, trails, and other facilities to minimize risks to active marbled murrelet nests.” We had asked if the mentioned relocations would occur if significant impacts are observed. Based on the response to that question, we would like clarification that State Parks would actually follow through on closing picnic grounds if impacts to threatened species manifested themselves.

As we stated in our previous DEIR comment letter, the effectiveness of the mitigation measures remains uncertain due to incomplete scientific understanding of the factors influencing marbled murrelet populations and the impacts of the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire on their habitat. Given the possible impact outcomes, there may be situations where human activities may have to be curtailed in certain areas to maximize protections for sensitive species. Our concern remains how State Parks may choose to act when facing such a situation.

Thank you for your service and commitment to the quality of our State Parks.

Cynthia A. Denny
Chair, Public Lands Subcommittee

Kristen Sandel
Chair, Conservation Committee

Michael A. Guth
Chair, Executive Committee

Sierra Club - Santa Cruz Group of the Ventana Chapter