

Source Document
Shamli Tarbell's Design Considerations for Use and Development of the
Caspar Headlands and North Riparian Area of Caspar Creek
Presented to the Caspar Community Meeting on March 12, 2000

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[numbers in brackets refer to relevant drawing]

- [1]** The Headlands and Riparian form the western edge of the town and, in fact, define the orientation of the town.
- [2]** There are three broad shelves on the western headlands, dropping about 180'. The Riparian area at the eastern side by Highway One crops about 320' from the flat area on top to the Creek.
- [3]** There are trails throughout both the Headlands and the Riparian Area. The old Highway One traverses the Riparian Area but becomes very overgrown as it approaches the Creek. The trail leading from the old Company Store to the Creek along the rim of the old Mill Pond is quite degraded. Existing trails on the headlands are in quite good shape, especially the trail leading from the Headlands to the Creek along the south side, following the old tramway which carried lumber from the mill to the Headlands for shipment.
- [4]** Botanical studies have not been carried out yet on the Headlands and Riparian Area; however, it is clear that the Headlands have been scraped by the Caspar Lumber Co. Eucalyptus, Him. Blackberry, Pampas Grass and Gorse are among the most prevalent invasive plants. Among the native plants are: Iris, Indian Paintbrush, and Lupine.
- [5]** Habitat studies also have not been carried out yet. There are birds (see attached Bird list). There are also deer, fox, and in the past burrowing owls. Caspar Creek has one of the few remaining native coho salmon runs.
- [6]** Restoration could be carried out in three stages: the first area to restore is probably the Riparian; then, the upland vegetation on both sides of the Creek and along the cliff; thirdly, the inner part of the Headlands.

PARKING

- [7]** and **[27]** Existing parking is in two locations. On the West side of Highway One there is a pull-out parking and view site which can accommodate ten cars. In town along Caspar Road there is parking in front of the commercial area on the East side of the road and cars are also parked along the West side of the road. The accompanying map shows that a pull-out parking site could be built on the East side of Highway One with a trail constructed under the bridge abutment leading to the site on the West side of the Highway (similar to the trail under Highway One at

Jughandle State Preserve).

[8] Signage and small tree planting at the view site would welcome visitors to the view and a trail through the Riparian Area would guide visitors from both sides of Highway One to the Headlands. Mendocino County has just granted \$84,000 to construct walking pathways in Caspar, including a path to be constructed near this view site down to the Headlands. It will be completed in the Fall of 2000.

[9] Visitors could rely on travel books to locate Caspar or a larger highway sign could beckon passers-by.

[10] In-town vehicles could park head-in along the West side of Caspar Road which would accommodate ____ automobiles. Four RVs and/or large vehicles could be accommodated to the North of the old Post Office where there is an adequately large pull-in area. Several RVs might also park parallel along Frontage Road. South of Frontage Road along the old Highway One is a possible parking area, but it might cause further degradation of the Riparian Area and is not recommended.

ACCESS

[10] and **[11]** and **[12]** Two likely entrances onto the Headlands are apparent. One on the East side of Caspar Road leading into the center of the Headlands, and one at the Southwest corner of Caspar Road and Frontage Road. The latter entrance is used at this time because of a barbed-wire fence along the Caspar Road side of the Headlands. A more formal entrance could be created on the East side, with trees and benches. A more informal entrance could be enhanced at the Southwest corner with native plantings and additional parking.

[13] Access to the bluff could be via trails leading to the cliff at several locations. A fence at such lookout areas would protect both visitors and the land. Signs would warn about the dangers of erosion. Along the rest of the cliff edge vegetation could be planted as a buffer to access.

[14] Trails of compacted earth and decomposed granite, 5' to 12' wide would be wheelchair accessible. Decomposed granite provides good drainage. Defined trails keep people from wandering everywhere.

[15] Along the trails, vegetation could be planted to serve as a buffer to sensitive species' habitats and to areas of vegetative restoration.

USE OF THE HEADLANDS AND NORTH RIPARIAN AREA OF CASPAR CREEK

[16] Two interpreted walks could define the location of trails and be a focus for use of the Headlands and Riparian Area of Caspar Creek.

[17] and **[18]** The first, a History Walk, could look at the Caspar Lumber Co. history on the Headlands and Riparian Area. The book, *Mallets of the Mendocino Coast*, has much information on Caspar

Headlands' history, as do the Maritime Museum in San Francisco, the Kelley House in Mendocino and the County Museum in Willits. The History Walk could begin either at the pull-outs on Highway One or at the entrance at the Southwest corner of Caspar Road and Frontage Road. Starting at the Highway, walkers could cross over the five-acre flat area, replanted with Redwoods and Fir, and see panels interpreting the following historical places:

[19], [20], [21], [22] and [23]

(1) the Log Chute: logs dropped off steam trains, coming in from the woods, onto the log chute shot down into the Mill Pond and thence were moved on the water to the Caspar Mill.

(2) the Caspar Mill: using state-of-the-art machinery for its time, Caspar Mill milled redwood which was then, via tramway, pulled up to the Headlands for stacking, drying, and transfer to boats for transport.

(3) the Extension Trestle: this remarkable trestle lifted especially heavy items, such as mill machinery, off boats.

(4) the Wire Chute: lumber (and people) were transported in bundles (and baskets) from the cliff edge to doghole schooners anchored just off shore.

(5) Railroad and Drying Yards: stacks of lumber and train tracks are long gone but photos could show the contrast with present-day grasses and wildflowers.

(6) the Bunker Oil tanks: a remaining foundation shows the enormous size of these tanks.

[24] A typical historical information board would show a photo, for example, of the old Caspar Mill site, and a present day photo would show the same site.

[25] and [26] The second walk could be the Steelhead and Coho Lifecycle Walk. This is especially appropriate at Caspar Creek since it has one of the very few remaining native coho salmon runs. Such a walk would introduce people to the glory of salmon and would build their passion to protect the salmon. The Salmon Lifecycle Walk could begin at either the highway pull-outs or at the Southwest corner. Walkers would go to the mouth of the Creek and follow a path along the Creek with interpretive panels and life-size, three-dimensional models showing the cycle of birth to sea to giving birth to death. An example of juvenile steelhead habitat would show the importance of gravel, riffles, deep pools and vegetation.

[16] A Picnic Area with space for playing frisbee, horse shoes and/or boccee ball would provide a community and visitor focus for recreation in an area protected from the Northwest winds which overlooks Caspar Beach and Blufftop.

A museum of photos and three-dimensional models would provide a framework for the History and Salmon Walks.

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