

RBDA Board Chair Dave Rubin

Zachary Ormsby was named BLM Central Coast Field Manager last December. He's had nearly 20 years of natural resource management experience to this position, in which he oversees approximately 315,000 acres of public lands in 12 counties.

Zachary's path to this position began with graduation from the University of San Diego, followed by 10 years as a biological consultant. In 2014, Zachary was attacked by a wild boar while conducting Golden Eagle surveys in the back country of the southern Sierra Nevadas. His resulting disabilities led Zachary to pursue a master's degree at the University of Nevada, Reno where he studied Natural Resource Planning, Policy, and Law. After that he worked in a series of conservation positions of increasing responsibility for the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. He then joined BLM as a National Monuments and National Conservation Lands Specialist and subsequent to that was promoted to his current position as Field Manager.

He grew up spending summers in Santa Cruz with family and is excited about this opportunity to serve the land and public in this area.

So I know Zachary brought some staff you want to introduce and we'll turn it over to you. Thanks for coming to talk to us.

BLM Field Manager Zachary Ormsby

Dave, thanks for the warm introduction, sir. I appreciate that. Couple of things that I did want to highlight in coming up here was to speak on behalf of the BLM and try and clarify any information that the public needs and there's things out in the sphere that I think are worth clarifying.

And so I'm going to talk about some of the backstory on how we got to where we're at, talk about where we're at, and then talk about where we're heading in the future in regards to the Cotoni Coast Dairies onshore unit of the California Coastal National Monument.

But the things that are important to me is to have the relationships. I approach my job, it really comes down to being a good neighbor. I'm not really a decision maker, I implement the law and policy that's established already for the benefit of the American people. And that's really what my job is. And so in doing that, I wanted to bring some of the staff up here that we have that you'll see throughout the community. And I wanted to bring some of our law enforcement officers who are new to our field office and you'll be seeing them here regularly and to provide them the opportunity to answer any questions that the community might have regarding law enforcement in this area and the new national monument.

So first, I'd like to introduce Ben Hoke. He's our new assistant field manager and I like to give him a hard time about that and he's been in this office longer than I have.

BLM Assistant Field Manager Ben Hoke

Good evening, happy to be here. Just a brief background on me. So I grew up on the East Coast, graduated with my degree in geology from the state school in Pennsylvania called Millersville University. And then I joined the job hunt looking for whoever was going to hire me first during a time where it was very difficult to find work as a newly graduated geologist.

I wound up in an internship program with the Bureau of Land Management headquarters in Washington DC with the fluid minerals program working with the oil and gas division.

And then after that, converted that internship into a full-time position as the geologist in Elko,

Nevada, which is more or less the capital of the middle of nowhere if you're heading east on 80 about four to six hours in any direction but it was somewhere.

But I had a good time there. I found this position as the geologist in this office, kind of by happy accident. But it was a position that I saw the location and I knew that it was a spot that me and my then fiancé would be able to settle down and really come to love over the past couple years.

And then earlier this year, it's been just a few months, I've stepped into the role as the assistant field manager, which is the direct supervisor for our team of subject matter experts in the office.

Stephen Korsgren, Law Enforcement Ranger for Central Coast Field Office (primary duty Fort Ord National Monument)

Hey, good evening everyone, my name is Stephen Korsgren. I'm celebrating my 20th year in federal service which I'm pretty proud of.

I grew up in Michigan. Sometimes I have a little accent. Joined the army. I was in rural Michigan, I want to get out of there. Joined the army right out of high school served my time as an M1A1 one crew member. Realized driving a tank doesn't really equate to a civilian job that well.

So had to go to school right, so went to Michigan State University got my public policy degree. And then I was picked up by the National Park Service right away. So I went to the Statue of Liberty worked a couple years there, then I came out to the West Coast and I really never wanted to leave. Went to Golden Gate National Recreation Area, right? Just up the road, Muir Woods. I was one of the lucky persons that got to live there among the old growth just like here.

So I fell in love with the Redwoods right away. After that, I went up and did a season at Katmai, Alaska. Anyone's ever been to that national park? If you ever have an opportunity, please go, right. That's where the biggest population of Brown Bears, right? In North America, it's just amazing. After that, I took a permanent job in St. Louis, Missouri at the Arch. And I was a supervisor there.

And then decided, needed a little break, went to Hawaii, worked at Haleakalā National Park. So you guys have been there, seen the sunrise right on Maui. It's just gorgeous. And then decided to come back to California.

With my wife, I have a four-year-old. We were at Redwoods National State Parks for four years. Up in Humboldt and Del Norte County, which was amazing. Prior to here, in July of last year, we were lucky enough, Donny Pham and I came down from the Arcata Humboldt area.

And he was with the BLM, and I had to start with the Bureau of Land Management. And I primarily work at Fort Ord National Monument. So that's my story. Thank you.

Donny Pham, Law Enforcement Ranger

Thank you. Good evening. Steve mentioned, my name is Donny Pham. I was born and raised in San Jose. Just down the road from you folks. So I went to school down in San Diego. Afterwards. Just like Steve, I did the military thing for a couple of years, seven years.

And it was during those days, you know, I was getting out of the military, returning to the community. What would be a good job after the military? What would I want to do if I were to retire? So I looked around at jobs and decided I would like to be a park ranger with the Park Service.

So I did that for seven years, starting my career out at Cape Cod, worked at Grand Tetons, Lake Roosevelt, Hawaii, not Maui, though, the Big Island. I was there for the eruptions. Lava flow and all that stuff in 2018. We experienced what they called the Type A event, earthquakes every day, 5.0s and all that stuff. It could affect you, so sometimes sleeping, you know, when you have these Type A events that occur throughout the day, you never know what's going to happen. It's not "Old Faithful" you know. So then I came back to the mainland, San Diego, where I worked at Cabrillo National Monument for about a year, and we opted to go to BLM, where I started with Arcata Field Office, Humboldt County, and we figured me and my wife wanted to be closer to our family, so I took this job down here.

So I've been here about a year now, and loving it, it's great. Unfortunately, the cost of living is a little high.

