

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
PRELIMINARY REPORT OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE
TRINIDAD HEAD LIGHTHOUSE REVOCATION
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD INTENT TO PATIALLY RELINQUISH WITHDRAWAL

INTRODUCTION

Executive Orders dated June 8, 1866 and September 10, 1902 withdrew 60.99 acres at the Trinidad Head for lighthouse purposes which was managed by the United States Coast Guard (USCG). Trinidad Head is located along the northern California coastline, in the City of Trinidad, Humboldt County, California. Lighthouse operations began in 1871 to aid vessels transporting lumber in Humboldt County. The Trinidad Head property originally contained a lighthouse, fog station, two water tanks, fencing, a housing complex and garage for USCG personnel, and a communication site.

The USCG later discovered that the lands in the withdrawal were in excess of their needs and relinquished most of Trinidad Head. In April 1983, the USCG relinquished a portion of the withdrawn lands and 46.94 acres was patented to the City of Trinidad for public recreation use under the Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act. The 1983 relinquishment left two separate remaining parcels in the original withdrawal; 12.97 acres (Trinidad Head lighthouse parcel) and 1.08 acres (USCG communication site parcel).

On March 23, 2007 the USCG submitted a Letter of Intent to relinquish the 12.97 acre Trinidad Head lighthouse parcel to the BLM. The housing complex and garage that were located on the parcel have been removed (leaving only the foundations), but the lighthouse, water tanks, fencing, and fog station remain on the parcel to be relinquished. The lighthouse and surrounding property are no longer needed for navigation purposes because the light system is automated and does not need to be manned. The light system has been removed from inside the lighthouse and placed on the outside of the building.

The USCG would keep the light system and fog station on their navigation inventory and submit a right-of-way application, retain a reservation, or enter into an agreement with BLM for continued use of the navigation equipment on the lands to be relinquished. BLM would remove the water tanks and would be responsible for the long term maintenance of the lighthouse, fencing, and surrounding land.

The remaining 1.08 acres of withdrawn land on Trinidad Head, which houses the communication site, would continue to be withdrawn and managed by USCG.

Recreation use consisting of hiking, enjoying the scenery of the ocean, rocks and islands making up the California Coastal National Monument (CCNM), wildlife viewing, and natural and cultural resource interpretation has increasingly become a more popular and suitable use of the Trinidad Head lighthouse parcel, especially due to its proximity near communities and easy access to the coastline. The local community and interest groups have been very supportive in increasing access to the coastline and retaining the lighthouse parcel for public recreation/historic preservation/interpretation purposes.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

The parcel is described as: Humboldt Meridian, T.8 N., R. 1 W., Section 26, Lot 6

A legal description review was completed and approved for BLM use on December 5, 2013.

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Proposed Action – The United States Coast Guard (USCG) has submitted a Letter of Intent to relinquish 12.97 acres which were originally withdrawn in 1902 for lighthouse purposes. The lighthouse station contains a 30 foot lighthouse, Federal Aid to Navigation (light beam), fog station and two water tanks. The lighthouse and water tanks will transfer with the land. USCG will keep the fog station and light beam in their navigation inventory. USCG would submit a right-of-way application, reservation, or enter into an agreement with BLM for continued use and maintenance of the Federal Aid to Navigation (light beam) and fog station located on the parcel. Any uses that are not authorized or reserved, will be removed upon jurisdictional transfer.

No Action Alternative – If the proposed revocation is not completed, the USCG would continue with disposal of the public lands through the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act program. In that circumstance, the future owners of the parcel could be a state or local agency, a non-profit group, or a private party. There is a possibility that public recreation on the historic site would be eliminated.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

An Environmental Analysis was completed on March 21, 2014 which found that the proposed action is in compliance with the Arcata Resource Management Plan and the California Coastal National Monument Resource Management Plan. There were no major concerns to the proposed action that would prevent the revocation from occurring.

