

# *Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) – Citizen Actions Guide*



A Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) Bull Tule elk with Barbed Wire Caught in His Antlers

THANK YOU for your interest in taking action to restore and protect Point Reyes National Seashore. Our best chance to defend nature in this national park is CITIZEN ACTION.

We MUST safeguard our public land, water and ocean coastline by removing destructive large-scale ranching and its looming agri biz expansion. Please help raise awareness – Call, write, share, organize, donate & speak out to Protect Wildlife and OUR Public Lands!

SEE Current News, Videos and please SIGN PETITIONS at: [SavePointReyesNationalSeashore.com](http://SavePointReyesNationalSeashore.com)

## WATCH:

[The Shame of Pt. Reyes](#) – Skyler Thomas, White Shark Video

[The Betrayal of Point Reyes](#) – Tony Sehgal, Silver Reaction Media

## VISIT, LEARN, DONATE:

[Point Reyes Rewilding Network](#)

[Resource Renewal Institute](#)

[Forelk.org](http://Forelk.org)

[naturebasedteaching.com](http://naturebasedteaching.com)

[Restore Pt. Reyes Seashore](#) (Learn it all here!)

[The Shame of Pt. Reyes](#)

[Western Watersheds Project](#)

[SavePointReyesNationalSeashore](http://SavePointReyesNationalSeashore.com)

## CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES:

**Carey Feierabend**, Acting Superintendent PRNS, [carey\\_feierabend@nps.gov](mailto:carey_feierabend@nps.gov) Tel: 415-623-2100

**Cc: Cicely Muldoon**: Superintendent PRNS, [cicely\\_muldoon@nps.gov](mailto:cicely_muldoon@nps.gov)

Point Reyes National Seashore, 1 Bear Valley Rd., Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

**Woody Smeck**, Western Regional Director, [woody\\_smeck@nps.gov](mailto:woody_smeck@nps.gov) cc:[PORE\\_Info@nps.gov](mailto:PORE_Info@nps.gov) Tel:415-623-2100

National Park Service 333 Bush St., Suite 500, San Francisco, CA 94104-2828

**Kristin Denryter**, California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Tule Elk & Pronghorn Coordinator,

[Kristin.Denryter@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Kristin.Denryter@wildlife.ca.gov) (916) 801-0649 cc: [Krystal.Ho@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Krystal.Ho@wildlife.ca.gov) (916) 373-8826

**Raul Grijalva**, Chair, Natural Resources Committee: [nrdems@mail.house.gov](mailto:nrdems@mail.house.gov) (202) 225-2435

**Representative Jared Huffman**, <https://huffman.house.gov/contact/email-me> (415) 258-9657

## **SAMPLE LETTERS, TALKING POINTS:**

### **TALKING AND WRITING POINTS for PUBLIC HEARINGS, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND TO ELECTED OFFICIALS:**

When calling or writing, draft a brief outline or have references ready beforehand. If you are a constituent, say that. Talk/write about why you like Point Reyes National Seashore, and why you insist that OUR national park be protected from cattle ranching and commercial businesses. Have them listen to how we want our Point Reyes National Park restored, protected, and managed for nature, public health and the future of our climate. Ask why such an impactful local controversy with global climate implications isn't being covered in the news! Use some of these talking points, or other facts and data you find below.

#### **SUMMARY**

IN ITS FINAL GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT (GMPA) FOR POINT REYES, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE HAS HANDED OVER 28,000 ACRES OF PUBLIC LAND TO A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP—RANCHERS.

