

# REDWOOD PATHWAYS STRATEGY:

## AN ACTION PLAN FOR TRAIL DEVELOPMENT



### CHAPTER 7. GARBERVILLE-BENBOW RIVER TRAIL



#### **PRIORITY PROJECT #2: GARBERVILLE-BENBOW RIVER TRAIL**

##### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

The Garberville-Benbow River Trail offers an alternative to Highway 101 that is quite scenic and has a relatively consistent grade. The proposed route runs along rural county roads and a largely undeveloped trail through Benbow State Recreation Area, connecting the community of Garberville with the amenities and facilities at Benbow. (Benbow amenities include a state camping and picnic facility, golf course, river access and the stately Benbow Inn.) The route makes a suitable afternoon hike, and can be traveled in a couple of hours—connecting visitors to the Benbow area with the shops and facilities available in the town of Garberville, as well as providing Garberville residents with access to the recreational facilities at Benbow.

This study proposes a combination of multiple-use pathways, bike lanes, footpaths and an upgrading of current trails. A paved multi-use trail accommodating touring bicyclists is an eventual possibility but is not recommended for the immediate future. With the combinations of proposed improvements, this route will provide a safer and more enjoyable corridor for both visitors and residents.

There is no other developed non-motorized means of getting from Garberville to Benbow. A high number of local outdoor enthusiasts and community residents, as well as tourists, who are attracted to the region by the redwoods, oaks, and rivers, would utilize a non-motorized multi-use trail from Garberville to Benbow. With an improved trail along the Eel River on existing State Park land, a more diverse user group will be able to enjoy the many recreational opportunities. The trail through the State Park along the river offers potential river access for swimming, boating and fishing.

With a developed trail from Garberville to Benbow, the community resorts and campgrounds will be able to attract more visitors and help improve the economy of the area. Garberville offers markets, restaurants, a movie theater, hotels, gas and coffee shops. Benbow offers recreation, camping, golf course and the Benbow Inn. Both communities host art and music events. Campers could access entertainment and shopping, while visitors to Garberville could easily access Benbow and its recreation and arts opportunities. Visitors to both could access the new Community Park.



## OVERALL TRAIL DESCRIPTION

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For descriptive purposes, the trail can be broken into five distinct segments. (See River Trail Project Area Map, p 59) Section one has two possible alternatives (1&1A). One starts from the Sprowel Creek Exit, leaves Garberville and ends at the junction of Kimtu and Sprowel Creek Road, pictured below. The second alternative (1A), starts on Redway Drive about one and one-half-miles north of Garberville and crosses the Eel River to connect with a private dirt road. Access permission would be required to route users on this private road, which winds south to the intersection of Kimtu and Sprowel Creek Roads.

Section two begins at the intersection of Kimtu and Sprowel Creek Roads, and proceeds along Kimtu Road to the Kimtu Meadows Subdivision.

Section three goes from Kimtu Meadows to State Park land, again potentially crossing private property.

Section four stretches from the northern reach of the State Park to the Benbow Dam Service Road. The Garberville-Benbow River Trail ends when the trail connects back with the 101 in Benbow. Each of these segments has unique constraints and opportunities and when linked together establishes a coherent and desirable project.



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### SECTION ONE ~ PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