Lee Thompson, Interpretive Ranger

Good evening, my name is Lee Thompson, I've been here about three years under the title of a non-law enforcement park ranger, dedicated to a lot of the public land we're managing, but most specifically the Cotoni-Coast Dairies. I too got my start with the military out of high school, I went to the Navy for seven years, and I was working on boats after that, and allergic reactions drove me to look for other work, and I had been volunteering at Olympic National Park for salmon, that's one of my big passions, and they hired me, and that was kind of my foot in the door with federal work, and I've since worked for Department of Interior, the BLM, Reclamation, and the Park Service in the states of Washington, California, Oregon, not Oregon, Nevada, and Utah, and happy to be here.

Got my start -- I was born just over the hill over at Stanford University, and I've been coming back to the area myself, sounds like a few of my co-workers have been doing the same, we all have kind of some heart strings attached to this area, and it's just good to get this job and be back here and start dedicating time and effort to the public lands and right in your backyard, so thanks for having us this evening.

Dave Rubin

I just have to butt in here, I feel like I belong up here because I worked for the Department of Interior Geological Survey for 38 years, so I should be with you guys. (laughing).

Zachary Ormsby

So, yeah, so I said I was going to explain the history of how we got here, but what I realized that I didn't do is introduce Zoe.

So this is the thing that really benefited me in my recovery from the accident that Dave mentioned. And so she's generally attached to my waist, and sometimes she roams around off the leash, depending on what the duty she's doing and where I'm at. She's super friendly and she comes up to you. I know some people are a little sensitive about it, but she's the boss, so she introduces herself. Go ahead and give her a pet. It's totally okay with me.

So I'm going to dive into some of the history of basically where we got and without going all the way back. You know, that TPL had the land, essentially gave land to the BLM. And I'm going to refer to this map a couple of times because it also lists this fuels reduction project that I'm sure some of you guys have heard about. And I'll pretty much close out, before we open up public comment, describing this fuels project.

But one of the things that's really important to mention is these things in white right down here are agricultural lands that TPL tried to give to the BLM as part of this national monument, but there's a lot of encumbrances and deed restrictions on these properties and the BLM was not able to take those. So they still, that was 15 years' worth of negotiations and that's essentially what all the attorneys came up with.

So these are still maintained and owned by Trust for Public Lands. And we had been working with them for roughly 20 years and then came the RMP, which is the Resource Management Plan Amendment. And the BLM is working under the what we thought was an agreement with TPL that the road at Marina Ranch gate was what we're going to use for our southern parking lot.

The BLM currently has a 20 foot wide by roughly 100 yard stretch of what's called property easement, it's a property right.

What we asked TPL for was to widen that or modify that easement so it could be 40 feet in width to allow for safer travel two way travel that was inclusive of trailers.

TPL at the last minute of our planning process decided they were not going to grant that modification to our easement. That created an opportunity for RBDA and FONC and DavenportNorth Coast Association to appeal our planning efforts because in our planning efforts the BLM had the Northern parking lot and the Southern parking lot conjoined as a being built out at the same time.

And we did not have analysis on having one parking lot built at the time. And so the IBLA, which is the Interior Board of Land Appeals, remanded the decision, it's decision number 23 in our RMPA back to the Field Office for further analysis. Decision number 24 referred to the Southern parking lot and that was declared moot by the IBLA.

All of this information is available on the E-Planning website under Cotoni-Coast Dairies. And so that remand put the BLM in a position where we had to evaluate or to look at, specifically the language was take a hard look and analysis of what just the Northern parking lot would look like as far as traffic is concerned.

So that's what we've been engaged in for the last year is doing traffic analysis and environmental assessments on what just the Northern parking lot would look like. And in that Resource Management Plan that there's still is going to be a Southern parking lot. It's just looking at them each individually one at a time.

So the Northern area is where we've been focusing our efforts now and once that is complete or resolved, we plan on moving down to the Southern area to resolve the parking lot issues there, parking areas.

So I have brought some conceptual drawings basically as things that we have been looking at and analyzing our traffic analysis for the Northern parking lot just came in. So we're analyzing

that. And these are some of the alternatives essentially that we've been analyzing to see what kind of configuration is going to fit the needs of this Northern parking lot area.

This is one of the original drawings in our Resource Management Plan that was proposed. And it's roughly 80 spots and has an entrance off of Cement Plant Road. **[See Appendix B, Concept A – page 5A]**

We've also looked at this same format with having an entrance off of Warrenella Road into this parking lot with this being an exit with a right turn only sign.

So traffic is diverted out the northern end of Cement Plant Road at Highway One. That is also the entrance to the monument is right there [pointing to North end of Cement Plant Road and intersection with Highway One]. So that's where we plan on putting the sign. That's also where we plan on essentially putting the Google information. So it promotes the apps that direct traffic up to that area as well.

And so we're in the process of analyzing this right now. And here's a couple other options that we have been analyzing in this conceptual kind of framework.

And as you can see, this is a smaller parking lot that's similar to what was in our original RMP. This has roughly just over 40 spaces in it. **[See Site Plan 4//13/2022 - page 5B]**

And then this down here is almost a hybrid proposal of what the BLM was originally proposing with what FONC, DNCA and RBDA had been proposing and putting the parking area down here along the Mocettini Cheese Barn. **[Visual not yet publicly distributed]**

And so in this analysis, there's a couple of things that I have to point out. This would be a phase one approach on the original knoll.

And this would be a phase two approach and is dependent on a variety of things. Currently, this whole area is under lease by our cattle operator. Our cattle operator is the number one tool that we have listed in our weed management plan for reducing weeds and controlling fuels. One of the reasons that that's our primary tool is responding to public comments that they wanted a very limited use of herbicides and pesticides on the property.

So the BLM opted for cattle to be the primary mechanism that we control off of. So it's important for us to maintain this relationship with our cattle operator, and this parking lot at this point is on land that he is currently leasing and it's fenced in. A couple of other things to consider is the Mocettini cheese barn, which is down here, and that is being evaluated. It's called a 106 or 110 analysis for historic determination. We have to do this in conjunction with the State Historic Preservation Office.

Some of the things to consider in doing that evaluation, it's not just the building, it's a historic site. That's the way that these things are evaluated.

