PREFACE

The concepts identified in this document are intended as an exploration of initial ideas developed by the Yurok Tribe’s Tribal Park Task Force. This document in no way represents any final decision by the Yurok Tribal Council with regard to this concept. The Tribal Council appointed the Tribal Park Task Force to assist the Council with the development and refining of these concepts. It is the Tribal Council’s intent to convene in-depth work sessions with the Tribal Park Task Force and the Tribal membership for the purposes of gathering input, comments, and refining details for these concepts. The Tribal Council will also continue to gather input and comments from various stakeholders and others.

The Yurok Tribal Council must underscore that some of the lands identified in this document are currently owned by Green Diamond Resource Company. The Tribe has entered into negotiations with Green Diamond to acquire approximately 47,000 acres of property currently owned by the company. Some of the concepts contained in this document are contingent on the acquisition of Green Diamond properties.

The Tribe has held very productive discussions regarding this potential acquisition with Green Diamond to date. However, the Tribe must make clear that the acquisition of these lands are not yet firm nor is there any final agreement between the Tribe and Green Diamond. The Tribe is in the process of finalizing a Letter of Intent (LOI) with the company that will identify the principles that will guide future negotiations between Green Diamond and the Yurok Tribe. Those principles include Green Diamond’s expectation that it will continue to manage property within the Yurok Reservation by fully complying with solely the laws and regulations of the State of California and the United States, which have governed the use of such property before and since it was acquired by Green Diamond, and which shall continue to regulate such property in the future. In addition to the terms of the sale, the Tribe and Green Diamond must reach agreement on this and other significant issues.

The Yurok Tribal Council has been appreciative of Green Diamond’s willingness to work with the Tribe on these and other issues surrounding this potential acquisition. The Tribe looks forward to continuing discussion with Green Diamond.
“Our people have always lived on this sacred and wondrous land along the Pacific Coast and inland on the Klamath River, since the Spirit People made things ready for us and the Creator placed us here. From the beginning, we have followed all the laws of the Creator, which became the whole fabric of our tribal sovereignty. In times past and now Yurok people bless the deep river, the tall redwood trees, the rocks, the mounds, and the trails. We pray for the health of all the animals and prudently harvest the great salmon runs and herds of deer and elk. We never waste and use every bit of the salmon, deer, elk, sturgeon, eels, seaweed, mussels, candlefish, otters, sea lions, seals, whales and other ocean and river animals. We also have practiced our stewardship of the land in the prairies and forests through controlled burns that improve wildlife habitat and enhance the health and growth of the tan oak acorns, hazelnuts, pepperwood nuts, berries, grasses and bushes, all of which are used and provide materials for baskets, fabrics, and utensils.”

~From the Preamble to the Yurok Constitution
YUROK TRIBAL PARK CONCEPT PLAN

THIS DOCUMENT WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY
A GRANT FROM THE RESOURCES LAW GROUP
IN COORDINATION WITH
THE YUROK TRIBE AND YUROK TRIBAL PARK TASKFORCE.

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August, 2005
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The decision by the Yurok Tribal Council to establish a Yurok tribal park system, and to strongly affiliate it with the compatible management of adjacent federal and state lands through co-management agreements, is one that will reaffirm our commitment to sustaining and restoring the forests, watershed, mountains, ocean, coast, lagoons and their endemic species within Yurok ancestral lands to the richness, diversity, and abundance provided by the Creator.

Over the centuries, since first contact between the resident Yurok people and invading settlers, virtually everything around the Yurok people has changed except their faith in and adherence to their traditional cultural values and life-ways. The sacred high country around Doctor Rock, now held by the National Forest, remains relatively intact, although sometimes trashed by debris of careless and uninformed visitors. The life-giving Klamath River still flows, albeit often with less water, and usually with fewer fish than are necessary to either a healthy ecosystem or for the sustenance of the Yurok people. Today, the coastal beaches and lagoons are the playground of non-Yuroks, but only occasionally allowed to provide the fish, shellfish, seaweed, and other marine life that are traditional foods for the Yurok people.

The Yurok Tribal Council, in an effort to fulfill the intent of its Constitution, seeks public support, inter-agency cooperation, and federal legislation to re-establish its traditional role in the management of its ancestral territory. Through use of this natural and cultural resource land base, the Yurok Tribe hopes to build a viable and sustainable economy for its people, while maintaining the land and rivers to ensure a healthy ecosystem.

As one key element of its future economy, establishment of the Yurok tribal park system with multiple and diverse sites throughout ancestral lands will boost the economy, allow establishment of viable tribal businesses, create jobs for Yurok people, and fulfill the aims of the Yurok Constitution to once again have a healthy ecosystem to sustain the Yurok people. Additionally, a Yurok Tribal Park will expand tribal sovereignty by, spearheading land base recovery, enabling co-management agreements providing the Tribe decision making authority over federal lands not transferred to the Tribe and educating the public on tribal sovereignty from a tribal perspective.

Assembling a Land Base for the Yurok Tribal Park

For a tribe that had lost its ancestral lands over the past centuries, reversing this loss will not be easy, but it will begin with a combination of land purchases from willing sellers, potential federal land transfer within its existing reservation boundary, and development of cooperative, co-management agreements with the three federal and one state land management agencies that occupy the remainder of its ancestral lands, the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service, and the California Parks Department.
Acquisition of Private Lands

Acquisition of private lands within both the Yurok Indian Reservation (YIR) and the tribe’s ancestral boundaries is one key element of the plan that has been approved by the Tribal Council and is critical to establishment of the Yurok tribal park system. Green Diamond Resources Company (GDR), formerly known as Simpson Timber Company, owns the majority of private lands within the current YIR. Recently Green Diamond has indicated its willingness to consider a sale, to the tribe, of a significant portion of its lands on the east side of the Klamath River, totaling some 47,000 acres. These lands fall both within and outside the current Reservation boundary, which the tribe intends to have expanded.

A portion of these Green Diamond lands, some 12,000 acres, lies in the lower watershed of Blue Creek, the site designated by the Tribal Council as the core of a Yurok tribal park system. Within the lands of the Blue Creek watershed the potential Yurok tribal park would be managed consistently to:

1) preserve and protect sacred sites;
2) sustain a wildlife and watershed protection program;
3) conduct a wetlands and fishery habitat restoration program;
4) establish an abundant elk population; and
5) develop the public recreation and tourism aspects of the tribal park.

Fundamental to management of the Yurok tribal park is the protection and management of traditional spiritual, ceremonial, hunting, and gathering sites in a manner that assures perpetual access for the Yurok people to these sites, and manages public use of them in a manner that assures compatibility.