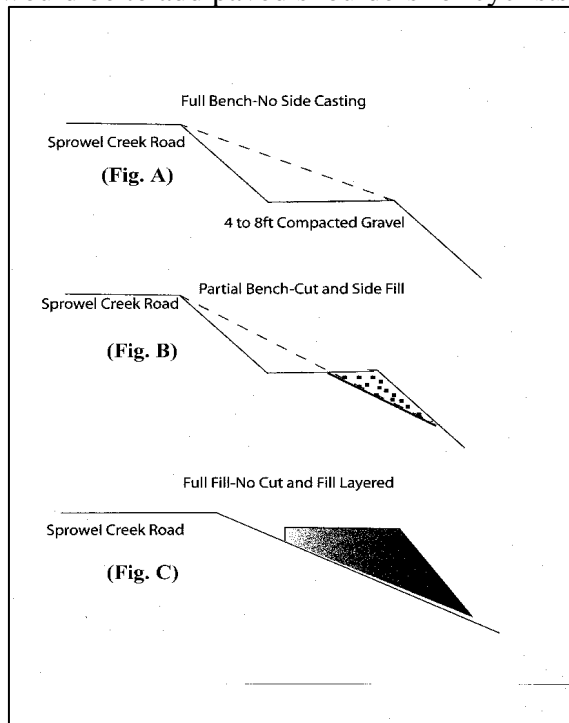
**\$575,000.00\***

Starting from the Sprowel Creek exit from SR 101 in Garberville, the proposed pathway would travel along Sprowel Creek Road. Bicycle lanes and sidewalks would be appropriate from the center of town to the beginning of the Sprowel Creek hill. There, ideally, a separate pedestrian path could be developed on the outside of the existing roadway and bicycle lanes added to the road for cyclists.

This .8 mile roadway section, from the beginning of the Sprowel Creek hill where the road narrows to the junction of Sprowel and Kimtu Roads, presents the greatest challenges to the proposed project. Currently, the road is very narrow and is used by large trucks coming from a gravel quarry along the Eel River. Even given the safety concerns presented by these uses on a very narrow road, the roadway currently receives substantial local pedestrian use. Since this is the only road from Garberville to the Community and Tooby parks, routing a trail along the road will increase pedestrian and bicycle use and safety of non-motorized users should be addressed. It is important to improve this part of Sprowel Creek road to protect the public.

\*Costs are estimated in 2002 dollars, exclusive of acquisition costs, and include recommended short-term improvements.

The most critical part of pathway Section 1 is the sharp and narrow curve that has a guardrail on one side. Currently there is no room for bikes or foot traffic. The best treatment option would be to add paved shoulders for cyclists and to create a trail on the other side of the guardrail for pedestrians. Either a full bench with the material end hauled (Figure A), a partial bench road with both cut and side cast (Figure B) or a full fill bench with fill placed and compacted in shallow layers (Fig. C) could be used to create a pathway along the existing road right of way. Geo-grid “honeycomb” material, geo-textile fabric “burritos,” or short retaining walls could also be used to add the required width in a stable manner.



Either a full bench with the material end hauled (Figure A), a partial bench road with both cut and side cast (Figure B) or a full fill bench with fill placed and compacted in shallow layers (Fig. C) could be used to create a pathway along the existing road right of way. Geo-grid “honeycomb” material, geo-textile fabric “burritos,” or short retaining walls could also be used to add the required width in a stable manner.

The extent of the County’s road easement would need to be determined. The trail surface would be compacted gravel roughly 4 feet wide, as has been used successfully in similar side hill construction along the Hammond Trail near McKinleyville. The trail would run parallel with the road until the road and shoulder width allowed for expansion of the paved surface near Tooby Park.

### Section One Alternative ~ Redway Drive Connection

During discussions with Humboldt County this alternative was discussed as a possibility to avoid routing additional use along the potentially dangerous curve on Sprowel Creek road. If this alternative were developed, users could leave Redway on Redway Drive and cross the Eel River on a bridge recently constructed by the County of Humboldt. (See map.) About fifty-feet past the bridge, the road becomes dirt and is privately-owned. The county has an access easement, which may or may not provide the public a legal right to use the road. Further exploration of this issue is needed, however, County Public Works staff indicated that the recent public construction of the bridge might positively influence the private landowner to provide additional access, if required. After about 2.8 miles the private drive connects back to Sprowel Creek Road. The proposed pathway would then continue as alternative one recommends.

This Alternative to Sprowel Creek Road would be a particularly good future addition to a regional trail network, because it provides a relatively direct link from Redway to the intersection of Sprowel Creek and Kimtu Roads, near both the Tooby Memorial Park and the developing Southern Humboldt Community Park. However, for the purposes of the Garberville to Benbow trail segment, the first alternative is preferred because it provides a direct link from the community of Garberville. The connection of Garberville with Benbow is vital to achieve the goal of economic stimulation. It will also substantially improve safety for existing Garberville residents using Sprowel Creek Road to access the Eel River, Tooby Memorial Park and the Southern Humboldt Community Park.

This section runs from the intersection of Kimtu and Sprowel Creek Roads to the Kimtu Meadows subdivision.

