

3.15 RECREATION

This section describes the environmental and regulatory setting for recreational resources. It also describes existing conditions and potential impacts related to recreation that would result from implementation of the proposed project, and mitigation for potentially significant impacts, where feasible.

3.15.1 Environmental Setting

The County has several recreational opportunities and open spaces. More than 20 percent of the County's 2.3 million acres are protected open space, forests, and recreation areas. Within County boundaries, recreational resources include 4 federal parks and beaches, 10 state parks (3 of which are encompassed by Redwood National Park), 16 county parks, beaches, recreational areas, and reserves. These areas contribute to the quality of life in the County and provide needed recreational opportunities for residents of neighboring counties and visitors from all over the world (Humboldt County 2017c). County parks, recreation, and open space resources are managed by several agencies, including Native American Tribes, BLM, USFWS, U.S. Forest Service, CDFW, California State Parks Department, local city governments, Humboldt County, and special districts (Humboldt County 2017c).

Regional Parks

Most parks in the County are outside the incorporated cities, and there are few local community or neighborhood parks. There are nearly 468,000 acres of federally managed parklands in the County, including National Forest, National Parks, and National Wildlife Areas, in addition to 7,600 acres of BLM Reserve Lands. The County has about 76,000 acres of State Beach, State Parks, and State Reserve Lands. The County operates approximately 850 acres of parkland that includes ocean beaches, river access, boat ramps, and trails (Humboldt County 2017c).

Local Parks

There is one park adjacent to the proposed project area, Redwood Fields Park, which is a 12-acre, non-profit operated park that includes a ball field, playgrounds, picnic areas, and bocce courts. Sequoia Park and Zoo is located approximately 0.5 mile from the project site.

3.15.2 Regulatory Setting

State

Quimby Act

Section 66477 of the California Government Code, also known as the Quimby Act, was enacted in 1965 in an effort to promote the availability of park and open space areas in California. The Quimby Act authorizes cities and counties to enact ordinances requiring the dedication of land, or the payment of fees for park and/or recreational facilities in lieu thereof, or both, by developers of residential subdivisions as a conditions to the approval of a tentative map or parcel map. The Quimby Act requires the provision of three acres of park area per 1,000 persons residing within a subdivision, unless the amount of existing neighborhood and community park exceeds that limit, in which case the city or county may adopt a higher standard not to exceed five acres per 1,000 residents. The Quimby Act also specific acceptable uses and expenditures of funds from fees.



State Public Park Preservation Act

The primary instrument for protecting and preserving parkland is the State Public Park Preservation Act. Under the State Public Park Preservation Act, cities and counties may not acquire any real property that is in use as a public park for any non-park use unless compensation or land, or both, are provided to replace the parkland acquired. This provision essentially stipulates that there shall be no net loss of parkland and facilities.

Local

Humboldt County General Plan

The County General Plan, adopted October 23, 2017, contains several policies that directly pertain to recreation, including the following:

Goal CO-G1. Conservation of Open Spaces. Open spaces that distinguish and showcase the County's natural environment, including working resource lands while not impacting the ability to provide livelihoods, profitable economic returns and ecological values.

Goal CO-G4. Parks and Recreation. Well maintained and accessible parks offering a range of popular recreation opportunities and a regional trail system that meets future recreational and non-motorized transportation demands.

- **Policy CO-P8: Planning for Recreational Needs within Communities.** Policies addressing community recreational needs shall be prepared as part of planning efforts within each community. Implement park in-lieu programs in major communities.
- **Policy CO-P9: Develop and Maintain County Parks.** Secure, develop, and maintain county parks and recreation areas that are highly accessible to the public in order to serve the present and future needs of county residents
- **Policy CO-P11: Public Recreation.** Support acquisition, development and management of parklands and trails primarily in locations that are highly accessible to the public in order to serve the outdoor recreation and ADA needs of current and future residents, and where such uses do not reduce the agricultural capability, timber productivity and ecological services on open space lands.

Humboldt County Code

Parkland

Section 314-110.1, Parkland Dedication of the County Code includes parkland requirements for future subdivisions. As a condition of approval by the County, a subdivision project shall satisfy the following requirements as they relate to the proposed project:

- 110.1.3.1 For new subdivisions containing fifty-one (51) or more parcels: (Former Section CZ#A314-29(C)(1))



- 110.1.3.1.1. An offer of dedication of a portion of the land planned for development to a public or private non-profit agency for public park or recreation use as identified in the County General Plan, according to the formula and standards set forth in subsections 313-110.1.4 and 313-110.1.5, trails and support facilities identified in the County Trails Plan, and coastal access as identified in the access component of the Coastal Land Use Plan; or (Former Section CZ#A314-29(C)(1); Amended by Ord. 2167, Sec. 29, 4/7/98)
- 110.1.3.1.2. An in lieu fee in accordance with the provisions of subsection 313-110.1.6, to provide an appropriate contribution to public parks or recreation. It shall be the County's option to decide whether a dedication of land or payment of in lieu fees shall be required. (Former Section CZ#A314-29(C)(1))

3.15.3 Methodology for Analysis

The applicable recreation regulations were reviewed and the applicable County General Plan and County database searches conducted in order to complete the analysis portion of this section. These regulations and databases were analyzed in conjunction with the thresholds of significance identified below.