#### **RANCHING**

- Ranching at the Seashore benefits an entrenched, well-connected minority at the expense of the public and the environment.
- The Organic Act directs the NPS to preserve natural and historic resources. There is no law requiring NPS to keep ranchers in business. There is no requirement that historic ranches be operational. The ranches should be preserved to serve as educational and cultural resources, not commercial businesses.
- Wealthy, politically connected ranchers with industry allies continue to occupy the Seashore 58 years after it became a national park in 1962. Under the NPS's management plan, the ranchers received unprecedented 20-year leases and will remain in the park. They are now looking at how to extend those leases and remain in the park permanently.
- The public paid the equivalent of \$400 million in today's dollars to buy the ranches for the national seashore. Ranchers willingly sold their land to the NPS during the 1960s and 70s. Their agreement allowed them to remain in the park up to 25 years. They never left.
- The public has since paid millions of dollars in subsidies to keep the Seashore ranches going, but many ranchers bought land outside the park. Some collected millions more through MALT conservation easements.
- Seashore ranchers unfairly compete with ranchers outside the park. They pay no property taxes; and pay token rents and below-market grazing fees. The NPS maintains the ranches, including buildings, fencing, roads, and managing "problem" wildlife.
- The NPS says it received \$500,000 from leasing the ranches last year. It spent more than double that amount to maintain and manage them.
- Ranches at the Seashore contribute a fraction to the county's more \$620 million budget—about \$16 million in 2019. Tourism to Point Reyes Seashore alone brought more than \$100 million to the county. Surveys show that the primary reason visitors come to the Seashore is to see wildlife.
- Because of decreased demand for beef and dairy products, ranchers are hedging their bets for the future. The new plan allows them to raise sheep, goats, chickens, pigs, and commercial crops. They also will be allowed to host private events and guest stays. This so-called "diversification" (of revenues) is intended to keep the ranches in the Seashore in business.
- What happens to park predators—coyotes, cougar, bobcats, foxes, badgers when they prey on small livestock?
- Commercial crops diminish wildlife habitat and lands for public recreation.

## **TULE ELK**

- Tule elk are endemic to California and are found in no other national park.
- A half million Tule elk once roamed Northern California. They were hunted to near extinction in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A remote herd was discovered and some elk were moved to Point Reyes National Seashore in 1978 in an effort to save the species.
- Under its new management plan, the NPS will shoot up to 15 of the free-roaming elk to manage the population at 120.
- The largest elk herd at the Seashore—about 500 animals—is confined behind an 8-foot fence at the Tomales Point in order to prevent the elk from foraging on park grasslands ranchers say they need for their cattle.
- During the 2014-2016 drought, half the confined elk herd died from malnutrition and thirst. The NPS covered it up.
- Now, ponds and other water sources in the elk reserve have gone dry.
- As a policy, the NPS does not supplement food or water for the wildlife. This policy has thus far extended to some 500 elk, though the elk are fenced in.

## **OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FROM RANCHES**

- Cattle are the number one source of greenhouse gases at the Seashore.
- Cattle manure is sprayed on parkland and runs off into creeks.
- Kehoe Creek, is one of the most polluted creeks in California. It flows into the Pacific, impacting both freshwater and marine species.
- Cattle manure carries a contagious fatal disease, Johne's disease, that has infected Tule elk in the park. For this reason, the elk cannot be relocated.
- The earth is undergoing an unprecedented species die off. Animal agriculture is a major cause of species loss globally.
- One hundred plants and animals at Point Reyes are listed as rare, threatened and endangered.

## **PUBLIC SENTIMENT**

- The public submitted 7,600 comments to the Park Service's draft plan for ranching at the Seashore. More than 90 percent of the comments opposed ranching or killing wildlife to accommodate cattle ranching.
- There are more cattle in the national seashore than there are Tule elk in the world.
- The 6,000 Cattle at the Seashore outnumber native Tule elk 10 to 1.

## **PUBLIC LAND IS FOR THE PUBLIC**

- The public is unwelcomed on public lands leased to ranchers. Locked gates prevent access to trails and park visitors have at times been confronted by ranchers when accessing trails.
- The public is essentially denied access to one-third of the national seashore—28,000 acres Americans bought and own in common.