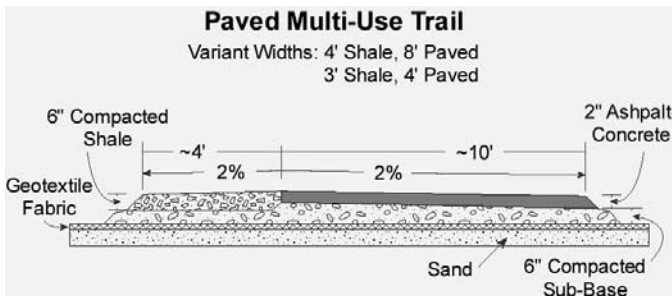
For the first mile, the trail follows Kimtu Road, which is flat with wide shoulders and ample room for the addition of bike lanes and potentially even a separated footpath or multi-use trail. (See photo.) Beyond that point, the route could utilize the low volume residential roads within the Kimtu Subdivision, or utilize an old access road that exists along the South Fork of the Eel River.



*Kimtu Road looking north. The field on the right is part of the developing Southern Humboldt Community Park. The Eel River is, outside of the picture to the left.*

At the intersection of Kimtu and Sprowel Creek Roads, improvements may be required if significant trail use develops, as users would need to cross Sprowel Creek Road to access Kimtu Road. The nearby bridge limits sight distances.

The Community Park and the County have both expressed support for improving the road for non-motorized users along this flat wide stretch of Kimtu road. The specific guidelines of the county for improvements have not been determined. The Community Park group should be contacted to discuss what they in-vision for the area. There is also potential for constructing a pathway through the community park land.



Since there is adequate room, a fully developed multi-use path would provide the most benefit to the widest variety of potential users. Although the path would not currently link to a contiguous multi-use pathway, it provides a good start for a regionally-connected trail system. A multi-use trail in this area is recommended.

At about one mile down Kimtu Road, it narrows substantially to approximately 22’ wide and moves much closer to the edge of the river floodplain. Here, traffic lanes could be narrowed to accommodate shoulders for bicycles, or if a multi-use path were sighted on the east side of the roadway (opposite the river,) the Community Park has expressed willingness to continue the path on their property. Further investigation is needed to locate the exact property boundary and to locate the path. Outside of the area pictured above, where the roadway narrows, some manipulation of the hillside may be necessary to continue the trail.

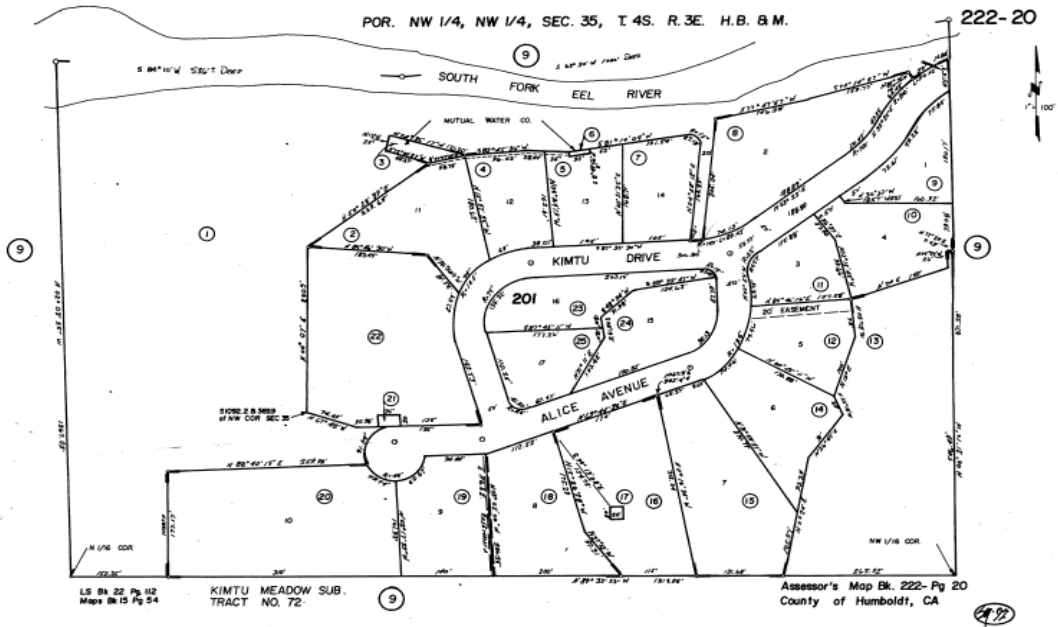


Figure 3. Shows the parcel map of the Kimtu Subdivision. The roadway at the top right connects to Sprowel Creek Road. The access road seems to surround the subdivision from the cul-de-sac at the end of Alice Avenue to the narrow parcel above the intersection of Kimtu Drive and Alice Avenue.