So we have to evaluate the structure, the integrity, the history of the structure, but also the entirety of the site, and that's specific for the 106. The 110 is a district where we have to look at the entirety of the relationship to the other buildings in the area that are also historic.

So that is underway and that's a several - year process in working with SHPO, or State Historic Preservation Office.

And then another thing to consider is this whole area floods. There's an ephemeral stream that comes on the backside of this knoll, and we've been monitoring this for the last three years. And there are surveys that we can do to look at wetland delineations generally done by the Army Corps of Engineers standards to determine if this is essentially a wetland and soil that we look at and vegetation.

And then it's also a riparian area because this feeds into Agua Puerca Creek. So we have these things called resources, objects, and values. Those are what's listed in the Presidential Proclamation designating Cotoni Coast Dairies.

It's 2017, it's Obama. One of the things that we have to conserve, protect, and restore, and that's very specific language that's outlined in the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act 2008.

That's also the same thing that created the National Landscape Conservation System, which is where national monuments, wild and scenic rivers, national scenic and historic trails, and wilderness fall into in the BLM. It's about 35 million acres managed by that NLCS program, National Landscape Conservation System. That OPLMA Law, Omnibus Public Lands Management Act is the primary lens that we have to manage those lands through, and we have to conserve, protect, and restore those values. Riparian areas are explicitly listed in the Presidential Proclamation. Our legal responsibility is to conserve, protect, and restore riparian areas. So there's a lot more research that needs to be done here. Cultural values are also spelled out in the Proclamation as well.

We do have the, our legal standards that we have to meet with the 106 and 110. So the earliest anything like this could happen would be 2026, based on the cattle lease, right? So where some of this comes into play, in that Proclamation, it says the public will have access to Cotoni Coast Dairies.

Once the RMP, the RMPA is filed, the record of decision for that RMP was June of 2021. The public has legal right access to Cotoni Coast Dairies as of June 2021, right? We've kept it very limited access and private tours basically or guided hikes and a series of small events with the Audubon and other groups, but the public has a right to access the land. What isn't a legal requirement is a parking area.

So that brings up a really, well, it's NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act. It's called a no action alternative, right? So these are preferred alternatives or alternatives. We select the preferred.

If none of this gets chosen, what gets enacted is called the no action alternative, which is the public just gets access and there's no parking, right? So it's walk-in access. That falls under a kind of a provision called status quo. And this part of the coast, people parking on the side of the road to access public space is status quo.

Some of the issues that come up with that is once parking gets established, unauthorized parking, so to speak, or offsite parking gets established. And I'm not going to speak on behalf of the California Coastal Commission, but it has been voiced that that becomes a prescriptive easement at that point. And once that parking is established, it's very difficult to have that parking removed because of the prescriptive easement.

So we're trying to find the solution that's going to be right to get this open. Here's some of

the alternatives that we're looking at and analyzing. We're analyzing the traffic flow patterns on Cement Plant Road and Highway One as well.

We hope to have this analysis done really within the next month. And then that Environmental Assessment will be put out for public comment, a 30 day period. That 30 day period, everybody in here has the ability to comment on all of the proposed alternatives. Every comment gets addressed by a subject matter expert.

So you got a cultural question or concern that you put in the comments or archeologist addresses it. About a wildlife concern or wildlife biologist. You got an engineering concern or engineer does it, right? So this is a heavily involved public process. I encourage everybody to participate in and that our subject matter experts are going to take into account all of the comments.

They're going to reconcile all of those comments. They're going to respond to all of those comments and then we're going to make a determination on what's called a preferred alternative. We put that part preferred alternative.

We file that essentially and then there's a 40 day period, 45 day period for appeals, right? That's show we got here, right? That right was exercised by the three groups that I mentioned earlier.

So we have to come back and do this stuff all over again. From my understanding, the no action alternative is not an appealable decision, right? That's just what happened. Why this becomes important is there's conversations that the BLM doesn't have enough money to manage this national monument.

And that's true as long as it stays closed. Funding allocations are based on visitor use and facilities. Without visitors accessing this property, the BLM goes through, it's called a budget allocation model. The number one metric is visitor use. One of the other top metrics is facilities. So if the public doesn't have access, there are no facilities like bathrooms. Funding doesn't get awarded. So that's the point I guess our office has been at for the last couple years while this has been closed to the public and we're doing our best.

We will be bringing on a new park ranger here in the very near future. We'll be onboarding in the selection process for a chief law enforcement officer to increase our law enforcement presence out here.

Just a visual perspective, everything that you see here in yellow is managed by this BLM Field Office. You can see the two monuments over on the side. Cotton Coast Dairies makes up just under 2% of the land that we manage. It will be receiving 25% of the law enforcement capacity that our office has. Fort Ord, it's about the same about 3% of our landmass. They received 25% of law enforcement capacity that we have. The rest of these lands, we have to patrol those as well. So, bringing on park rangers law enforcement staff when we're not receiving funding, it's a big, it's a big deal for our office to be able to get that where we've been able to get that assistance.

Something else that's worthy of note for the community is that baseline data has been brought up as not being sufficient here. And that's something that I would just like to vehemently dispute. The floristic inventory for the entirety of the property has been conducted by a botanist.

We've also done floristic inventory with the Amah Mutsun tribe to identify culturally sensitive plants. We've done intense surveys on cultural and archaeological resources throughout the property.

We have coho and we have salmon on property that we work with NOAA and the local resource conservation district and have location devices on those so we can monitor movements and population dynamics of those.

We've done bird surveys, done small mammal surveys throughout the entire property. We've been monitoring streams for the last years, range land health, soil hydrology.

There's an abundance of data. John Barnes from Davenport, North Coast Association did a FOIA request, Freedom of Information Act request for all of the biological data that we've done at the park.

And his remark to me that it was so much information it crashed his computer.

The entire floristic inventory for Cotoni Coast Dairies is publicly accessible. This is not typical for BLM offices. It's on calflora.org. You can go look at all the plants that we found out there.

Part of what we hope and we envision in this effort that we're going through now is I contracted with the USGS to develop a science plan.

It's also a part of our policy requirements for this place. It's in our policy that national monuments are supposed to serve as living laboratories.

Research will never stop here. The research that we conduct here is supposed to be used for the sake of research, but also for applied science that helps manage lands like this that can be rolled out to the rest of the federal portfolio.

