



Environmental Action Committee ~ Protecting West Marin since 1971

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**REVISED COASTAL COMMISSION PERMIT WILL PROTECT  
TOMALES DUNES, ENSURE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE USE AT  
LAWSON'S LANDING**

*San Rafael, Calif* - The California Coastal Commission yesterday heeded the requests of conservation groups and approved a revised permit for Lawson's Landing campground that will ensure that significant portions of the rare coastal dunes-wetlands habitat at the site will be restored and forever protected. The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin has been advocating for over a decade for full protection of the rare Tomales Dunes wetlands complex and suggested changes to the proposed permit that were partially adopted by the Commission.

"We are very pleased with the result," said Catherine Caufield, former EAC director who has led the charge to protect this priceless, unique ecosystem for the past ten years. "This exceptional, dynamic ecosystem will now receive the protection and restoration it deserves," said Caufield.

Thanks in part to the Action Committee's advocacy, the Lawsons will receive \$5.5 million from the Natural Resources Conservation Service for placing a conservation easement on 465 acres of the environmentally sensitive dunes and wetlands and will have an additional five years to remove unpermitted permanent trailers from the site and replace them with visitor-serving RV and tent sites.

"We consider this a victory for everyone," said Amy Trainer, current EAC director. "The Commission's decision fairly balanced environmental protections and honored the Coastal Act. Given that much of the development at Lawson's over the past four decades has never complied with land use laws or the Coastal Act, the reduction in trailers was fair, significant California red-legged frog habitat will be permanently protected, wetlands will no longer be drained, and enough camping and RV sites are permitted to allow this family-owned business to continue to provide low-cost recreational activities and coastal access."

Funding from the conservation easement will support the Lawson's construction of an adequate septic system as well as removal of the invasive European Beach grass and restoration of the wetland and dunes areas that have been degraded for years by cars and RV camping.

The Tomales Dunes are an ecological treasure, and until yesterday, were the largest unprotected dune system in central California. This extraordinary site supports at least nine rare, threatened,

or endangered wildlife species and significant numbers of rare plant species. Tomales Dunes is actually a complex of several distinct habitats: mature mobile dunes, central dune scrub, dune prairie and dune wetlands. It is surrounded by and connected to a rich coastal environment that includes coastal prairie, coastal scrub, salt marsh, tidal flats, bay and ocean.