**SECTION THREE ~ ACCESS STUDY AREA**

**\$8,000.00**



The access road near the first houses along Kimtu Drive.

Near the first houses along Kimtu Road, a frequently-used dirt access road borders the Eel River leading from the Kimtu Meadows subdivision toward State park land. (Project staff encountered several locals using this “de-facto trail” on each visit to the site.) The ownership of the access road is unknown, and may belong to the Mutual Water Company. This access road circles around and returns to the subdivision at the Alice Avenue cul-de-sac. Several unofficial, or “volunteer,” trails break from the access road heading toward the Benbow State Recreation Area.

These volunteer trails cross a small private holding before it reaches the state park land. The property owner has been identified, and permission needs to be acquired prior to any further trail/path development. An easement granted by the owner would enable the improvement of

one primary trail crossing the property, and final routing of that trail sub-section should wait until access is secured.

Once legal access is established, trail improvements would include parking, directional signs and interpretative information. It is recommended that the trailhead and parking be located within the Community Park, if park organizers are willing, to minimize disruption to neighbors.

If the Alice Avenue cul-de-sac were determined to be the most suitable access, the gate crossing the old access road would need to be modified. The trail would then follow the old road south at a mild gradient (under 5%) through trees and blackberries for approximately 520' before intersecting a trail near State Park boundary. If access from the end of Kimtu Road were developed instead, the proximity of the access road to several residences would require specific design accommodations, and the concerns of adjacent land owners should be carefully incorporated into any final design. Both access points present sensitive issues and concerns to neighborhood residents. The community of Kimtu Meadows would need to be engaged in the planning process. Appendix B includes a list of Kimtu property owners and contact numbers.



*The access road at the Alice Road cul-de-sac.*

Regardless of the access, roughly 500' of trail would have to be improved through river sand, meadow, and coyote brush to link with the existing State Parks trail. Initially, the conceptual design of the trail through the sand could incorporate use of geo-textile fabric and application of trail-base rock. The trail width would be between 3' and 6' wide, depending on the access width.

#### **SECTION FOUR ~ BENBOW STATE PARK TRAIL**

**\$15,000.00**

Continuing toward Benbow, the existing trail through the State Park is primarily a narrow single, 2' to 3' track with light usage by hikers and mountain bikers. The trail runs at 0% to 5% gradient for approximately 1,500' before slowly gaining in elevation, heading increasingly away from the river, and accessing a mixed forest and meadow plateau adjacent to private fenced land. Near this point, the trail splits into three smaller trails.



Each of the three trail sub-segments proceed roughly south between the river and the private property, heading uphill and rejoining one another near the hill top. The three sub-trails are relatively similar, utilizing what appears to be old

road sections and experiencing substantial erosion where the roads head steeply uphill. Short segments of up to 20% grade exist within each option, with similar rutting and related erosion damage, (see picture). Drainage structures on the road sections are non-existent or non-functioning.

The shortest of these, running closest to the private fence, cuts hundreds off feet of the route at a minimal cost to scenic elements. The southern half of this sub-section follows a rutted ranch road which heads directly uphill. Once gaining the top of the hill, the trail runs at a mild gradient (less than 5%), proceeding through forest and meadow. The trail then runs roughly adjacent to fenced private property and turns away from the fence and private property within a broad meadow before arriving at a concrete pad close to Section five.

To upgrade this existing trail for greater public use would require relatively minor improvements. The area where the trail splits into three sub-trails would most likely require re-routing to minimize the uphill gradient and control erosion. The three existing trails could then be closed. Where the trail follows closely the private property boundary, there is a short level section experiencing erosion, as well as a drainage swale that seems to be eroding into the trail width. This area also needs treatment, perhaps with short sections of retaining structure and fill to widen the trail tread. Near the junction of this trail section with Section Five, directional signs would assist first-time users to locate the appropriate trail—either to the riverside or to Benbow.

