



Point Reyes
National Seashore Association

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Explore. Discover. Connect.



Point Reyes
National Seashore Association

Winner, 2006 National Park Service "Director's Award for Excellence"

Currents

Additional \$1 Million Grant Received for Coastal Wetlands; Site Preparation Begins at Point Reyes



Photo: David Wimpfheimer

General Management Plan for Point Reyes

Open for Public Comment Spring 2007

National Park Service managers at Point Reyes are preparing for the release of the Draft General Management Plan and environmental impact statement (EIS) in early spring of 2007. There will be a public comment period during which time the National Park Service and PRNSA will be encouraging Seashore Association members and the public to provide feedback to the proposed plan.

The full Draft General Management Plan will be available at the official Point Reyes National Seashore web site: www.nps.gov/pore/parkmgmt.

"This is an excellent opportunity for people to weigh in on the future direction of the park," said Gary Knoblock, Executive Director of the Seashore Association. "We are encouraging everyone to make his/her voice heard -- after all this park belongs to all of us."

A General Management Plan is a strategic planning document that outlines the future management of a National Park Service site for the next 15 to 20 years. The plan will set the basic philosophy and broad guidance for management decisions that affect the park's resources and the visitor's experience. Over the past several years, Point Reyes National Seashore has proposed a variety of management options for the park and has sought public feedback on these. The next stage of the process is to select the preferred alternative from the many options.



Photo: Hank Hilsmann

Writer Barry Lopez spoke at a recent fundraising event. Delicious local food and wine were served. Barry discussed his latest unique collaborative effort, *Home Ground: Language for an American Landscape*. Thanks to all those that participated in the auction held immediately following. The event raised \$10,000 for PRNSA!

Help Protect the Ocean!

PRNSA is part of a new statewide effort to protect our oceans, thankyouocean.org

5 things you can do to thank the ocean

Learn about the ocean: visit the www.thankyouocean.org website, a library or aquarium.

Experience the ocean: swim, sunbathe, surf, boat, dive, fish, play or just sit and contemplate.

Respect the ocean: take care where you step, don't disturb sealife that live on land, water or air.

Choose the ocean: conserve water and remember that everything ends up in the ocean, so don't litter.

Make a difference: participate in a beach cleanup, write your lawmakers or join an ocean organization.



Photo: Patrick Kleeman, USGS

Wetlands restoration will increase suitable breeding habitat for the California State Threatened species, Black Rail. Less than 10 pairs were found in recent tidal marshland surveys.



Photo: Gary M. Fellers, USGS

California Red-Legged Frog, a California Species of Special Concern, also a Federal Threatened Species, will benefit from slower moving stretches of freshwater riparian corridors.

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With the receipt of a \$1 million grant from the Migratory Bird Conservation Council announced in September, the Point Reyes National Seashore Association is quickly moving towards its fundraising goal of \$5.75 million for wetlands restoration at Point Reyes. With a significant amount of the fundraising accomplished, the Seashore Association has also begun initial preparation on the site to lay the groundwork for major restoration in 2007 and 2008.

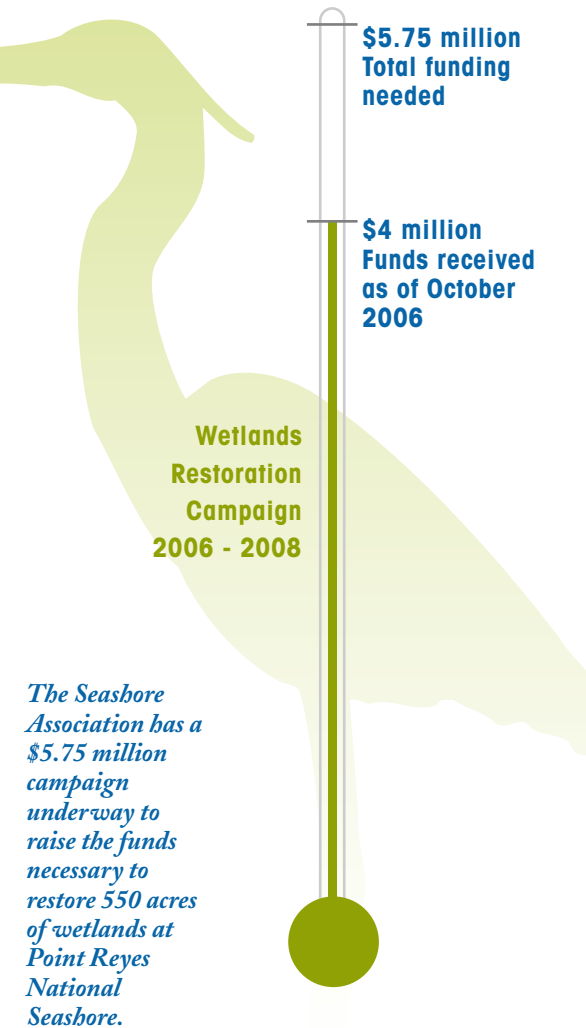
"People are going to be amazed at the diverse bird populations the restored wetlands will eventually support," said Point Reyes Superintendent Don Neubacher. "The Migratory Bird Conservation Council understands the strategic importance of Point Reyes to sustaining healthy bird populations along the Pacific flyway, which is why they were willing to commit so much money to this project."