EXISTING THIRD PARTY USES AND AGREEMENTS

The lands to be revoked are encumbered by the following existing uses:

- Right of way reservation to Humboldt Bay Air Station Group for vertical operations training. This reservation is issued in perpetuity.
- Right of way reservation to the United States Coast Guard for continued use, maintenance, repair, replacement of antennas, electrical power lines, poles and associated equipment to service the Federal Aid to Navigation (light beam) and fog signal. This reservation is issued in perpetuity.
- Right of way reservation to the United States Coast Guard for access to the Coast Guard's Federal Aid to Navigation (light beam) and fog signal. This reservation is issued in perpetuity.
- Right of way reservation to preserve the arc of visibility for the Federal Aid to Navigation (light beam). This reservation is issued in perpetuity.
- Right of reservation to replace, or remove the Federal Aid to Navigation (light beam) or add any supplemental Federal Aid equipment. Relocation of the navigation system would require Bureau of Land Management coordination and written approval. This reservation is issued in perpetuity.
- Right of way reservation to the Federation of Women's Club for placement of a Trinidad Head Historic Cross. This reservation is issued in perpetuity.
- USCG and the City of Trinidad entered into a written agreement dated August 29, 1988 for construction and maintenance, including costs/responsibilities, of a locked gate on parcel owned by the city. The agreement is non-transferable without written agreement from the other party; therefore BLM will enter into a new agreement with the City of Trinidad, if needed, upon jurisdictional transfer.

A copy of records related to all existing third party uses will be provided for documentation in the case file.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENT

Public Notification for a Withdrawal Revocation is not required. However, the Arcata Field Office has made extensive effort to communicate their interest in managing the Trinidad Head and has received positive feedback from the local community as to the potential of allowing public access to this site. The USCG and local groups have showed special interest in assisting the BLM Arcata Field office in developing plans to address site improvements. The Arcata Field Office informed the Yurok Tribe and the Trinidad Rancheria of the potential for relinquishment through letter dated September 12, 2013.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are BLM's Findings and Recommendations on the proposed action:

1a. Finding: Public Benefits of the Proposal

BLM's potential management of the parcel would be a public benefit for the following reasons:

- Supports planning efforts consistent with California Coastal National Monument (CCNM) Resource Management Plan and Arcata Field Office's management of coastal properties along the Northern California Coastline.
- Provides a center piece for connecting the community of Trinidad to the California Coastal National Monument (CCNM) and BLM California's Coastal Collaborative Strategy.
- Increases unique public recreation opportunities, such as coastal hiking and site seeing.
- Provides an outstanding visual resource with views of the rocks and islands within the CCNM along the Northern California Coastline.
- Allows Federal protection of a lighthouse that is on the National Register of Historic Places. The surrounding lands are also very significant to the Yurok people and are within their ancestral territory.
- Improves public access and interpretation.

1b. Recommendation:

Upon jurisdictional transfer, the Trinidad Head lighthouse parcel be analyzed for cultural, historic, biological resources and managed in accordance with planning objectives identified in the Arcata Resource Management Plan, the California Coastal National Monument Resource Management Plan, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000.

2a. Finding: Public Interest Factor

The public has been supportive of BLM's intent to acquire and manage lands for beach access along the Northern California Coast. The City of Trinidad, Yurok Tribe, and Trinidad Rancheria have in the past, shown an interest in acquiring the Trinidad Head lighthouse parcel, but are currently supportive of BLM ownership with the expectation that input provided by each group would be considered in management of the parcel.

These interested groups are members of the Trinidad Gateway Committee along with the Trinidad Museum Society, California State Parks, Humboldt State University, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Tsurai Ancestral Society, Trinidad Coastal Land Trust, Coastwalk California, Redwood Region Audubon Society, and the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce. BLM has a close relationship with the Committee and has gained a lot of support to acquire the parcel.

