

Report on the

## **Economic Feasibility**

of the Proposed

# **POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE**

1961

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

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# Report on the Economic Feasibility of the PROPOSED POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

## INTRODUCTION

This report concerns a survey of the economic consequences relating to the proposal to establish a Point Reyes National Seashore. The survey was conducted by the National Park Service in collaboration with University of California Professor John W. Dyckman of the Department of City and Regional Planning, and Professor Julius Margolis of the School of Business Administration. Marin County Assessor Bert Brommel and Executive Vice President Kenneth Davis of the Point Reyes National Seashore Foundation also made highly important contributions.

A tentative economic report, based on preliminary data, was completed in early 1960. The findings of that report were later supplemented by additional, more detailed information — especially concerning assessed valuation — which was brought out at a public hearing held in Kentfield, California, by a Public Lands Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

Since the hearing, there has been opportunity to check further with Marin County officials, and the former tentative report has been edited to bring it into concert with the additional information presented at the Senate hearing. This document, which reflects the changes that have been made in the earlier report, represents a meeting of minds between the Marin County Assessor and the National Park Service with respect to assessed valuations.

So far as the investigators are concerned this report concludes the work to be done, at least for the time being, on the economics of the Point Reyes proposal. At some future time it may be feasible to develop other economic aspects of the Point Reyes proposal, and thus make a further contribution to the field of recreation economics, but there are no specific ideas in this connection on the part of the National Park Service at this time.

## SUMMARY

The proposed Point Reyes National Seashore is situated on the Point Reyes Peninsula, a conspicuous promontory on the coast of Marin County, California. The highway entrance to the Peninsula is 30 to 35 miles northwest of San Francisco.

The area under consideration includes approximately 53,000 acres of land, plus bays, inland lakes, and tidal and submerged lands extending one-quarter mile to seaward from mean high tide. The varied character of the shoreline, with its wide sandy beaches, wave-swept caves and offshore rocks, and steep coastal bluffs combines with sand dunes and grasslands, chaparral and scenic fir and pine forest to make the area one of the most outstanding segments of unspoiled seashore yet remaining along the Pacific Coast.

The proximity of the proposed national seashore to one of the major metropolitan centers of the United States is a feature that adds greatly to the recreation importance of the area.

Practically all of the lands within the suggested boundary of the proposed area are in private ownership and

those in productive use are largely devoted to dairy operations and beef cattle ranching. Under the present proposal the Point Reyes National Seashore would be operated through two types of land management. Of the 53,000 acres which would be acquired, 33,000 acres would be managed solely for public use. Some 20,000 acres of land situated in the central part of the Peninsula would be leased for ranching purposes to preserve the present pastoral scene.

The suggested boundaries as of April 1960 include a total of 15 dairy ranches which support approximately 7,000 dairy stock, with about 3,175 head in active milk production, and 10 beef cattle ranches with approximately 3,500 head of beef cattle. If the national seashore were established and managed in accordance with the present proposal, about half the dairy lands and beef cattle lands would continue operation under lease agreements. Ranching operation within the portion of the national seashore to be reserved for public use would be largely, if not wholly, discontinued. Two existing trans-Pacific radio receiving stations, maintained by the Radio Corporation of America and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, respectively, would remain and would continue operation. Additional installations, consisting of public utilities in the form of electric power and telephone services, not only would remain in operation but would require expansion in connection with national seashore development.

Existing commercial oyster beds and an oyster cannery at Drakes Estero, plus three existing commercial fisheries, should continue under national seashore status because of their public values. The culture of oysters is an interesting and unique industry which presents exceptional educational opportunities for introducing the public, especially students, to the field of marine biology. Continuation of commercial fishing, with expansion of existing facilities to include sea food restaurants and markets and charter boat service for deep sea sport fishing would be compatible with the seashore concept.

Almost all of the Peninsula is privately owned and there is very limited access to the shoreline. Thus recreation now plays a relatively minor role within the boundaries of the proposed national seashore. Public areas are limited to two small developments along the shore.

On the basis of Marin County tax records, the total assessed valuation of lands and improvements within the 53,000 acres of the proposed national seashore is approximately \$2,695,000. This figure includes approximately \$1,726,000 in lands and improvements that are assessed locally (by the County) and \$968,550 in the State-assessed communications and power utilities already mentioned, which would remain if a national seashore were established. Of the locally-assessed lands and improvements, approximately \$1,291,000 represents the assessed valuation within the proposed PUBLIC USE AREA and approximately \$435,000 the value within the proposed RANCHING AREA.

Lands and improvements in Marin County are presently assessed at 23 percent of market value. On that basis, the value of the locally-assessed lands and improvements within the proposed area is estimated at about \$7,500,000, of which some \$5,610,000 represents the value within the proposed PUBLIC USE AREA and \$1,890,000 the value within the proposed RANCHING AREA. Since it is likely that land is somewhat under-assessed for the reason that assessments are presently based on a 1956 market level, the actual fair market value will be greater than the figures indicate.

Taxes on property for the entire 53,000-acre area in the 1959-1960 fiscal year totalled slightly less than \$160,000. Tax revenues from the proposed PUBLIC USE AREA amounted to \$102,000 and revenues from the proposed RANCHING AREA \$58,000.

It is anticipated that the visitors who would use the facilities at the Point Reyes National Seashore would be derived from two groups: residents within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, plus Sacramento and San Joaquin Counties, who would account for most of the day use attendance at the national seashore; and tourists, together with residents outside the nine-county ring, who would contribute substantially to the overnight, weekend and vacation attendance.

In consideration of the population growth which is expected within the nine-county Bay Area, and others who would visit the national seashore for day use types of recreation, it is estimated that the national seashore would receive at least 2.1 million days of visitor use annually by 1980. Assuming that sufficient campgrounds were provided within the national seashore and that ample overnight accommodations were developed by private interests outside the boundaries, it is estimated that overnight, weekend and vacation use could account for at least 250,000 additional visitors per year by 1980.