With this latest grant, the Seashore Association has secured commitments for \$4 million for the Giacomini Wetlands project, the vast majority of which has come from private foundations and generous individuals.

"It was a tremendous team effort to secure this grant," said Gary Knoblock, Executive Director of the Point Reyes National Seashore Association. "We worked for over two years with the National Park Service, the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture and a variety of other partners to secure this funding. It's going to provide a tremendous boost to restoration in coastal Marin."

In October, the Seashore Association began \$300,000 worth of habitat enhancements on the site at the south end of Tomales Bay. Work included enhancing freshwater marsh for the red-legged frogs and creating a new high tide refuge for California black rails.

This preliminary work will conclude in the winter with revegetation of the enhanced habitat sites using native



species. These improvements will ensure that threatened and endangered species continue to have suitable habitat even as large-scale levee removal and restoration begins in 2007.

"It's exciting to see the project move forward," continued Superintendent Neubacher regarding initiation of work. "Over the next several years, visitors to the park are going to see tremendous changes take place at the south end of Tomales Bay as a beautiful wetlands emerges."

Your Visit to Point Reyes



Park Grant - This project is supported by your Seashore Association membership

On Your Own

Elephant Seals and the Sea

When not at sea, seals congregate at only a few traditional terrestrial colonies to rest, molt and breed. Point Reyes National Seashore is one of these colonies, and every year, seals will gather in fall and winter to breed, and then in spring and summer to molt. The colony has grown exponentially over the past 25 years, with seals now using three breeding sites within the park and an estimated 700 pups were born in 2006. The breeding season begins in November with the arrival of adult male seals that establish their hierarchy on remote beaches around Point Reyes Headland. Females arrive in late November and early December, and the peak pupping of the season is during the last week of January. Females remain onshore 24/7 nursing their young and fasting until they wean their pups at around 33 days. Dominant alpha or beta males also fast while they defend their position next to females for up to 3 months, challenge rival males, and mate with females before they return to sea.

Northern elephant seals, *Mirounga angustirostris*, are one of the largest pinnipeds in the world and are apex predators of the Pacific Ocean. Males can reach 18-20 feet in length and

females average around 9 feet. The name "elephant seal" derives from the large inflatable proboscis of the male used for trumpeting. Their large size enables elephant seals to dive very deep (more than a mile in depth), to hold their breath for over an hour while pursuing food, and to spend many days at sea (60-80% of a year). While at sea, elephant seals embark on some of the longest migrations of any mammal, swimming over 14,000 miles while traveling two times in a single year between the Bering Sea in Alaska from terrestrial breeding and resting colonies in California.

Fortunately for researchers, these terrestrial colonies are also excellent places to intensively study seals. Seals are excellent indicators of ecosystem health because they are a major component of the marine food web and respond promptly to changes in the marine ecosystem. At Point Reyes, researchers will be able to measure the effects of sea level rise associated with global climate change, for example, that could significantly alter seal breeding habitat, pup survival, and survival of the species.

Submitted by Sarah G. Allen



Photo: Kim Hilsmann

Learn about historic Lifeboat Station and its newly restored marine railway

Be sure to include a stop at the historic Lifeboat Station on the edge of Drakes Bay when you are next out visiting Chimney Rock or the Elephant Seal Overlook. The National Park Service has put in tremendous resources to restore the historic marine railway connected to the building which allowed for the rapid launch of rescue boats when the Coast Guard still operated the station. Now that it is restored, it is the only functioning historic marine railway on a lifeboat Station on the West Coast.

New interpretive exhibits are also on display now both inside and outside the Lifeboat Station. During the elephant seal pupping season, January through April, most weekends there will be docents at Elephant Seal Overlook and frequently on weekends either staff or interpretive rangers will open up the Lifeboat Station for visitors to explore.