2b. Recommendation:

Upon jurisdictional transfer, BLM form a cooperative partnership group and develop a long term management plan to allow input by all interested groups.

3a. Finding: Mineral Potential and Environmental Concerns

As addressed in the Environmental Assessment dated March 21, 2014, the mineral potential on the Trinidad Head lighthouse parcel has been determined to be low to non-existent. Any mineral present would likely be very small in quantity and difficult to extract. In the case of quarry rock, rock quality is less than that found elsewhere in the vicinity. Given the numerous coastal regulations applicable to the area, no development of mineral or aggregate resources is expected.

An Environmental Site Assessment Report was completed on February 26, 2014 which found no indication of any risk to human health, safety, or the environment on the site. The parcel was identified as suitable for acquisition.

3b. Recommendation:

A mineral withdrawal petition/application would not be required.

4a. Finding: Property Management- Cost Consideration

The proposed action would add a 30' lighthouse and two water tanks into BLM's property inventory. The water tanks would be removed upon jurisdiction transfer. A draft Business Asset Management Plan has been completed. The expected costs of managing the lighthouse parcel in the short term are estimated at less than \$70,000 including costs of new railing, paint, signage, etc. Long term costs for routine maintenance, repairs, etc are estimated to be less than \$20,000 annually. No additional positions for law enforcement or resource staff are likely to be needed for management of the parcel. Opportunities to reduce costs are available in the form of community assistance. Although initially the BLM would be responsible for the costs of maintaining the Light Station and surrounding lands, the BLM expects to manage the Light Station in partnership with the Trinidad Gateway Committee and other Collaborative Partners to help enhance partners' capabilities to share resources and expertise, leverage limited funding, and create seamless management of the Light Station over the long term.

4b. Recommendation:

Upon jurisdictional transfer, BLM should form a cooperative partnership group and develop a long term management plan to reduce costs and assist in management of the lighthouse and surrounding property.

5a. Finding: Administrative Compliance


Instruction Memorandum 2005-151 (IM) was issued by the BLM Director's Office in May 2005 which states, "It is the Director's policy that BLM will not retain or manage lighthouses other than those for which the BLM has already accepted responsibility." This IM expired on September 30, 2006, and was not replaced by any additional policy. On March 19, 2014, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) California State Office requested a one-time exemption from IM-2005-151 to further explore the partial revocation.

5b. Recommendation:


The proposed revocation would be subject to approval of an exemption to IM 2005-151.

RECOMENDATION REVIEW:

We, the undersigned, have reviewed the analysis and recommendations that the Bureau of Land Management accept the voluntary relinquishment of 12.97 acres of withdrawn public domain lands from the United States Coast Guard. We recommend that the above recommendations be approved as the Bureau's decision on the proposed action and recommend the Assistant Secretary of the Interior partially revoke the withdrawal created by an Executive Order dated June 8, 1866 and September 10, 1902.


District Realty Specialist
Northern California District Office

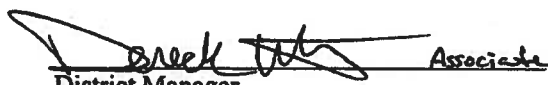
4/4/14
Date


Field Manager
Arcata Field Office

4-4-14
Date

CONCURRENCE:

I have reviewed the recommendations on the proposed partial withdrawal revocation contained in this report and have concluded that the land is suitable for return to the Bureau of Land Management. I concur with the recommendation that the BLM accept the United States Coast Guard's voluntary relinquishment of 12.97 acres of withdrawn public domain land.


District Manager
Northern California District Office

4-4-14
Date

DECISION:

I have reviewed the recommendation that the Bureau of Land Management accept the voluntary relinquishment of 12.97 acres of withdrawn public domain lands from the United States Coast Guard and that the lands return to the Bureau of Land Management, and approve such recommendations as the Bureau's decision on the proposed action.


State Director
California State Office

4/8/2014
Date