

**FINAL INITIAL STUDY
NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**HUMBOLDT REDWOODS STATE PARK
FOUNDERS GROVE DAY USE AREA RELOCATION AND
RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT
SCH#:2024020929**



May 2024

**State of California
Department of Parks and Recreation
North Coast Redwoods District**

FINAL NEGATIVE DECLARATION

PROJECT: Founders Grove Day Use Area Relocation and Reconstruction Project

LEAD AGENCY: California State Parks

AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS: The Initial Study for this Negative Declaration was made available throughout the 30-day public review period at the reference desks of the Humboldt County Library. It was also available at the public information desks of DPR's Northern Service Center and the North Coast Redwoods District Headquarters offices and available on DPR's website (www.parks.ca.gov). The Final Negative Declaration and all supporting materials will be available, by request, at DPR's Northern Service Center.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The California State Parks in partnership with Save the Redwoods League, will decommission and demolish the existing restroom facility, as well as the parking lot at Founders Grove, and relocate and construct a new day use facility including restrooms and parking in an alternate location. In addition, the new site will include a new water source and treatment system, on-site sewage disposal system as well as a new accessible trail connection to Founders Grove.

FINDINGS

An Initial Study has been prepared to assess the proposed project's potential impacts on the environment and the significance of those impacts and is incorporated in the Draft ND. Based on this Initial Study, it has been determined that the proposed project would not have any significant impact on the environment. This conclusion is supported by the following findings:

- There was no potential for adverse impacts on Agricultural Resources, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, and Population and Housing, Public Services, and Tribal Cultural Resources associated with the proposed project.
- Potential adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project were found to be less than significant in the following areas: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Recreation, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems and Wildfire.
- Full implementation of the proposed Standard Project Requirements and Project Specific Requirements included in this ND would ensure that project related adverse impacts on Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazardous Materials, and Noise would remain at a less than significant level.

This document, along with the Draft Initial Study/Negative Declaration (SCH#2024020929) Comments; and the Notice of Determination, constitute the Final Negative Declaration for the Founders Grove Day Use Area Relocation and Reconstruction Project at Humboldt Redwoods State Park.

Pursuant to Section 21082.1 of the California Environmental Quality Act, the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR or California State Parks) has independently

reviewed and analyzed the Initial Study and Draft Negative Declaration for the proposed project and finds that these documents reflect the independent judgment of DPR. DPR, as lead agency, also confirms that the Standard and Specific Project Requirements detailed in these documents are feasible and will be implemented as stated in the Negative Declaration.

DocuSigned by:

Steven B. Michalk

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Brad Michalk
Environmental Coordinator
Northern Service Center

5/15/2024

Date

DocuSigned by:

Victor Bjelica

A1FB8A008EE0488...

Victor Bjelica
District Superintendent
North Coast Redwoods District

5/14/2024

Date

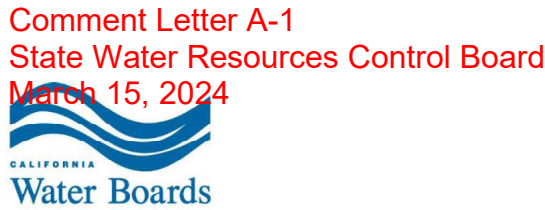
1. INTRODUCTION

This attachment provides responses to comments received during the Draft Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS/ND) for the Founders Grove Day Use Area Relocation and Reconstruction Project public review period, which began on February 23, 2024, and ended on March 25, 2024. No public meeting was held for the project. Detailed responses are provided to individual comments in Section 4 below, which follows copies of comments submitted on the Draft IS/ND.

2. COMMENT LETTERS RECEIVED

Table 1 provides an index of all comment letters received and corresponding numbered responses. Comment letters are organized by category and then chronologically in the order the letter was received. Each letter is assigned a letter designation and each comment within that letter is numbered. Comment letters, bracketed by comment, are reproduced in their entirety, and are followed by responses to each comment. No comments required textual changes to the Initial Study document.

Table 1		
Document Letter Designation	Agency/Respondent and Date of Correspondence	Response Designations
State Agencies		
A-1	State Water Resources Control Board - 03/15/2024	A-1-1 to A-1-4
A-2	North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board - 03/20/2024	A-2-1 to A-3
Public		
B-1	Marcus Mallow	B-1-1
B-2	Robert Sapsford	B-1-1



State Water Resources Control Board

March 15, 2024

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mar 15 2024

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

California Department of Parks and Recreation
Attn: Brad Michalk
2241 Harvard Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95815

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION (DPR), INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION (IS/ND) FOR THE FOUNDERS GROVE COMFORT STATION RELOCATION AND REPLACEMENT PROJECT (PROJECT); STATE CLEARINGHOUSE #2024020929

Dear Brad Michalk:

Thanks for the opportunity to review the IS/ND for the proposed Project. The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (State Water Board, DDW) is responsible for issuing domestic water supply permits pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water Act. This Project is within the jurisdiction of the State Water Board, DDW's Klamath District. DDW Klamath District issues domestic water supply permit amendments to the public water systems serviced with a new or modified source of domestic water supply or new domestic water system components pursuant to Waterworks Standards (Title 22 CCR chapter 16 et. seq.). A public water system requires a new water supply permit amendment when changes are made to a domestic water supply source, storage, or treatment and for the operation of new water system components- as specified in the Waterworks Standards. The Founder's Grove-State Parks water system No. CA1210312 will need to apply for a domestic water supply permit amendment. Prior to serving water from the proposed well, an amended permit application must be submitted, and a permit received from DDW – Klamath District to serve water to the public.

