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Cama Beach State Park

Planning for the Future

**Michael Hankinson
Planning Program Manager**





Preliminary staff recommendation

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- **Not reopen the cabins where they currently sit.**
- **Plan instead for a sustainable park that is in harmony with the site conditions.**





Planning process for Cama Beach

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Part 1:

- Information gathering
- Present and gather public input on preliminary staff recommendation

Part 2:

- Commission decision on October 10, 2024
- Plan the future of the park, Fall 2024-2026, including decision on future of cabins, infrastructure, and beach access





Presentation

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1

Description of park

2

What went wrong?

3

Can we reopen the cabins?

4

Conclusion and recommendations





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1.

Cama Beach State Park





Tonight's Meeting: Big Picture

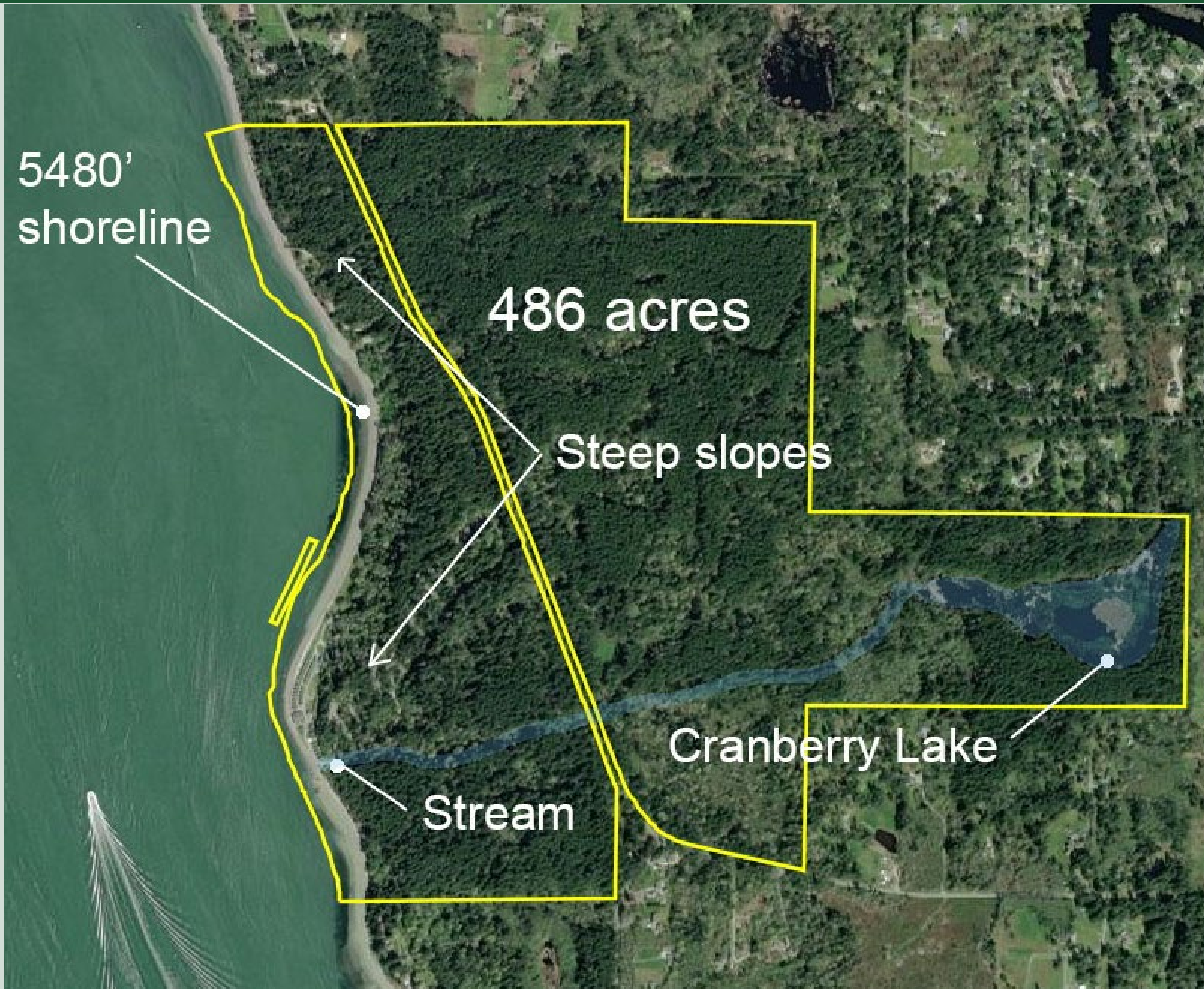
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- What are the facts about the park?**
- What other factors influence decisions about the cabins and park?
- Analysis reveals limited management choices

Feedback from all concerned:

- Welcome new information about the park that may influence decision-makers
- Commission decision on cabins in October





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Natural Environment



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Children's play park
Standard cabins
Center for Wooden Boats/ Boathouse
Offices
Museum/store
Restrooms
Workshop
Bungalows
Deluxe Cabins
Seawall

Built Environment at beach

- ✓ Visitation 2023
272,888
- ✓ Revenue 2023
\$982,650
- ✓ 91 Special Activity Permits 2023
48 weddings





Precontact Site

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Available public information since 2005

Everett Herald

"The state Parks and Recreation Commission plans to open a park there next year, but the project has been halted since March, after crews excavating utility trenches to provide power for rental cabins unearthed the remains of four people in January and February."

Seattle Times

"...archaeologists in 2005 uncovered human remains and other Native American artifacts that date back 1,600 years."