Other smaller tracts on private land lie within the current reservation boundary, and acquisition of these lands by the tribe will be sought from willing sellers as funds become available. Some of these lands, whether along Highway 101 or beside the Bald Hills Road, contain significant natural and cultural resources, or could serve as sites for viable tourism-related businesses. Critical parcels exist, and are for sale, near the mouth of the Klamath and near the Yurok Experimental Forest, and should be high priorities for purchase.
Transfer of Federal Lands

Within the present Yurok Reservation boundary is some 1,340 acres of land, currently held and managed by the Redwood National Park. These lands were intended for transfer to the Tribe in the 1988 Hoopa-Yurok Settlement Act (HYSA), but did not occur in the final bill. The Yurok Tribe seeks to have these 1,340 acres, all at the mouth of the Klamath River, transferred to the Tribe upon settlement of the Act and ideally placed in tribal park status. To assure land management compatibility, for former NPS lands and other lands and programs in Redwood National and State Parks (RNSP), within the Yurok ancestral territory, the Yurok Tribe seeks co-management agreements with the RNSP.

The lands at the mouth of the Klamath River have always held economic, cultural, and spiritual significance for the Yurok people. As the site where all anadromous fish species enter the Klamath, management of the fishery at the mouth of the river has always been critical to this potentially sustainable and productive enterprise. Badly over-fished in the past by commercial fish canneries owned outside the tribe, the mouth of the river must be managed in a manner that offers the tribe the stability and sustainability of this fishery.
The Yurok Tribe has the only legally reserved fishing right on the Lower Klamath River. In the last thirty years, the Yurok Tribe has only been able to support commercial fishing sporadically. Commercial fishing is not an economically sustainable enterprise for the Yurok people if there are no fish entering the river, if the spawning grounds upstream are impaired, or if the fish cannot reach those spawning grounds because of impassible dams, poor water quality, reduced water flows, and/or warm-water temperature barriers.

Similarly, the ability of the Yurok people to subsist on the former bounty of the river fisheries has been seriously abridged, and should be restored over time, with the implementation of the tribal park system and associated federal and state agency actions. At the same time, a viable sport fishery on the river can provide Yurok tribal members with job opportunities through tribal owned or licensed outfitter and guide services.

The river mouth has always been and continues to be a traditional ceremonial and spiritual site. The mouth of the river holds great spiritual significance, for which its use and management should be guided by the tribe and its traditional practices. Other public recreational and tourism activities can and will be accommodated here, and elsewhere, in a manner that is compatible with and respectful of the spiritual values and ceremonial practices of the Yurok people.

These lands can also serve as the site of other appropriate and compatible developments to provide services for tourists and other visitors to the area. River adventure and interpretive tours, camping, craft sales, and other commercial enterprises offered by the tribe, or by tribally licensed concession businesses can greatly assist employment and economic progress for the Yurok Tribe, while assuring that the scenic and ecological qualities of the lands remain compatible with national park standards.
In addition, the Yurok Tribe is seeking title transfer of Redding Rock, a significant 5-acre sea stack rising above the Pacific Ocean some 3 miles off-shore, which has significant spiritual value to the Yurok. Currently, Redding Rock is a part of the California Coastal National Monument, managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Tribe proposes to designate a marine protected area around the Rock, and to manage the significant ground fishery, sea lion rookery and shellfish there, as well as to protect its cultural values. Additionally, there are several other smaller rocks near the Mouth of the Klamath River which lie within the Monument that the tribe seeks to have transferred to tribal trust status.

Finally, the tribe intends to secure transfer, through federal legislation, of all of the Yurok Experimental Forest, some 1,000 acres, of the Six Rivers National Forest adjacent to California Highway 101. The forest is comprised of several parcels detached from the Six Rivers National Forest system and includes several historic buildings, an old growth forest remnant as well as rehabilitated forest lands. The Tribe currently leases the historic buildings for office and storage space for several Tribal Departments. The small old growth forest remnant, in several disconnected parcels, offers critical habitat for several threatened or endangered species of wildlife, including marbled murrelet, and can offer the public an easily accessible, guided first-experience in an old growth redwood forest. All of these land transfers would be accomplished through federal legislation.

Co-management of Federal Lands in the Yurok Ancestral Territory

The Yurok Tribe is proposing to enter into co-management agreements with each of the three federal and one state agencies that currently manage lands within the ancestral boundary of the Yurok territory. For the National Park Service and California State Parks, a co-management agreement with the Yurok Tribe would be a significant expansion of existing agreements and joint activities that involve programs ranging from curation and cataloging of cultural artifacts to prescribed burning to maintain open meadows in the Bald Hills region of the park. In particular, the tribe would like to take an active lead in interpretation and education of park visitors on all aspects of Yurok culture, and would like to regain appropriate access to traditional ceremonial and gathering sites inside the parks.

Elk cow along Bald Hills Road
The RNSP already have a very successful co-management agreement in place for the joint management of the state and federal parks. The Yurok Tribe will seek to have its tribal park added to this co-management arrangement, in order to establish a Redwood National, State and Yurok Tribal Parks Complex that can be seamlessly managed and maintained.

For the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Yurok Tribe intends to enter into a Steward or other agreement for co-management, of all portions, of the California Coastal National Monument along the Pacific Ocean that fall within Yurok ancestral territory. Yurok coastal ancestral territory ranges from Little River in the south some 50 miles north to the mouth of Damnation Creek. Such management agreements are authorized in the new National Monument Management Plan recently finalized by the BLM.

For the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Yurok Tribe intends to enter into a co-management agreement for all portions of the Six-Rivers National Forest (SRNF) that fall within Yurok ancestral territory. For current and proposed “Wilderness” designated areas of the National Forest that lie in the Blue Creek watershed, the Tribe proposes consolidation into one whole “Wilderness” management unit and re-naming as the “Yurok Wilderness.” Further, the tribe seeks to manage the Blue Creek watershed as a single management unit, and together with the private lands that the tribe will acquire in the lower watershed, dedicate this special area as Yurok Tribal Park. Blue Creek is of particular spiritual and ceremonial significance to the Yurok Tribe, and is the site of its most important sacred places in the high country, which lies within the southern Siskiyou Wilderness on the SRNF.
Establishment of the Yurok Tribal Park System

Because the Yurok Tribe traditionally occupied and utilized resources from a diverse geography, a Yurok tribal park system should also be a reflection of that geographic diversity. From the sacred high-country, into the river and stream valleys, along the river terraces, and out onto coastal lagoons, beaches and sea-stacks, a fully representative Yurok tribal park will be formed. The Yurok tribal park system will both showcase the culture and native terrain of the Yurok people to all Americans, and preserve these resources for customary uses by the Yurok people today.