The value of the non-recreation land of the Point Reyes Peninsula up to 1960 has not been great. Relatively few land transactions have taken place during the recent past, and average prices per acre have been low.

According to the Marin County Tax Assessor, if the Point Reyes National Seashore is established and managed as presently proposed (assuming that all taxable property except utilities on the 33,000 acres designated for public use would be removed from the tax rolls, and the taxable value of 20,000 acres designated for ranching adjusted to a possessory interest tax basis), there would result a local and county tax loss of possibly \$60,300 annually. The economic survey indicates that the removal of lands from the tax rolls in the event of national seashore establishment would not necessarily result in increased tax burdens to other property owners. Also it indicates that any possible loss in annual tax revenues as estimated above unquestionably would be more than compensated for by the various taxes paid by existing and new facilities and services that would be essential to serve the visitors.

On the basis of research to date the question of whether subdivision developments, which might occur if a national seashore were not established, would increase or decrease the tax burdens of other residents would depend largely upon the types of developments. However, accord-

ing to Marin County fiscal officials, the addition of the average tract home to the tax base does not react favorably to the tax position of property owners in general. This is so because the added tax revenue realized from the new home is less than the costs of education and other governmental functions needed to service that home.

Marin County has fewer industrial properties in proportion to residential properties than other counties in the Bay Area—over 67 percent of the tax base is in improved residential property. This fact, in turn, has resulted in a property tax burden on households which is greater than for any other Bay Area county. A national seashore would serve in the same role as industrial property in that it would attract taxable commerce and facilities beyond what would otherwise be required to serve the visiting public. Such expansion would add to the property, sales, gasoline and other tax bases of the county. In addition, the proximity of a national seashore would attract new commercial enterprises to the region because they would find that the recreation advantages of Marin County would make it easier to hold skilled labor and professional forces, especially of the substantial types Marin County is trying to attract.

#### CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL SEASHORE DEVELOPMENT

A brief review of the criteria with which we are concerned in this case is necessary before proceeding with the economic appraisal itself. Since there is as yet but one established national seashore, an explanation of how this type of area differs from other units of the National Park System is in order.

A national seashore is distinguished from a national park primarily in its method of development and management, which may be somewhat less restrictive than in a national park. The national parks are spacious land areas which have suffered little or no alteration by man, and require exacting application of protective controls to conserve, unimpaired, their compelling manifestations of nature. A national seashore, although it may offer certain unique or outstanding natural history elements requiring absolute preservation just as in a national park, generally will be capable of sustaining as a major objective a varied public recreation program less restrictive than would be suitable in a national park. Both types of areas are administered under the laws, rules and regulations of the National Park Service.

The proposed Point Reyes National Seashore exemplifies critically significant ecological processes involving varieties of earth and life resources which combine to produce rare scenery and a diversity of recreation opportunities. All of the recreation activities reasonably allowable at a national seashore are frankly encouraged. Boating and other water and beach recreation, softball, and other sports and games may be highly consistent where they can be worked out without endangering other important considerations. Thus, public use opportunities could exert more recreation "pulling" force than is usually expected at a national park where the recreation use is generally of a more passive or contemplative nature.

Preservation of the unique attractions of the natural

scene is an obligation which should not be evaluated by economic techniques. Hence, such an evaluation is outside the scope of the report.

## THE POINT REYES AREA

### Location

The Point Reyes Peninsula is situated on the coast of Marin County, California. The Peninsula extends northward along 45 miles of seashore from a point some 15 miles north of the entrance to the Golden Gate Channel of San Francisco Bay. The highway entrance to the Peninsula is 30 to 35 miles from downtown San Francisco.

### Character of the Area

The proposed Point Reyes National Seashore is one of five coastal areas identified in the Pacific Coast Recreation Area Survey, published in 1959, as possessing scenic, scientific, and recreation values of possible national significance. That survey describes the area as follows:

"The shoreline varies in character, with wide sandy beaches, wave-swept caves, offshore rocks, steep coastal bluffs and one three-mile long sandspit. The upland consists of sand dunes and grassland graduating into chaparral and magnificent fir and pine forests. Also included are such features as Drakes Estero with its 28 miles of shoreline, 9 inland fresh-water lakes plus Abbotts Lagoon of several hundred acres, several fresh and salt water marshes, and an interesting variety of birds and mammals."

Two other commanding facts of the proposed national seashore which have to do with its location are particularly worthy of attention.

First, it is extremely rare for such a large unspoiled area of great natural interest to be within such easy reach of a major metropolitan area (The San Francisco-Oakland Metropolitan Area) as is the Point Reyes Peninsula. The values inherent in superlative natural areas identify and characterize them, of course, regardless of their geographic relation to user populations; and it so happens that most of them are far more distant from population centers than is Point Reyes.

The second locational attribute is that found in the rising attractiveness of water-related recreation. The most rapidly growing recreation activities are those of boating and other water-related uses. Where conservation objectives can include the creation of opportunities for recreation water use, an impressively large volume of benefits can result, as the reservoirs impounded by the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Corps of Engineers, and other agencies attest.

These two factors of the Point Reyes area, its nearness to major populations and the added recreation lure of swimming and boating water, would be important factors in the total benefits accruing from national seashore development.

### Access

The Point Reyes Peninsula is well located with respect to both the large northern California metropolitan popu-

lation, and the sizeable volume of national tourists who visit California each year.

At present, two highway routes provide major access to the Peninsula. U. S. Highway 101, the main arterial traffic route through San Francisco, is less than 15 miles to the east of the proposed national seashore. State Highway 1, which follows the coastline and connects with U.S. 101 about 13 miles south of Bolinas Bay and 4 miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge, is immediately east of the Peninsula.