For more information and to take action, visit <https://restoreptreyesseashore.org/elkfilm>

*Courtesy of RRI.ORG SI-2020*

## TALKING / WRITING POINTS:

When emailing or writing a letter, strengthen your action by referring to some of the talking points from the previous page, researching your own verifiable facts and data, or expressing personal experiences of the harmful land, water, and air degradation at PRNS.

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### **Sample letter1 - General**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

*The National Park Service (NPS) recently said during its recent GMP Amendment environmental review majority that public opinion how the Seashore is protected and managed does not matter. We say that public opinion is VERY important because as taxpayers we are the owners of this land. The federal government weakens public participation across the board, gutting significant environmental laws, and becoming less transparent by the hour.*

*We are pushing back, insisting our comments as voiced by the vast majority of management plan options respondents be fully considered and implemented. The NPS opined "this is not a vote," while mandated by federal laws and regulations to take care of this public jewel on the Pacific Coast, and to conserve and protect native coastal prairies and wildlife in the Seashore. But NPS leadership and staff at Point Reyes are clearly not following either NPS or the Seashore's governing law. These are substantive, provable, factual omissions and commissions by the NPS. As demonstrated by the vast majority of over 7, 600 public comments, many see the NPS catering to a narrow for-profit group of a dozen or so private commercial-scale livestock operators who were paid millions of dollars by taxpayers decades ago to find alternative private ranchlands and exit the Seashore. These ranchers continue to flout the will of the people by staying on our parklands, and worsen already traumatized wildlands and wildlife.*

*The NPS should respond and act affirmatively to all the individual comments demanding more nature, and removal of all ranching and agri biz.*

*Sincerely,*

*Your Name*

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*Sample letter Feinstein/Huffman (Courtesy RRI.ORG)*

Add your own words and concerns about management practices at Point Reyes Seashore to this sample letter, send letters to:

Senator Dianne Feinstein <https://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact>

Representative Jared Huffman <https://huffman.house.gov/contact>

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*Dear Senator/Congressman,*

*I/My family lives in\_\_\_\_\_. We enjoy visiting our national parks and am contacting you about concerns regarding the management of the Point Reyes National Seashore.*

*By law, the National Park Service is mandated to manage all national parks in a manner which provides maximum protection, restoration, and preservation of the natural environment for generations to come.*

*The long-overdue General Management Plan Amendment (GMPA) for Point Reyes National Seashore must make the preservation and restoration of the park's natural values, its native wildlife, archeological resources, and public use and enjoyment its highest priority.*

*The GMPA must set standards and conduct monitoring to ensure that ranching does not damage park ecosystems or negatively impact wildlife habitat, endangered species, archeological sites, water quality, native vegetation, public recreation or the aesthetic natural beauty of the park.*

*Ongoing private cattle grazing is incompatible with the purposes for which the Point Reyes National Seashore was established. Ranching at the Seashore has resulted in overgrazing, water pollution, invasive weeds, and reductions of native species, including some protected under the Endangered Species Act, which I know you support.*

*We now know that cattle are the Seashore's #1 source of greenhouse gases that cause climate change.*

*Tule Elk are an ecologically important part of the landscape of Point Reyes National Seashore. Their recovery is a success story for restoring native ecosystems, consistent with the mission of the National Park Service.*

*Ranching on public land is not a right, it is a privilege. Commercial lease holders should not dictate wildlife removal or exclusion policies. Confinement, fencing, removal, hazing, and killing of wildlife in the national park for the benefit private ranch operators is unacceptable.*

*Given the founding purposes of Point Reyes National Seashore, commercial leases or activities at the Seashore should not conflict nor interfere with the protection of natural or cultural resources or public access to the park.*

*Tax dollars subsidize ranching in the national park, but taxpayers have limited access to large parts of the Seashores, at times further limited by fences, locks, and signage posted by ranchers. The GMPA must ensure, and the NPS must enforce the public's right to access the park.*

