



FRIENDS OF THE GUALALA RIVER

P.O. Box 1543 Gualala, CA 95445

707-886-5355

www.gualalariver.org

Bob Merrill, District Manager
bmerrill@coastal.ca.gov
California Coastal Commission
710 E Street, Suite 200
Eureka, CA 95501

Via e-mail and USPS

May 2, 2007

SUBJECT: Gualala, Mendocino County, Independence Day fireworks events –
regulation of activities with significant potential impacts to sensitive fish and wildlife
habitats of the Gualala River mouth

Dear Mr. Merrill:

Friends of the Gualala River has recently received notice of local plans to conduct another Independence Day fireworks display directly over the mouth of the Gualala River (summer lagoon, beach, and nearshore zone). Please see the attached notice.

Last year, this fireworks display was organized by local interests without seeking approval from by state, federal, resource agencies with jurisdiction over fish, wildlife, and coastal resources. Substantial local public concerns about impacts to seabird rookeries, shorebirds, waterfowl, marine mammals (including legally protected species) went unheeded for lack of a regulatory process or public forum.

The 2006 Independence Day fireworks over the Gualala River mouth even did in fact cause significant and documented disturbance of seabird and other waterbird roosts and rookeries. Friends of the Gualala River is deeply concerned about unregulated repetition of this event at this sensitive coastal river mouth location. We advocate re-location of the event to any appropriate alternative site that is less environmentally sensitive.

We believe the location and the activity fall within Coastal Commission jurisdiction. We understand that periodic events with far less environmental impact, such as farmers markets within the Coastal Zone, are regulated by the Commission.

We request that the Commission's staff determine whether the proposed fireworks are within its jurisdiction, and take prompt and timely actions to regulate them if they are.

We urge the Commission to use its discretion to protect the important natural resources of the Gualala River mouth.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 310-5109 or baye@earthlink.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Peter R. Baye". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "B".

Peter R. Baye, Ph.D., Vice-President
Friends of the Gualala River

Cc:

California Department of Fish and Game, Fort Bragg
Mendocino County Planning Commission, Ukiah
Sonoma County Department of Parks and Recreation, Santa Rosa
Rich Kuehn, Sea Ranch

ATTACHMENT: Gualala Festivals Committee Press Release

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2006

Gualala Festivals Committee

PO Box 1415

Gualala, CA 95445

707-884-4453

Contact: Marshall Sayegh

GUALALA FIREWORKS DISPLAY SCHEDULED JULY 6th 2007

The Gualala Festivals Committee is proud to announce the Second Annual Gualala Fireworks Display will take place at 9:15 PM on Friday July 6th 2007.

The best view of the Fireworks will be from downtown Gualala.

In addition to the Fireworks display Gualala will be decorated with American Flags and Patriotic displays. Merchants are encouraged to participate in the Patriotic Display Contest sponsored by the Festivals Committee. Prizes will be awarded for the best displays.

Coastal visitors have the opportunity to view a selection of four fireworks displays during Independence Day Celebrations; Bodega Bay Fireworks occur on Sunday July 1st - the Gualala Fireworks on July 6th and the Point Arena and Fort Bragg fireworks occurs on July 7th 2007.

The Gualala Festivals Committee encourages donations for the Fireworks Display. Donations can be sent directly to the committee or deposited in donation jars distributed at area stores.

The Gualala Festivals Committee sponsors the Christmas Truck Parade, the Community Christmas Tree and July 4th celebrations.

For more information go to www.gualalafestivals.org, email info@gualalafestivals.org or call 707-884-4453