Additional access is afforded by certain county spur roads which connect these two main highways at frequent intervals north of the above junction. These are slow-speed and scenically interesting roads.

East-west U. S. 40 inter-connects San Francisco and Oakland with Sacramento on U. S. 99, which roughly parallels U. S. 101 about 70 miles to the east. U. S. 50 connects the same two cities with Stockton; U. S. 40 joins trans-continental U. S. 30 at Salt Lake City; and other major trans-continental routes connect with U. S. 99 at various points. The improvement of U. S. Highways 30 and 99 as part of the Federal Interstate and Defense Highway System will further the presently good access to Point Reyes by national routes.

In addition, the completion of routes now approved for the California Freeway and Expressway System, all scheduled within the next 20 years, will bring virtually all sections of the Peninsula in direct contact with the major freeway systems. Legislative Route No. 69, over the existing Sir Francis Drake Highway which connects Point Reyes Station with the Marin County seat at San Rafael and U.S. 101, will be brought up to freeway standards over its 25-mile length. Legislative Route No. 252, which will join the Sir Francis Drake Highway near Nicasio five miles southeast of Point Reyes Station, will feed in from Novato on U. S. 101 and will provide direct access to Point Reyes from points within the Sacramento Valley. Legislative Route No. 51 will extend from the community of Valley Ford, about seven air miles northeast of Tomales Point, to the City of Santa Rosa on U. S. 101, serving the Sonoma Valley. Legislative Route No. 56 calls for the improvement of California State Highway 1, the Coast Highway, to freeway standards over a 48-mile stretch reaching from its junction with U. S. 101 near the Golden Gate Bridge to its intersection with Legislative Route No. 51 at Valley Ford, thus greatly reducing time-distances to Point Reyes from both north and south.

These Federal and State programs will greatly improve and speed access to Point Reyes; connections between it and major U. S. travel routes, such as U. S. 99 and local traffic interchanges at San Francisco, will provide further ready access. Interior access, however, now is extremely limited by large ranch holdings which are not traversed by public roads. Suggested development for the proposed national seashore calls for construction of approximately 25 miles of new roads, the improvement of an additional 40 miles of existing roads, interior road bridges, an entrance road tunnel and about 25 miles of horse and hiking trails.

With these improvements, a wide range of attractions would be opened to the visitors. In addition to the natural

attractions the area possesses, which could be opened to public use merely by providing access such as the suggested hiking and riding trails and scenic overlooks, many others would have supporting facilities and developments for full public use and enjoyment.

#### The National Seashore Proposal

Preliminary plans provide for the acquisition of approximately 53,000 acres of land for the proposed Point Reyes National Seashore. The suggested boundaries also include tidal and submerged lands extending one-quarter mile to seaward from mean high tide. The existing communities of Bolinas and Inverness, plus lands required for their expansion, and the existing 1,019-acre Tomales Bay State Park, administered by the California State Division of Beaches and Parks, are excluded from the boundaries. Although they are situated within the exterior boundaries as presently proposed, 120 acres of land comprising the U. S. Coast Guard Point Reyes Lighthouse Reservation and the Coast Guard's Lifeboat Station of about 12 acres, also are excluded from the proposal.

Two types of land management are proposed within the exterior boundaries of the proposed national seashore. Thirty-three thousand acres of land, including the promontories of Point Reyes and Tomales Point and the forested eastern and southern portions of the Peninsula, plus inter-connecting strips along the coastline, would be managed solely for public use. The 20,000 acres of land situated in the central part of the Peninsula also would be acquired in fee simple by the Federal Government, but would be leased back to the ranchers to preserve the present pastoral scene which is such an important quality in the Point Reyes Peninsula landscape.

#### Present Land Uses

Though the Point Reyes Peninsula is within the San Francisco-Oakland Standard Metropolitan Area, it has been off the main path of urban development to date. With the lag in development until recently, land prices on the Peninsula have remained relatively low and use of the land has remained at a relatively low intensity. Nearly 70 percent of the Peninsula is taken up by brushlands and grasslands which are used for the grazing of livestock. Forest lands total about 12,000 of the 53,000 acres within the exterior boundaries of the proposed national seashore. The forest consists mainly of Douglas fir, Bishop pine and several species of broadleaf trees. Spectacular dunes and sea cliffs account for about 3,000 acres.

Considerable land on the Point Reyes Peninsula was under cultivation during World War II. Since that time, however, this form of land use has been almost entirely discontinued, due largely to the problem of obtaining and holding the labor required in connection with cultivated crops. At the present time, only a very minor fraction of the total acreage on the Peninsula is devoted to this use. It consists of grain crops and grain-type hay for livestock, rather than the more diversified crops that are raised elsewhere in Marin County. The major types of existing land uses are indicated in the following table:

TABLE 1  
Acreage in  
Existing Major Land Uses

	Within Exterior Boundaries of Proposed National Seashore	In Public Use Area	In Ranching Area
Forest	12,000	11,000	1,000
Brushland and Grazing	36,500	18,160	18,340
Dunes and Cliffs	3,060	3,060	
Cultivated Lands:			
Grain-type hay	340	80	260
Grain crops	1,100	700	400
Total Acreage	53,000	33,000	20,000

As the large acreage of brush and grazing lands in the foregoing table would indicate, dairying and beef cattle ranching are the dominant land uses at the present time on the Point Reyes Peninsula.

A National Park Service field survey of land ownerships, conducted in March and April of 1960 on a personal interview basis, showed 15 dairy ranches totalling about 19,000 acres and 10 beef cattle ranches with a total of 23,000 acres to be located within the presently designated boundaries of the proposed national seashore. The survey also showed that on the Point Reyes Peninsula (as in many parts of California) the practice of renting dairy farms is prevalent. It was found, for example, that 18 of the 25 ranches within the proposed national seashore boundaries are operated on a rental basis. Eleven of the 18 ranches so operated have completely absentee owners, and the other 7 are operated on a tenancy basis through family or estate arrangements.