They count on these NLCS units, these national monuments to spearhead research that is going to enhance the management throughout the entire federal portfolio.

That's our job with Cotoni-Coast Dairies. So in contracting with the USGS, we're developing a science plan as part of our policy. We're also developing that plan for the entirety of California Coastal National Monument.

There are five other onshore units, not just Cotoni-Coast Dairies, but five others. What we're doing at Cotoni-Coast Dairies is going to serve as the framework for the other five units. We're redeveloping this program in a way that's never been developed with BLM.

We're spelling out the resources, objects, and values that we're legally required to manage by. We're partnering with the University of California, Santa Cruz, to invite faculty and student researchers out to help us conduct research to meet our legal obligations, but to do research for the sake of research and also to create the next generation of scientists and land managers. We're doing that in a way that it's going to create, it's called the PLC, it's a Public Lands Corp, it's a special designation. These student researchers, while they're out at BLM, and they're getting paid, right, through internships, right, so they're earning a living, they're going to school. What they're also going to get is time and grade as a federal employee, and they end up with something called the direct hire authority. They don't have to compete for jobs in the

federal government, specifically they don't have to interview for them, right, this is a Hispanic serving institution, the partnership extends to the entire UC system, but we're developing it first with UC Santa Cruz. And members of the Davenport community, Don Croll, is leading that effort.

And so, we're trying to innovate at Cotoni-Coast Dairies, for the best land management practices possible, by creating cutting edge science, and bringing up the next generation of researchers, and it becomes difficult when you don't have any funding, which goes back to the visitor use, and I can argue all day long about the way things are, but the reality is that's just the way they are, right, so we've worked with, in partnerships, in trying to develop this, and our neighbors around are helping to bring this vision to reality, and part of what brings this vision, this science plan to reality, and this framework, it's called the Friends Group. And Conservation Lands Foundation is made up of former federal employees, they get behind national monuments and they help stand up Friends Group.

And that's what we envision for Cotoni-Coast Dairies. So there is a board of directors from neighbors, the universities, from business, from the local communities that sit on this board of directors to help implement the science and the research and the projects that are done at Cotoni-Coast Dairies.

So there's active engagement and involvement by business, local communities and students. And so that's where we're at now. That's what we're actively doing right now.

The future, there's a couple ways to spell that out. It depends on how the EA goes, right? And if it's litigated or appealed, when it becomes open to the public, getting down to the southern portion and providing access in that particular area, those are the things that they're down the road.

Probably what most of you came here to talk about is the fuels reduction project or learn about, right? And so this is a partnership with Cal Fire who's doing fuels reduction project up here along Bonny Doon Road.

Pardon, I get emotional sometimes talking. This is where the BLM is coming in to do the rest of the work, take it down to Highway 1. We've recently gotten PG&E to commit to removing all the hazard trees along the power lines along California coast, Highway 1.

What I'm talking about is a response to public involvement in a couple of ways. I've been in this community enough times where people have come up to me and they pointed out the dead and downed trees by the fire station in downtown Davenport, right? Sure, we're going to remove it. One of the other issues people keep bringing to my attention is the hundred feet of defensible space that's needed around your residence. And how that becomes difficult when that extends onto federal land?

What do you do? We're doing it. That's our response. So we're going to create a hundred feet of defensible space around the entire town of Davenport and all the residences there and the residences in Newtown. We're going to use cattle, sheep, our fire program, mechanical controls, hand controls, we're going to get the dead and downed trees out. And we're working with Bill Henry because that's also a grove of monarch butterflies that overwinter in that eucalyptus grove.

And we just met with Bill to talk about the impacts of monarch butterflies and how this

removal project can create better habitat for monarch butterflies.

That also falls in line with the Davenport Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan that our scientists created, Mike Powers, with Bill Henry, years ago. We haven't shied away from learning about monarch butterflies and how to manage for them better.

We created a management plan for the town, in fact, to do that. We assisted in that effort. So there's concern about the monarchs where the parking lots are proposed. It's great information when somebody brings it to our table that, hey, there's a species and it's important and you need to work to protect them. That's what we do. That's what national monuments are for. So we don't take that lightly.

So this fuels project, this is what I'm going to get at when it comes to community involvement. And I talked about those conversations that I had down there in residents letting me know that they were scared about the hazard trees on one and us being able to reach out to PG & E for that help.

But part of this project, this fuels reduction project came when I was at fire training. It's called MS 581 training. And the table I was sitting at was with the hotshot crew. They was here to the CZU fire, and I showed them the graffiti, and that on the board it says, "We love BLM," and it brought hotshots to tears. That's why I get emotional. Those aren't guys you see often brought to tears, but they don't hear that. They don't hear how a community responds and respects them for the effort they go for. So it's through some of those conversations and this information getting back to our fuels program that they want to come out here and take care of this community. My Field Office can't pay for this, our fire program is paying for this. So that's where your community input matters, right?

That's why I'm inviting you to participate in the Environmental Assessment, to leave your comments. They're heard. We do our best to incorporate them into our land management to do the right thing by community.

We're here to be good neighbors. We're here to invite people to Cotoni-Coast Dairies so we can share how special a place this is. And I'm going to venture to say you have some questions.

And one of the reasons, like I said, I brought the law enforcement officers here, it's why we're going through the process of hiring another ranger and a chief ranger for our law enforcement.

I get that the community has concerns about enforceability of laws out here and what the potential of opening a place like this is going to do. So if you have questions, you want to talk to our law enforcement officers about it, ask them directly. These guys are well experienced in managing just these types of things. If you've got questions about science, law and policy, I'm your guy. But I'd like to turn it over to the community and see if you have any questions, if you have any comments. - If you would mind going to the microphone.

Is there folks in here that can hear you? - All right, guys, you can come right here.

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Lisa Schallop

Oh, that microphone, yeah. - So confused, oh, thank you for lowering the volume. So I

just wanted to start out by saying thank you for all the help during this season.

Oh, wait, I've got to introduce myself. My name is Lisa Schallop and I live in Redwood Meadows Ranch, which is directly adjacent to the monument right down the road here off of Bonny Doon Road.

