Environmental Consequences

Specific impacts associated with each alternative are address below:

Alternative A: No Action Option (Continue to operate current facilities)

Impacts on Natural Resources

Under the no action alternative, impacts on natural resources would be limited to those associated with natural processes and human activities already occurring on site.

Vegetation. Under this alternative, impacts associated with vegetation would be limited to those associated with human activities already occurring at the site.

Water Resources. Some potential negative impacts could occur due to sewage contamination if the existing system is not repaired.

Wildlife. Some potential negative impacts could occur if the Hostel does not repair the septic system. Sewage could potentially impact water systems and indirectly affect wildlife.

Threatened and Endangered Species. Since no federally listed species or special status species have been detected on the project site, there will be no effect on threatened or endangered species. This alternative would also not result in impacts to listed species or special status species in the vicinity.

Soils. No new ground disturbance would occur. Therefore, no new positive or negative impacts are anticipated.

Topography. No change to topography would occur under this alternative. Therefore, no new impacts, either positive or negative, would occur as a result of this alternative.

Conclusion. Under this alternative, there would be no new ground disturbance, topography change, and no construction or improvements in the project area. Therefore, no new impacts are anticipated. However, some potential negative impacts could occur to water quality and wildlife from improper sewage treatment.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

There would be no direct impact on archeological or historic structures as a result of this alternative. However, impacts to the historic structures may continue to occur if rehabilitation work is not carried out on the existing structures.

Conclusion. Under this alternative, the NPS would continue to monitor the historic structures to eliminate any impacts. Therefore, no new impacts are anticipated.

Impacts on Visual Quality

Negative impacts would continue. Current structures were not designed to visually blend with the landscape and are in serious need of repair. The site also has debris stored around the facilities that would continue to visually impair views toward the estuary.

Conclusion. No new impacts would occur. However, negative impacts from the buildings that need repair would continue to impair scenic views in the area.

Impacts on Human Health and Safety

Under this alternative, the Hostel would fail to comply with local, state, and federal regulations. This alternative would have an adverse impact on health and human safety. In addition, failure to comply with building codes for life and safety would pose a potential threat to anyone in or near the buildings.

Conclusion. Significant negative impacts to human health and safety would continue to occur due to non-compliance with health and safety codes.

Impacts on Noise

Noise levels would continue to be at the same levels; no positive or negative impacts are anticipated. Limited noise is currently generated by worker activity, occasional use of heavy equipment, and visitor use.

Conclusion. Since there will be no construction activities, there would be no new disturbance or inconvenience to park visitors as a result of this alternative.

Impacts on Public Facilities and Services

Water Supply. Under this alternative, water supply and amount of use would remain unchanged.

Roadways and Public Transportation. Under Alternative A, public roadways would remain unaffected.

Energy Consumption. Energy consumption would remain at current levels.

Fire Protection. No change to fire protection services would occur under this option.

Schools. No change to enrollment in local schools would occur under this alternative. Residences in area are expected to remain constant.

Other Government Services. Under this alternative, no new government services will be needed.

Conclusion. Because this option does not change the number of potential visitors using the Hostel, public services and utilities are not expected to be adversely affected. Some reduction of services needed may occur if the facilities are not repaired but the effect will be less than significant.

Impacts on the Local Economy

Negative economic effects could occur because the Hostel could be closed due to noncompliance with federal, state, and local codes and regulations.

Not improving current guest and staff accommodations and utility systems would limit the ability of the concessionaire to implement and complete the provisions of the concession management agreement. The concessionaire is responsible for making improvements valued at approximately $210,000 within the first five years of the contact to qualify for an additional five years of tenure or a total contract time of 10 years.

Conclusion. This alternative could negatively affect the local economy. However, because the generated revenue from the Hostel is a very small percentage of the total economy of Marin County, the effect will be less than significant.

Alternative B: The Proposal: Construction of New Facilities

Impacts on Natural Resources

Vegetation. On the main construction site this action would result in 3500 sf of ground disturbance on a previously developed site. To mitigate any impacts, in accordance with NPS management polices and guidelines, disturbed areas would be revegetated with native plant materials (e.g., seeds, cuttings, transplants).

The development of the main leach field will disturb approximately 1,500 sf of disturbed coastal scrub and non-native grassland. These impacts are expected to be mitigated by rapid regrowth of vegetation in the leach field area. Full restoration of the site is anticipated in 1-2 years. If necessary, impacts would be mitigated by planting native vegetation in accordance with NPS revegetation policies.