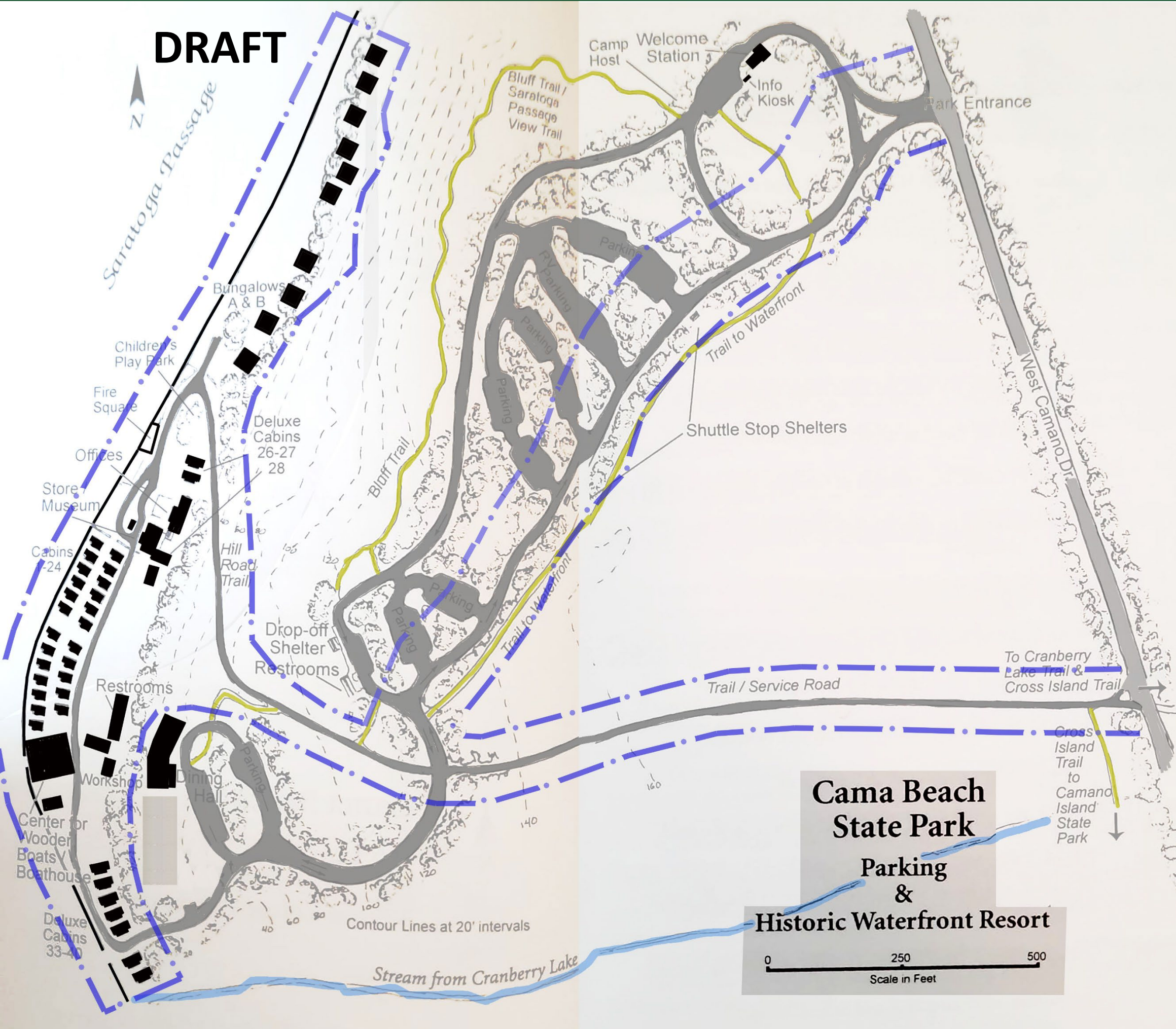
Spokesman-Review

"The discovery of ancient human remains at the old Cama Beach fishing resort has brought state development of the site to a temporary halt..."

Wikipedia

"The discovery of human remains and artifacts in the early 21st century threatened to scuttle the creation of a state park at the site."





Two landscapes on National Register of Historic Places

Pre contact site:

- 13 acres
- **Period of Significance 2,000 years**
- Areas of Significance:
 - Archaeology
 - Ethnic heritage

Cama Beach Resort:

- 38 acres
- **Period of Significance: 1932-1953**
- Areas of Significance:
 - Entertainment/Recreation
 - Architecture
 - Landscape architecture



Climate change is impacting park

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- Seven 50-year storms in last 20 years