*Allowing private ranches to expand operations at the Seashore would reduce public access to the park, damage wildlife habitat, and degrade water quality. I am opposed to the ranchers' demand to grow commercial row crops and introduce sheep, goats, pigs, turkeys or chickens to the national park, which would create conflicts with and pressure to kill native predators like bobcats, coyotes, and foxes.*

*Sincerely,*

**Send to:**

**Raul Grijalva, Chair of the Natural Resources Committee:** [nrdems@mail.house.gov](mailto:nrdems@mail.house.gov) More info at: <https://naturalresources.house.gov/contact/contact-us?1>

Dear Chairman Grijalva,

Firstly, thank you for the tremendous work you're doing on so many fronts. I am inspired by your steadfast resolve to adhere to a more just and ethical approach to defending our society's most vulnerable and our nation's resources. And, I especially admire your vision towards a cleaner and more environmentally sound future.

For these reasons, I appeal to you for help in a local battle to save our only National Seashore on the West Coast of the U.S. I'm sure you're aware of the ongoing conflicts between ranching and conservationists at Point Reyes National Seashore and I implore you to intervene in any way possible to ensure that this small piece of wilderness be protected. It has been called our Yosemite on the coast and is one of the most diverse natural environments in California, housing 15% of all California biodiversity. It is home to 1500 species of plants and animals, including 200 life forms found nowhere else in the world. Almost half of all bird species known in the Americas can be spotted within the park. It is the largest protected coast south of Alaska and yet... **the NPS management plan aims to extend privately owned ranch leases to an unprecedented term of 20 years, allowing for unbridled expansion of the cattle ranching activities** which already pollute the watershed and beaches, destroy the natural habitat, kill off the wildlife, and are the number one cause of carbon emissions in the locality through methane and industrial emissions, and loss of carbon-sequestering native plants and healthy soils.

A small group of ranchers have benefitted from heavily discounted grazing fees, paying zero dollars in property taxes and enjoying water waivers that allow them to pollute our national seashore. **The park service is in the process of exacerbating all of these problems in perpetuity.** By law, the National Park Service is mandated to manage all national parks in a manner which provides maximum protection, restoration, and preservation of the natural environment for generations to come.

**Why is this being permitted? Is there no oversight to the NPS at Point Reyes?**

I am part of a grassroots coalition of activists, biologists, conservationists, former NPS rangers, people from all walks of life. We have educated ourselves on the complexities in all areas of this debate, hosting webinars and calling on legal counsels and experts and inviting the public to increase awareness. We've appealed to Dianne Feinstein and Jared Huffman who both refuse to discuss this matter, deferring to the ranchers as 'historic' and 'culturally significant.'

Ranchers and local politicians like Rep. Huffman have long claimed that the public overwhelmingly supports cattle grazing in these parks but they have never offered any evidence to substantiate that claim, which is false. The public comments on the move to extend the leases to two decades wholly contradict that assertion. Thousands of people told the NPS in no uncertain terms they want the park service to protect the park, the wildlife, and the climate. **An analysis by park advocates found that fully 91.4% of the public comments opposed ranching and killing elk in the national park.**

There is a larger context to this environmental depredation. Urbanization, livestock grazing, logging, and agriculture have fragmented many of California's native landscapes. Less than one percent of California's grassland is still intact today. Remnants of once-vast coastal prairies still exist at Point Reyes National Seashore and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, with the potential to recover the rich biodiversity that has been lost to decades of cattle operations. **Removing cattle operations from the Park, which was the original deal when it was created, will provide refuge for wildlife, restore habitats for threatened and endangered species, improve water quality, provide educational, recreational and volunteer opportunities, sustain cultural traditions of native peoples, and preserve America's natural heritage—is this not what our national parks were created for?**

*The 1916 NPS Organic Act which applies to all units of the national park system states its purpose "...to provide for the enjoyment of the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."*