The core of the Yurok tribal park system will be the Blue Creek Watershed, some 80,000 acres currently comprised of both private and U.S. Forest Service lands. The private lands will be purchased, and the federal lands, designated wilderness, will be managed under a cooperative management agreement as an integral component of the Yurok tribal park system.

Additional sites within the ancestral Yurok lands will be managed by the Yurok Tribe as units of a tribal park system, either through direct purchase, public land title transfer, or co-management agreement.

As one particular component of the system, the 12.5 acre ancient Tsurai Village site in the Town of Trinidad will be acquired by the Yurok Tribe and managed as a park unit. A scenic trail, ecological restoration, possible village demonstration project, and an active interpretive guide program are contemplated there. The Yurok Tribe is currently involved in development, along with Trinidad City and California state offices, of a Tsurai Village Management and Restoration Plan.
At a site yet to be determined, the Tribe will construct and operate a Tribal Museum and Cultural Center, serving traditional cultural needs of tribal members, as well as appropriate public exhibits, tours, demonstrations, and craft sales. Additionally at sites to be determined within the tribal park system, the tribe will establish tribally owned or licensed businesses, one or more eco-lodges, one or more campgrounds, food services, camper supply sales, craft and souvenir sales, and other related business opportunities.

Finally, a key component of the Yurok tribal park system will be an integrated trail system linking high mountains, stream and river valleys, and the coastal beaches. Both culturally and historically, the Yurok people maintained a complex network of foot trails throughout ancestral lands, the importance of which has been well-documented in ethnographic literature. Today, hiking is one of the most common recreational activities. The designated long-distance California Coastal Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail, together with the connectivity offered between them through the Yurok tribal park system can establish a potentially popular network of circuit trails, while protecting cultural and traditional values, that will rival any in the country for scenic diversity, variable lengths, and natural and cultural resource education opportunities.

**Key Resource Elements of the Proposed Yurok Tribal Park**

**Blue Creek Watershed** – Blue Creek is the second largest and one of the most important tributaries of the Lower Klamath River basin. It is the first coldwater inflow reached by salmon on their journey from the ocean, and itself is an important spawning habitat for Chinook, Coho and Steelhead anadromous species. The most important factor in its ecological integrity is that most of the watershed that lies within the Six Rivers National Forest has not been logged, at least in over a century, and a portion of that has been designated as statutory wilderness. Some 30,000 acres of the watershed comprise the lower portion of the southern Siskiyou Wilderness. Another 30,000 acres of the Blue Creek watershed is qualified for and proposed to be designated as “Wilderness” in pending legislation.\(^1\)

The entire Blue Creek watershed is an essential component of the Yurok tribal park. Through a co-management agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, the private and public lands of the watershed will be managed as a single ecological unit. Critical restoration projects will be needed in the lower portion of the watershed to address legacy road systems and past logging practices that have long since been improved. A key wildlife management goal is restoration of a naturally abundant elk population in the watershed, which will allow resumption of a subsistence hunt for the Yurok people in this area.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) H.R, 3327, the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Act of 2005, proposes to designate wilderness areas in several national forests, including this portion of the Six Rivers National Forest. At this writing, the bill has not passed Congress.

\(^2\) A parallel co-management agreement with Redwood National and State Parks will allow capture of surplus elk from herds in these parks and transfer to the Yurok Tribe for re-establishment of herds in the tribal park.
The Yurok Tribe is seeking to have both the existing and proposed “Wilderness” areas of the upper Blue Creek Watershed combined into a single management unit and re-designated, in statute, as the “Yurok Wilderness,” which will then be the nucleus of a Yurok tribal park under a co-management agreement with the U.S. Forest Service.

Some 12,000 acres of the Blue Creek Watershed, from its lower elevations to its mouth on the Klamath River, is currently owned by the Green Diamond Resources Company, which has agreed to a process to explore the potential sale of selected lands (both here and elsewhere) to the Yurok Tribe. Virtually all of these Green Diamond lands have been logged, over the last fifty years. Timber management practices on these lands have placed an emphasis solely on developing stands of Redwoods and Douglas fir trees and include practices to control competing native and non-native vegetation to enhance crop trees and prairie conversion.

A critical management objective for the lower Blue Creek watershed, when it is returned to Yurok ownership, will be restoration to a naturally complex ecosystem, so that traditional practices for gathering and hunting can be resumed. At the same time, these lands will serve as the customary recreation “front-country” for tourists and park visitors to the Yurok tribal park. The tribal park will minimally provide a campground, camper store, and network of foot, horse, and mountain bike trails in the restored lands in the lower watershed, and serve as the gateway for hikers who seek to link with the Pacific Crest Trail, or to complete a shorter circuit back to the coast on the Kelsey Trail through the adjacent Smith River National Recreation Area. The network of trails in the Blue Creek Watershed is sufficiently diverse that it will allow the tribal park managers to both
serve a variety of recreation interests, and to protect the spiritual values and privacy for traditional spiritual and ceremonial uses.

**Tsurai Village Site** – Within the Town of Trinidad and sitting just above the scenic Trinidad Bay, at the southern edge of Yurok ancestral lands, is a 12.5 acre site that is the location of an ancient Tsurai village that has been well documented in ethnographic and anthropological literature. The Yurok Tribe is currently in negotiations with the Town for transfer of these 12.5 acres to the Tribe. Sitting on a terrace above the high tide line, the village site will offer the Yurok tribal park system a culturally significant component that will add considerable diversity. In partnership with the California Coastal Conservancy, City of Trinidad and the Tsurai Ancestral Society, the Yurok Tribal Historic Preservation Office is currently drafting a management plan for the site. The management plan envisions enhanced area trails, site restoration, area vegetation management and future interpretation opportunities.

![Commemorative marker of Tsurai Village Site in Trinidad](image)

**Requa Hill** – On the high bluff facing the Pacific Ocean on the north side of the Mouth of the Klamath River, the tribe has recently acquired a 2-acre tract that was a former FAA communications facility. Adjacent to this is the main maintenance complex serving Redwood National Park. The NPS has current plans and funding to relocate its maintenance facility to a more centralized site further north, and will then have no further use for these facilities. Since these lands already fall within the Yurok Reservation and have been intended for transfer to tribal ownership previously, the tribe currently anticipates that transfer of these lands would be included in legislation pending in the U.S. Congress. Because there is some geological instability on portions of the bluff, the NPS is anxious to have some of the facilities removed and the site restored.
There is considerable spiritual and cultural significance to this headland area in Yurok understanding, and consequently the tribe is also anxious to have the site restored and put to more compatible uses as a part of the tribal park system. To that end, the tribe would seek an amendment to the annual funding agreement with the NPS to carry out the site restoration. Some $1.5 million has already been appropriated for facility removal and restoration and could be transferred to the tribe for this task.