Through Point Reyes Field Seminars

Art and Photography classes help you connect to Point Reyes in new ways.

Have you always wanted to learn to draw or paint, or are you inspired to photograph the natural beauty of the area? Come explore your creative side while experiencing the park. Be assured that our dynamic and skillful art and photography instructors will create the high-quality Field Seminar experience you have come to expect. This season, choose from: [Exploring Watercolor](#) with Birgit O'Connor on December 2; [Creative Nature Photography](#) with Brenda Tharp on March 24, [Drawing for Beginners](#) with Chuck Stasek on March 17 or [Wildflower Photography](#) with Sean Arbabi on April 20-22. Join us, develop your talent and let nature be your muse!

How You Can Get Involved

[Volunteer for Seashore Association](#)

Take an afternoon drive to Point Reyes, soak up the beautiful scenery, enjoy the tranquil atmosphere as you provide critical office assistance for PRNSA membership mailings and activities. Tuesday afternoons, weekly or biweekly. Contact Kim Hilsmann at kimh@ptreyes.org or call 415-663-1155.

Seasonal Highlights: Winter & Spring



Photo: David Wimpfheimer



Photo: Doreen Smith



Photo: Bruce Farnsworth

November

Winter rains clear the air and bring great coastal views; When northern temperatures drop and days shorten, birds migrate south along "lanes" of the Pacific Flyway. Our climate and the amount of available food provide wonderful "overwintering" grounds for the birds and great viewing opportunities for us! On Nov 18th join the 'Coastal Waterfowl' Field Seminar, visit wetlands, marshes, ponds, estuaries and the ocean (all here in Point Reyes!) to observe, identify and learn more about ducks and geese.

December

Excellent minus tides Dec 4th, good tide-pooling beaches, Palomarin, Kehoe, McClures. Learn how to identify gulls, head out to the field to practice identifying gulls on the fly on Dec 9th with Field Seminar participants in 'Oh No, Not Gulls!' (A great way to practice for the upcoming Christmas Bird Count!). Hike the Bear Valley Trail to Divide Meadow and Arch Rock, look for newts crossing the damp trail and winter wrens darting amid dense tangles of vegetation.

January

Peak of southern gray whale migration, visit the lighthouse and Chimney Rock for best whale-watching. Snowy Plover at Abbotts Lagoon and Estuary shorebirds breeding season can be viewed on Limantour Beach. Come explore the mysterious and fascinating world of wild mushrooms with the 'Stalking the Wild Mushroom' Field Seminar, Jan 21st; learn the basics and the vital roles that mushrooms play in the planet's ecosystems.

February

Great Blue Heron occupies nesting rookery Feb-Jul. Look for winter birds at Limantour Spit, Drakes Estero and Abbotts Lagoon. Currant bushes bloom in coastal scrub, milk-maids decorate the forest. Attend 'The Lives of Lower Plants-Mosses, Ferns & Lichen' Field Seminar, Feb 10th. Learn how they evolved, how these non-flowering plants reproduce, where they live, and their various roles in ecosystems.

March

Come spend a day observing and learning about the incredible marine mammals that present themselves this time of year, 'Whales & Seals' Field Seminar held on March 10th. Look for gray whales migrating towards northern feeding waters. Mothers and calves often pass close to shore, increasing our chance for good viewing; Northern Elephant Seals will be hauled out, sunning, breeding or birthing along several spots around the headlands.

April

Peak month of flower display. Learn wildflower names, some traditional uses of certain plants and on which species butterflies are likely to lay eggs. Sign up for 'Wildflowers of Chimney Rock' Field Seminar April 14th Saturday. Chimney Rock, Abbotts Lagoon, Kehoe Beach have the best wildflower displays. Glimpse a Tule Elk spotted calf learning to stand within the first hour of life at Tomales Point.

Whether on your own or with experts leading Field Seminars, winter and spring are some of the finest times to visit and enjoy this beautiful park.

Geology, outdoor photography, hiking adventures, art classes for beginners and advanced skills... you can experience all of these exciting seasonal happenings in more depth through **Point Reyes Field Seminars!** Check your brochure, call 415-663-1200 or visit www.ptreyes.org for information on current seminars.

Business Sponsors

Please support the businesses that support the park!