King tide February 2012



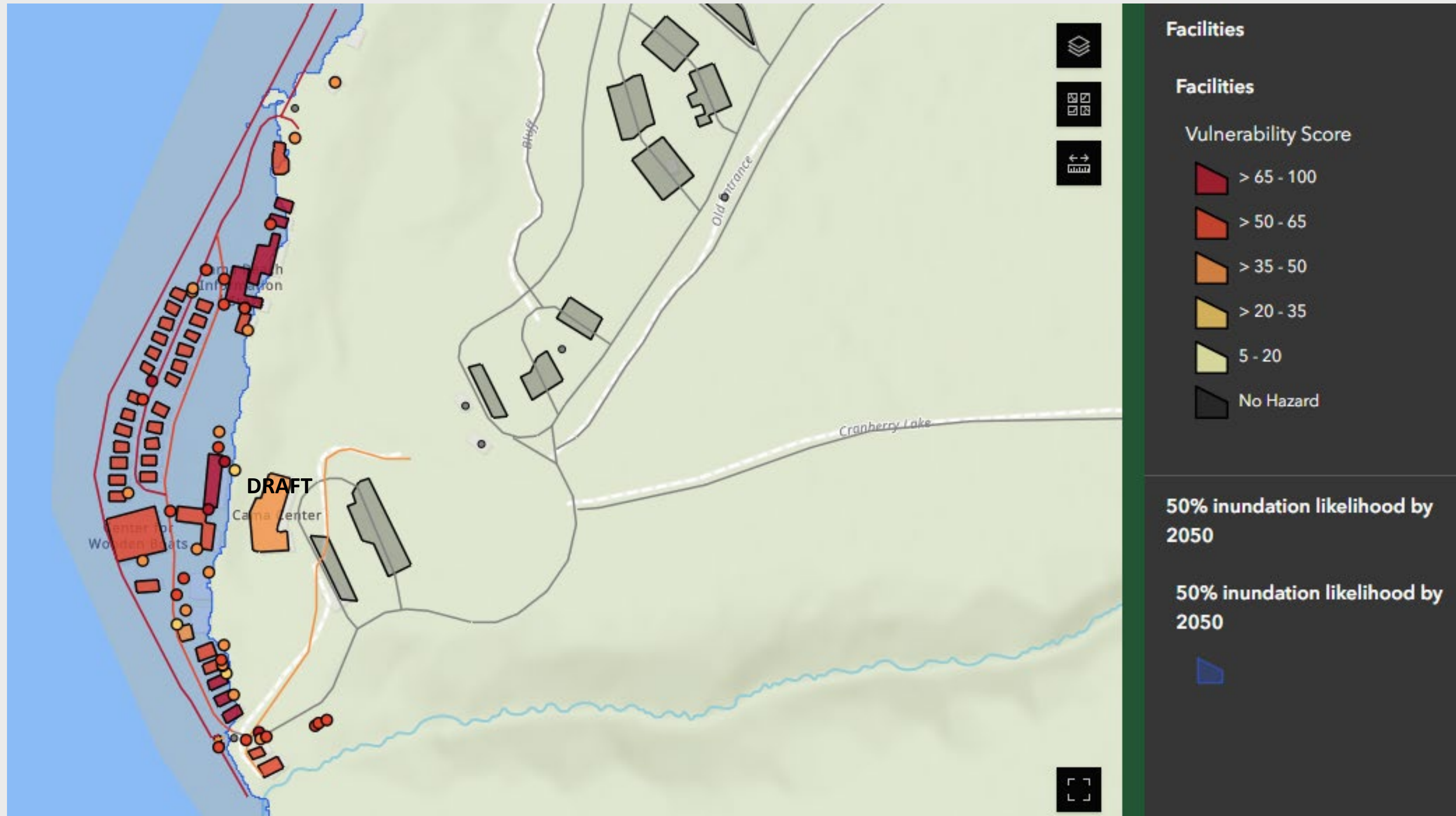
Climate change is incrementally impacting park

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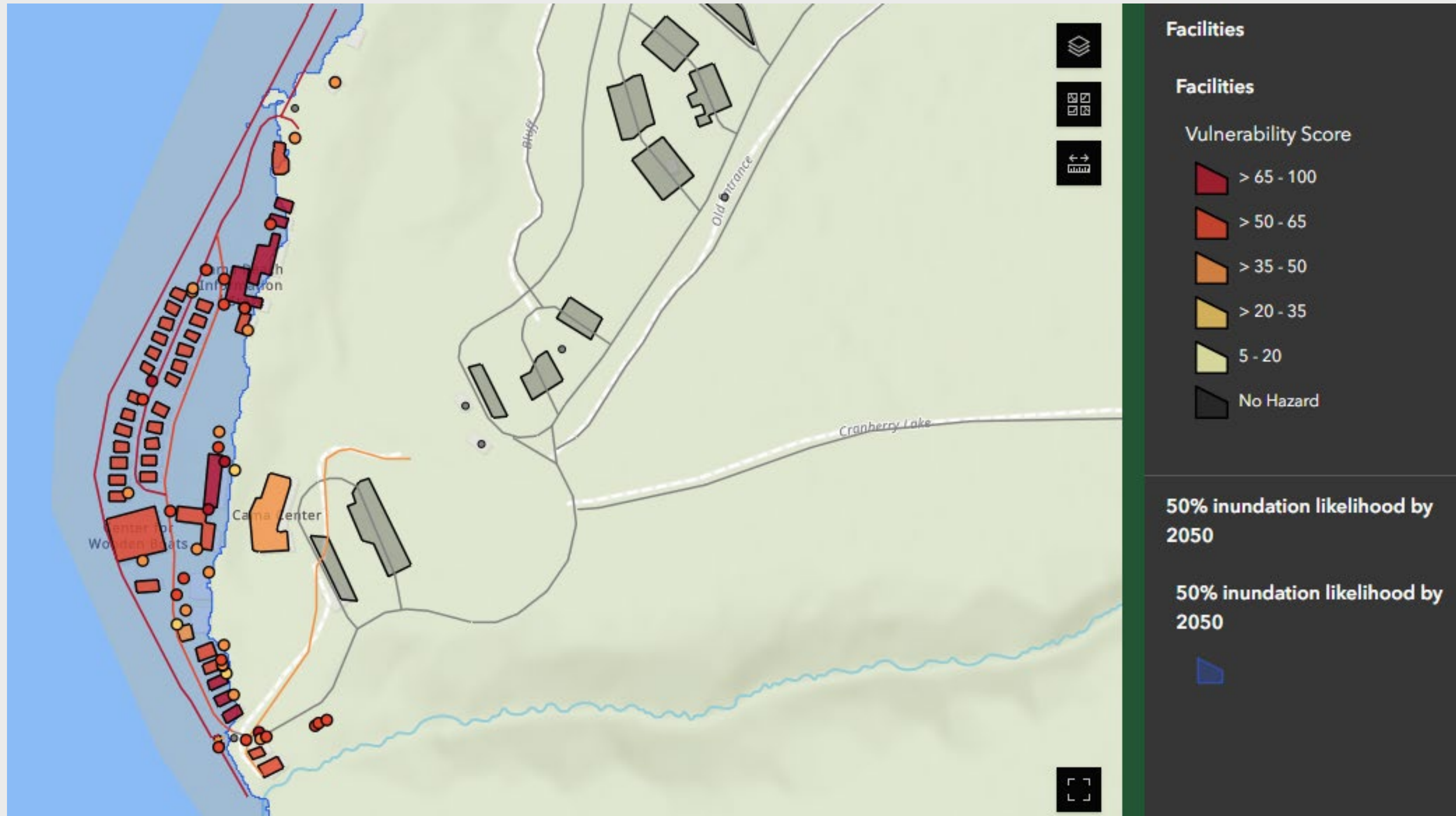