**Mouth of the Klamath River** – Some 1,340 acres of land within Redwood National Park at the Mouth of the Klamath River also lies within the Yurok Reservation. An additional 149 acre tract is in private ownership of Yurok tribal members. In past discussions with the family they were not willing to sell the property to the NPS, but they have discussed selling the property to the Tribe. Several years ago, the Yuork Tribe was in negotiations for the property but the Tribe was unable to secure adequate funding at that time. Inclusion of this tract in the tribal park would allow the tribe to offer essential
Klamath River Estuary

visitor facilities and further preserve critical ceremonial sites. This high ground above the flood zone is one possible site for an eco-lodge and/or camping facility that would serve recreationists as a key trail stop for California Coastal Trail, as well as other tribal/national park visitors. The river sand spit also provides access to a very important fishery, both for the beginning of the salmon spawning runs, and for a variety of ocean species traditionally caught from the ocean bar across the river mouth, such as eels. The Yurok First Fish Ceremony involves several rocks and the sand spit at this site.

Coastal Rocks and Sea-stacks—A fifty-mile section of the Pacific Coast of northern California falls within the ancestral territory of the Yurok people. All of the coastal rocks, islands, and sea-stacks of the California coast form the California Coastal National Monument, managed by the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The management plan that BLM has prepared for the monument provides for the establishment of coastal section “Stewards,” management partners for the agency to assist with the day-to-day monitoring and management of the national monument. The Yurok tribe will negotiate a management Steward agreement with BLM for this 50-mile section of coastal monument within tribal ancestral territory.
Beyond the Steward agreement for co-management of a larger portion of the Monument, the tribe will seek title transfer of Redding Rock, a large, nearly 5-acre, sea-stack some 3
miles offshore. In Yurok knowledge, Redding Rock was formed when an angry girl, soon to be betrothed, threw a grinding pestle at a fleeing lover; it remains an important spiritual site for the tribe, and would also form the centerpiece of a larger marine reserve that the tribe would establish for the management and appropriate use of the important groundfish populations, sea lion rookery, marine birds, and shellfish that inhabit the rock and adjacent waters.

**Yurok Experimental Forest** – A significant old-growth remnant of native coastal forest, known as the Yurok Experimental Forest, approximately 1,000 acres, was set aside by the U.S. Forest Service as a research area decades ago, and remains as a detached, isolated portion of the Six Rivers National Forest today. Several historic structures on this site are currently managed by the Yurok Tribe under a long-term lease, and utilized as the offices of several Yurok Tribal Departments.

The Yurok Tribe seeks title transfer of the Yurok Experimental Forest, and other miscellaneous forest service parcels located in the Klamath area. A boundary adjustment could also be sought to incorporate the tract into the exterior boundaries of the reservation. This forest remnant currently provides critical habitat for several species, including the threatened marbled murrelet, and would be managed by the tribe as a key resource element of the Yurok Tribal Park. The site’s proximity to California Highway
101 would allow for very viable guided interpretive tours of the site by certified Yurok guides, and the area could serve as the interpretive site for Yurok craftsmen carrying out river and ocean canoe-carving demonstrations.

**Klamath River Cultural Riverscape** – Because the Klamath River has always been such a vital resource to the entire culture of the Yurok people, and because so many specific sites along the river are known to have played in the past, and continue to play at present, essential roles in subsistence fishing, canoe-making, ceremonies, and spiritual practices, the tribe seeks to have this significance recognized through the designation of the river as a “Cultural Riverscape.” Such an official determination of eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, covering all of the cultural sites along the river important to Yurok heritage would offer national recognition, protection, and potential funding that could support management and appropriate uses of the river as a component of the Yurok tribal park system.

**Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Area** – A key natural resources component of the tribal park will be the development of a plan for habitat restoration and management to serve a variety of native species of mammals, birds, and fish that are endemic to the region, and important culturally to the tribe. Animal species include salmon, eels, steelhead trout, and sturgeon; deer, elk and black bear; spotted owls and marbled...
murrelets, among others. Plants important to traditional cultural practices include redwood, cedar, tan oak, hazel and mock orange trees, various grasses, clover, bulbs, berries, and nuts.

Restoration of elk habitat in the lower Blue Creek drainage, through burning, thinning and meadow replanting is a critical management objective. Re-establishment of an abundant anadromous fish population in the full-range of age classes is a long-term objective that will require both habitat restoration and protection in the lower Klamath, and cooperation from upstream land managers and regulators, including removal of several dams that currently block the passage of spawning salmon runs.

Restoration of wetlands in several freshwater lagoons along the coast is also a management objective of the Yurok tribal park, but will take the long-term cooperation of a variety of federal and state agencies, as well as some purchase of private lands from willing sellers as they become available.

**Other Cultural Sites** – Within the Yurok ancestral territory, but currently found on other private and public lands, are numerous significant Yurok heritage sites, known through ethnographic, anthropological, or other studies, that warrant protection, better management, and where appropriate, public interpretation. The tribe will seek cooperative management agreements, easement acquisition, or other means to secure access to and protection of these cultural sites. Among the additional important cultural sites are places such as Rock Pile, Bluff Creek, Bee Mountain, Onion Lake, Fish Lake, Burrils Peak, Lake Prairie, Aikens Creek, Big Lagoon, Stone Lagoon and Freshwater Lagoon.
Key Recreation and Tourism Facilities and Services
That Offer Jobs & Economic Benefits
in the Yurok Tribal Park System

Yurok Eco-Lodge – One facility that is considered a cornerstone to the Yurok tribal park is an “eco-lodge,” a sensitively designed and located destination lodge that will provide accommodations, food, and other services to tribal members, tourists and other recreationists visiting the area. Fortunately for the economic viability of this enterprise, there is no traditional national park lodge associated with Redwood National and State Parks, and no other private lodgings that serve this market niche in the vicinity of the parks’ complex.

Conceivably, the potential visitor base seeking to experience the natural and cultural resources of the area could sustain two or more eco-lodges, one possibly located near the mouth of the Klamath, and one upriver, possibly in the lower Blue Creek watershed or further upriver near Bluff Creek or Fish Lake. Associated visitor services would also include restaurants, gift shops, and fishing, camping, and picnicking supplies sales.
**Yurok Museum and Cultural Center** – One of the best means to convey appropriate aspects of the Yurok culture to the general public will be tribal, design, construction, and operation of a Museum/Visitor Center that includes exhibits.

