



CHAPTER 4 -- THE LAND USE PLAN: DESCRIPTIONS AND POLICIES FOR THIRTEEN PLANNING AREAS

NORTH COAST CAC PLANNING AREA

4.1 HUMBOLDT COUNTY LINE TO ROCKPORT PLANNING AREA (List Coast)

The northern three quarters (approximately 7.5 miles) of the Lost Coast is in public ownership or is proposed for acquisition by the Department of Parks and Recreation. Private lands in the 1,000-yard-wide coastal zone mainly are in the Timber Preserve Zone or in Agricultural Preserve.

Sinkyone Wilderness State Park; Usal Ranch Project

Except for a part of the Bureau of Land Management's King Range National Conservation Area (Chemise Mountain Primitive Area) extending south from Humboldt County, most of the coastal zone north of Bear Harbor is Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. No management plan has been prepared by DPR, and no developed campsites exist. The Usal Ranch Project, extending from the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park boundary to a mile south of Usal Creek, is not a part of DPR's officially funded acquisition program. If funds are insufficient, acquisition could be limited to a trail easement or other less-than-full-fee interest in portions of the area. The large beach at Usal Creek is within the funded acquisition program. Land south of the Usal Ranch Project is designated for timberland and agricultural use.

Lost Coast residents who have commented on plan proposals for their area strongly favor preservation of wilderness, and most wish to restrict motor vehicle access in Sinkyone State Park within the coastal zone.

Coastal Element Policies: Sinkyone Wilderness State Park and the Proposed Usal Ranch project

- 4.1-1 A management plan for the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park and for the proposed Usal Ranch project shall maintain a wilderness recreational experience wherever appropriate. A low-impact recreational experience shall be provided in other areas not adaptable for the wilderness recreational experience.

The management plan shall include provisions for improved trails, camp areas and interpretive center, as well as protection and enhancement of anadromous streams, seal haulout areas, wetlands, old growth redwood stands and archaeological



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resources. The Management Plan and provisions for coastal trail access shall be coordinated with the Humboldt County Local Coast Plan and with the Management Plan adopted by the Bureau of Land Management.

The plan shall include suitable access for elderly and handicapped persons to the interpretive center proposed for Needle Rock House. Hiking and designated equestrian trails shall be situated in a manner which will be least disruptive to the environment. Vehicles shall be restricted to designated roads and parking areas.

- 4.1-2 In the event that federal lands within this segment of the coastal zone are transferred to state ownership, the local coastal plan indicates on the land use maps that those lands which are presently administered by the Bureau of Land Management as part of the King Range National Conservation Area should be transferred to the California Department of Parks & Recreation. These lands should be included within the boundaries of the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park and should be managed by DPR according to state park wilderness area standards. A hiking trail should be developed, located generally in the area delineated on the Land Use Map. It should extend from the Humboldt County line southward beyond the southern limits of the State Park and along the Usal Road to State Highway 1.
- 4.1-3 The Board of Supervisors or appropriate entity should continue to negotiate for a trail from Humboldt County line southward to connect with other trails within the Coastal Zone.

Designated Access Points, Trails, and Recreation Areas

Policies for all access points, trails, and recreation areas are in Section 3.6 and 3.7. Policies specific to locations in this planning area are listed below in geographic order from north to south. Each access point (other than fee access where designated) will need to be acquired by acceptance of an offer of dedication or by purchase by an appropriate public agency or private organization as described in Section 3.6.

Briceland Road

Location: County Road 435 from Four Corners to (north of) Bear Harbor paralleling the coast through Sinkyone Wilderness State Park.

Characteristics: Approximately six miles of County maintained road, suitable for hikers and equestrians. Potential trails connect to shoreline.

Existing Development: unpaved.



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Potential Development: Complete to Bear Harbor.

Whale Gulch

Location: 3 miles south of Humboldt County line; 1 mile southwest of Four Corners.

Ownership: Bureau of Land Management and California State Department of Parks and Recreation - Sinkyone Wilderness State Park.

Characteristics: Access via Briceland Road to trail from Low Gap Creek to sandy beach. Trail adjoins a wetland and riparian area.

Existing Development: Beach used for fishing and diving, primitive camping.

Potential Development: Improved Hike-in camping area.

Policy:

- 4.1-4 The method of limiting vehicle access to Briceland Road (County Road 435) shall be based upon the management plan to be developed by the Department of Parks and Recreation. Hiking or equestrian trails shall be extended from Usal Road, utilizing existing trails whenever appropriate, as indicated on the Land Use Maps. Vehicles shall be restricted to designated roads and parking areas. Vehicle access shall not be prohibited except as agreed by Mendocino County.

Bear Harbor

Location: 6 miles south of Humboldt County line, 6.2 miles southwest of Four Corners.