3.15.4 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines' Appendix G Environmental Checklist was assessed during the NOP scoping process to identify the proposed project components that have the potential to cause a significant impact. The following thresholds of significance were used to determine if further evaluation within this EIR was warranted to ascertain whether the proposed project may:

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment

3.15.5 Project Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures

This section analyzes the proposed project's potential to result in significant impacts to recreation. When a potential impact was determined to be potentially significant, feasible mitigation measures were identified to reduce or avoid that impact.

Recreational Facilities

Impact REC-1: The proposed project would not necessitate the construction of new park or recreational facilities, or cause substantial physical deterioration of existing park and recreational facilities.

Impact Analysis Construction

Construction of the proposed project would be phased over a period of 10 to 20 years and may impact the current use or result in changes to the existing Redwood Fields Park. During construction, there may be intermittent disturbance related to park access, which could deter people from using the park. As such, implementation of MM TRANS-1, Traffic Management Plan, would be required in order to ensure that



access is maintained to the Redwood Fields Park throughout the proposed project's construction period. MM TRANS-1 would include provisions for detours or signage, if necessary, in order to maintain public access at the Redwood Fields Park. Additional County General Plan policies CO-P9 and CO-P11 (discussed in Section 3.15.3) require park facilities to remain highly accessible. This impact would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Operation

Operation of the proposed project would introduce new land uses in the area, which could impact the use of the existing Redwood Fields Park or necessitate the need for new or expanded parklands. Current County Zoning Regulations (Section 314-110.1 Parkland Dedication) require that residential subdivisions offer to dedicate land to a public or private non-profit agency for public park or recreation use or pay in-lieu fees to provide an appropriate contribution to public parks or recreation, pursuant to the Quimby Act (Government Code section 66477). This current Parkland Dedication program would require that residential subdivisions in the Eureka area make fair share contributions towards new park facilities or rehabilitating existing park facilities. These contributions are intended to limit the deterioration of existing facilities in these areas.

The proposed project would include 21.73 acres as forest lands to be preserved through the establishment of a permanent easement or conveyance in fee, and would be dedicated to the County, which would satisfy the Quimby Act requirements. Additionally, the proposed project would provide access points and would provide 20-foot-wide trail easements that would connect to the McKay Community Forest. These easements and trail connections and trail sections within the subdivision would be developed as part of the phased development for the proposed project; however, these locations would be subject to approval by the Public Works Director. A temporary trail would be provided from Fern Street, Arbutus Street, or Redwood Street to the McKay Community Forest as part of the first phase of the project. As each subsequent phase is developed, these temporary trails would later be abandoned, as necessary. While the exact trail locations are not known at this time, it is anticipated that Phase 3 could include two trail connections. One would provide access from Arbutus Street/Oakview Drive and could be from Lot 52 proposed for multi-family development. A second trail connection and parking lot could be provided between lots 57 and 58, to connect Canyon Lane to the McKay Community Forest. Trail connection to provide access from Oakview Drive on the southern portion could be developed as part of Phase 8 or 9. The proposed project's population of 778 (or less than 1 percent of the County's total population) would use trails, existing Redwood Fields Park, and other off-site recreational amenities that would be more than sufficient to provide recreational opportunities for the project's residents, visitors, and employees without triggering the requirement for new parks. Since the trail map is not finalized, MM REC-1 would be required to ensure that adequate trail connections are provided to the satisfaction of the County. With the implementation of mitigation measures, impacts would be reduced to a level of less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially Significant Impact.



Mitigation Measures

MM REC-1: Final Trail Map. Prior to approval of the final improvement plans for each phase, the Applicant shall prepare a final map showing the precise location and alignment of the trails on the project site and their connection points to the adjacent forest land. The final map for each phase shall be submitted for review and approval by the County of Humboldt Public Works Director. These trails will be recorded in permanent open space easements or in a manner that no future development on the trails shall occur and trail connections shall be maintained for the life of the project.

MM TRANS-1 would also be required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



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