So I wanted to start off by saying thank you for all the help during the season of fire. Those guys definitely saved our neighborhood. There's no doubt about it.

We can pass that message on. I wanted to thank you for the emergency egress that was cleared. We noticed that, thank you. And I wanted to thank you for the plans for continuing the shaded fuel break because that's all very exciting.

I'm also on the Bonny Doon Fire Safety Council. One question that I did have as a concern is hunting. So I know the scope has been reduced, but the fact that zone two, which we border on, is part of the core habitat for animals. And regularly on our trail cameras, we do see mountain lions. Sometimes they have cubs. You know, based on the research from Chris Wilmers at UCSC, any kind of human presence definitely affects those animals. My question is, or my concern is about hunting and whether that fits in with the core habitat that is required in the Proclamation.

Answer from Zachary Ormsby

That's actually a fun question for me to answer, right, at this point. So you're talking when it talks about hunting being allowed on the property, that's bow hunting, right? And Cal Department of Fish and Wildlife goes through and does prey surveys to determine what prey availability is and if they would issue permits and then we have to approve that process.

We've been, we've just begun contributing to Chris's research and we'll formalize the agreement. What would be hunted would be deer. We want to understand what the impacts of that prey are or that as a prey item to the mountain lion habitat so we can understand how our decisions impact mountain lions and the deer population and we're going to use those data to inform our land management decisions.

But as of now, there is no immediate plan and there is no data that supports hunting on the monument at present and Chris will be consulted and his data will be looked at once we reach a formalized agreement to evaluate those decisions moving forward.

And that's also movement data, right, not just of the prey but of the mountain lion. It's an apex predator and all of my research or published research was raptors mainly at looking at the impacts of the wildland urban interface on prey of apex avian predators. This is not something that's unfamiliar to me and this is just how the office is choosing to respond to that that question at this time.

Lee Otter

Hello, my name is Lee Otter and thank you for giving us that fine briefing and that's much appreciated. My concern has to do with baseline studies and so forth and so you want to dispute that a bit but I'm not here to dispute that.

I believe in baseline studies. I appreciate the work that BLM is doing along these lines. I was particularly interested though in having more information about how the

baseline studies would inform resource management decisions and how it would inform decisions about providing visitor use facilities because the BLM seems to be faced with the same issue that national and the same mission as the National Park Service has which is to protect the resources you have and to provide for the public use thereof and so the any clarification along these lines would be helpful and I'm especially impressed by management plan for the real estate that's upslope from Coast Dairies managed by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz where they have a resource management plan that is both based on baseline studies, biological baseline studies, and it has provisions for limiting, redirecting, or even cutting back on visitor use if resource impacts are detected and of course we don't know what kind of resource impacts are happening, unless you have a baseline. You have to have a starting point to measure from. So that's my thinking on it. So I'll be interested in any further views you might have.

Answer from Zachary Ormsby

Sure. I appreciate the question. The BLM is pretty comfortable at this point that we have a well-established baseline understanding of the biological resources at Cotoni Coast Dairies as far as all the vegetation, trees, streams, water, seeps, springs, cultural, all of that. So we feel pretty comfortable that we have a well-established baseline.

Now, monitoring something like visitor use impacts, we don't have any visitors yet, but we're actually required by the California Coastal Commission to monitor specifically for visitor use impacts, right? So we have to do that for them-A. B, the conserve, protect, and restore mandate that I mentioned is law. This property has to be managed to conserve, protect, and restore natural resources, primary. If there is a use that is incompatible with the conservation, protection, or restoration, it can automatically be mitigated, eliminated, postponed, changed, or altered.

We have what's called a Supplementary Rule package that is going through the Federal Registry right now for approval. This is a suite of almost 40 additional Rules for the BLM to be able to manage this property. The most rules that I know for another national monument are 12.

Most national monuments have no additional supplementary rules. This one has 40. That allows us to create signage that will limit daytime use, will limit activities. It comes with a suite of tools for us to use so we can conserve, protect, and restore as our primary lens, and alter. It's generally called adaptive management. We're going to learn stuff as we go. That's the reality. So we needed these rules to allow us to be able to adapt more quickly.

They're working through that process. The other thing, I've mentioned, this all gets put forth in what's called a manager's report. All national monuments have to do it.

It's a requirement for the NLCS program. It's one of the things that I did when I was in headquarters. Those manager's reports for every single national monument are now available online on that national monument's webpage and they're 508 compliant and accessible to the public.

So we're completely transparent. Visitor use impacts will be included in that report. That report will also be shared with the California Coastal Commission in our effort to be completely transparent to evaluate how we're doing.

Thank you. - Yes, sir. - Thank you.

Online Questioner

We have a question from our online participants. Are there any plans to tackle invasive plants that are not palatable to cattle, such as purple star?

I'm not wearing my glasses. –

Answer from Zachary Ormsby

Purple star, thistle. - Thistle, yeah. - Yeah. - Yeah, so we've already drafted a comprehensive Weed Management Plan that is also available online.

If for some reason you can't find it, Eric or Dave can get hold of me and I'll make sure that you get a copy of it. Purple star thistle, yellow star thistle, these are all things that are very difficult to remove from the environment and generally manual removal is what works best when it's timed appropriately before they go to flower and seeds are dispersed.

So what we do have at Fort Ord National Monument right down the way is we have what's called a weeds crew. That is exactly what they focus on is the removal of weeds.

And so 20 years ago, basically, when Fort Ord became a national monument, it was an artillery range. Think about that for a second.

Today, it is the largest expanse of coastal maritime chaparral on the central coast of California, right? That's a huge transition in a 20 year period of time.

Part of it has to do with the relationship with the Army and how funding comes across for that. And they get such high visitation, they have a decent budget to have a weeds crew.

Part of what supplements that is they use goat grazing and sheep grazing. And that program is generally managed by these interns that we have.

We have this agreement with Cal State University of Monterey Bay, where in lieu of a master's thesis, a master's in a science program, can do an applied internship doing research at Fort Ord National Monument and not do a thesis, right? As their master's requirement. That process helps us understand what the biomass and fuels reductions are by our goat and sheep grazing programs out there. What it has also done is promoted the discovery of four brand new species and of plants on that monument.