Once the Museum is in place, with suitable curatorial storage and protection measures established, the tribe will be in its best position better house current and future Yurok collections of baskets and other items. Current collections are housed at Yurok Tribal Offices and through a cooperative agreement with the RNP facility.

**Bald Hills Road National Scenic Byway** – The entire length of the Bald Hills Road from CA Highway 101 to Hwy 169 on the Yurok Reservation should be designated by the Federal Highways Administration (or by an Act of Congress) as a National Scenic Byway. In order for this route to provide a viable tour, significant improvements to the roadbed and surface will be needed.

At present, the Bald Hills Road provides visitor access to the “Tall Trees Grove” in Redwood National Park, which is a very significant attraction containing the world's tallest tree. Also along this road, the NPS and the Yurok Tribe currently work cooperatively to maintain the open bald meadows that give the road its name. These “balds,” traditionally maintained by fire, have been critical to the Yurok people as
gathering places for plant materials used in basket-making, medicines, foods and ceremonies. For the future, live interpretation programs in these meadows could provide additional cultural experiences for visitors and jobs for Yurok interpretive guides.

Even in the park however, the Bald Hills Road is in a badly deteriorated condition, and elsewhere along its route is seriously unsafe for the many Yurok people who use the road daily. Reconstruction and routine maintenance of the Bald Hills Road is a high priority for the tribe, and should be for Humboldt County and the Federal Highway Administration’s Federal Lands Highway Program. The NPS should make road safety improvements a high priority for the Bald Hills Road, and do so cooperatively with the county and the tribe for the segment that serves the Reservation as the primary access road.

**Yurok Campgrounds** – In addition to the eco-lodge(s), another tribally operated or licensed business that would serve tourists to the area well would be one or possibly several campground facilities, one in lower Blue Creek, one at the Mouth of the Klamath River, lagoons and one or more upriver at sites near Weitchpec, Wautec, Fish Lake or Aikens Creek as integral components of the Yurok tribal park system. Coordination would be needed with the co-management partners to avoid duplication or excess
capacity, with a priority given to the tribe for establishment of any new capacity to serve area visitors.

While the campgrounds, especially near Highway 101 at the Mouth of the Klamath, could serve the overnight needs for tourists passing through, the primary target clientele would be for longer-term campers staying multiple nights and engaging in various daytime activities in the parks, or for recreational hikers or bikers who would move between campgrounds on the ocean and inland along the river to the high country.

**Yurok Klamath River Docks** – In order to efficiently move visitors from the coast upriver, the tribe would establish, or license, small businesses to provide various boat services from docks along the estuary of the Klamath, and at smaller docks upriver. Eco-tour businesses licensed by the tribe could take visitors on day-trips on the river or provide upriver transport for tribal members, tribal employees, hikers and campers; a sport fishing guide service would provide charter boat services, sales and rental gear, and food for paying guests, as well as processing and packaging for customer’s catch to be carried/mailed home.

One unique service that is needed and that would be provided by tribally operated or licensed boat businesses would be a ferry service to carry California Coastal Trail hikers across the mouth of the Klamath. At present, such long-distance hikers must leave the coast hiking some miles inland to the Highway 101 Bridge and back out to the coast in order to cross the Klamath Mouth. These docks would also serve to support a regular river “taxi” service, both for tribal members, and for visitors heading upriver to the Blue Creek tribal park facilities.

**Trinidad Ocean Fishing/Tour Services** – The most logical and viable ocean harbor for development of visitor services would be located in Trinidad, which has a sheltered and well developed harbor. With the location of the ancient Tsurai Village component of the tribal park system there as well, the opportunity to reconnect Yurok culture with modern heritage and eco-tour business opportunities presents a viable scenario. A seasonal eco-business offering scenic motorboat or guided sea kayak tours in combination with cultural heritage interpretation, and/or sport fishing services would create new job opportunities for tribal members. Such businesses could be tribally owned and operated, or licensed in cooperation with other governmental entities in the Trinidad area.
Yurok Interpretive Guide Service – One of the most viable small business opportunities associated with establishment of the Yurok tribal park system would be to develop a Yurok Interpretive Guide Service. This business could be developed either as a tribally owned and operated company, or licensed as a tribal concession service. Individual tribal members would complete a two-part training and certification course, administered jointly by the Yurok Historic Preservation Office, the tribe’s Natural Resource Department, and the National Association for Interpretation (NAI). NAI is the national professional society for public interpretation and offers a variety of interpretive guide and “master interpreter” training and certification courses, which teach basic interpretive education and presentation skills. The tribe’s Historic Preservation Office and natural resources departments would provide the specific training for prospective interpreters in the natural and cultural heritage of the Yurok people and its ancestral lands. Tribal members thus provided with interpretive guide training and certification will offer visitors a range of natural and cultural heritage interpretive programs, including Museum-based short programs, evening programs at the eco-lodges and campgrounds, guided backcountry trail expeditions, and river and ocean-based boat/canoe tours.

Yurok Trail System – One aspect of the Yurok culture that is nearly unique compared with other Native Americans is the extent to which foot trails are an integral part of the tribe’s traditional spiritual, ceremonial and cultural practices. The noted ethnographer of the Yurok people, T. T. Waterman wrote, in his classic book, *Yurok Geography*, that

“Trails are ‘like people,’ that is, they are sentient, and must be treated with urbanity. If you step out of a trail and in again, and fail to preserve decorum, the trail becomes resentful. Along each important trail there are “resting-places.” Few of these show on my maps, because I did not travel the trails myself, but hundreds of such places are to be found. People when traveling kept on in a business-like way until they came to these resting places. There they took off their packs and had a good breathing spell. If they did differently they were likely to have bad luck...Here and there in Yurok country are large trees into which parties of travelers shot arrows, as an offering for good luck on the trail.”
Trails are also an important park management tool, allowing land managers to direct and manage uses into or away from certain areas as needed to both serve visitors and protect sensitive resources. Many of the existing roads within the Yurok ancestral territory follow old trails. Such trail management would be an important aspect of a Yurok tribal park system. The Tribe is seeking to establish a tribal Student Conservation Association (SCA) program and would also seek to be partners with the associations involved in the Pacific Crest (PCT) and California Coastal Trails (CCT).

A key management objective will be to design and build/restore an inter-connected network of trails connecting routes, recognizing cultural and traditional sensitivities, in the tribal park system with Redwood National & State Parks, Six Rivers National Forest, Smith River National Recreation Area, the Kelsey Trail, the California Coastal Trail, and the Pacific Crest Trail. Construction grants and contracts with the Yurok Tribe from federal agencies will be sought through co-management and compacting authorities.