Upgrading this section to a multi-use trail that would accommodate touring cyclists would require additional resources and improvements. Although Rangers and State Park representatives expressed initial support for some general trail improvements, upgrading the trail to full multiple use needed for street bikes is a longer term, more costly proposition which *could*, depending on the design specifications, alter the scenic quality of the trail.

Therefore, it is recommended that the trail maintain its use as a hiking path with the aforementioned drainage and erosion-related improvements. Upgrading this trail section to a fully-functioning hiking path would preserve it for its current use and decrease erosion occurring along the trail. Improved signs warning people of fire danger and directing people would also be beneficial to existing users. Interpretative signs explaining both the cultural and natural history of the area would improve the overall experience of the public, both existing and new. Eventually, when the Sprowel Creek Road section is improved and use increases, additional upgrades can be investigated.

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## **SECTION FIVE ~ SERVICE ROAD**

**\$2,500.00**

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This final section of the Garberville-Benbow River Trail begins where the existing trail meets a well-graded gravel road in the center of a wide, open field. Here the trail, now a road, has little or no gradient. A second road intersects this one, heading down to the river. Following the road toward Benbow, the route begins to head gradually downhill, near a cattle crossing guard. The roadway slowly winds nearer to the river. Gradients are mild, reaching a relative maximum of 7 - 15% for short sections, before changing over to low gradient paved road.



This service road is about 1.3 miles long, passes several large residences, and connects to the historic Benbow Bridge. Little needs to be done to improve the route. However, there is a stretch where the road is dirt and gravel and would need to be upgraded to allow for touring cyclists. This road is closed to auto traffic except for a few residents and maintenance vehicles. Signs along this road and dealing with several “shot-gun” culverts that may eventually undermine the roadbed, would be the only real need improvements.

Just north of the historic bridge is a motorized gate. Beyond the gate, the service road connects with Benbow Drive, which is open to motorized vehicles. Here bike lanes and directional signs could connect the trail to the Benbow lake picnic area and related amenities, including restrooms. Where Benbow Drive reaches Route 101 this proposed project is complete.

### PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less * than Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X

#### I. Discussion:

A - d). No. The project will not have an adverse effect on the scenic character of the area. The project will likely result in improved access to scenic vistas for visitors to the area. This

low-impact trail will improve existing trail resources, adding minimal signs and proposes no additional lighting.

<b>II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES:</b> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) to non-agricultural use? (The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program in the California Resources Agency, Department of Conservation, maintains detailed maps of these and other farmland categories.)				<b>X</b>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				<b>X</b>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could individually or cumulatively result in loss of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				<b>X</b>

**II. Discussion:**

a-c). No. There is no prime or unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance within the proposed project area. There is no agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract for the site. There is potential for trail development along Kimtu Road. This area is currently zoned residential, although straw is grown within the parcel currently. The proposed trail, if sited in this area, would be located along the roadway on the verge of existing grassland which is currently a drainage ditch. No existing farmland will be impacted by the proposed project and trail development will not individually or cumulatively result in loss of farmland in the area.

<b>III. AIR QUALITY --</b> Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Attainment Plan or Congestion Management Plan?				<b>X</b>
b) Violate any stationary source air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation?				<b>X</b>
c) Result in a net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal				

or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				<b>X</b>
d) Create or contribute to a non-stationary source “hot spot” (primarily carbon monoxide)?				<b>X</b>
e) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				<b>X</b>
f) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				<b>X</b>

III. Discussion:

a-f). No. There may be short-term increases in airborne dust during trail construction. Potential project impacts will be primarily dust created by construction, emissions from construction and maintenance operations, and increased vehicle traffic to and from the site. These activities are not expected to generate emissions in sufficient volumes to exceed stationary air quality standards, however, due to the proximity of the site to the Eel River, all BMP for controlling dust and erosion during construction will be observed.

Trail design will only allow for non-motorized use. No significant vehicle congestion on roads or at intersections will result from the project. Although there could be a slight increase in traffic to access the trail through the Benbow State Park recreation land. The trail project should *ultimately reduce* emissions by offering an alternative to auto use for residents and visitors. The project will not create any additional air quality impacts.