***Will you please help us reclaim this land?*** *We have contacted our local officials to no avail. We need someone to step up for our National Seashore. Please help in any way you can.*

***Thank you very much.***

***Best regards,  
your name  
address***

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*Sample letter W. Smeck*

*Send to:*

*Woody Smeck, Regional Director National Park Service*

*333 Bush Street, Suite 500*

*San Francisco, CA 94104-2828*

*CC: David Vela, Deputy Director*

*Email: [woody\\_smeck@nps.gov](mailto:woody_smeck@nps.gov) cc: [PORE\\_Info@nps.gov](mailto:PORE_Info@nps.gov) and also submit here:*

*<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1180/contactus.htm>.*

*Dear Mr. Smeck,*

*I am writing in regard to the imminent decision regarding the General Management Plan for PRNS: I urge you NOT to sign PLAN B, which would expand private ranching in the park and cull Tule elk, which have just recovered from near extinction. Pt. Reyes is the only National Park in the U.S. where they live and they are native species. Please don't allow the NPS to kill them in the name of private enterprise "historic culture." Plan F is the only plan alternative that fulfills the mission of the park, allowing the native ecosystem to recover and thrive for all citizens--now and in the future--to enjoy.*

*As the NPS regional director, you have the authority and opportunity to clean up and restore the Point Reyes National Seashore, a national treasure. During the public comment period for the revised management plan, over 90% of comments favored removal of ranching on protected lands, and against the culling of native Tule Elk. Only 2% of comments favored continuing the ranching/dairy operation status quo.*

*I am reaching out to you because it has been disheartening to listen to Congress Huffman share his support of the ranchers to remain on this federally protected land when his decision does not reflect the overwhelming the majority of his constituents voices. Unfortunately, he is siding with the ranchers, against scientific evidence. This is why I appeal to you to use your position to reflect what the people want, do what is best for the future health of our planet, and the historic gem that is Pt. Reyes National Seashore.*

*The park's visitors --local and international--go to see elk, not cows. There is plenty of ranch land in west Marin and many of the ranchers in the park own land tracts outside the park. The NPS staff should not be focused on issues of the ranchers but rather should be doing as mandated to protect wildlife, landscape and the native flora and fauna.. The bottom line is that the national park belongs to the public, not to private enterprise. The ranchers were well paid for their land and have had more than enough time to relocate. It's time for them to go.*

*You have the opportunity to take the park in a healthy direction that benefits the wildlife, the land, and future generations. Please use this opportunity well. It is a gift.*

*There are 335 million Americans who are the rightful owners of Point Reyes National Seashore, and 7 million of them live in the nearby Bay Area, an area starved for available public lands for recreation. The National Park*

*Service should not continue to manage Point Reyes National Seashore for the private profit of 13 ranches, including large corporations, while neglecting the public interest to manage these lands for conservation and public enjoyment. It is time to end the extension of Park Service leases on Point Reyes for livestock grazing.*

*I am also especially concerned, during COVID-19 times, that polluted water and crowded cattle operations might be a petri dish of infectious diseases that could harm human health in our national park. These are our public lands--the mission of the NPS is to protect them, not allow private enterprise to destroy their ecosystems.*

*Sincerely,  
Your name  
Address*

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*Sample letter C.Feierabend, C. Muldoon*

*Mail to: Point Reyes National Seashore, 1 Bear Valley Rd., Point Reyes Station, CA 94956 Tel: 415-623-2100  
Carey Feirabend: [carey\\_feierabend@nps.gov](mailto:carey_feierabend@nps.gov) Cc: Cicely Muldoon, Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore  
[cicely\\_muldoon@nps.gov](mailto:cicely_muldoon@nps.gov),*

*Dear Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_,*

*I am a concerned citizen who has loved and frequented Point Reyes National Seashore for many decades. I am also a member of the Friends of Point Reyes, a large group of people asking the park service to protect the park's wilderness, wildlife, open space, beauty and health as we plan for its future.*