Although the major part of the acreage comprising the dairy and beef cattle ranches is in brushlands and grazing lands, it also includes a considerable amount of forested land as well as unvegetated dunes and cliffs. Lands usable for agriculture are limited to the brushlands and grazing lands, improved pastures and hay acreage. Thus, of the 19,000 acres that are estimated to comprise the dairy ranches, some 20,000 actually are used for dairying operations. Of the 23,000 acres of beef cattle ranches, about 20,000 acres consist of lands that are actually used for that purpose.

The above-mentioned field survey also revealed that the 15 existing dairy ranches support approximately 7,000 dairy stock, with about 3,175 head in active milk production, and that the 10 beef cattle ranches support approximately 3,500 head of beef cattle. The dairy stock within the proposed boundaries constitutes about 16 percent of the 43,000 total dairy stock in Marin County, based on the Annual Livestock and Agricultural Report of the County for 1959. The beef cattle total represents slightly less than 90 percent of all stock of that type in the County for 1959.

If the proposed Point Reyes National Seashore were established and managed in accordance with the suggested acquisition program about half the dairy lands and some 37 percent of the beef cattle lands would be situated within the proposed ranching area and would continue operation

under lease agreements. The rest of the lands now used for dairying and beef production would be included within the proposed public use area, and ranching operations there would be largely if not wholly discontinued.

Although exact data on the annual catch are not available, commercial fishing, together with oyster farming and processing, is of undoubted economic importance to the Point Reyes area and Marin County. The economic advantages of this location are clear and undisputed.

Commercial oyster beds are located in Drakes Estero. The beds are leased from the State, and an oyster cannery is situated on the upper reaches of an arm of the Estero.

Three commercial fisheries, operating on a year-round basis, are located on the west shore of Drakes Bay. Each commercial fishing company owns one wharf and, in addition, leases a small amount of land from the land owner. Information obtained during the 1960 field survey indicated that the annual catch consists of crab, salmon, and bottom fish. Part of the catch is trans-shipped to San Francisco via boat, and the remainder is taken out in trucks to the various processing plants. In addition to fishing with their own boats, the companies purchase fish from independent operators. In the opinion of company representatives, the annual catch of salmon alone amounts to one million pounds.

Both the oyster production and the commercial fishery operations, in the thinking of the National Park Service planners, should continue under national seashore status because of their public values.

The promontory of Point Reyes has long served as a lookout and beacon to ships at sea. Here the United States Coast Guard maintains one of the most important Pacific Coast lighthouses. Lands comprising the Point Reyes Light consist of 120 acres. In addition, the Coast Guard maintains a lifeboat rescue station on a small property of about 12 acres. The station is situated at the west end of Drakes Bay, about three miles east of the Point Reyes Light.

Two religious organizations also engage in agricultural pursuits in the proposed area. The Church of the Golden Rule conducts dairying operations on 3,100 acres of land situated on the southern part of the Peninsula and, according to field information, has about 700 acres under cultivation, plus a plant nursery. However, this ranching operation (with the exception of the nursery) is conducted solely for the benefit of the religious organization rather than for general commercial purposes. It is one of the 15 dairy ranches mentioned above.

The Vedanta Society has a religious retreat, also situated on the southern part of the Peninsula within the proposed seashore boundaries. The lands are primarily forested, although a few livestock are kept. There is some development including living quarters, resthouse and tool-house for monastic and lay workers.

Two trans-Pacific radio receiving stations are maintained on the Peninsula by the Radio Corporation of America and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company respectively. The former owns 1,474 acres of land, while the latter owns 521 acres. In addition to serving radio communications, these lands also are leased for dairying or cattle ranching operations.

Recreation now plays a relatively minor role in the land use pattern within the designated boundaries of the proposed national seashore, and is limited to two small public areas. Both are very popular. One of these, known as McClure's Beach, comprises about one-half mile of excellent beach frontage located near Tomales Point. The private land owner has made the area accessible to the public through cooperation with Marin County.

Drakes Beach County Park, developed and managed by Marin County, is the only other recreation area within the proposed boundary that is open to the general public. It includes 52 acres of lands situated on the shore of Drakes Bay a short distance west of the entrance to Drakes Estero.

A third area, known as the Bolema Club, comprises 681 acres of land north of the promontory known as Double Point, near the southern end of the Peninsula. It is restricted to members of the Bolema Club, a sportsmen's organization.

Although the forests do not constitute timber of good commercial quality in the view of experts who have studied the national seashore proposal, timber rights have been sold in several instances, and logging operations have been conducted over the past year and a half. Some 800 acres were logged up to mid April 1960.

#### Assessed Valuation and Tax Revenues

The Marin County tax base is made up largely of private homes, neighborhood shopping and servicing facilities for the homeowners, dairying, and a few industrial enterprises.

An analysis of tax records for the year 1959-60 shows the total assessed valuation of all land, improvements, secured and unsecured personal property within the proposed national seashore to be approximately \$3,244,000. This figure includes \$2,695,000 for lands, improvements and secured personal property and \$549,000 for unsecured personal property. It represents not quite 1.5 percent of the total county tax base.

Assessed valuation of State-assessed public utilities (the Trans-Pacific receiving facilities of the Radio Corporation of America, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and electric power and telephone facilities) amounts to approximately \$968,550. The portion of the tax base formed by these utilities amounts to nearly 30 percent of the total tax base within the proposed national seashore.

Secured and unsecured personal property and State-assessed public utilities must be taken into consideration in analyzing the effects on the local tax base of national seashore establishment. Even though included within the national seashore area, neither the personal property nor the public utilities would be acquired by the Federal Government. The personal property situated within the proposed public use area would, however, be removed from the tax rolls together with the land and improvements. The taxable property within the proposed ranching area would be adjusted to a possessory interest basis for tax purposes, while the public utilities would continue in operation.