Climate impacts will get worse

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Is this site appropriate for further investment?



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What's changed?

- Laws
- Policies
- King tides and climate change
- Population increased 126% since 1970



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soundwaterstewards.org





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2.

What went wrong with the cabins?



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Sewer System Failure

- Temporary fixes continue to fail
- Multiple pumps inoperable or actively failing
- Electrical panels and wiring likely root cause of problem
- Any fix requires significant ground disturbance
- Daily pumping required
- Failure to pump regularly could result in sewer spill



Seawall failing in multiple places

- Places vulnerable cabins at greater risk of damage



Additional Problems Arise

- Fire suppression system failure in boathouse
- Waterline break in the cabin area
- Significant ground disturbance to repair both





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**Based on this damage,
cabins were closed in February**





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3.

Now what do we do?

- **Can we reopen the cabins?**
- **Should we reopen the cabins?**





Tonight's Meeting

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Feedback from all concerned:

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Can we reopen the cabins? Should we reopen the cabins?

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- **Federal, State, local laws**
- **Commission policies**
- **National Register of Historic Places: two separate sites**
- **Public demand for overnight facilities**
- **Coastal vulnerability, sea level, and climate change**
- **State Parks mission**



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Laws



Indian Graves and Records(RCW 27.44)

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Intent.

- **Native Indian burial grounds and historic graves are finite, irreplaceable, and nonrenewable. Legislature recognizes the importance of respecting all graves**
- There has been careless indifference in cases of accidental disturbance of graves and burial grounds
- Indian burial sites and historic graves located on public and private land are to be protected. The legislature's intent is to encourage voluntary reporting and respectful handling in cases of accidental disturbance and provide enhanced penalties for deliberate desecration



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Governor's Executive Order 21-02

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“State agencies shall take all reasonable action to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse effects to archaeological and historic archaeological sites, historic buildings/structures, traditional cultural places, sacred sites or other cultural resources.”



Increasingly complex environmental laws

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Photo: Elaine Thompson



Photo: Conrad Gowell



Photo: Wild Orca



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Policies





Commission cultural resources management policy

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“The Commission will **protect all human remains, locations of graves, grave sites, and cemeteries**. When, as a result of ground disturbing activities, it is not possible to protect the human remains the preferred treatment will be to relocate to a site adjacent to the original grave/cemetery location.”





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Commission climate change resolution

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“...that the Washington State Parks and Recreation **Commission hereby directs that actions taken at all levels of the agency shall be evaluated in the context of climate change...**”

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Coastal Facilities Vulnerability Assessment: Implications for Sea Level Rise and Coastal Hazard Planning





Commission critical areas policy

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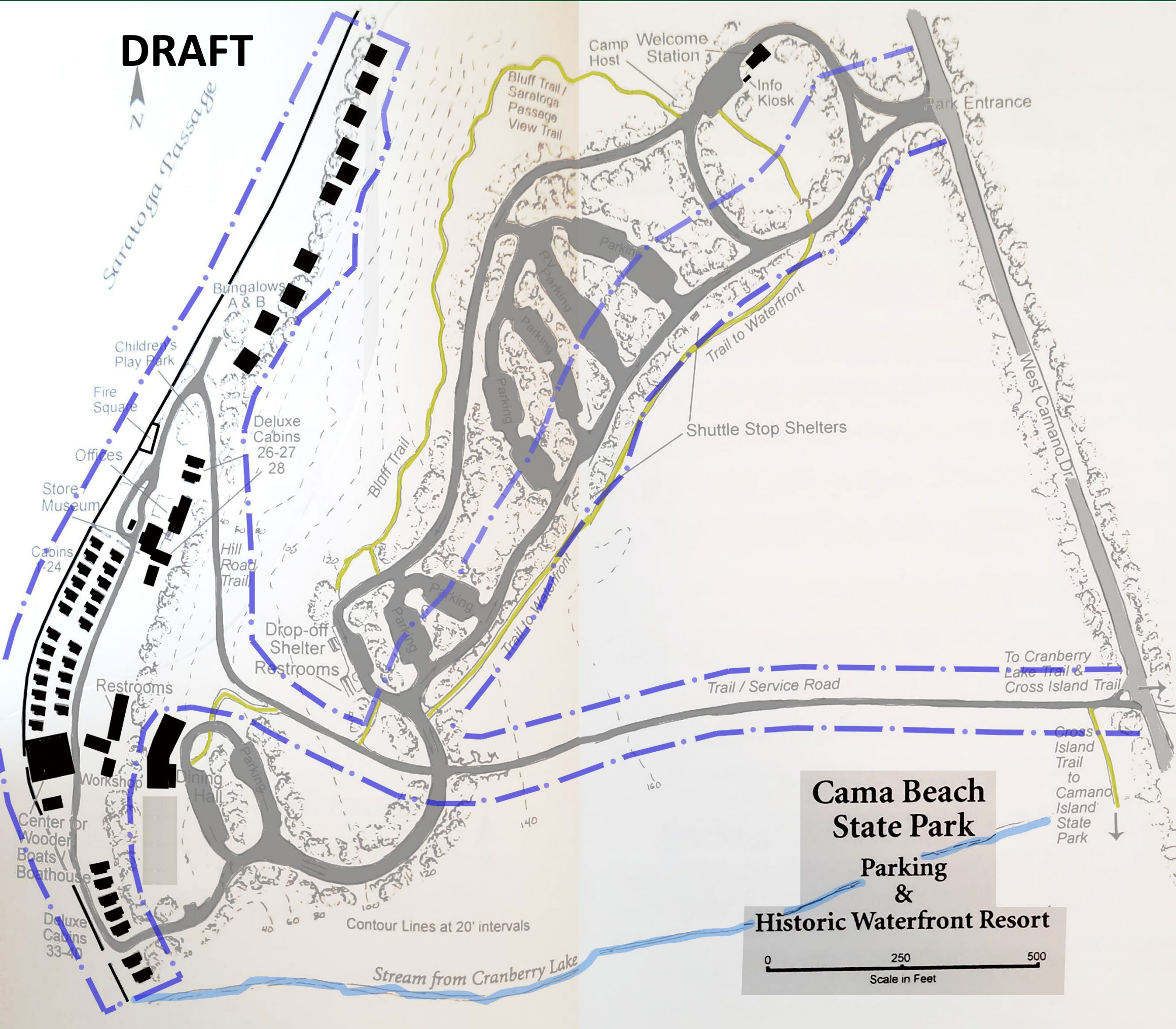
“The first and generally **preferred agency response to a threat by a natural land change process,** such as or landslides or coastal erosion, **shall be retreat ...**”