*Point Reyes National Seashore is under increasing threat from the expansion of the commercial cattle industry. The National Park Service is conducting a General Management Plan environmental review considering alternatives for managing the Seashore going forward. The National Park policy statement "The national parks belong to all Americans" recognizes that citizens are the rightful owners of this public land, and thus have a stake in its future. An initial public comment period in the fall of 2019 elicited over 7,600 comments from the general public, as required by the environmental review process. A large majority of the comments clearly favored moving the ranches, preserving the elk herd and the native wildlife. Yet these comments were dismissed by [park] planners as "not part of the vote."*

*In 1962 when the park was established, taxpayers funded the multi-million dollar buyout of the ranches. Ranchers signed leases set to expire in 1987, giving them years to move their operations to private lands. [Today,] Ranch supporters (including many of our local politicians) promote a plan that will extend the leases and allow much of the GGNRA to continue to run beef and dairy ranches, and to expand them to include other commodity animals such as pigs, goats, chickens and commodity crops. With this expansion, wildlife will face more barbed wire fences, traps, insecticide and pesticide pollution, and certainly hunting as any wildlife is seen as a threat to the bottom line. This will only increase under the park's preferred plan.*

*Although ranchers and their allies claim that cattle grazing is sustainable, upon inspection we witness the stark contrast between the natural prairie and the ranching lands.*

*In the grazing areas we see manure piles, "poop ponds," eroded areas filling the streams, creeks marshes and water bodies with polluted waters and sediment. All of this ends up in the ocean where it impacts fish, shore birds, and marine mammals including seals, sea lions, porpoises, and elephant seals. And yet, NPS continues to grant "waivers" to ranches to improve impaired water quality despite the fact that the State Water Resources Control Board reports that the waters of Point Reyes teem with e-coli and rank as one of the most polluted in the nation.*

*The PRNS prairie is one of the most naturally biodiverse landscapes in the world, teeming with interdependent species of native plants, grasses and shrubs that form deep roots and fight climate change by acting as a carbon sink. It supports a huge variety of native animals including the tule elk, which now exist only here in the park. These are being "culled" to keep them from "interfering" with "grasses intended for the cattle." Keeping them*

*penned in to stop them from roaming has caused 200-250 elk to die of thirst. A tiny percentage of the original herd remains, although they need larger numbers in order to maintain the biological diversity necessary to survival.*

*NPS policy clearly mandates natural resource conservation, and states that the land must be managed in such a way that future generations find it in better condition than it is now. The public has spoken about this issue, strongly favoring conservation and restoration.*

*As the final decision is expected to come from the Park Service sometime this spring, the public is wondering if the special interests backing a few dozen commercial enterprises will outweigh the park's own mandate to protect and preserve this precious treasure that belongs to all of us. We will continue to ask our representatives to side with us as we demand honesty and transparency in the democratic process that guides these critical public lands decisions. We insist that the park service do what it is supposed to do: protect Point Reyes National Seashore.*

*Sincerely,*

*Your name, address*

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**WANT TO DO MORE?** Copy/paste your letter to all of these to reach a broader audience: [San Francisco Chronicle](#), [Marin Independent Journal](#), [Press Democrat](#), [Argus Courier](#), [Sonoma News](#), [Point Reyes Light](#), [Pacific Sun](#), [East Bay Express](#), [San Jose Mercury News](#), [Sacramento Bee](#), and other numerous local, regional, and national online and print media – news, political, science, nature, environmental, parks & rec, hiking, surfing, camping, etc. Refer to this recent San Francisco Chronical article by its Lead Science Reporter Peter Fimrite to encourage more press. [“At Point Reyes, the contest is elk vs. agriculture. The people vote for the elk.”](#)

## **FURTHER QUESTIONS?**

**The following individuals have generously made themselves available for questions and events:**

Skyler Thomas  
White Shark Video  
<https://shameofpointreyes.weebly.com/>  
[Skyler@whitesharkvideo.com](mailto:Skyler@whitesharkvideo.com)