The total assessed valuation (tax base) of the lands and improvements within the proposed public use area is approximately \$1,291,000 and approximately \$435,000 for the proposed ranching area. This totals about \$1,726,000.

These assessed valuations represent 23 percent of the fair market value appraisals made in relation to 1956 market levels. The 1956 value of locally assessed private lands and improvements within the area now proposed as a national seashore is estimated at approximately \$7,500,000. Of this total approximately \$5,610,000 represents the value of lands and improvements within the proposed public use area and \$1,890,000 the value of lands and improvements within the proposed ranching area.

According to the Marin County Tax Assessor, adjustment of the market value of the lands and improvements within the boundaries of the proposed national seashore to reflect current conditions results in a maximum figure somewhat in excess of \$10,300,000. It is emphasized that this amount would not necessarily represent the final cost to the Federal Government in the event the area were acquired for national seashore purposes. The national seashore proposal itself has generated considerable interest in the area and there has been a substantial increase in real estate sales and subdividing during the past two years. It is logical to believe, therefore, that the longer acquisition is delayed, the greater the land costs will be.

Taxes for the entire 53,000-acre area in the 1959-60 tax year totalled slightly less than \$160,000. Tax revenues from the proposed public use area amounted to some \$102,000, while revenues from the proposed ranching area totalled about \$58,000.

#### POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

It has been found that urban centers in this country generate upwards of 90 percent of the day use of accessible outdoor recreation areas. Records at national and state parks and recreation areas suggest that where they are located within close proximity to a major population center, that center may be expected to dominate the visitor use at the area.

The population growth of the 9-county San Francisco Bay Area and the 13-county San Francisco Bay Region, therefore, may be expected to be primary factors in the demand for recreation at the proposed Point Reyes National Seashore. The counties within the Bay Area and Bay Region are listed below. Those preceded by an asterisk are within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

*Alameda	Sacramento	*Santa Clara
*Contra Costa	*San Francisco	Santa Cruz
*Marin	San Joaquin	*Solano
*Napa	*San Mateo	*Sonoma
	Yolo	

In terms of future travel time and ease of access, the San Francisco-Oakland Standard Metropolitan Area, the Sacramento Urban Area, and the Stockton Urbanized Area of San Joaquin County could be expected to provide most

of the visitor use of the National Seashore from within the entire 13-county San Francisco Bay Region. The population of the San Francisco-Oakland Standard Metropolitan Area was estimated in 1959 at more than two and three-quarters million persons,<sup>1</sup> or nearly two-thirds of the resident population in the entire 13-county San Francisco Bay Region.

In addition to the growth trends that have been recorded for the 9-county Bay Area and the 13-county Bay Region, several independent population studies employing various prediction methods have been made recently by such agencies as the U. S. Department of Commerce,<sup>2</sup> the California Department of Finance, the San Francisco Bay Area Council, and the Bay Area Rapid Transit District.

Taking into account the recorded growth trends and the population predictions made in the studies mentioned above, the population of the 9-county Bay Area (estimated at 3.6 million as of July 1, 1959,) could well be expected to grow to a level of about 6 million by 1980 and to 8.3 million by the year 2000. Thus, during the next 40 years some 4,700,000 persons probably will be added to the Bay Area. More than 2,000,000 persons, by conservative estimation, will be added to the Bay area population in the twenty years from July 1, 1959.

#### TRAVEL TRENDS

A study of travel trends in California was conducted in 1957 and 1958 by the Department of Public Works as a partial basis for a State-wide plan of freeways and expressways. The findings of this study are embodied in the report "The California Freeway and Expressway System" which was published in September 1958. Many of these findings have a direct bearing upon the proposed Point Reyes National Seashore and its importance to the people of California, particularly those in the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as to the Nation.

The report reveals that California's travel is dominated by the metropolitan areas of Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Region.<sup>3</sup> The residents of these areas generate two-thirds of California's vehicle miles. Bay Area residents were found to travel widely through the northern and central regions of California. The report states that they "even contribute nearly seven percent of all travel in the Santa Barbara region," a distance of some 300 miles to the south. Northern California receives about 37 percent of the travel generated by Bay Area residents, and the Monterey section of south central California about 24 percent. In contrast, the Point Reyes Peninsula is located a radial distance of but 40 miles from

1/ Estimate by Financial and Population Research Section, California Department of Finance.

2/ Future Development of the San Francisco Bay Area, 1960-2020, December 1959.

3/ The San Francisco Bay Region, as defined by the California report, includes nine counties.

the central core of the San Francisco-Oakland Standard Metropolitan Area. A 50-mile radius from Point Reyes encompasses all but the outlying portions of the Metropolitan Area.

A finding of particular interest, in that it reveals much about the importance of recreation in the day-to-day lives of Californians, is that 29 percent of all travel in the State is for social and recreation purposes.

The increasing mobility of California residents is illustrated by yet another finding of the freeway study. The 7,492,000 motor vehicles registered in the State in 1957 meant about one auto or truck for every two residents during that year. The report found that the number of vehicles is increasing slightly faster than the population, and estimates that by 1980 the persons-per-vehicle ratio will decline to about 1.85. About 20 percent of all vehicles by that date are expected to be of the registered commercial type.

Further findings concerning travel characteristics are contained in a travel survey for Yosemite National Park, published in December, 1953.<sup>4</sup> The survey shows that three districts of population concentration -- the southwestern, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Central Valley -- contributed some 90 percent of the park's California visitors during the calendar year.

Travel by out-of-state tourists is another important facet of the California travel pattern and is of major economic importance to the State. According to the travel research agency, Californians, Inc., manufacturing, agriculture, and the tourist industry in that order are the three most important industries in the State as sources of basic income.