And a fifth is in review. So the long-winded answer to your question is we plan on replicating what has worked so well at Fort Ord at Cotoni-Coast Dairies to deal with star thistle, purple, yellow, and a variety of invasive and noxious weeds. - Great answer. Any other questions from both the audience?

Joe Christy

No, I'm not. I'll just bend over because that's the way I usually do. My name is Joe Christy. I was a board member of the RBDA I guess about 2003 to 2010.

I am the founding and continuing president of the Bonny Doon Fire Safe council. And

I'm also the, I was the founding and now I've returned again to the presidency of this Santa Cruz, the Fire Safe Council of Santa Cruz County. A mouth full. I've been asked to ask some questions about fire.

We've been lucky enough to have Keegan Guillory come regularly to our meetings. Both Fire Safe Councils every month.

Keegan has been off fighting fires in the last month or two. And so we had Ed Fulton who designed this Fuels Management Plan.

And we had a lot of people that come and speak to both of us. We were very impressed by what you've done and how it ties in with what we have done. Working down through the San Vicente Redwoods and tying into things, projects we've done. So I applaud you on that. Thank you for that. Keegan's predecessor, Mike Chodini was a great guy and he saved the town of Davenport. By doing back burns and introducing fire as a tool.

We're very interested in using fire as a tool because it's the way this landscape was maintained for seven to 10,000 years before Europeans got here and they seem to have done a pretty good job of it. They of course didn't build houses.

So, with that long preface, and you can tell I'm a college professor so I love the sound of my own voice but I'm trying to limit that.

I wanted to ask to put forward a question that was put to me is what about fireworks. There's fire arms are prohibited.

But there's a long history of people, especially around the Fourth of July going down to the coast, what was once the coastal part of the Trust for Public Lands Coast Districts property and setting off some major fireworks and they often set the driftwood on fire.

How are you going to deal with that, and that spilling over into the grasslands which just gives me nightmares of people doing live shooting a fireworks up there?

I have a second question.

Answer from Zachary Ormsby

You want to take this one now?

Joe Christy: Yes, please.

Zachary Ormsby: No fireworks.

Joe Christy: Excellent. The other thing that's of concern is the patrolling and the law enforcement, so can you tell us about how you're going to patrol, how frequently the patrol will be, and where you're going to be based and will you be available and accessible to the community at large.

Zachary Ormsby: Yes, thank you for that question. Our Ranger Stephen Korsgren will address it.

Answer from Ranger Stephen Korsgren

So, what we have worked out in this in this Field Office is we have kind of a roving patrol meaning we do we do saturation patrols. Three Rangers can go to one parking lot if we're having issues there.

Say it's the 4th of July and there's fireworks. And so we do, we like we work late. Right. Just like if it's hunting season or anything else. We go where we believe where crime history takes us.

And so we do know on July 4 to be in those hot spots, no pun intended, to make sure that laws are followed. It's one thing to say that "fireworks are prohibited." It's another thing when a uniformed Ranger is sitting in the parking lot and the kids roll up and they're like, I think I'll go down. So, I mean, that's, that's basically how we handle fireworks things and we, you know, we have a, we have a whole slew of tricks we can use, you know, we can, we have, we're going to have hardened parking lots like we do in most places. It's going to be day use only. So we can have physical security (called fences) to close things out, force people out of areas, keep people moving. I mean, those kind of deterrence. If you make a place kind of difficult to commit crimes people will move on. So that's kind of how we're going to control.

Ranger Pham

And I've dealt with fireworks in the past, in a community called Shelter Cove out in Humboldt County. So we worked with CHP, the County to enforce, you know, fireworks restrictions. Now, obviously in BLM fireworks are prohibited. On the County side, it may be safe to do so in certain spots so those are maybe designated fireworks spots.

And with talking about roving patrols, you mentioned, yes, but how often we'll be out here, like what Zachary was saying, you know, maybe 25%. When we get to that, if you see the need for increased patrols or saturation patrols. And we'll respond to whatever, like Lee was on-site on a daily basis. So they'll see something contact us to come out and respond or when necessary. So it all dictates on the visitation, you know, and increase crime, increase homelessness, or transients, what not. So it's all dependent on patterns that we see.

Zachary Ormsby

I'm going to jump in and add a couple of things. The Chief Law Enforcement Officer Ranger that we're hiring for right now, one of their first orders of business is to create and establish a memorandum of understanding with the local other jurisdictions that are in this area so there is better communication and working relationships and enforceability in this area. The other thing that you will notice when this becomes open to the public, there will be a strong law enforcement presence, officer presence out in this area by BLM because that's the tone I would like, our team would like, to set to dissuade things from starting off on the wrong foot is the easiest way to say that. And I would venture to say, once the Monument is open, you will see BLM Law Enforcement Rangers in this area more often than you will see patrols or presence from any other of the law enforcement jurisdictions. And if you find at some point, but then I'm wrong on that, you can call me and tell me.

Eric Ornas

We have another question from our online participants. What endangered or rare species

have been identified on the property and what steps are being taken to protect?

Zachary Ormsby

This could be my favorite question of the night. Really, the salmon that I mentioned earlier, the coho and steelhead that we have in San Vicente Creek, it is a population that is not supposed to exist based on the fragmentation of that creek.

So NOAA is studying those and the movements and the demographics, the physiology, the movement of those fish because it's really a unique subset of the population to study.

And they're doing that in conjunction with the Resource Conservation District who's removing invasive species out there, clematis. And they're also doing some restoration activities that allow debris to accumulate in parts of the stream when it benefits spawning habitat for the fish.

It's actually, it's great science that they're doing out there, and we're doing it with our partners. The other species, its most prominent T and E species out there is the red legged frog.

Our ecologist in our office, Dr. Mike Westfall, is one of the world's leading experts on red legged frogs. In fact, we have nine ponds at Cotoni-Coast Dairies now serving as breeding habitat for red legged frogs.

And we do population samples of the newts, salamanders, the red legged frogs, and he works on a large group to create interconnectivity across the landscape to ensure the continued success in the population rebound of red legged frogs.

Colin Hannon

Question for Law Enforcement. There's two things about my name is Colin Hannon and I live in Davenport. There are transients and people camping out on the side of the road has been a problem issue for folks in Davenport lately.