1

The State Water Board, DDW, as a responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has the following comments on the DPR's (IS/ND):

- Please add the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water to agencies with discretionary approvals and "Domestic Water Supply Permit Amendment" to Table 3 (PDF page 38).
- If the Project disturbs more than an acre of soil it will need a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction Stormwater General permit.

2

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | ERIC OPPENHEIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Brad Michalk

- 2 -

March 14, 2024

When the CEQA review process is completed, please forward the following items with the permit application to the State Water Board, DDW Klamath District Office at DWPDIST01@waterboards.ca.gov:

- Copy of the IS/ND with all comment letters received and the lead agency responses as appropriate.
- Copy of the Resolution or Board Minutes adopting the IS/ND and
- Copy of the date stamped Notice of Determination filed at the Humboldt County Clerk's Office and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse.

3

Please contact Lori Schmitz of the State Water Board at (916) 449-5285 or Lori.Schmitz@waterboards.ca.gov, for questions regarding this comment letter.

Sincerely,

Adrian Dela Calzada

Adrian Dela Calzada
Environmental Scientist
Division of Financial Assistance
Special Project Review Unit
1001 I Street, 16th floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Cc:

Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse

Barry Sutter
District Engineer
Klamath District

Response to Comment Letter A-1
 State Water Resources Control Board
 March 15, 2024

Comment A-1-1: Domestic Water Supply Permit

Comment noted. Chapter 3, Section X, HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY noted only that a test-well will be drilled under a water well permit to the Humboldt County Department of Environmental Health and subject their conditions.

This final Initial Study has been updated to add the following language to this section:

The new water system will also require a domestic water supply permit amendment from the State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water, to serve water to the public.

Comment A-1-2: Discretionary Approvals

Comment noted. Table 3-Agency Permits and Approvals is revised to include the State Water Resources Board as an additional agency that will have permitting authority. Additionally, the original table identified the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Army Corps of Engineers for 401/404 permitting respectively. However, as noted in Chapter 3, Section IV, impact criteria question c, of the Initial Study, no wetlands will be affected by this project, so reference to those permits (as well as the Army Corps of Engineers) have been eliminated from the table in the final document. Finally, as the project site does exceed 1-acre in size, an NPDES Construction General Permit will be required, and that information has also been added to the table.

Table 3-Agency Permits and Approvals

AGENCY	APPROVAL
Humboldt County Dept. of Public Works	Encroachment Permit
Humboldt County Dept. of Env. Health	Water Well Permit
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification —NPDES Construction General Permit
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Streambed Alteration Agreement
United States Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit
State Water Resources Board-Drinking Water Division	Domestic Water Supply Amendment.

Comment A-1-3: Post CEQA Filing Requirements

- Comment noted. California State Parks will provide the complete Final Initial Study document to the Division.
- The California State Parks Department Operations Manual 0600 contains DPR's CEQA implementation procedures. Specifically, Section 0605.5.2 outlines its process for approving projects evaluated under a Negative or Mitigated Negative Declaration. Under its implementation procedures, DPR prepares a Response to Comments, and approval is granted by virtue of a signature from an appropriate official on the final documents. As such, no resolution or board minutes will be available.
- Comment noted.

Comment Letter A-2
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control District
March 20, 2024

From: NSC_CEOA@Parks
To: Michalk,Brad@Parks
Subject: FW: Founders Grove Comfort Station Relocation and Replacement Project - CEQA IS/ND - NCRWQCB Comments
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 1:09:07 PM

From: Teicher, Margarete@Waterboards <Margarete.Teicher@waterboards.ca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 1:05 PM
To: NSC, CEQA@Parks <CEQA.NSC@parks.ca.gov>
Cc: Bey, Ryan A.@Waterboards <Ryan.Bey@Waterboards.ca.gov>; Cody, Kelsey@Waterboards <Kelsey.Cody@Waterboards.ca.gov>; Schmitz, Lori@Waterboards <Lori.Schmitz@waterboards.ca.gov>; Moore, Heaven@Waterboards <Heaven.Moore@Waterboards.ca.gov>
Subject: Founders Grove Comfort Station Relocation and Replacement Project - CEQA IS/ND - NCRWQCB Comments

You don't often get email from margarete.teicher@waterboards.ca.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello Mr. Michalk