Travel in California by out-of-state tourists since 1950 is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Tourist Travel Trends in California\*  
(In thousands)

	Tourists	% Incr. or Decr. over 1950	Expend- itures	% Incr. or Decr. over 1950
1950	2,968	0	\$560,168	0
1951	3,330	12.2	625,489	11.7
1952	4,191	41.2	653,128	16.6
1953	4,334	46.0	771,833	37.8
1954	4,270	43.9	692,353	23.6
1955	4,414	48.7	734,719	31.2
1956	4,732	59.4	775,058	38.4
1957	4,763	60.5	787,289	40.5
1958	4,537	52.9	700,172	25.0
1959	4,877	64.3	839,983	50.0

\*Californians, Inc.

Total visits to California by out-of-state tourists have shown a strong upward trend since 1950, though they are somewhat sensitive to changes in the economic climate, as shown by the decline in visits and in tourist spending during the recession year of 1958.

Out-of-state tourist travel to the San Francisco Bay Area increased 10.5 percent in 1959 over 1958. The total

number of such visits to the Bay Area in the latter year was 1,622,923, according to statistics by Californians, Inc.

Reducing the two-thirds growth in out-of-state tourists to California, which was achieved in the fifties, to allow for the effect of a somewhat slower rate of growth in the future, it is still possible to arrive at an estimate of over 2,000,000 out-of-state tourists who will visit the Bay Area annually by 1980, and over 2,500,000 out-of-state tourists to the 13-county Bay Region. With the increases in leisure time, mobility and disposable income per capita expected in the decades ahead, the tourist total could be much greater.

PROPOSED NATIONAL SEASHORE DEVELOPMENT

If the Point Reyes National Seashore were established, the following types of facilities would be provided on the land in the Public Use portion of the area:

Interior access would be provided by a road system, utilizing existing roads wherever feasible, but about 25 miles of new roads also would be built as outlined in a previous section of this report. These would be supplemented by hiking and riding trails, also mentioned in the previous section on access.

Campgrounds, with tables, grills, sanitation facilities, utilities and parking areas, would be established in suitable locations.

Bathhouses, shelters, comfort stations, water, food concessions, picnic facilities and parking areas would be available at Tomales Beach and Drakes Beach to create more favorable conditions for swimming and beach use.

Picnic areas, with tables, grills, sanitation and potable water and parking, would be provided at such areas as McClure Beach, Abbotts Lagoon, Limantour Spit, Bear Valley and Double Point.

Docks would be constructed to make possible the enjoyment of pleasure boating.

The visitor would have the opportunity of learning firsthand the full story and the meaning of the earth and life resources of the Point Reyes Peninsula through a system of interpretive devices and structures, such as self-guiding trails and interpretive signs and markers. Through this medium, his enjoyment of the area and his total seashore experience would be enhanced.

Riding stables would be developed in the area and would be operated on a concession basis.

Five overlook developments would be programmed to take advantage of the many landscapes and seascapes which are outstanding features of the Point Reyes Peninsula.

Under the present proposal, the existing commercial fisheries at Drakes Bay and the existing oyster cannery at Drakes Estero would continue under private operation as at present, but with some added facilities such as entrance roads and parking areas.

A headquarters development would be programmed, to include employee housing, utility buildings, an administration and public contact building, and necessary roads, power service, water and sewage disposal.

4/ Conducted by National Park Service in cooperation with California Division of Highways and U. S. Bureau of Public Roads.

## ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE

### Extent of the Market and Area Capacity

The visitors who would be expected to use the facilities at the Point Reyes National Seashore can be divided into two groups for purposes of estimation: those residing in nearby counties and those residing in other places.

The volume of actual visits in each case would be generated from three main sources: the growth of population, the increase of leisure time and disposable income, and a certain number of visits which would result from the substitution of the Point Reyes experience for recreation at other points.

The geographical extent of the market for visits is determined by the character of use that is anticipated. The day-use portion of the market will be derived predominantly from the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, plus Sacramento and San Joaquin Counties. The overnight, weekend and vacation visitors would be drawn largely from vacation tourists traveling from all sections of the United States.

Over the past years, total attendance at State parks has been increasing more rapidly than population growth.<sup>5</sup> But, if the rate of park attendance were stabilized at the 1954 national average of 1.05 guest days per capita of state population the population growth alone would mean 3.8 million visits in 1960 and 6.3 million in 1980 for the nine-county Bay Area. This is a most conservative assumption, especially in view of the fact that in 1958 the national average of guest days per capita rose to 1.38, and to 1.43 per capita in California the same year. If the Point Reyes National Seashore were to attract one-third as many visitors as State parks in the Bay Area, based only on population in the nine-county Bay Area (again a conservative figure) it would receive 2.1 million visitors in 1980.

The tourist component of the estimated total annual attendance would be made up of two parts: (1) the growth of California tourist population, which would contribute many trips to the National Seashore; and (2) the additional touristy which would be induced by the establishment of the National Seashore.

It is difficult to estimate the volume of touristy which would be generated by the addition of a national seashore in this area. California already contains several units of the National Park System — such as Yosemite National Park — which attract many national visitors. A Point Reyes National Seashore would provide an attractive extension, or side trip, for many of the visitors to Yosemite, as it would for many visitors to San Francisco. The highway improvements mentioned above would permit visitors to reach Point Reyes from Yosemite National Park in a half day's normal driving time. It is not possible to estimate the marginal increment to the total visits to Yosemite which would result from adding a stay at the Point Reyes National Seashore to the journey of the Yosemite visitor, but it is safe to say that it would be a positive factor.

The actual volume of the overnight market at the National seashore would depend heavily on the facilities

provided. If sufficient campgrounds were provided within the national seashore, and sufficient overnight cabins, lodges, and motels were made available by private industry outside the boundaries, overnight stays could easily account for 250,000 visitors per year by 1980 in addition to the 2.1 million estimated above.