<b>IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Adversely impact, either directly or through habitat modifications, any endangered, rare, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (sections 17.11 or 17.12)?				See below
b) Have a substantial adverse impact, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				See below
c) Have a substantial adverse impact on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			<b>X</b>	

d) Adversely impact federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) either individually or in combination with the known or probable impacts of other activities through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			<b>X</b>	
e) Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?				<b>X</b>
f) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				<b>X</b>
g) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				<b>X</b>

IV. Discussion:

a). No. Currently there are no threatened or endangered species identified in the project area. No specific surveys have been conducted for endangered plant species within the project area. However, there was no evidence of endangered species observed during site visits or expected to be found in the project area as identified a review of state and federal listings. Further studies would be needed to completely rule out the presence of such species and adequately develop mitigation for impacts of the recreational development.

b). See A, above. Sensitive Species identified during a biological evaluation of the project area will be considered and mitigation developed to minimize any potential disturbance to sensitive habitat. The proposed enhancement of trails and facilities could limit some amount of current disturbance through education and a ‘focusing’ of public impact to a public trail versus use of existing ‘volunteer’ trails.

c-d). Trail segments will be routed to avoid wetlands. Any wetland areas disturbed during the construction phase will be fully mitigated. Increased public access to the project area will channel use onto the official trail route away from existing wetlands, reducing the current impacts. There is no construction proposed in wetlands.

e). No the development of the proposed project will not interfere with the movement of wildlife or fish species. Increased use of the area may cause some initial disturbance but movement will not be hindered.

f-g). No. There are currently no conservation plans that contradict the proposed project.

<b>V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource which is either listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, or a local register of historic resources?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resources (i.e., an artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions, has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest or best available example of its type, or is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person)?				X
c) Disturb or destroy a unique paleontological resource or site?				X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X

V. Discussion:

a-d). No. There are no known cultural resources impacted by this project. If evidence of cultural, historical, or paleontological resources are uncovered during construction, all activity will cease until review and disposition by the appropriate experts occur.

<b>VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?				See below
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X
v) Landslides?				X

vi) Flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
vii) Wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas and where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	
b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Would the project result in the loss of a unique geologic feature?				X
d) Is the project located on strata or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X
e) Is the project located on expansive soil creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
f) Where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater, is the soil capable of supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems?				X

VI. Discussion:

a). Humboldt County is very seismically active in terms of strong seismic ground shaking and landslides. The project will not create additional hazard, does not proposed structures or housing units near earthquake faults.

vii) The proposed project will likely increase public use within the park which may present a minimally greater potential for fire, however, the majority of the proposed project area is already state facility open to the public. Any will be mitigated by posting signs warning users of fire danger and appropriate park uses.

b). No. The project will not promote erosion and loss of topsoil.

c). No. The project will not impact geologic features in the area.

d). No. The project will not create a greater potential for instabilities.

e). No. The project area does not have expansive soils.

f). No. The project will not create a need for waste disposal.

<b>VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				<b>X</b>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment?				<b>X</b>
c) Reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				<b>X</b>
d) Is the project located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				<b>X</b>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				<b>X</b>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				<b>X</b>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				<b>X</b>
h) Expose people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			<b>X</b>	

VII. Discussion:

a-g). No. There are no hazardous materials associated with the project.

h). The proposed project will likely increase public use within the park which may present a minimally greater potential for fire, however, the majority of the proposed project area is already state facility open to the public. Any will be mitigated by posting signs warning users of fire danger and appropriate park uses.

<b>VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Violate Regional Water Quality Control Board water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				<b>X</b>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (i.e., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				<b>X</b>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems to control?				<b>X</b>
f) Place housing within a 100-year floodplain, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				<b>X</b>
g) Place within a 100-year floodplain structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				<b>X</b>

**VIII. Discussion:**

a-e) No. The project will not alter the area significantly. Impact to existing drainage and groundwater due to placement of the trail will be minor, and is likely to decrease long-term erosion. All appropriate construction BMP's will be incorporated into the construction to minimize short-term erosion and siltation.

f-g) No structures or housing are proposed.

<b>IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:</b>				
a) Physically divide an established community?				<b>X</b>

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community's conservation plan?				X

IX. Discussion:

a-c. No. The project does not divide a community it connects Garberville with the Benbow area. There is no conflict with any current community plan or conservation plan.

<b>X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource classified MRZ-2 by the State Geologist that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X

X. Discussion:

a-b No. There have been no valuable mineral resources identified in the project area.

