

**SUSTAINABLE TAMALMONTE
215 JULIA AVENUE
MILL VALLEY, CA 94941**

December 30, 2013

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 329
San Rafael, CA 94903

Re: BOS Letter pertaining to the National Park Service (NPS) Proposals for visitation to Muir Woods

Dear Marin County Board of Supervisors,

We understand that you will be considering a letter composed by Supervisor Kinsey and Supervisor Sears to the National Park Service (NPS) regarding the Park Services' proposals to increase visitation to Muir Woods. We wish to make the following comments and recommendations regarding the letter and the NPS proposals.

The National Park Service's quest for greater revenue by increasing the number of visitors to Muir Woods is contrary to what is best for the preservation of the Muir Wood's habitat and what is best for the surrounding communities. Potential consequences from the increase in visitors include: destruction of sensitive habitat; harm to wildlife (including endangered species); increased traffic congestion; more pollution and debris; and greater risk of public harm due to more accidents, pollution, blocked evacuation routes and fires. Therefore, we urge you to do the following:

1. Allow ample time for review of public written comments and public testimony on the Board of Supervisors' letter to the National Park Service before voting on the subject.
2. Retain local control (Marin County's control) over shuttles and law enforcement related to managing and controlling Muir Woods' visitor load. This will allow locals to control how much traffic is generated by Muir Woods in order to prevent adverse impacts on the environment, public health and safety, and quality of life in our residential communities. Also, make certain that no illegal parking is allowed and parking regulations are enforced near Muir Woods and along Hwy 1.
3. Halt the National Park Service proposals until a trustworthy INDEPENDENT CARRYING CAPACITY STUDY of Muir Woods,

including impacts on adjacent habitats and neighboring communities, is completed.

4. Don't just keep the number of Muir Woods visitors at current levels but LOWER the number of tourists allowed to visit Muir Woods to that which is sustainable by setting daily, monthly and yearly CAPS.
5. Significantly LOWER the traffic impacts that Muir Woods' visitors have on traffic congestion along Shoreline Hwy and other local roads. Don't allow an increase (as proposed by NPS) and don't just maintain the status quo. This is a tremendous opportunity to improve the unacceptable traffic conditions in Manzanita, Tam Junction and all along Hwy 1.
6. If an Independent Scientific Carrying Capacity Study on visitor load for Muir Woods and related parking & traffic proves the need for a more robust shuttle system, establish a Muir Woods Shuttle System (using small shuttle buses) that picks up and drops off Muir Woods' visitors at **regional points of origin** (E.g. San Francisco, East Bay, and North Bay) and NOT within the Tamalpais Area Community Plan area. The number of vehicles exiting off Hwy 101 and entering onto congested Hwy 1 (with an LOS "F") must be reduced.
7. Do NOT contemplate putting a Muir Woods Visitor Center in Manzanita. This is one of our most congested areas, with bottleneck traffic at LOS "F". A visitor center would increase the number of cars entering the Manzanita/Tam Junction area and worsen an already unbearable and perilous traffic situation. Rather than increasing congestion, the number of vehicles exiting off Hwy 101 and entering the Manzanita/Tam Junction area must be reduced. Therefore, the idea of a visitor center within the Manzanita/Tam Junction area should be discarded.

Thank you in advance for your conscientious consideration.

Very truly yours

/s/

Sharon Rushton

Chairperson

Sustainable Tamalmonite