The proposed project would not result in significant impacts to native vegetation, wetlands, stream/riparian habitat, or other sensitive habitats.

Water Resources. Some short-term minor impacts could result due to minor ground disturbance and grading. However, actions, such as plastic silt fencing and soil/straw bale berms would be used to ensure that sediments and runoff from the construction site do not enter Laguna Creek or the adjacent pond.

No changes to surface or ground waters will result from this project. Grading will be minimal and limited to the construction area and will not increase flows. Rain water drainage will continue towards the main road. Because current flows and natural drainages would not be significantly altered, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

Air. The new facilities would not release significant air pollutants. Heating systems, the only source of exhaust, would meet current standards and codes. Some dust will be generated from construction activities; however, this would be mitigated to less than significant levels by watering of disturbed areas and covering the beds of trucks hauling material from the project site.

Wildlife. Noise and human activity would be related primarily to construction activities. It is unlikely that construction activities would result in permanent displacement of wildlife in the immediate area.

Because the proposed action would result in only temporary and localized impacts on wildlife, these effects are considered insignificant. Animals and songbirds would be expected to return to the area once construction and restoration activities are completed.

Because of the abundance of coastal scrub/grassland habitat adjacent to the proposed leach field site, recolonization of the area by birds and other species would occur after construction. During construction, there will be some short-term less than significant impacts to resident avian species such as wrentits, scrub jays, and small mammals such as the brush rabbit and the white-footed mouse.

Threatened and Endangered Species. Since no federally protected species or their host plants have been detected at the project site, there would be no effect on threatened or endangered species.

Soils. In addition to the ground disturbance and minor grading that would occur, the potentially liquefiable soils at the project are anticipated to need stabilization. Based on the site conditions, compaction would be used to stabilize the soil beneath buildings and structures. All work would be closely monitored to minimize ground movement and its potential impact on buildings and structures.

To minimize ground disturbance, equipment and materials would be stock-piled on existing disturbed areas to be directly impacted by construction. Areas supporting of native vegetation would be identified and fenced or signed in the field to protect these areas from inadvertent disturbance.

Topography. The project will not substantially change topography of the site; surface grading will be limited to minor alterations for leveling parking area and foundation construction for the new facilities. To mitigate any unknown impact, a qualified soil engineer will investigate soil conditions to insure long-term stability of proposed structures. The proposed project will not alter any unique geologic or ground surface features.

Conclusion. Under this alternative, no special-status species would be adversely affected. Some short-term temporary impacts to wildlife may occur. Water resources will be protected from impacts by mitigation measures to reduce adverse impact to less than significant levels. Ground disturbance and change to topography will be minimal and monitored to ensure soil erosion does not occur. Overall, this alternative is not anticipated to have any significant impacts to natural resources.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

The site contains two historic structures determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The new 2,800 sf structure would intrude on the cultural landscape; however, impacts would be mitigated to less than significant levels because the facility is designed to be compatible with the existing structures and would be integrated into the complex. In addition, stabilization of the historic garage and other improvements will be conducted in accordance with the *Secretary's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. In addition, a 1998 cultural landscape inventory indicates the area has low historic integrity because landscape

features essential to convey historical identity and character have been lost, such as the milking barn, dairy house, corrals, and calf/horse barn. The inventory also determined the main building was significantly altered after a fire in the 1950s that has substantially reduced its historical integrity.

No ethnic cultural values or religious or sacred uses currently occur within the project area. If any archeological material is found during construction, construction will stop and a qualified archeologist will evaluate the situation to mitigate any impacts.

Conclusion. Limited impacts both positive and negative to cultural resources and the cultural landscape will result from this alternative. However, with mitigation measures in place, no long-term significant adverse effects are anticipated to occur to cultural resources.

Impacts on Visual Quality

The project will add an additional structure to the former ranch complex and could reduce the natural scenic values in the area. However, the project incorporates height, mass and bulk characteristics that are proportional to the site. After a landscape architectural site analysis conducted in the summer of 1997, the new proposed structure was sited adjacent to the other structures--between the main building and the existing bunk house--and located on the lower slope of the hillside to minimize visual quality impacts to the area. Because of its location, the proposed new 2,800 building would not adversely impact existing scenic vistas within the PRNS.

The proposed design of the new structures would better blend with the surrounding natural environment. Proposed colors and construction materials would compliment the surrounding natural environment, as well as integrate well with the existing lodging units located nearby.

Improvements to the former garage, because of its dilapidated condition, will enhance the visual quality of the site.

