

Above Porter-Sesnon

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Dan Coyro/Sentinel

The 72-acre meadowlands of Porter-Sesnon will remain undisturbed for the time being.

Porter-Sesnon deal signed

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SANTA CRUZ — A plan to add the scenic ocean-view Porter-Sesnon property to the state park system, at a cost of \$3.45 million, got the governor's stamp of approval this week.

Odds are good that the 72-acre ocean-side meadowlands will continue undisturbed at least for the near future.

Gov. Pete Wilson's signature is not the final hurdle for the property a developer once hoped would become the site of the controversial Wingspread hotel, performing arts and conference center.

But it brings the day closer when the land probably will be added to California State Park system.

"This is truly a great day in the history of not only the people of the Central Coast, but the entire state of California," said state Sen. Henry Mello, D-Watsonville. "Purchasing the Porter-Sesnon parcel at this time, particularly at the currently offered price of \$3.45

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million, is a genuine once-in-a-lifetime opportunity." The lease to the land was originally bought in 1978 by Palo Alto developer Rye Kelley. Kelley tried for eight years to develop the property. In 1988, voters soundly defeated his Wingspread proposal.

Since that time, Mello has worked to buy the land for use as a state park. The deal he put together included \$2 million in park funds from the state Department of Parks and Recreation and the state Coastal Conservancy; \$1 million from existing bond funds; and \$500,000 personally committed by Parks and Recreation Director Don Murphy.

Next stop for the deal is a public hearing set for 7:30 p.m. Sept. 28, at Capitola Community Center, 4400 Jade St., Capitola.

More information and maps of the

proposed purchase site are available at local state park offices at 101 North Big Trees Park Road, Felton, and 101 Madeline Drive, Aptos; at the Aptos branch and other local libraries; and at the Capitola Community Center.

For information on the hearing, call (916) 653-9901.

The hearing will be the last time the public will be able to offer opinions on whether the land should be purchased and added to New Brighton State Beach.

No plans are in the works to develop the park land, according to parks officials. Permanent developments would require a change in the parks' general plan. Temporary developments, such as an unpaved parking lot, are possible if needed, but not considered likely.

"It will sit as is, but we would operate it, we would patrol it immediately, with existing forces," said Ken Collier of the state Department of Parks and Recreation. "But it will not be developed until we have the money."