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News Release

Interior Report Finds Mistakes Made, but No Scientific Misconduct at Point Reyes National Seashore

Matter Referred for Appropriate Administrative Action

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WASHINGTON, DC - The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) has completed a review of allegations that officials and scientists in the National Park Service (NPS) suppressed or failed to disclose existing or available NPS data related to aquaculture activities and harbor seal populations in the upper portion of Drakes Estero within Point Reyes National Seashore (PORE) in California.

The review, done by the DOI Solicitor's Office, analyzes the factual record which supports conclusions that there was no criminal violation or scientific misconduct but that NPS, as an organization and through its employees, made mistakes which may have contributed to an erosion of public confidence. Specifically, several NPS employees mishandled research in the form of photographic images showing the activities of humans, birds, and harbor seals at upper Drakes Estero in PORE.

Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Will Shafroth and National Park Service Deputy Director Peggy O'Dell are overseeing a full review of the Solicitor's Office report. O'Dell is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate corrective action is taken. To protect the legal rights of affected NPS employees, DOI will not discuss any personnel action that may be taken, and will not publicize the individual names associated with the report.

To read the report, [click here](#). To read Acting Assistant Secretary Shafroth's referral letter, [click here](#), and Deputy Director O'Dell's response, [click here](#).

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