Special designations, such as “national recreational trail,” or “tribal heritage trail” will be established, both to provide public recognition for marketing purposes, and to offer access to grant and contract funds to build and maintain or restore the trail system. On certain designated trails in the Yurok tribal park system, a certified tribal interpretive guide will be required, both to protect especially sensitive cultural areas, to avoid critical areas at critical spiritual times, and to enhance the visitor experience through added educational value from the guide.
Fulfilling Co-Management Agreements with Federal and State Agency Partners

The term “co-management” as used in the context of this Concept Plan means putting the values that are shared by all of the land management agencies who manage the Yurok ancestral territory into practice through jointly undertaken management decisions and joint implementation actions, involving the tribe in meaningful ways from conception to implementation.

Freshwater Lagoon along Hwy 101

Nothing about co-management means that any agency has compromised its fundamental statutory framework, its core management principles, or its operating practices. Rather, co-management means that each agency has agreed to move forward with its land management responsibilities through a partnership that not only recognizes but embraces the fact that the Yurok people bring essential knowledge, skills, and abilities about the diverse natural and cultural resources in their lower Klamath River territory to the land management decisions-making process. Further, co-management means that once such decisions are jointly made, the implementation will occur with full participation of the Yurok people who bring essential knowledge, skills, labor and other abilities.
Fundamentally, the Yurok Tribe’s philosophy of land management is one grounded in a desire to foster biodiversity of both plants and animals native to its ancestral territory. At the same time, the tribe believes that the natural biodiversity of their homeland can best be fostered (or restored) through wise management, and that this wise management must be grounded in the deep knowledge gained over the millennia in which the Yurok people have applied their wisdom to management of these lands and waters.

**Management Objectives Specific to Each Agency Co-management Partner**

National Park Service & California Department of Parks and Recreation

1. Tribal management of Ganns Prairie and other traditional balds for restoration of meadow species through prescribed burning in order to support continuation of traditional cultural practices and restore biodiversity.

   ![Meadows along Bald Hills Road](image)

2. Re-location of surplus elk from national and state parks to tribal park system lands in Blue Creek, in order to re-establish a Yurok tribal herd to support resumption of a subsistence hunting tradition, and to restore that ecosystem.

3. Employment of tribal interpretive guides in each national and state park visitor center to provide tribal culture and history interpretation/education.

4. Tribal use of downed or salvaged redwood trees from the parks for traditional canoe carving and house planks.
5. Prohibition of sport climbing on sacred rocks at the mouth of the Klamath River.

6. Amendment to the annual funding agreement for facility removal and site restoration of former NPS maintenance yard on Requa Hill, including interim space utilization by the Yurok tribal park system.

7. Appropriate access to traditional fishing beaches and lagoons in national and state parks.

U.S. Forest Service

1. Management and public recreational use plan for the Yurok Wilderness in the Blue Creek watershed portion of the Yurok tribal park system.

2. A trails plan, including restrictions on public use near Doctor Rock, and development of alternative trail routes into the high country, including connector trails to the Pacific Crest Trail and loop trails into the Smith River National Recreation Area.

3. USFS support in restoration efforts for the native forests and meadows of the lower Blue Creek lands that the tribe will acquire.

4. A native forest management plan for others units of the Six Rivers National Forest designed to support viable places with stands of species utilized in traditional Yurok foods, medicines, crafts, and cultural practices, including
especially oak groves, hazelwood sticks (new growth), and a variety of meadow species.

5. USFS support for re-establishment of a viable elk population throughout the Blue Creek watershed.

Bureau of Land Management

1. Designation of the Yurok Tribe as the Steward for the 50-mile segment of the National Monument that lies within ancestral territory.

2. Contract with the Yurok Tribe to write and design appropriate interpretive exhibits and signage that provides appropriate and accurate public information about the Yurok cultural significance of the offshore rocks and sea-stacks.

3. Development (also in cooperation with the National Marine Fisheries Service) of a fish, shellfish, seaweed, kelp, marine mammal, and other living marine resources management plan for this 50-mile segment of the national monument that is Tribally monitored and managed.
Recreation and Tourism Market Analysis
Summary for the Yurok Tribal Park System

In April 2005, the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) issued a press release entitled “Americans Pick Top U.S. Treasures,” which places the “Redwood Forest” number eight (8) in the TIA top ten destinations list. TIA noted that “this year the travel industry is inviting travelers to recognize the many treasures we have in our great country. It’s interesting to note that the top ten are all magnificent outdoor experiences that either highlight our natural beauty or our history and culture.” Nine of the top ten TIA sites are focused on national parks (all except Niagara Falls). Of the TIA top ten, it is significant that Redwood National and State Parks are currently the least heavily visited, indicating a latent potential for becoming a major tourist destination. It is also worth noting that California is already the number one vacation destination state in America for travelers, and receives 21% of all foreign travelers to the United States.

The advent of a Yurok tribal park system with first-class visitor facilities and services would seem to be timely and needed. The Yurok tribal park system is being planned for development in close cooperation with three federal agencies, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, as well several state agencies such as California State Parks and California Coastal Conservancy, as well as, lands owned or to be acquired by the Yurok Tribe. While all of these agencies manage spectacular natural resources, none of them provide visitor accommodations other than campgrounds, while interpretive services are being reduced. The North Coast region of California lacks a great destination lodge like those associated with other national parks (such as the Ahwahnee in Yosemite, the Wuksachi in Sequoia, the El Tovar in Grand Canyon, or the Old Faithful Inn in Yellowstone).

Humboldt County and Del Norte Counties, the two northern coastal California Counties in which all of the Yurok Ancestral territory lies, currently falls at the mid-point in annual visitation among all counties in the State. In 2003, visitors to Humboldt County spent some $249 million, making the tourist economy second only to the timber industry in the county, and providing some 4550 jobs.

In the decade between 1994-2003 one common measure of the growth in tourism, the so-called “bed tax,” (formally known as the transient occupancy tax) increased by more than 50% in Humboldt County, bringing in a total of over $5 million in fiscal year 2004 alone to local governments.

In response to surveys carried out by the local Convention and Visitors Bureau, the vast majority of visitors to the county have indicated that the most important influences on their decision to travel are the natural beauty of the area, its uniqueness or genuine characteristics, and the value derived for the expense of visiting the area. In addition,

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3 “Humboldt County 2004: The Tourism Industry ‘Cluster.’ Prepared by the Humboldt County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Eureka, CA
4 Del Norte Statistics were not available at time of publication of this concept plan.
respondents have indicated that viewing the redwood forests, and enjoying the beaches, together with general scenic driving, are the major attractions of the area at present. More than half of visitors seek experiences in the surrounding mountains or on the rivers of the region. Currently, three times as many visitors to the region stay in hotels or motels than make use of campgrounds.