Tourist visits depend in large measure upon the nature and cost of accommodations which are available. The tourist potential if the Point Reyes National Seashore were established would be likely to exceed the available accommodations for some time after its development.

In summary, it is seen that while the present population would support a substantial use the largest single factor in the increased demand for recreation at the proposed Point Reyes National Seashore would inevitably be the population growth of the northern California region as a whole.

A 1957 study by staff members of the School of Forestry of the University of California found that growth of California population was a good indicator of growth in numbers of visits to national parks located in the State even where there had been no significant increase in facilities at those parks.<sup>6</sup>

The more conservative population growth forecasts for the San Francisco Bay Area indicate a growth in number sufficient to generate at least as much attendance at a Point Reyes National Seashore as there was at Yosemite, Kings Canyon and Sequoia, and Lassen Volcanic National Parks combined in 1955 (2,362,707 visitor days).

## EFFECTS OF NATIONAL SEASHORE ON THE ECONOMY

### Of the Point Reyes Peninsula

Using market evidence, it is relatively easy to establish that the value of the non-recreation use in the past of the Point Reyes Peninsula has not been great. Relatively few land transactions have taken place in the area during recent years, and the prices per acre have been low on the average.

Under present proposals for the Point Reyes National Seashore, Marin County would not lose the total value of the output of the dairy and beef cattle herds. From the figures cited in the previous section, "Present Land Uses," it would seem that the area in question is very important to Marin County for beef cattle. But the total size of beef herds, and the yield from that activity, are both low, and in fact Marin County is not an important beef producer.

Similarly, dairy use of the particular acres of the proposed seashore now used for that purpose is not a unique or critical factor in the total dairy production of Marin County. For one thing, the combined output is not large compared to the total output of the County, and

5/ Attendance figures from National Park Service, State Park Statistics.

6/ J. Zivnuska and A. Shideler, "A Projection of the Recreational Use of Public Forest Areas in California to 1965," Forest Science, September, 1957.

probably could be compensated for by adjustments in output in other nearby milk-producing areas, or by relocation of the Point Reyes herds and contracts to other areas in West Marin. But even more significant, there is no consistent relationship between the available acreage within a given ranch and the number of stock or milk-producing cows on the premises. Vegetative cover on the brushlands and grasslands does not furnish the forage needed to support dairy ranching operations in most cases. Much of the hay and grain concentrate required is imported, and the lands are used primarily as holding areas. Much of the available pasturage is used for dry and young stock, while some pasturage is used for the milk-producing herd in the spring. As a result, the discontinuance of approximately half the acreage of the dairy lands would not necessarily mean a proportionate reduction in the gross dairy product of the Peninsula.

In view of the present day surpluses of milk in California any diminution of the relatively small supply coming from Point Reyes Peninsula would not necessarily result in any overall, critical disadvantages to the dairy industry or to the consumer. This is borne out by the dairy information bulletins issued monthly by the California Crop and Livestock Reporting Service.

In Marin County, there are more than one hundred tax code districts. It might perhaps be argued that if the area becomes a public reservation and is removed from the tax rolls the property owners who are in the same tax district as the National Seashore would suffer, since they would then have to pay a larger share of the tax burden. The fear of this undue burden on the neighboring property owners is often magnified by the belief that if left in private hands and permitted to develop in urban uses, the lands would produce substantial tax revenues for the local governments and would relieve some of the tax burden from neighbors. In analyzing the probable effects, it is necessary to consider both the current and the prospective tax situations.

A considerable portion of the monies that are now collected in taxes from properties on the Point Reyes Peninsula need not be lost from the tax rolls under the present national seashore proposal. The two trans-Pacific radio receiving stations, for example, would continue to be privately operated as long as these facilities are needed. In addition, other public utilities, such as electric power and telephone service, would be needed for national seashore operation and by the private lessees within the ranching area. Basically, therefore, all the public utilities not only would remain in operation if a national seashore were established, but development of the seashore for public use would require additional installations of public utilities and thus increase that portion of the present tax base.

Further, the proposal to lease the lands within the proposed ranching area back to private individuals if a national seashore is established would not mean the loss of taxes now paid to the County by the ranch operators. Each lessee, by virtue of the temporary rights he would receive under the lease, would be subject to possessory interest taxation, and the taxable value of the ranches would be adjusted to a possessory basis (which would however, be

less than the tax on an unimpaired interest). Within the legal framework, this would also apply to any concessions developed within the national seashore.

The Marin County Assessor has estimated that a maximum of about \$60,300 (of the \$160,000 total 1959-60 tax revenue) would be lost to county-wide and local governments if the national seashore were managed as presently proposed, and if the Federal Government made no compensatory arrangements for in lieu tax payments, and if there were no taxable public use developments by private interests. This loss would result in a reduction in the current county tax base of .58 of 1%. The largest loss in tax revenue would be sustained by the four local school districts serving the Point Reyes area.<sup>7</sup>

It should be pointed out, however, that losses to the school districts could be largely mitigated, or the present situation perhaps even improved, through reorganization of the districts, which is currently under study. Such reorganization would be contingent on the will of the people to reorganize the districts, and no recommendations therefore can be made in this connection.

The full loss in tax revenue would not be shifted to other groups in the district. Associated with the transfer of property would be a transfer of services. The decline in resident population within the national seashore would reduce the volume of local services such as police and fire protection and road maintenance within the national seashore, because they would be largely assumed by the Federal Government.