Ownership: California State Department of Parks and Recreation - Sinkyone Wilderness State Park.

Characteristics: Access via Briceland Road to beach trail. Secondary trail access from two points on Usal Road along old jeep trails.

Existing Development: Beach used for fishing and diving, primitive camping.

Potential Development: Improved Hike-in camping area.

Policy:

- 4.1-5 The method of limiting vehicle access to Briceland Road (County Road 435) shall be



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based upon the management plan to be developed by the Department of Parks and Recreation. Hiking or equestrian trails shall be extended from Usal Road, utilizing existing trails whenever appropriate, as indicated on the Land Use Maps. Vehicles shall be restricted to designated roads and parking areas. Vehicle access shall not be prohibited except as agreed by Mendocino County.

Jackass Creek

Location: Approximately 14 miles north of Usal Road turnoff from Highway 1.

Ownership: Private, in proposed acquisition area for Usal Ranch Project.

Characteristics: Rocky shore and cliffs border a 500-foot sand beach. Seasonal summer lagoon. Trails connect this old mill site along old jeep roads from Usal Road.

Existing Development: Beach used for fishing and day use.

Potential Development: Hike-in camping area.

Policy:

- 4.1-6 This area should be acquired and managed by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation. At the time of any coastal development permit, if this area is not acquired by the Department of Parks and Recreation an offer to dedicate an easement for public access shall be obtained for that area delineated on the Land Use Maps consistent with policy 3.6-5.

Little Jackass Creek

Location: 13 miles north of the Usal Road turnoff at Highway 1.

Ownership: Private.

Characteristics: Former "dog-hole port" reached via old trails. Rocky shore and cliffs border a 300-foot sand beach. Sensitive marine habitat area. Trails provide views of this rugged coastline.

Existing Development: Beach use, primitive camping.

Potential Development: Improved Hike-in camping area.

Policy: This area should be acquired and managed by the California Department of Parks and



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- 4.1-7 Recreation. At the time of any coastal development permit, if this area is not acquired by the Department of Parks and Recreation, an offer to dedicate an easement for public access shall be obtained for that area delineated on the Land Use Maps consistent with policy 3.6-5.

Usal Creek

Location: 6 miles north of Usal Road turnoff at Highway 1.

Ownership: Private - Georgia Pacific.

Characteristics: A 1/2 mile long beach and 5 acre lagoon are bordered by a large area of level land suitable for car camping. Area is reached by a short trail from Usal Road.

Existing Development: None; currently used for primitive camping.

Potential Development: Car camping, restroom facilities, picnic area.

Policy: This area should be acquired and managed by the California Department of Parks and

- 4.1-8 Recreation. At the time of any coastal development permit, if this area is not acquired by the Department of Parks and Recreation, an offer to dedicate an easement for public access shall be obtained for that area delineated on the Land Use Maps consistent with policy 3.6-5.

Usal Road

Location: Humboldt County Line to Highway 1, three miles north of Rockport; County Road 431.

Characteristics: Approximately 30 miles of County maintained road, unpaved, suitable for hikers and equestrians. Potential trails connect to shoreline. During the winter months vehicular traffic is difficult and may become dangerous at times.

Existing Development: Designated by County Trails Plan.

Lost Coast Trails

Policy:

- 4.1-9 Designated portions of the Usal Road and of State Highway One within the coastal zone shall be designated as the main coastal trail for the area of the coast lying north of Rockport. These segments shall be connected using both existing and newly proposed



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alignments, extending into Humboldt County as indicated on the Land Use Maps. Vehicles shall be restricted to designated roads and parking areas.

Policy:

- 4.1-10 Coastal trails shall be established for hiking and equestrian use as designated on the Land Use Map connecting shoreline access points along the Briceland Road and Usal Creek, and aligned with other trail segments to the south. Vehicles shall be restricted to designated roads and parking areas.

Policy:

- 4.1-11 The coastal trails for hiking and equestrian use which connect Usal Road with coastal beaches along the Lost Coast area should utilize existing roads and trails where feasible to minimize disruption to the environment. Parking areas at Usal Road trailheads shall be provided to encourage hike-in recreation. Since most of these parking areas would be outside the coastal zone, this would be a worthwhile project involving close coordination between the Coastal Element and the General Plan Land Use Element.

Visitor Accommodations and Services: No sites have been designated for visitor accommodations and services as a principal permitted use in the Humboldt County Line to Rockport Planning Area. However, the following sites have been designated as a conditional use for visitor serving facilities:

Whale Gulch	DPR proposed campground
Bear Harbor	DPR proposed campground
Jackass Creek	DPR proposed campground
Little Jackass Creek	DPR proposed campground
Usal Creek	Proposed campground