Conclusion. This alternative would not significantly impact the visual quality of the site. Improvements to the former garage structure would improve its visual quality.

Impacts on Human Health and Safety

By bringing the complex into compliance with health and safety codes, the Hostel will no longer pose a health risk to staff and visitors. In addition, by modifying existing buildings and constructing the new housing structure to comply with building codes for life and safety (e.g., fire detection, handicap access, seismic stability), hazards to the operating staff at the site would be minimized.

The former septic system at the Hostel has been deemed inadequate for the current operation and the new proposed facility. The new septic system will ensure ground water and Laguna Creek

are not contaminated by Hostel operations. The new system will meet Marin County and State of California requirements. Monitoring requirements for the septic systems will be established by Marin County and the State of California. The new sewage systems with appropriate monitoring will reduce any potential discharge of pollutants to a less than significant level.

The Hostel is approximately eight miles west of the San Andreas Fault. Because of the geology, there is a potential for a moderate susceptibility to ground shaking intensity. Also, the maximum ground shaking intensity potential is considered strong. To mitigate any impacts to less than significant, the new facilities will be constructed in conformance with Uniform Building Code (UBC), Chapter 16, (Zone 4) and would fully meet standards for wind and earthquakes.

Liquefaction susceptibility is considered low in the Drakes Bay Formation.

The proposed project area is situated near coastal scrub/grassland vegetation. The proposed facilities will contain flammable materials such as cleaners, lubricants, solvents and other potential hazards. Mitigation measures have been adopted to ensure the project will not significantly increase fire hazards in the area. These include access enhancements along the main entrance road, proper storage of hazardous material and waste, fully automatic sprinkler systems in buildings, proper removal of vegetation around the complex, and adequate space around buildings for emergency vehicle access. In addition, the main objective of the project is the rehabilitation of buildings to meet current health and safety codes and reduce potential fire hazards.

All hazardous materials and waste, such as paint and oil, will be properly stored in the new facility and be in accordance with federal/state standards and regulations and the *Point Reyes National Seashore Hazardous Waste Management Plan.* In addition, all hazardous waste such as paint and oil will be disposed of according to the *Hazardous Waste Management Plan*. No pesticides are used by the Hostel. As no major or unusual quantities of explosive or hazardous materials will be present on the project site during construction or when improvements are completed, the likelihood of an explosive hazard is extremely remote and deemed insignificant.

Conclusion. Code compliance upgrades will have a positive effect on human health and safety. Once the buildings and septic system meet current codes, they will no longer be a health and safety risk to park visitors and Hostel staff. In addition, once hazardous material is properly stored and disposed of, potential impacts to visitors and Hostel staff will be minimal and not significant. Building and site improvements will also improve fire safety.

Impacts on Noise

The proposed project will result in the periodic generation of noise associated with short-term construction activities. Vehicles traveling to and from the site will result in the generation of intermittent low levels of noise. Although ambient noise levels in the surrounding area are

expected to increase during construction, the construction-related noise would represent a temporary increase of limited duration, and therefore, is not considered a significant impact.

Conclusion. Some short-term impacts to park visitors related to noise will occur during construction. However, there will be no new long-term impacts.

Impacts on Public Facilities and Services

Water Supply. The Hostel is provided water from the NPS. The new facility is not expected to generate substantial new use and the PRNS has determined adequate supplies are available. Therefore, no impacts to other public sources will occur.

Roadways and Public Transportation. Park visitation peaked at 2.6 million in 1992 but has dropped over the last five years to 2.4 million in 1996. The NPS anticipates park visitation will slowly increase approximately 2-3% per year. The PRNS GMP does not call for any additional facilities in the Limantour area of the park that would have a cumulative impact with this proposed project on traffic. No public or NPS transportation facilities are available in the area. Therefore, this project will have a less than significant impact on traffic and public transportation facilities.

Energy Consumption. Energy use is anticipated to increase only slightly, approximately (10%), because of the small increase in square footage. Current energy use is estimated at 1,650 kilowatts per month.

Fire Protection. Increased square footage of replacement buildings will add minor impact to PRNS and Marin County Fire Department responsibilities. In addition, based on a review of the facilities, improvements to street and site address labeling, road access, water storage, and facility automatic fire sprinkler systems are needed. These improvements are part of the Hostel's overall plan for the site to mitigate impacts. With these mitigation measures, the impact will be minimized and less than significant.

Police Protection. NPS is the primary law enforcement agency in the project area. No increase in service is anticipated. Marin County Sheriff's Department currently provides adequate back-up law enforcement protection to the subject property. No increase in this service is necessary. Therefore, less than significant impacts will occur.