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Historic significance





Two landscapes on National Register of Historic Places

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Public demand





Population increased by 2 million since 2006

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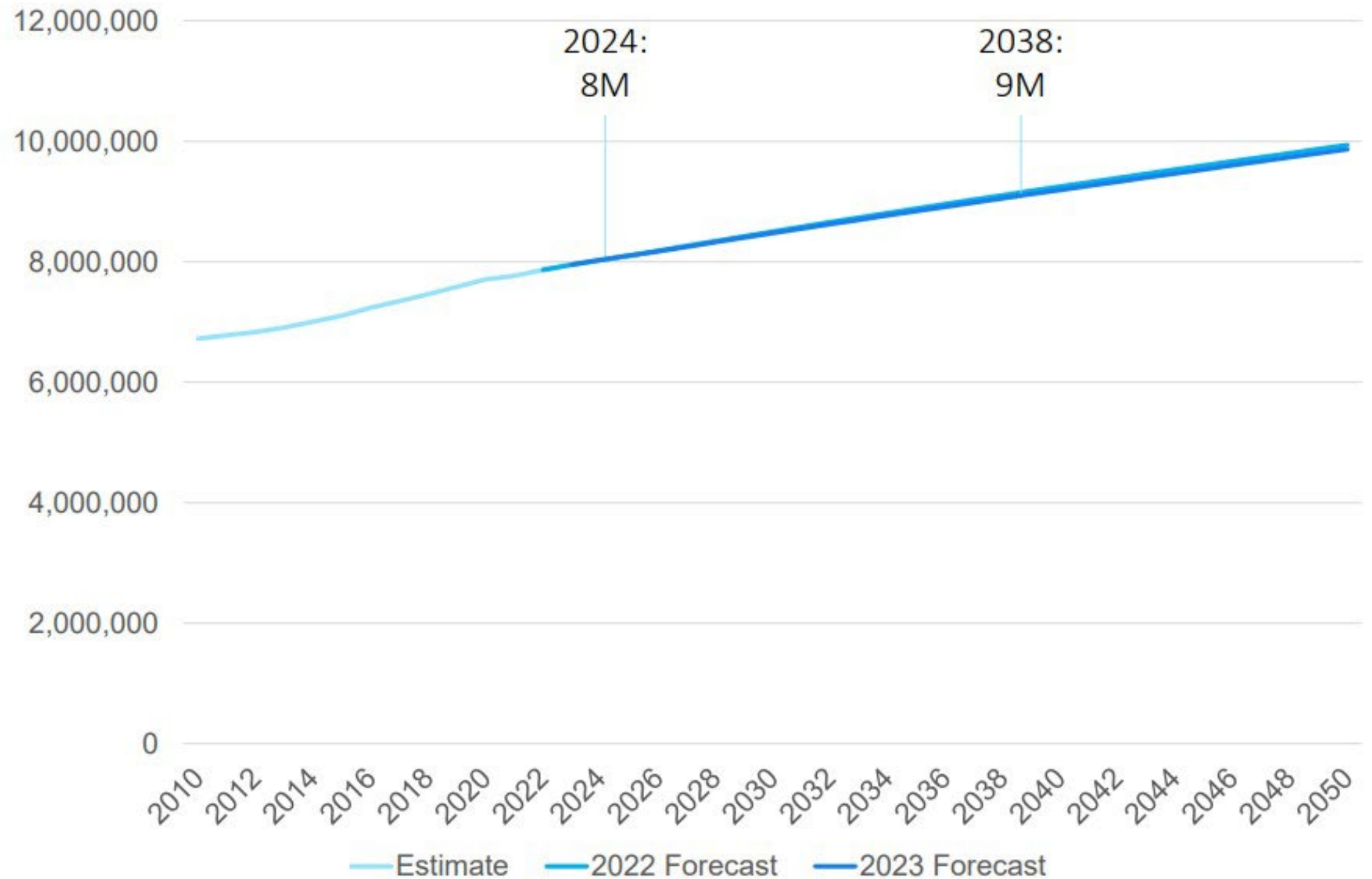
November 8, 2023