<b>XI. NOISE -- Would the project result in:</b>				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a				X

public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

**XI. Discussion:**

a-c & e, f. No. There are no significant contributions of noise that will result from increased recreational use of the area. Steps will be taken to ensure that no motorized vehicles will have access to the trail. Trailhead parking will be sited away from residences.

d. There may be a minor temporary increase in noise during the construction phase of the project, if motorized machinery is used for construction. However, the overall addition of noise will be minor. There are no expected long-term impacts.

<b>XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

**XII. Discussion:**

a-c. No. The project will not induce population growth or displace existing housing.

<b>XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES</b>				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance				

objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?				<b>X</b>
Police protection?				<b>X</b>
Schools?				<b>X</b>
Parks?			<b>X</b>	
Other public facilities?				<b>X</b>

**XIII Discussion:**

a. No. The project will not create substantial adverse effects on public services. The proposed project will enhance an existing State Park, connecting that facility with the nearby community of Garberville. Some Garberville and Kimtu subdivision residents already utilize the proposed trail. There are existing water and bathroom facilities at the Benbow campground and picnic area, which should be sufficient to meet the needs of additional users.

<b>XIV. RECREATION --</b>				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			<b>X</b>	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				<b>X</b>

**XIV Discussion:**

a-b. The proposed project will enhance an existing State Park facility connecting it to the nearby community of Garberville and potentially increasing the use of this recreational facility. The proposed improvements will better facilitate access to the area, directing existing use from several un-maintained volunteer trails onto one improved trails. This is likely to slightly decreasing the overall impacts to the resource. Proposed construction can and should be designed to minimize impacts to the area.

<b>XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle			<b>X</b>	

trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?				
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				<b>X</b>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				<b>X</b>
d) Substantially increase hazards to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				<b>X</b>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				<b>X</b>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				<b>X</b>
g) Conflict with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				<b>X</b>

**XV Discussion:**

a-g). There will be a potential increase in recreational use of the area and the resultant additional traffic, however, the anticipated increased use is well within the existing capacity of the county roads. The project includes pedestrian and bicycle-related improvements to Sprowel Creek Road, the only potential sites of use conflicts. Parking, as proposed, will primarily be off-street in project-designed spaces. Finally, the proposed project is consistent with and supported by regional transportation and alternative transportation goals.

<b>XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS --Would the project:</b>				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				<b>X</b>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				<b>X</b>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				<b>X</b>
d) Are sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or				<b>X</b>

expanded entitlements needed?				
e) Has the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project determined that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Is the project served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

XVI. Discussion:

a-g. No. The project will have no significant impacts on water supplies or treatment facilities. Water and waste needs of the project will be met by existing facilities, and should be well within the capabilities of those existing facilities.

<b>XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --</b>				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				<b>X</b>
b) Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?				<b>X</b>
c) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and of probable future projects)?				<b>X</b>
d) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				<b>X</b>

XVII Discussion.

a-d. This development and improvement of recreational facilities associated with the Benbow State Park and the adjoining area will have no cumulative detrimental environmental impacts. In fact, it will help the county to achieve stated transportation, economic development and tourism development goals.

## NEXT STEPS

The Redwood Pathways project team was able to meet with State Park representatives several times regarding this trail. Local rangers and staff seemed very interested and supportive.

In addition, organizers of the Southern Humboldt Community Park, which borders Kimtu Drive, also expressed interest in having part of the pathway on their property *and* in assisting with securing support for the pathway from the Superintendent of Humboldt Redwoods State Park (who also oversees the Benbow facility.)

Further in-depth meetings with the Superintendent and staff are necessary to determine how the community can assist with this project. Initial meetings should concentrate of securing the park staff's support for the trail. Once the park staff supports the idea, dealing with the community's expressed desire for this pathway to accommodate dogs on leash, (and, in the longer-term bicycles,) should become a focus for community-Park collaboration. Later partnership efforts can focus on working *with* the park staff to secure the needed resources (easement or property acquisition, permitting, construction and maintenance funds) to implement the project.