Thank you for providing North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) staff the opportunity to comment on the California State Parks CEQA Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the Founders Grove Comfort Station Relocation and Replacement Project (Project). The Applicants are proposing to (1) relocate the comfort station away from State Hwy 101 and out from the old-growth redwood forest and construct new facilities including 1-2 restroom buildings; (2) construct two separate parking areas – one for standard vehicles and one for RVs/buses; (3) construct a 1.2 mile trail, with a creek crossing bridge, trailhead, and a future-phased 900-foot riparian corridor trail and a 200-foot raised boardwalk; (4) picnic areas; (5) up to 3,000 feet in concrete pedestrian walkways; (6) a welcome center and associated visitor seating areas; (7) campsite sites and associated parking; (8) water supply system including a new well, water storage tank, and water distribution piping; (9) septic system; (10) underground utilities (approximately 1500 feet) and associated transformer; and (11) 650-foot long stormwater water quality treatment bio-swale.

1

All projects must be evaluated for the presence of jurisdictional wetlands and other waters of the state and impacts to these waters should be avoided. 401 Water Quality Certifications (401 certification) are issued for activities resulting in dredge or fill within waters of the United States. Under the Clean Water Act sections 401 and 404, disturbing waters of the U.S. requires a permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and a state 401 certification. For more information, please visit our 401 website at [Water Quality Compliance | California Northcoast Regional Water Quality Control Board](#). To determine whether a 401 certification or other state water quality permit is required, please contact Ryan Bey at Ryan.Bey@waterboards.ca.gov. You will also need to reach out to the ACOE to determine whether federally-jurisdictional waters of the U.S. are present, and if a 404 permit is required.

2

Your Project may be subject to municipal and construction stormwater requirements. Please visit our NPDES Stormwater website at [NPDES Stormwater Program | Northcoast Water \(ca.gov\)](#). If you have any questions, please contact Heaven Moore at Heaven.Moore@waterboards.ca.gov.

3

Thank you.

Margarete "Maggie" Teicher

Response to Comment Letter A-2
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control District
March 20, 2024

Comment A-2-1: Project Overview Recap

Comment noted. No response required.

Comment A-2-2: Activities resulting in dredge or fill in waters of the U.S.

Comment noted. As noted in Chapter 3, Section IV, impact criteria question c, of the Initial Study, and referred to above, no wetlands will be affected by this project and thus, no 401/404 permits are required for the permit.

Comment A-2-3: Construction Stormwater Permit

Comment noted. As noted in DPR's response to comment A-1-2 above, the project site exceeds 1-acre in size, and as such an NPDES Construction General Permit will be required. This was also covered in Standard Project Requirement HAZ 1-Hazardous Materials. No further revisions to the document are required.

Comment Letter B-1
Marcus Mallo
March 18, 2024

From: NSC_CEOA@Parks
To: Michalk,Brad@Parks
Subject: FW: Illegal
Date: Monday, March 18, 2024 1:51:14 PM

Hi Brad,

I don't know if this is your project? I will be forwarding a second email regarding the same issue.

Monica

From: Marcus Mallo <yourdoneson707@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 1:17 PM
To: NSC, CEQA@Parks <CEQA.NSC@parks.ca.gov>
Subject: Illegal

You don't often get email from yourdoneson707@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

So my dad lives at the Dyerville loop location your trying to put a new bathroom and parking lot, and they turned off my dad's water yesterday on st Patrick's day with no legal notice or anything and I know it's illegal to do that even for squatters you can't do that without legal notice and he is even disabled he has Parkinson disease and you guys are stressing him out and making his shaking a lot worse. He worked on the rail road for over 20 years and has lived there for over 30 years so I know you guys are calling him a squatter but even they have rights so if you guys don't want to get sued over more than you already are you might won't to turn his water back on. 7072232823 name is Marcus mallo

1

Comment Letter B-2
Robert Sapsford
March 18, 2024

From: NSC_CEOA@Parks
To: Michalk,Brad@Parks
Subject: FW:
Date: Monday, March 18, 2024 1:52:26 PM

Hi Brad,

This is the second email related to the gentleman at the Dyerville loop location and the water shutoff issue.

Monica

From: Robert Sapsford <rws1985@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 1:25 PM
To: NSC, CEQA@Parks <CEQA.NSC@parks.ca.gov>
Subject:

You don't often get email from rws1985@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello I would like to say what you are doing to a great man like Dane Mallo kicking him out of a place he has lived for the pass 30 year. Has been there this hole time with not issue or complaint but now you wanna move an old disabled person to were. Just for a restroom and parking. This should never happen to some one that is a big part of our community. Please don't allow them to kick him and the other gentleman that lives down there out to the streets.

1

Response to Comment Letters B-1, B-2
Marcus Mallo, Robert Sapsford
March 18, 2024

Comment B-1-1: Illegal Eviction

While these commenters suggest that the project is displacing the resident, the Project site is located across Dyerville Loop Road from the individual referenced in their comments, and his home is not located on State Parks land or under its control. If any evictions are occurring on that parcel, they are being undertaken by entities that control that site and are unrelated to the Project.