Laura Cunningham  
Point Reyes Rewilding Network (WWP)  
[pointreyesrewild.org](http://pointreyesrewild.org)  
[lcunningham@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:lcunningham@westernwatersheds.org)

Julie Phillips  
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Chance Cutrano  
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[ccutrano@rri.org](mailto:ccutrano@rri.org)

Diana Oppenheim  
For Elk.org  
[forelk.org](http://forelk.org)  
[action@forelk.org](mailto:action@forelk.org)

Diane Gentile  
Citizen Advocate  
707-347-6703  
[dianegentile@gmail.com](mailto:dianegentile@gmail.com)

## **Social Media:**

Please share, like and retweet content about conserving and restoring Point Reyes National Seashore, and saving tule elk on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Use: **#RestoreTheShore**, **#savethetuleelk** **#savetheelk** to build momentum around this effort.

**Links To Articles, Letters, Comments - Here are just a few of the many articles addressing PRNS:**

### **Concern Growing over Health of Tule Elk at Point Reyes National Seashore**

<https://www.nationalparkstraveler.org/2020/08/concern-growing-over-health-tule-elk-point-reyes-national-seashore>

### **A New Vision for the Coast – Robert Johnston 7/2020**

<https://www.ptreyeslight.com/article/new-vision-coast>

### **A Disservice To The Community; Rely On The Science Instead**

<http://www.thewildlifeneeds.com/2020/07/24/a-disservice-to-the-community-rely-on-the-science-instead/>

### **Tule elk are at the center of an epic conservation battle on Point Reyes National Seashore**

<https://roadtrippers.com/magazine/point-reyes-national-seashore-tule-elk/>

### **The Impacts Of Livestock Grazing On Biological Soil Crusts (And Climate Change) L. Cunningham**

<https://nobullsheet.net/2020/05/31/the-impacts-of-livestock-grazing-on-biological-soil-crusts-and-climate-change/>

### **Proposed Ranch Plan for Point Reyes Seashore Draws Public Fire:**

<https://www.sonomacountygazette.com/sonoma-county-news/proposed-ranch-plan-for-point-reyes-seashore-draws-public-fire>

### **At Point Reyes, The Contest Is Elk Vs. Agriculture. The People Vote For The Elk.**

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/environment/article/At-Point-Reyes-the-contest-is-elk-vs-15203706.php>

San Francisco Chronicle – Peter Fimrite, April 15 2020

### **Point Reyes Livestock Hinders Soil Carbon Banking**

<https://www.ptreyeslight.com/article/point-reyes-livestock-hinders-soil-carbon-banking>

Pt. Reyes Light – Laura Cunningham, December 4, 2019

### **The Big Lie: Point Reyes National Seashore And Ranching**

<https://jimcoda.com/2019/04/22/the-big-lie-point-reyes-national-seashore-and-ranching/>

Jim Coda, April 2019

### **Point Reyes Ranchers Shouldn't Be Favored Over Wildlife**

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/openforum/article/Point-Reyes-ranchers-shouldn-t-be-favored-over-13381520.php>

San Francisco Chronicle – Barbara J. Moritsch, November 2018

### **New Point Reyes Management Plan Riles Up Environmentalists**

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/environment/article/New-Point-Reyes-management-plan-riles-up-14291769.php>

San Francisco Chronicle – Peter Fimrite, August 2018

### **Beef of Burden**

<https://www.bohemian.com/northbay/beef-of-burden/Content?oid=2948337&showFullText=true>

North Bay Bohemian, March 2016

### **Wild Meets Mild**

<https://www.bohemian.com/northbay/wild-meets-mild/Content?oid=2702207>

James Knight, March 2015

### **Point Reyes National Seashore; Fencing Harmful to Wildlife**

<https://jimcoda.com/2014/07/26/point-reyes-national-seashore-fencing-harmful-to-wildlife/>