**Because this trail requires a link that crosses private property and is accessible only by passing through a small neighborhood, *all* actions taken should be sensitive to the rights and concerns of the landowner and adjacent property owners. Do not encourage trespassing. Avoid publicity until such a time as an easement or property has been secured. *This study does not condone activities that endanger the rights of private property owners. It is the support and generosity of these individuals that make many, if not most, trails and pathways possible.***

Note the use of the term “pathway” rather than trail—State Parks *does not allow dogs or bicycles* on its “trails”, therefore, this project should be referred to by another term to encourage the development of a link between the two communities that has a *special designation* which allows these uses.) Other ways that community organizations can facilitate implementation of the Garberville – Benbow River Trail are:

1. Organizing local community groups, such as the Avenue Trails Committee, and school groups, such as science teachers, athletic coaches and teams, parent groups, and students. Once organized in support of the pathway, these groups can hold letter and petition drives to demonstrate to State Parks and County Public Works the **breadth and depth of community support for the path**. In this case, letters of support for trail acquisition and construction funding may assist the Parks and County in securing needed funding to make improvements (particularly the Sprowel Creek Road area.)

Southern Humboldt county communities have relatively small populations. It is necessary for these populations to show a **united** and **consistent** force in order to establish change and get agencies to commit resources to improvements.

2. In addition, community groups can work with the State Parks to organize trail maintenance and clean up events on existing sections of the pathway. This type of ongoing collaboration between the community and Parks will *demonstrate* to the Park staff the **commitment** of the community and, over the long-term, **establish a relationship** of trust.
3. State Parks has established this sort of trust – collaborative relationship with several organizations. It may be quite beneficial for community organizers to meet with the leadership of the Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association and the leadership of the equestrian groups active in the southern Humboldt area to **get first hand information** on how their successful relationships were developed with the parks.
4. Hold fund raising drives for seed money to begin the pathway implementation. See if local businesses would be willing to donate needed fencing or other materials.
5. Identify potential grants and work with the State Parks/County Public Works to secure grant funds.
6. Meet regularly with the State Parks and County Public Works, to update them on community efforts, and discuss the pathway—keeping it fresh in their minds. Discuss the desire of the community for the path, for the ability to have bicycles and dogs on the facility. *Ask how the community can assist!* (Then be sure to *follow through* and *do some* of their suggestions.)
7. Get Air photos of the proposed area.
8. Document the history of the pathway corridor. Get assistance from local historians such as Judith Bell or Douglas Fir. Walk whole trail path. Document the significance of special features along the path.
9. Work with the Southern Humboldt Community Park board to confirm their support. Determine where within the park is best for this trail. Design a trailhead with parking and interpretive features. Gather length, width; assess potential for vehicle parking improvements; and take lots of pictures.

*Once public access is legally secured:*

10. When the State Parks/County Public Works proceed with implementation of the pathway, they will need certain documents and studies. Providing them with as much of this information as is possible can demonstrate interest **and** directly speed the process. For instance, school classes could conduct projects to:
  - research and identify endangered plants and animals found in the proposed pathway corridor;
  - conduct research into the history and potential archeological sites within the corridor;
  - preliminary investigations into the environmental impacts of the proposed trail link;
  - create interpretive materials for later use in brochures or on signs

- younger students can create art expressing what such a trail would mean to them (this has been shown to be very effective elsewhere)
  - political science classes can study the effectiveness of involving politicians in such a venture— by letter writing as well as organizing events inviting politicians to visit the area and see the communities and potential pathway route personally
  - There are indefinite other ways... creative and supportive (as long as the efforts are not adversarial. This is important to building trust between the community and parks.)
11. Set up a web site that promotes the idea, its benefits, community goals, and asks for support (letters, financial, etc.)
  12. Host guided walks to drum up support w/ locals.
  13. Once support is secured, write regular articles for local papers! Get the issue on the radio! (Copy and send them to State Parks and Caltrans.)
  14. Collect written information of similar trails elsewhere, their impact on tourism and the economy, and construction methods that may be suitable locally.

Priority Project #2: Garberville-Benbow River Trail .....	57
Project Summary .....	57
Overall Trail Description .....	59
Section One ~ Preferred Alternative .....	\$575,000.00*
59	
Section One Alternative ~ Redway Drive Connection.....	60
Section Two –Kimtu Road \$150,000.00 .....	61
Section Three ~ Access Study Area .....	\$8,000.00
62	
Section Four ~ Benbow State Park Trail .....	\$15,000.00
63	
Section Five ~ Service Road .....	\$2,500.00
64	
Preliminary Environmental Checklist.....	65
Next Steps.....	78