



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY GROUP

of the Ventana Chapter

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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

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