Jim Coda, July 2014

**Commercial Beef Cattle In America's National Parks Are You Serious?** <https://www.npca.org/articles/83-commercial-beef-cattle-in-america-s-national-parks-are-you-serious> National Parks Association 2012

### **TALKING POINTS For Letters to the Editor**

I am a concerned citizen who has loved and frequented Point Reyes National Seashore for many decades. I am also a member of the Friends of Point Reyes, a large group of people asking the park service to protect the park's wilderness, wildlife, open space, beauty and health as we plan for its future.

Point Reyes National Seashore is under increasing threat from the expansion of the commercial cattle industry. The National Park Service is conducting a General Management Plan environmental review considering alternatives for managing the Seashore going forward. The National Park policy statement "The national parks belong to all Americans" recognizes that citizens are the rightful owners of this public land, and thus have a stake in its future. An initial public comment period in the fall of 2019 elicited over 7,600 comments from the general public, as required by the environmental review process. A large majority of the comments clearly favored moving the ranches, preserving the elk herd and the native wildlife. Yet these comments were dismissed by [park] planners as "not part of the vote."

In 1962 when the park was established, taxpayers funded the multi-million dollar buyout of the ranches. Ranchers signed leases set to expire in 1987, giving them years to move their operations to private lands. [Today,] Ranch supporters (including many of our local politicians) promote a plan that will extend the leases and allow much of the GGNRA to continue to run beef and dairy ranches, and to expand them to include other commodity animals such as pigs, goats, chickens and commodity crops. With this expansion, wildlife will face more barbed wire fences, traps, insecticide and pesticide pollution, and certainly hunting as any wildlife is seen as a threat to the bottom line. This will only increase under the park's preferred plan.

Although ranchers and their allies claim that cattle grazing is sustainable, upon inspection we witness the stark contrast between the natural prairie and the ranching lands.

In the grazing areas we see manure piles, "poop ponds," eroded areas filling the streams, creeks marshes and water bodies with polluted waters and sediment. All of this ends up in the ocean where it impacts fish, shore birds, and marine mammals including seals, sea lions, porpoises, and elephant seals. And yet, NPS continues to grant "waivers" to ranches to improve impaired water quality despite the fact that the State Water Resources Control Board reports that the waters of Point Reyes teem with e-coli and rank as one of the most polluted in the nation.

The PRNS prairie is one of the most naturally biodiverse landscapes in the world, teeming with interdependent species of native plants, grasses and shrubs that form deep roots and fight climate change by acting as a carbon sink. It supports a huge variety of native animals including the tule elk, which now exist only here in the park. These are being "culled" to keep them from "interfering" with "grasses intended for the cattle." Keeping them penned in to stop them from roaming has caused 200-250 elk to die of thirst. A tiny percentage of the original herd remains, although they need larger numbers in order to maintain the biological diversity necessary to survival.

NPS policy clearly mandates natural resource conservation, and states that the land must be managed in such a way that future generations find it in better condition than it is now.

The public has spoken about this issue, strongly favoring conservation and restoration.

As the final decision is expected to come from the Park Service sometime this spring, the public is wondering if the special interests backing a few dozen commercial enterprises will outweigh the park's own mandate to protect and preserve this precious treasure that belongs to all of us. We will continue to ask our representatives to side with us as we demand honesty and transparency in the democratic process that guides these critical public lands decisions. We insist that the park service do what it is supposed to do: protect Point Reyes National Seashore. Write a letter to the editor. Sign this petition. To learn more, see:

[pointreyesrewild.org/](http://pointreyesrewild.org/) or [RestorePtReyesSeashore.org/](http://RestorePtReyesSeashore.org/)

**Thank You for caring about OUR Point Reyes National Seashore.  
Together, we MUST reach critical mass in  
Public awareness and direct actions to protect this National Park treasure!**

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