State Population Forecast: 2020-2050

Office of Financial Management
Forecasting and Research Division

OFM
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Comparison to Prior Forecast – Total Population





Visitors Love the Park

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"This place has a magic to it" former owner Sandra Risk Worthington

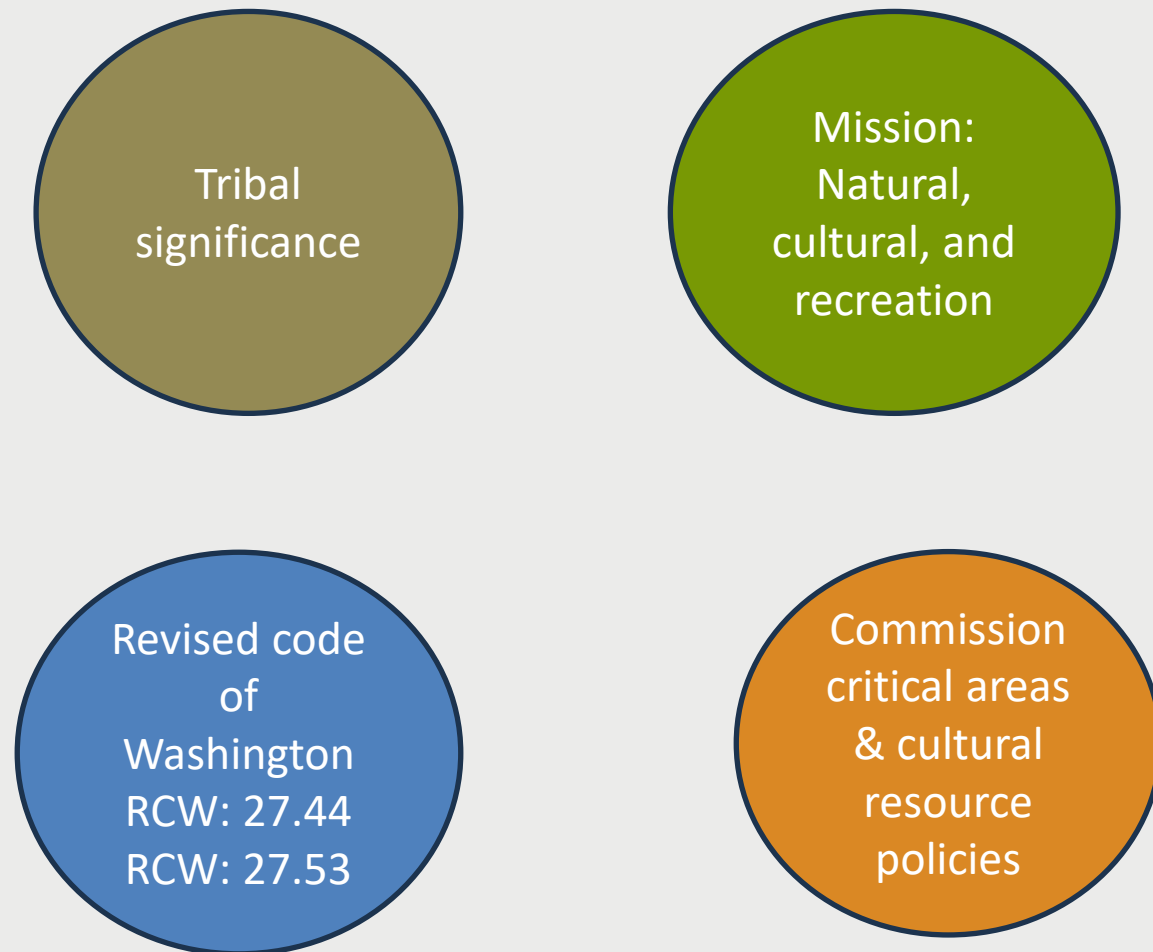


Management considerations

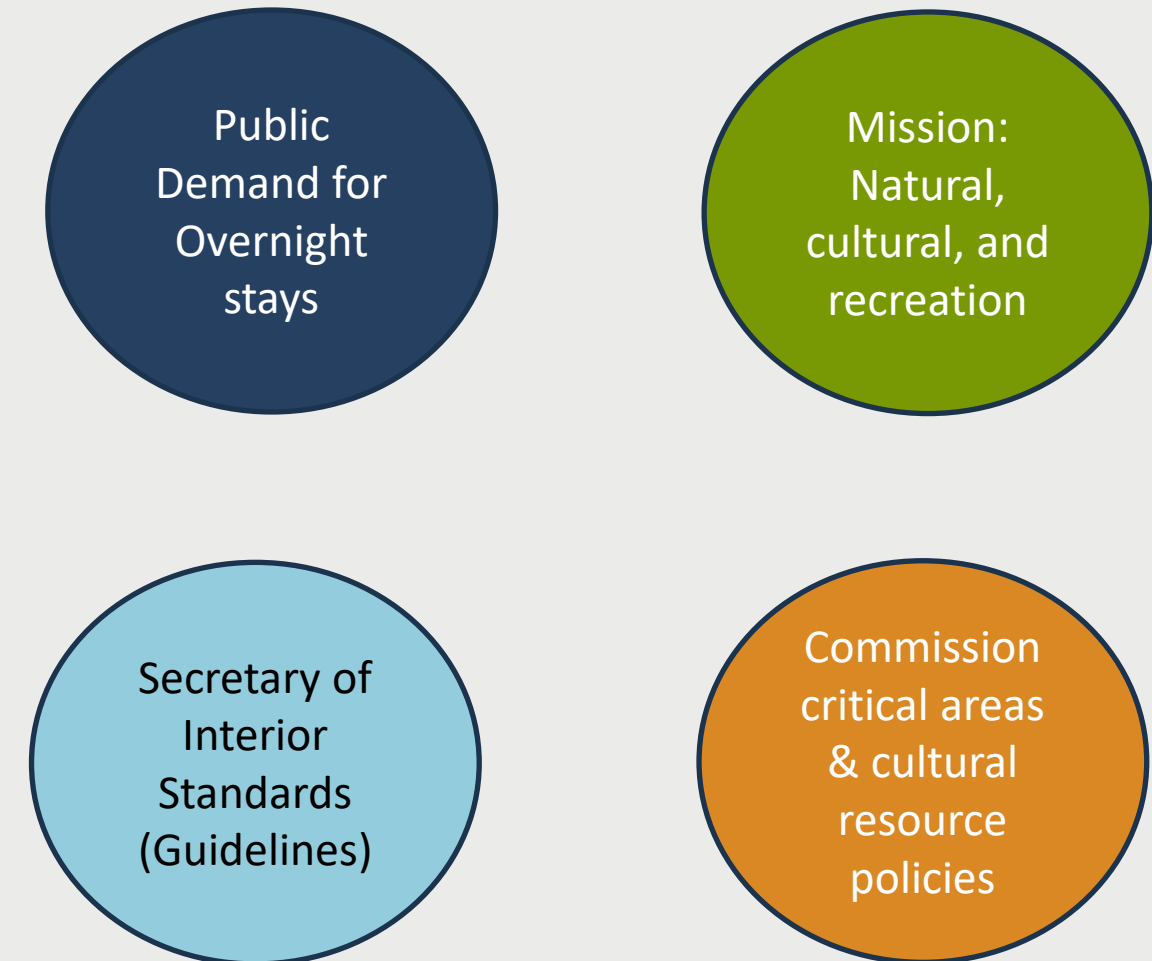
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Pre contact site



Cama Beach Resort



Two sites on National Register & two different management approaches



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State Parks mission



Washington State Parks Mission

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission cares for Washington's most treasured lands, waters, and historic