- Abalone Inn
- Bear Valley Inn
- Blackthorne Inn
- Cabaline Country Emporium & Saddlery
- Cow Girl Creamery
- Inverness Secret Garden Cottage
- Perry's Delicatessen
- The Old Point Reyes Schoolhouse Compound
- The Station House Café

Grants Received 2006

Many, many thanks to these foundations and corporations for doing so much to help us preserve Point Reyes!

- California Department of Fish & Game - \$85,000 - for Salmon and Steelhead Restoration
- Chevron Texaco - \$5,000 for Whale Watching Shuttle Bus
- Community Foundation of Sonoma County - \$1,000 for scholarships
- Environmental Action Committee \$2,000 for dune restoration
- Lucasfilm Foundation - \$500 for Snowy Plover Protection Program
- Marin Community Foundation \$30,000 for Tomales Bay Biodiversity Partnership

Fiscal Year 2005-2006 Year-End Highlights

Gary Knoblock
Executive Director

Wetlands Restoration Initiative Expands Our Capacity

The work we put in over the past year to the wetlands fundraising campaign is paying off, with approximately \$4,000,000 secured to date of the \$5.75 million needed. Phew! In addition to the grants secured, we currently have over \$2,000,000 worth of proposals pending with a variety of funders and should be in excellent shape to begin the in-depth levee removal work in the summer of 2007. This magnitude of fundraising has brought us into a wide network of partners at the local, state and national level and this network of contacts is definitely increasing our organizational capacity to better support park preservation efforts now and over the long-term. Many thanks to all the people who have made donations to this significant wetlands restoration project!

Strategic Plan Sets Course for Future

Staff, Board and the National Park Service leadership spent the past 12 months identifying strategic park needs that the Seashore Association could best address. We have produced a draft five-year strategic plan which will focus our efforts. Because we are in excellent financial health and are not facing any organizational crises, we determined that the best use of our energy is to continue to expand our dual role supporting park preservation efforts and cultivating future stewards.



Photo: Alexis Saunders

1780 Field Seminar participants from throughout the bay area had in-depth opportunities learn about what is fragile and unique at Point Reyes and throughout the natural world by participating in our innovative education programs.

2005 2006



Photo: PRNSA

Kids building a fun and meaningful connection to nature -- that's our goal with the 350 children, ages 7-16 who attend Point Reyes Nature Science Camp each summer. This year the Seashore Association provided 39 campers with scholarships to attend. If you would like to sign up a child or grandchild for this week-long guided exploration of the Point Reyes wilderness during summer 2007, check our website starting in January for registration information or, to be placed on our special summer camp mailing list, call 415.663.1224 or email summercamp@ptreyes.org.

To continue our work educating children and the public about preserving Point Reyes and the natural world, we need to focus on some of the infrastructure of our program, including much-needed repairs to our environmental education center facility near Limantour Beach. We will continue to enhance our existing vibrant education programs, including Nature Science Summer Camp and Field Seminars, and we also plan to explore ways to expand educational opportunities, especially to underserved groups like disadvantaged teenagers. As the threat to the long-term health of our oceans continues to become more imminent, we also plan to explore ways we can increase people's awareness of the need to protect marine ecosystems around Point Reyes and throughout California.



Photo: PRNSA

Permanently Protecting New Park Lands

In our continuing effort to preserve the beautiful Tomales Bay estuary, staff and Board members spent time in 2006 working with another local landowner who is interested in transferring shore line property so that it can become part of the park and permanently protected. We expect this land purchase to conclude soon.

Kids in canoe as part of 1702 participants in the 2005-2006 Education Center School Program

2006 FINANCIALS

Overview of Financial Activities for the Year Ended September 30, 2006

Revenues

Membership & Donations	\$223,000
Grants	\$653,000
Fees - Environmental Ed Center & Seminars	\$363,000
Store Sales (Gross)	\$358,000
Investment Income	\$25,000
Total Revenues	\$1,622,000

Program Expenses

Park Enhancement Projects	\$420,000
Environmental Education Center	\$266,000
Field Seminars	\$170,000
Store Inventory and Expenses	\$298,000
Total Program Expenses	\$1,154,000