And I was just curious, as you guys were talking about that, what would you do if somebody parked in that parking lot and wouldn't leave or said their car was broken down or something? What would be the, because there's all these things, it's difficult if the sheriff has difficulties with managing those situations. I was curious what it would be like for you guys.

Ranger Stephen Korsgren

Absolutely. In the past, at any federal jurisdiction, place that I've worked, it's usually handled obviously a face to face contact. That's the first thing. Talk about what's going on, what's happening. Most people want to get out of federal land because we have fences, we have gates, we have physical security that actually closes. We'll keep you stranded. What's unique at this property, and I noted it here, it was the same in Humboldt County. Transient populations tend to stay within five miles of services, gas station, grocery store, et cetera. I don't see that here. Because again, that costs people more money to burn their heaters and RVs, all that stuff. Hopefully it's not a huge issue.

Like I understand people around the beach overnight, but that's accessible. And if we can handle the areas in the parking lot and to ensure that we have adequate presence, which means we're there during the day, people will know. And I'll tell you something very, what I've seen in my career for federal, we don't have many staff, right? There's three of us for all that land that they showed you.

The thing is though, we have a very unique presence where we can self-dispatch. We're not going through a Chief of Police. We will have a Chief Ranger. But if we see a problem, if we hear from a community member, hey, this RV's been here three nights. I believe they're trying to live here. We will go. We don't have fixed hours. We have administratively uncontrollable overtime.

We can go dispatch and handle that problem. Because what I've seen is, if you can handle a problem in the first 48 hours, then it won't become a reoccurring. And that's what we do best in the Bureau of Land Management.

We just go and handle it immediately. And we don't have to triage a lot of calls. We're not going to calls from like Santa Cruz County or something like that for other public safety issues.

Colin Hannon

Yeah, that kind of leads to my other question.

Ranger Pham

Yeah, but the RV's or campers who won't leave, we have tools that we can utilize. We have warnings until we contact the tow company. We show up at the tow truck, then they leave. That's the experience I have ran into. We give them ample time, okay. Find some resource to go fix this RV or camper or whatnot. And then once you see a tow company show up they're out, they'll do whatever they do to just get out. So that's their domicile, right? That's where they live. They don't want to lose that.

Colin Hannon

Yeah, there's places where you can just pull out on the side of the road. There's been issues and down. So I'm curious. Thank you for answering those questions. Then the other question, which is kind of maybe wishful thinking, but will you guys be able to enforce laws outside of your property?

Ranger Pham

I don't know what to say, because there's a shortage. So there's, s a y i t ' s a d j a c e n t t o , okay, it takes you to their nexus to the property. And that goes along the lines of MOUs with the County. So short answer is a "yes, it depends."

Colin Hannon

Yeah, I mean, the fireworks thing is there's a lot of that going on and never gets addressed like down at the beach, you know, but there's a lot of other things that happen that never get addressed because nobody has the time to get up to Santa Cruz north coast urgently because so much is going on in Santa Cruz, they can't make it. So if you guys are up there, I just wondered if you can help with some of that.

Ranger Pham

If it's not close maybe a little bit. No, it's not. What's close? The boundaries and

what I call nexus, you know, if it's touching BLM, then yes. Yeah, that's close.

Ranger Stephen Korsgren

And so, this property, so I work primarily at Fort Ord National Monument that has one million visitors. And it's going to look kind of kind of similar with our supplemental rules we are going to have in place for closures and make sure that because there's, we don't have vehicle use on the property up there. We have a dusk to dawn kind of curfew there, even before sunrise, 30 minutes after. So a lot of mechanism put in. And the thing is to what we do to manage any of these places, this area is proprietary jurisdiction, okay? So what that means is we don't have, concurrent means we have state arrest powers. We don't have that. The federal government has not blessed us with that.

And we never want to violate your guys' legal rights or the citizens' legal rights. We don't do that to our officers. So it's just our jurisdictional inventory says we can't enforce certain laws off promises.

However, if we're called for assistance, absolutely. And we all have training under Penal Code 832. That's a California statute mixed peace officer. So we can go if we see any kind of crimes in progress, things like that, absolutely. But can we move an RV that's not on our property? No. And that's probably what you're asking.

Colin Hannon: I don't really know what I was asking actually.

Ranger Stephen Korsgren: Hopefully that answered some questions. - But yeah, if it's a life, safety threat, absolutely. And we can act as any peace officer in the state, but it becomes more limited if we're just dealing with other kinds of crimes.

Colin Hannon: Okay, thank you. - But that answered it, yeah.

Eric Ornas: We have another question.

Rachel _____

Hi, my name is Rachel. I have a fun question. So I know it's broken up into four zones. And I know the lower part is mostly reserved for cattle. And there's Northern and Southern projects. And I realize all of this depends on funding and nobody suing, but assuming a Pipe Dream where everybody's happy and life progresses and you guys get lots of funding, will Zones one and four ever get connected? Like the North and South recreation zones?

Zachary Ormsby

That's a really good question, right? And that's currently the way that they're separatedis preserving two zones for ecological benefit, right?

And so they're really only going to be open for permit for research and the other two where we've concentrated the visitors are really classified as highly impacted and highly degraded areas.

As we continue to monitor the situation and conduct the science and the data to inform our decision-making processes, RMPs, RMPAs generally come up for reevaluation every five years is kind of the standard process. So I can't speak 20 years into the future

what the data is going to suggest that we do, but that's what opens up the RMPAs for different planning efforts is, hey, we have all of this new data now. And maybe we find that the coastal prairie restoration isn't going well where we have some of the high visitor use impacts right now.

And so we might want to limit visitor use impacts, maybe we want to disperse that across the four zones, that we can use that data to inform those management decisions.

And it's every five years that it comes up that we have the opportunity to do that. And that then goes through that public comment period again. Thank you. Yes, ma'am.

Jonathan Wittwer

Hi, I'm Jonathan Wittwer. I'm the president of the Friends of the North Coast. And another one of our board members is with me, Marty Demare. I just wanted to start out by thanking Zachary for all the improved relationships and communication that we've experienced from him.