Schools. The project will not increase housing or the number of employees working at the Hostel. Because there will be no increase in housing or number of employees, the number of school children attending local schools is not anticipated to change and will remain at current levels. Therefore, a less than significant impact will occur to the Shoreline School District.

Other Government Services. Because of the small scale nature of this project, no new governmental services will be needed. Current facilities are being upgraded to meet current codes and correct deficiencies.

Utilities. Pacific Gas and Electric Company has adequate facilities in the project area to provide service to the proposed project. Only minor insignificant increases in power and propane are anticipated. No new phone service is needed.

Conclusion. Public facilities and services, such as fire, police, public services and utilities, and schools will not be significantly increased or adversely affected.

Impacts on the Local Economy

Minor positive impacts are anticipated. Construction costs are estimated to exceed $200,000.

Conclusion. Under this alternative, the Hostel will continue to operate and contribute to the local economy. Since the Hostel's annual budget is approximately $100,000, there contribution to the local economy is negligible. There will be some short-term minor impacts to the economy from the construction activities.

Cumulative Impacts

Because the proposed improvements would bring the Hostel into compliance with local, state and federal regulations and laws, the project's overall impact on the environment and NPS operations would be beneficial. No other construction projects are planned, therefore, there will be no cumulative indirect impacts from any other projects.

Conclusion. The NPS concludes that this project, by itself and in conjunction with the long-range goal to provide the public with safe facilities, will not result in a significant cumulative impact.

Consultation and Coordination

The plan alternatives and environmental assessment were prepared by the Point Reyes National Seashore staff with assistance from planning staff in the Pacific Great Basin Support Office.

Copies of the assessment will be made available to interested private organizations, government agencies, and individuals for a minimum period of 30 days. News releases to local and regional media will announce the document's availability.

The draft plan has been reviewed by the Point Reyes Committee of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore Citizen's Advisory Commission.

Informal consultation regarding Threatened and Endangered Species is underway with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Section 106 Historic Preservation Act compliance is being completed.

Consistency with the California Coastal Act will be determined after consultation with the staff of the California Coastal Commission.

References

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Resource Management Plan, Point Reyes National Seashore. National Park Service. September 1994.

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Summary Impact/Mitigation Matrix

Park: Point Reyes National Seashore

Project: Construction/rehabilitation of the Point Reyes Hostel and Upgrade of Septic

IMPACT	PRESCRIBED MITIGATION AND RESPONSIBILITY
1. Natural Resources	
Vegetation	To mitigate the invasion of non-native vegetation, the main disturbed building site will be monitored and non-native plants removed after construction from disturbed areas. Areas will be replanted with native plants where needed. At the leach field area, the site will be monitored for regrowth by surrounding native vegetation. If necessary, planting with native plants will occur (PRNS Resource Management).
Water Resources	The site will be monitored during construction and appropriate measures taken to ensure Laguna Creek is not contaminated with sediments and construction debris. Soil and straw bale berms and plastic silt fencing will be established, as necessary.
Air	Some dust will be generated from construction activities. Dust will be monitored and mitigated by watering of area and covering truck leaving area with debris.
Wildlife	PRNS Resources Management Staff will monitor species before, during, and after the proposed project to insure disturbance is minimal. Resident bird nesting season will be avoided.
T/E Species	NA
Soils	Some short-term impacts due to heavy equipment on-site will occur. These impacts would be mitigated by the contractor/Hostel by regrading and restoring the site quickly to allow regrowth of vegetation. To minimize any soil loss during

		construction, the area will be sprayed with water regularly to reduce dust and soil erosion. In addition, ground disturbance will be kept to a minimum(less than 3,500 sf) to ensure soil erosion is minimal.
	Topography	To mitigate any potential impact to new structures, a qualified soil engineer will investigate soil conditions to ensure long-term stability of proposed structures.
2.	**Cultural Resources**	If any archeological material is located during construction, the project will be stopped and the area evaluated by the NPS Regional Archeologist.
3.	**Visual Quality**	NA
4.	**Health and Safety**	NA
5.	**Noise**	Short-term impacts only during normal business hours on weekdays as demolition crews remove structures and debris. Residents will be notified of construction activity and hours of all construction activity will be regulated. No construction can occur before 7:00 am or after 7:00 pm.
6.	**Public Services**	NA
7.	**Economic**	NA

Appendix A: Location Map and Park Zoning Map

POINT REYES
NATIONAL SEASHORE
REGIONAL MAP