The visitor profile and current tourism trends in northern California indicate a good potential for the economic development benefits of a Yurok tribal park system being realized in the coming years.

Tsurai Village site in Trinidad
APPENDIX 1

A Brief Yurok History

The Yurok people have lived, since time immemorial, along the Klamath River and Pacific coast of northern California, with the culture subsisting on abundant supplies of salmon, mussels, acorns, elk, deer and other natural resources. The ancient forests provided redwood logs for carving both river and ocean canoes, and planks for people’s houses. The ancestral territory of the Yurok people ranged from their sacred high country in the mountains of the southern Siskiyou, to the banks and terraces above the Klamath River, where most villages were located, onto the Pacific shoreline lagoons, and even out into the numerous rocks and sea stacks miles from shore. The Klamath River was the people’s highway, as well as their source of food, inspiration, and cultural fulfillment.

Yurok culture, its sacred sites, its traditional ceremonies, its life-ways and practices, even today, are inextricably tied to the forests and waters of its ancestral territories. Centuries before modern scientists understood the natural role of fire in forest management, the Yurok people regularly burned sections of forest to assure production of new growth used for food, medicines, clothing and craft materials.

At the time of first contact with European settlers along the North Coast of California, there were more than seventy Yurok villages, spaced along both the Klamath River and the Coastal lagoons and headlands. Primarily because contact came so late in the settlement of the continent by Europeans, and because contact was followed so closely by the discovery of gold in California, the native Californians were treated more harshly even than most other Native Americans had been. With no more of the continent further west available to “remove” the Indians to, a policy of extermination was advocated and utilized wherever possible.

California was annexed by the United States by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, gold was discovered in northern California in 1849, and the Yurok Tribe gained official federal recognition in the Treaty of 1851. As many as half the Yurok population died over the following decades from measles, smallpox and tuberculosis passed on from settlers. Many others were killed by settlers, miners, and loggers over the balance of the 19th century. Many Yurok villages were subsequently burned by settlers.

The Klamath River Reservation was established by the federal government for the Yurok people in 1855, on the lower 20 miles of the river, consisting of about 25,000 acres within one mile of either side of the river. In 1864 the Hoopa Valley Reservation was established upstream along the Trinity River. In 1891, a further small part of our aboriginal land was added when "The Extension" to the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation was set aside by executive order authorized by the 1864 statute, which created the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation. This statutory reservation extension extended from the mouth of the Klamath River, including the old Klamath River Reserve, about 50 miles inland and encompassed the river and its bed, along with one mile of land on both sides of the
river. Although the Yurok and Hoopa Tribes were similar yet distinct cultures, they were forced into political affiliation by the federal government, and basically occupied the same reservation together until 1988. During that 140 years, the Yurok people and their economic development (but not their culture) were dominated by the political control of the Hoopa Tribe.

In 1891, the Hoopa Valley Reservation was joined to the Klamath River Reservation, covering the entire 44 miles of the lower Klamath River to its mouth on the Pacific Ocean, establishing it as one reservation politically dominated by the Hoopa Tribe, even though the Yurok were the more numerous tribe.

Over the ensuing century, the Yurok lands along the river portion of the reservation were mostly transferred out of Yurok ownership by various federal statutes including the Timber and Stone Act and the Allotment Act. At the same time the more isolated Hupa lands upriver were never stolen.

The Yurok Tribe Today

In 1963, a federal lawsuit, known as the Jessie Short Case, was filed by a number of Yurok people, who argued that they were entitled to a share of the proceeds from timber sales on the reservation, which up to that point had benefited only Hupa people. In 1972 the U.S. Court of Claims ruled in favor of the plaintiffs in the case. Following years of political and legal wrangling over the outcome, in 1988 Congress enacted the Hoopa-Yurok Settlement Act (HYSA) (P.L. 100-580) which reversed the court’s decision and divided the reservation into two, the Hoopa Valley Reservation and the Yurok Reservation.

The HYSA resulted in an enormous inequity, with the Hupa Tribe retaining the political, social, and economic infrastructure of the former joint reservation that had been developed over the previous century, including ownership of over 80% of the land within their reservation boundary. In stark contrast, the Yurok Tribe was given a reservation in which they had no infrastructure other than individual homes, and ownership of less than 20% of the lands within the reservation boundary.

Nevertheless, some 150 years after its recognition by the federal government as a distinct tribe, the Yurok people formally organized as the Yurok Tribe with adoption of its Constitution in 1991 and election of its Tribal Council. Objectives of the Yurok Constitution are as follows:

1. Preserve forever the survival of our tribe and protect it from forces which may threaten its existence;

2. Uphold and protect our tribal sovereignty which has existed from time immemorial and which remains undiminished;
3. Reclaim the tribal land base within the Yurok Reservation and enlarge the Reservation boundaries to the maximum extent possible within the ancestral lands of our tribe and/or within any compensatory land area;

4. Preserve and promote our culture, language, and religious beliefs and practices, and pass them on to our children, our grandchildren, and to their children and grandchildren on, forever;

5. Provide for the health, education, economy, and social wellbeing of our members and future members;

6. Restore, enhance, and manage the tribal fishery, tribal water rights, tribal forests, and all other natural resources; and

7. Insure peace, harmony, and protection of individual human rights among our members and among others who may come within the jurisdiction of our tribal government.

Owning less than 1% of its ancestral territory and thus being unable to effectively provide for the economic, social or cultural needs of its people, the Yurok Tribe has been confronted with an enormous task. Although it has been granted the only commercial fishing rights on the lower Klamath River, and although it owns senior water rights on the River, the damming and diversion of the rivers’ waters far upstream, has, up to this time, rendered even this asset largely unable to support the tribe’s social and economic infrastructure. The ancestral forest of the Yurok people is owned by others. Today, the Yurok Tribe seeks restitution. The establishment of a tribal park will address each of the Yurok Tribe constitutional objectives.
APPENDIX 2

Benefits of a Tribal Park for the Yurok People

Establishment of a Yurok tribal park system, operated both to serve tribal members and the general tourism public, would produce a variety of benefits to the tribe, and to individual members of the tribe, that will increase over time and essentially be permanent ones, assuring a brighter economic future. Nevertheless, it will be desirable to have designated portions of the tribal park system, and/or specific times during the year, when the parks and their resources are available exclusively for the use and benefit of tribal members, especially to support and sustain subsistence uses and traditional ceremonial and other cultural practices.