And I think, at least speaking from my perspective, a lot of that probably has to do with his experience with the National Landscape Conservation System, I guess; that's where he worked for a while. Based from our end of things. Friends of the North Coast, I guess I would say, is not local area focused. It's broad North Coast and more about the environmental issues, which the National Landscape Conservation System, as you just again repeated tonight, is dedicated to.

So we appreciated that very much. And we appreciate all of you coming up here and giving us a chance to piggyback a little bit on Rural Bonny Doon here.

I guess I have two just quick questions. One is that we've heard a lot about the Supplementary Rule and our three organizations actually circulated and spent considerable time trying to give our input into the draft that came out. At least I wasn't aware that it had advanced. I'm glad it has advanced. And that it's, I guess, being part of the federal register. How do we get a copy of what is actually the final version that's being forwarded for process, I should say.

Zachary Ormsby

Well, so part of what it goes through is it's called the digital tracking system. It literally goes from our office up to the state, up to headquarters for NLCS. It goes through an entire chain of people. Every bureaucratic level that you can imagine within the organization gets a chance to make comments on that before it becomes a final document. So when it does become a final document or once their reviews are done, then can absolutely share what those supplementary rules are like.

And I'd love to tell you there's an exact date on when I would expect delivery of that. But I have no intention to misrepresent the truth, Jon.

J o n a t h a n W i t t w e r

So as I understand it, then it's still internal within BLM. So I didn't quite understand that from what you said before. It sounded like it was maybe out there for a public comment again, or something. OK.

I'm guessing the same is true about the traffic study that you referred to, but that's not going to be available to the public until, I guess, when you put out your Proposal.

Zachary Ormsby

Absolutely. Yeah, that's correct. The environmental analysis, we expect that, we hope to put that out within the next month. The traffic engineering surveys that we conducted for the area literally came in yesterday. I haven't even had the chance to read them. I just know that they arrived. So now we're going to start our analysis on what it looks like.

Jonathan Wittwer

So step by step.

Zachary Ormsby

Yeah, yeah, and it's ambitious for us to be able to analyze that and put all of these pieces of the puzzle together in the next month, but I'm confident that I can honor that commitment.

Jonathan Wittwer

Well, I'll speak for Friends of the North Coast, but we actually have, all three of our organizations, spent considerable time communicating among ourselves kind of like I guess BLM has its internal process. Ours is not that formal, but we, you know, we did that with a purpose in mind of trying to speak with one voice as much as we could anyway, so that you get some feedback from us that's not all over the map. And we would like to continue to do that. I know that I think I could speak for the other two organizations, because that's how we approached it all along and nobody has said stop doing that. So we hope that we can use the relationship that's improved and find ways to work together and give you the input from the people that have been at the meeting so kindly constructive.

Zachary Ormsby

Thank you. Thanks, Jon. And if at some point it comes up or I want you to stop doing that, I'll ask you. Otherwise expect it to continue.

Jonathan Wittwer

Okay. Okay.

Eric Ornas. We have one more from the community from -- Garret.

Garret Hammack

You mentioned funding can be tied to visitor use and require some monitoring. Will there be a development of visitor use management plans that includes monitoring, perhaps in line with IV /UMC frameworks? Am I speaking the right acronym?

Zachary Ormsby

It is. It is so government, Garret. I have to wonder where you work. There's a variety of things to look at, and I'm just going to be completely honest with you. Traditionally, the BLM has relied on road counters, estimating traffic that comes in and out of the Monument, multiplies that by 2.4 because it's average vehicle occupancy, and that's how we come up with our visitor use numbers. It's antiquated. There's really innovative research out there, and when I say we're partnering with the University, there

are things that we're going to look at is how do we better account for visitor use numbers. It's nose-cret, I think, to this community that the Rail Trail is going to come up from Santa Cruz. There's a pedestrian bridge plan that's going to bring people over, and road captures are not going to count any of it.

We don't know, and I just told you how keen the powers that we are in using visitor numbers to establish the budget allocation models that determine funding, so it behooves us to be innovators in collecting data specific to visitor use, specific to the impacts of visitor use so we can hopefully lead efforts there.

What is it? It's not the Maze in Arizona, It's the Wake in Arizona, really famous National Monument. They've had this permit system down there for years that relied on you going into a gymnasium just like this. You draw a number. It was like a bingo number and then they had a ball that spit up the ping pong ball. They would call that out and then you would see if you got your permit to go that day, right? So you had to show up at seven o'clock in the morning and random geographic location. They found that to be widely inefficient and a number of complaints.

There's a lot of man-hours involved in counting the ping pong balls and calling out the numbers. And so I'm laughing at myself, but it's really not funny. So they've created within a cell network a geofence is what they've done. And so you can now register as long as you're within this wider geofence that now incorporates two gateway communities because each one was arguing where their bingo things should take place so they could get the occupancy in their small town.

And so now they can spread that out amongst themselves because they have this this geofence that is set up that's based on your cell phone data. And as long as you register for the permit and you're within this geofence perimeter, you'll get a notification on your phone and whether your permit was awarded that day. And so that's super innovative for the BLM to do something like that to go from ping pong balls to a geofence.

And so when we talk about the visitor use data here and how we can better understand how that's impacting the resources we're legally required to manage. I expect to be innovators here.

There's a thing called Silicon Valley right over the way. There's fantastic universities in this area. And I really think that we could come up with something better than road counters.

Dave Rubin

Thanks Zachary and Zachary's BLM staff. And to follow up on Jonathan's comments, it was really interesting for me to hear, in particular, Zachary's answer to the question about Baseline studies, thinking back to when we had a meeting comparable to this, I forget how many years ago, maybe three years ago, when Zachary's predecessor from BLM was here. And when the discussion of Baseline studies was raised by a number of members from the audience, the response was well BLM didn't have money for Baseline studies. And I remember that quite, quite clearly, and many people from Bonny Doon community were, were surprised, trying to figure out a solution, getting donations from nongovernment organizations to cover the cost of the Baseline studies and then seeing the contrast with that tonight and hearing Zachary's commitment to baseline studies was, it was quite a contrast. So thanks.

Zachary Ormsby

Thank you all for tolerating me tonight. I'm appreciative of you too. Thank you. Super.
All right.

Eric Ornas

Thank you all for tuning in online.