places. State parks connect all Washingtonians to their diverse natural and cultural heritage and provide memorable recreational and educational experiences that enhance their lives.

Declaration of policy – Lands for public park purposes (RCW 79A.05.305)

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Lands for public park purposes to be acquired and managed to:

- **Maintain our parks, keep them looking good, protect/restore habitat, provide recreation**
- Protect cultural and historical resources, locations, and artifacts
- Provide a variety of recreational opportunities to the public
- Preserve and maintain habitat to protect and promote plants and animals of conservation concern



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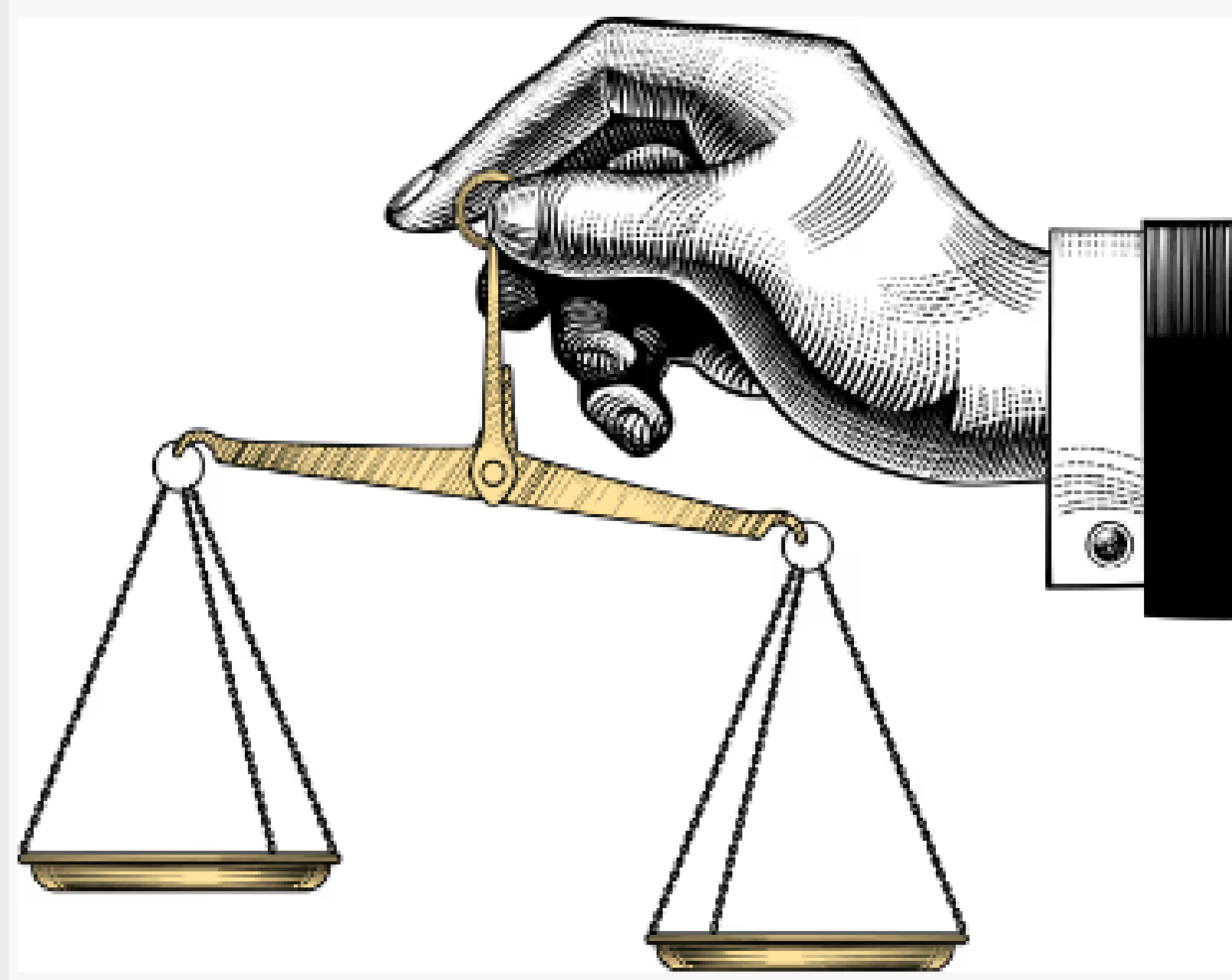
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Decisions require judgment calls