However, in order to maximize the job creation and economic benefits of the tribal park, there will also be many times and places in which the tribal park is open to the general public. As a park established by the tribe for the benefit of its people, the tribe will establish management rules and regulations that will control the types, levels, and means of usage by the public, in order to assure the long-term sustainability of the park and its resources. It is this “management” of the park that will assure that its use produces benefits on an on-going basis.

Immersion Center for Tribal Youth

One of the major reasons for establishing a tribal culture center and museum will be for the benefit of tribal members, and especially for their children. Over the past century, much of the Yurok culture, language, and traditional practices have been threatened with irrevocable loss. While most of the traditional knowledge of the Yurok people remains with the tribal elders, much work is needed to assure that this traditional knowledge is passed on to succeeding generations. One way to assure that the Yurok cultural knowledge is permanently retained is through a formal immersion program focused on tribal youth, which is intended to be a major purpose of a new tribal culture center and museum.

Subsistence and Other Traditional Practices

For tribal members, the first obvious benefit of the park will be the greatly improved ability of the tribe to assure an available and abundant supply of the natural resources of the coastal forests, rivers and ocean that have sustained its people since time immemorial. Restoration and management of redwood and oak groves, salmon, eel, steelhead, sturgeon, and other fisheries, elk herds, meadows and prairies (replacing a near-monoculture of redwood and fir timber stands) will be a paramount objective of park management. A return to natural and abundant populations of elk, for example, will allow resumption of a substantial subsistence hunt. Restoration of natural meadows and “balds” by management of fire will assure a regular supply of hazel sticks, bear grass, and other plant materials used in basketry, clothing, foods, medicines, and ceremonies.
Management of the lands and resources of the tribal park will also better assure the Tribe that the sacred sites and ceremonial grounds are managed for the long term, and that the present intrusions are either removed or reduced to a tolerable level of impact. In particular, prayer sites can be put off limits to the general public through management plans and land use zoning within the tribal park sites.

**Job Creation**

Operation of the tribal park exclusively for tribal members, however, would greatly reduce the economic development potential for the park, and virtually eliminate its job creation benefits for individual tribal members. Tribal members, of course, would not need the services of a tribal guide, would not need to purchase a craft gift, rent a campsite, hire a river guide for a boat trip, rent a lodge room or pay for other services that a typical tourist would need. Conversely, all of these services will be sought by heritage tourists and recreationists to the area, bringing new revenue and job opportunities with them.

Over time and through tribal park management decisions made by Council, it is likely that both tribally owned and operated business and commercial licenses and permits will be issued by the tribe for the purposes of providing authorized tourism services to park visitors and tourists to the region. Among the specific types of jobs likely to be established are certified guides, overnight lodging, food services, camper store(s), craft and gift store(s), fishing guide service, both on the river and the ocean, scenic river boat tours and transport services.

**Heritage Education for Tourists**

Therefore, where and when appropriate as determined by the tribe, the tribal park will establish opportunities for education of the public, by such means as guided tours and personal services interpretation (by tribal members). Public outreach is also a way to educate the Public on tribal sovereignty. Such sharing of the Yurok culture, and of its tragic history of treatment by 19th century European settlers, with the tourists coming to northern California will aid the tribe in its efforts to combat the stereotypes with which Native Americans are often labeled by non-natives. Over the long-term, this sort of public education is essential to win public support for full restitution of ancestral lands and rights. Construction and operation of a tribal museum and cultural center, near Highway 101 on tribal lands, would be an obvious means to generate significant additional visitation to the area, and to build job opportunities working in the tribal park for tribal members.

Further, heritage education programs in the tribal park will create jobs and generate revenue for the tribe and its individual members. To the extent that a tribal native crafts program can be established (offering items for souvenir sales through a tribally–owned gift shop, for example) additional jobs and economic development will be accomplished through the park.
Recreation & Tourism Revenues

Tourists and visitors to the North Coast who are seeking a more active set of experiences will want to partake in new recreation opportunities that the Yurok tribal park system will offer, and it’s a certainty that these tourists and recreationists will be willing to pay for them. Boat tours, both on the river and along the ocean coast will be attractive additions to the park experiences currently available in Redwood National and State Parks. Establishing foot trail connections between the California Coastal Trail and long-distance trails in the high mountains will be very popular, and will of necessity cross the Tribal Park. A tribal hiker guide service will generate fees and create jobs, as well as better assure that the public does not intrude upon or violate sacred or other cultural sites. Maintaining loop trails for mountain bikers (who will pay to play) in lower elevations among previously cut-over (and non-culturally sensitive) lands that are incorporated into the tribal park could create additional jobs and revenue.

Given that neither Redwood National nor State parks currently offer overnight lodging (except camping) or food services nearby, these services are a logical opportunity for the tribe to add even more jobs and generate additional revenues. Several sites near the mouth of the Klamath, and upriver near the mouth of Blue Creek would present logical locations for an eco-lodge and/or camping facilities.

Yet to be determined is the proper mix of tribally owned and operated businesses that will provide visitor services, versus those that are licensed or certified by the tribe, with appropriate franchise fees or taxes.

Wilderness

The fact that the proposed tribal park system would encompass existing designated wilderness in the Six Rivers National Forest, within the Blue Creek watershed is a positive management opportunity for the tribe. This protective and restrictive designation not only provides an additional measure of protection for Doctor Rock and other sacred sites in the high country, but also will become a key marketing opportunity for adventure tourism with the general public.

Building Public Support for the Tribal Park

A critical factor in winning public support for the proposed Tribal Park, and the expanded co-management agreements that are intended to complement and expand the tribe’s land management responsibilities, will be the fact that the tribal park system is open to the general public for heritage education and recreation. Numerous non-governmental organizations, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Wilderness Society, may offer support for the tribal park once it is understood that public access will be allowed under tribal management rules and regulations. Potential private funders, including foundations and corporations, will expect that public access is offered by the tribal park’s management.
Shared Values

Ultimately, local, state and federal agencies, elected politicians, non-governmental conservation and preservation organizations, and the general public will be won over to supporting the Yurok tribal park system as they come to better understand the shared values that already exist, and that are intended to be fully realized in the management practices that are adopted by the tribe for the park. The beautiful scenery, wild mountains, and rushing rivers have been a part of the Yurok culture for generations, and given the chance to manage these areas appropriately, the Yurok Tribe and its people are willing to assure all of the American people that these same natural and cultural resources will be managed so that they are conserved for all time, and for all people.