Associated with the national seashore would be an increase of commercial activities nearby to serve the visitors, and income producing property, income and sales taxes. Motels, gas stations, restaurants, and stores would develop. The area itself would have a substantial payroll from resident staff, and would provide from time to time construction and maintenance projects of financial value to the local economy. These would provide private property and sales taxes in amounts far greater than the increase in local public expenditures necessary to protect or service them. While it would be difficult to estimate reliably the local tax payments of the new establishments which would be built near and on account of the National Seashore, those tax payments certainly would far exceed the amount of \$60,300 which the County Tax Assessor estimates would be lost in the event of national seashore establishment. For example, \$150,000 accrues to Mariposa County annually from concessions in Yosemite National Park, and it is estimated that additional tax income from businesses in the vicinity, which are supported by visitors to the Park, totals \$278,000 annually. As further evidence that local tax payments would more than compensate for tax losses, a study by the Marin County Planning Department shows that one 65-unit motel with restaurant-bar and swimming pool on five acres of land in Marin County pays an annual tax revenue to the County of nearly \$8,000.

7/ West Marin Union School; Tomales Union High School; Point Reyes School; and Bolinas School.

Therefore, eight such motels (which would incidentally, accommodate a total of only 520 visitors per night) would more than compensate for the maximum \$60,300 which could be lost in the event that Point Reyes National Seashore were established.

Assuming that the Point Reyes Peninsula would be devoted primarily to subdivision developments if a national seashore were not established, it is by no means clear whether such development would lighten or aggravate the tax burdens of the present neighboring populace. A development of low density, high income homes with few children would mean property tax payments which would exceed the needs of the residents for public services. This type of development it is believed would also result in lower sales taxes and higher subventions to the units of government within the County. A more intensive urban settlement might result in a higher volume of property added to the tax rolls but, at the same time, a more than proportionate increase in demands for urban services. In this case, the neighboring property owners could well find their tax burdens increased materially.

The fact that residential uses may have associated public expenditures which are greater than their tax payments has been borne out by several studies, both in California and elsewhere in the Nation. This also has been found to be the case in many instances in Marin County, according to a statement made in October 1959 by the Marin County Tax Assessor to the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Development of Marin County, which was included in a report of the Committee and presented to the Marin County Board of Supervisors in March 1960. The Tax Assessor stated that, although there are residential areas in Marin County which amply carry their load, most of the normal type of subdivisions in the County tend to create a burden on property owners in general. Those residential developments which are self-supporting in taxes in the County consist of residences from \$25,000 to \$50,000 in value, situated on half-acre to one-acre sites.

There is no way in which the National Park Service at this time can speak with confidence about the patterns of possible urban settlement on the Peninsula if a National Seashore is not established. More investigation than time has permitted to date would be required in answering that question. Suffice it to say that a burdening of the local people with greater taxes than they have now would be as likely as a lightening of them.

Setting aside the question of taxes borne by local people and turning to other points, one could reasonably assert that the local people, who have found almost perfect tranquility in living in this vicinity, would benefit in some ways if the Peninsula were accorded national seashore status. Their proximity to the national seashore would permit them to use it far more intensively than could any other part of the metropolitan area or Nation. This is borne out by the pattern of usages at existing state and national parks in California. The immediate neighbors of the National Seashore would benefit greatly by the increased demand for commercial facilities to accommodate the visitors. These facilities in large part

would not be desired within the National Seashore. For the rest of Marin County, the existence of the National Seashore would be a marginal inducement for the location of new or additional limited commercial businesses. There are many firms which rank recreation opportunities highly in locating their plants. Often, rather than expanding engineering and research facilities or by offering higher wages, such firms prefer to find locations with greater living and working advantages which attract and hold more highly qualified professional personnel. The presence of a national seashore would certainly enhance the desirability of Marin County for such firms.

The main concern of Marin residents at present is the possible loss of tax revenues. There is a strong feeling among the residents that compensation should be made by the Federal Government to offset any loss in such revenues, if a Point Reyes National Seashore is established.

#### Of the Surrounding Area

Once the pattern of settlement of a given region has developed, the acquisition of park spaces to match rising population and recreation demands poses a difficult problem. Park agencies — city, regional and national — because of various controlling factors tend to acquire land where it is available on reasonable terms, but this often results in the parks being located well away from the population groups which need them most. In some cases the outcome is park usage far below that which would yield the economic benefits contemplated at the time of expenditure. When a major natural recreation resource like the contemplated Point Reyes National Seashore is also within easy access of a large population center and major tourist center, the potential economic returns are exceptionally high.

Many of the tourists who visit California annually would be inspired primarily by the anticipation of visiting such a place as Point Reyes to plan a tour of many of California's scenic and recreation attractions. Collaterally, it would put visitors in a position to enjoy the business and vacation advantages of the nearby metropolitan center. Motels, lodges and other facilities which would grow up in the vicinity of the seashore development also would be in a favorable position, as a result of their easy access to both downtown San Francisco and Point Reyes, to attract some of those visitors whose primary trip motive to San Francisco would be other than recreation.

Though the San Francisco Bay Area is rather well provided with open space at present, its tremendous growth prospect in the near future threatens to greatly reduce this favorable balance. Certain recreation resources, such as usable ocean beaches, are in short supply even now. The great potential use of water recreation localities in metropolitan areas is suggested by the experience of the largest metropolitan centers in the East. A recent memorandum of the National Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission observes that "The beaches of New York City, for example, handle a visitor load equivalent to that of the National Parks; and the Palisades Interstate Park on Labor Day weekend handled 157,000 visitors, which almost equals the total

season visits (1956) to Mesa Verde National Park."

Thus a very real benefit of national seashore establishment, through the coincidence of geographic location, would be that of preserving the amenities of open space within the inner ring of the metropolitan area in the face of strong development pressures.

To recapitulate, the specific benefits of a national seashore at the Point Reyes Peninsula are traceable through several sources, outlined as follows:

One, the major criterion for reservation and development of this type of national area—preservation of a

unique natural attraction through controlled use—as established by the basic Act (August 25, 1916) creating the National Park Service.

Two, the provision of maximum personal recreation benefits as measured by the estimated number of users and the value to the user.

Three, the tangible benefits to the whole metropolitan area of which the natural seashore would be a part.

Four, important economic benefits found in commercial opportunities which would occur as a consequence of seashore establishment.