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Can we reopen the cabins? Should we reopen the cabins?

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- **Federal, State, local laws**
- **Commission policies**
- **National Register of Historic Places: two separate sites**
- **Public demand for overnight facilities**
- **Coastal vulnerability assessment**
- **State Parks mission**





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4.

Conclusions and staff recommendation





Tonight's Meeting

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- What are the facts about the park?
- What other factors influence decisions about the cabins and park?
- Analysis reveals limited management choices**

Feedback from all concerned:

- Welcome new information about the park that may influence decision-makers
- Commission decision on cabins in October



Ultimately, we must balance:

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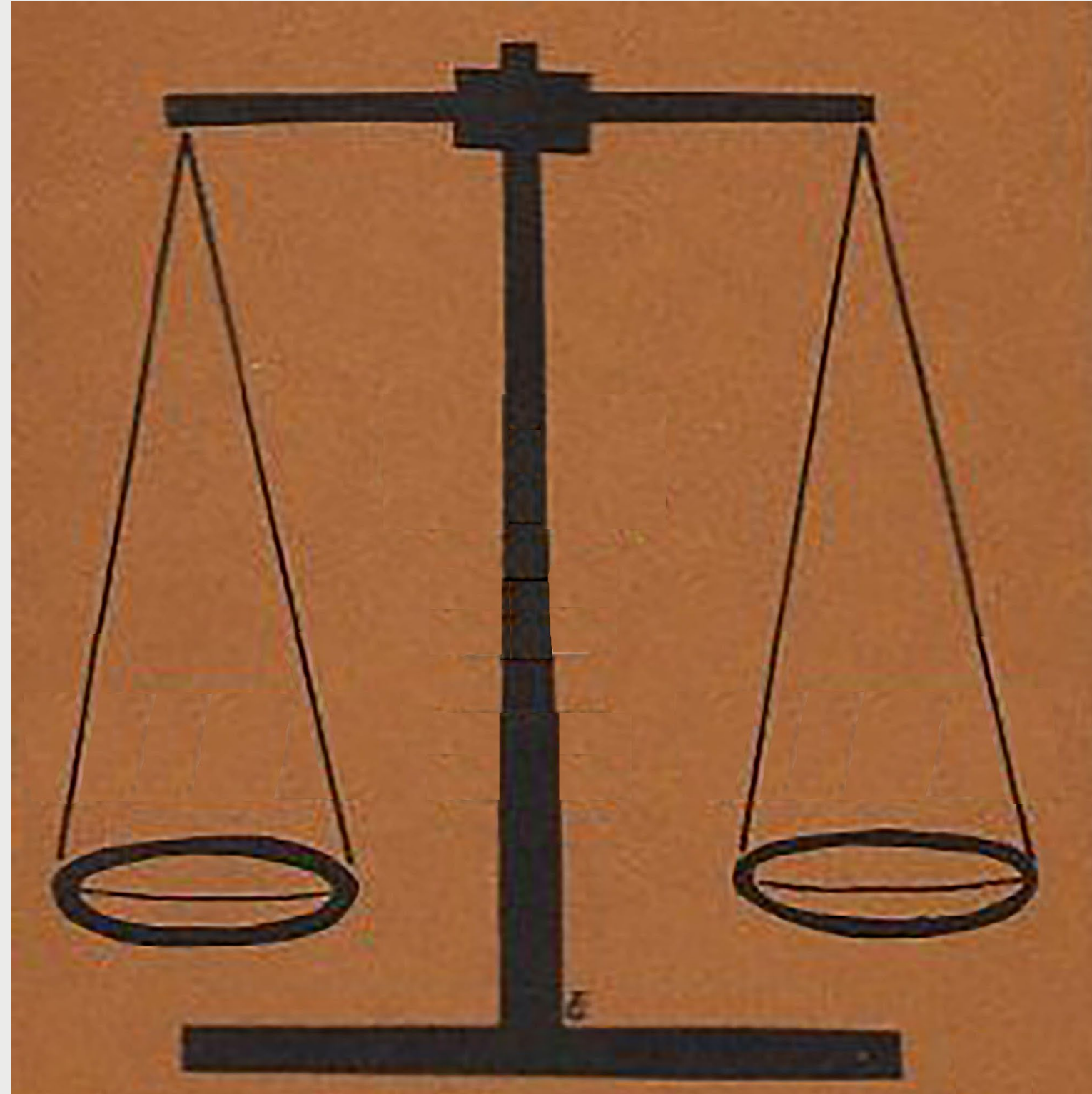


Impacts to
pre-
contact
site

Climate
change

Public
access

Good use
of public
dollars





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