Support Services

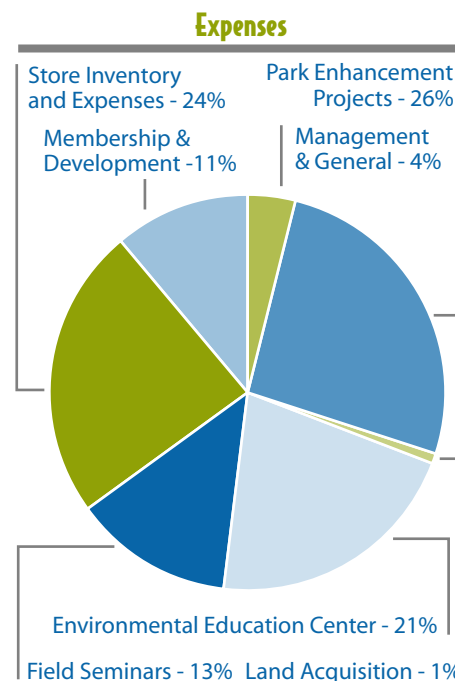
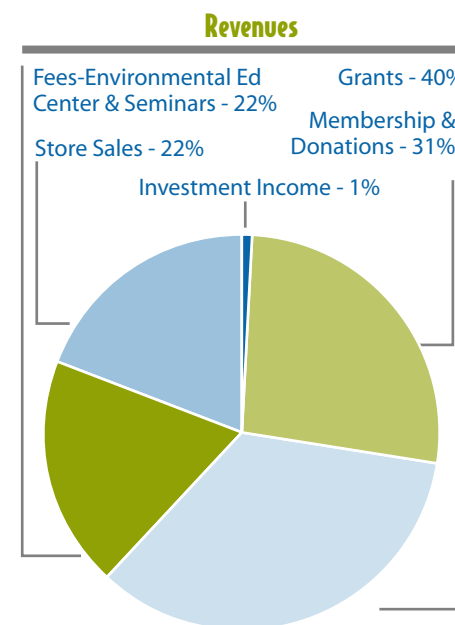
Membership & Development	\$139,000
Management & General	\$48,000
Total Support Services	\$187,000

Total Expenses \$1,341,000

Net Activities \$281,000

* Net activities surplus is primarily grant funding receive in FY 2006 that will be spent in FY 2007 on wetlands restoration.

Note: This overview is based on unaudited financial data and is provided for information only. Audited financial statements available after January 1, 2007.



Grants Received 2005

Many, many thanks to these foundations and corporations for doing so much to help us preserve Point Reyes!

- Marine Spill Response - \$1,000 for protecting coastal Point Reyes
- Marin Wildlife & Fisheries Advisory Committee - \$1,825 for Coastal Education
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation - \$150,000 for Giacomini Wetlands Restoration
- B.T. Rocca Jr. Foundation - \$1,000 to preserve coastal Point Reyes
- The Bernard Osher Foundation \$52,500 for Environmental Education Scholarships
- Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation \$350,000 to restore Giacomini Wetlands, secured in collaboration with our partner the National Park Foundation
- Santa Rosa Sunrise Rotary \$1,000 for Environmental Education Scholarships
- The Morris Stulsaft Foundation \$10,000 for Environmental Education Scholarships
- Taproot Foundation - \$25,000 in-kind for website development
- Willis Lease Finance Corporation \$1,000 to preserve coastal Point Reyes

National Park Service Gives Award for Excellence To Point Reyes National Seashore Association



Photo: Al Sims

Tule Elk bugling at Point Reyes

Little Rock, AR --- National Park Service (NPS) Director Fran Mainella presented the Director's Award for Excellence in Interpretive Media to Point Reyes National Seashore Association Monday, March 7, 2006 in Little Rock, Arkansas. The Media award was presented by Director Mainella to the Point Reyes National Seashore Association for their project to create a new branding and graphic identity for the organization, which included creation of a new logo, and greatly enhanced its newsletter and all of its other educational materials.

"I am pleased to be able to present this award to the Point Reyes National Seashore Association," said Director Mainella. "I applaud the Association and Point Reyes National Seashore for turning the Association's new look and enhanced educational materials into increased community support for the park and its programs."

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Currents is published twice a year by the Point Reyes National Seashore Association. For comments and questions, contact us at mail@ptreyes.org or visit our web site at www.ptreyes.org.

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THANK YOU!

Donations to Point Reyes Top \$655,000 in 2006!
Special Thanks to the Community for the Generous Support!

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Too numerous to list here, our sincere thanks to all who donated in this category.

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The following individuals made donations to honor the memory of Carleen Pertschuk:
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Thanks to these individuals who remembered Point Reyes in their wills and estate planning.

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Named in honor of Senator Peter Behr, who was instrumental in the creation of the park, these Peter Behr Circle members are continuing the tradition of protecting Point Reyes. For information about the Peter Behr Circle, contact Gary Knoblock, Executive Director, at 415-663-1835 or garyk@ptreyes.org.