





Camping

There is no camping currently accommodated in the park. In an effort to assess the need and potential for camping at Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park, this inventory focused on identifying regional camping facilities and specific locations within the park where camping opportunities could be considered.

Assessment

Steep terrain and limited vehicular access make extensive development of camping facilities unlikely at this park. There are several locations, however, that lend themselves to development of camping facilities--if they are sensitive to the idiosyncrasies of the site, appropriate in scale, and protective of the park's inherent resources. Exhibits ___ and ___ present an initial assessment of these locations.

Note that there were several types of camping considered. Some require road access and parking facilities. Others (hike-in, bike-in ride-in (equestrian) are suitable for trail access as well. The park already has an existing trail system, so opportunities for trail-side camping should definitely be explored. No sites were well-suited for recreational vehicle (RV) camping because of the considerable requirements for space, access, and supporting infrastructure.

The Spahn Ranch site offers the most opportunities for vehicular access and the development of related programs and facilities. Its history as an equestrian ranch and relationship to the movie industry offers opportunities to incorporate these themes into any future development.

There is a wide range of facility development to consider—from primitive camps to full service. The summer heat at this park is intense, so shade would make camping more comfortable. The availability of potable water, showers, and type of restrooms must also be determined.

A number of operational issues may be anticipated with the development of camping facilities. These include staffing, safety and patrol access, maintenance of sites (especially trash and waste removals), and indigent residencies. Noisy groups of young partiers have been problematic in this park as well as in nearby campgrounds.

Within a 10-mile radius, camping facilities are offered at only Sage Ranch, Oak Park, and Tapo Canyon Regional Park. They range from undeveloped group camping areas to fully developed RV facilities. Most accommodate groups of campers—scouts and youth groups. Chatsworth Park South has an informal arrangement with youth scouting organizations for occasional use of the park for camp-outs. Exhibit ___ looks at regional camping facilities.

Recommendations

- Camping should be considered as a potential recreation offered by the park.
- Additional study is recommended to determine actual demand for the various types of camping and to target specific user groups.
- Consistent with its history, equestrian activities (staging, camping, etc.) and themes should be considered at Spahn Ranch.

Potential Campground Locations

Base Map



Parcel boundaries are approximate and should not be considered legal descriptions. Maps are intended for study purposes only.

Legend

Regional Roads

- State Hwy
- Local Road
- Service Road
- - - Trail
- + - - Railroad
- - - Park Boundary

Contours

- 100ft Interval
- 25ft Interval



Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park



Scale bar showing 0, 250, and 500 feet.

SSPSHP POTENTIAL CAMPGROUND LOCATIONS

CAMPGROUND SITE				SUITABLE TYPE OF CAMPING							FACILITIES & AMENITIES OFFERED						
Map No.	LOCATION	Mgmt Agency	Size/Capacity	Drive-In	Hike-In	Bike-In	Ride-In	RV	Universal Access	Group Camp	Parking	Restrooms	Potable Water	Tent Pads	Picnic Tables	Fire Rings	Hitch/Lock Post
1	Spahn Ranch Site	DPR	25 A	X	X	X	X	No	X	No	10--50	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	SSPR Field Area	DPR	15-20 A	X	X	X	X	No	X	No	10--20	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Eucalyptus Grove	DPR	25 A	X	X	X	X	No	X?	Maybe	10--50	X	X?	X	X	X	X
4	Upper Meadow	DPR	25+ A	No	X	X	X	No	No	No	No	Compost	No	X	Maybe	No	X
5	Chatsworth Park South	LA City		Site Not Considered													
6	Church Grounds Annex	Private		Site Not Considered													

CAMPGROUND SITE				RELATED PROGRAMS & FACILITIES							POTENTIAL IMPACTS						
Map No.	LOCATION	Patrol Access	Maint. Access	Interp Trail	Campfire Center	Intrp/Edu Progrms	Visitor Center	Historic Site	Picnic Grounds	Other	Cultural: Prehistoric	Cultural: Historic	Natural: Vegetation	Natural: Wildlife	Views/Aesthetic	Slopes/Erosion	Other/Notes
1	Spahn Ranch Site	X	X	X	?	X	X	X	X		No	Mitigable	Sensitive	Sensitive	No	Flat	Riparian
2	SSPR Field Area	X	X	X	No	X	No	No	X		No	No	Sensitive	Sensitive	? from road	Flat	Riparian
3	Eucalyptus Gove	X	X	X	?	X	No	Maybe	X		No	Maybe	No	Maybe	? from trails	Terraced	Tree Hazard Access ??
4	Upper Meadow	Maybe	Maybe	X	No	No	No	No	X	Major Viewpoint	Minor	No	No	No	Sensitive	Flat	Scenic Viewshed
5	Chatsworth Park South			Site Not Considered													
6	Church Grounds Annex			Site Not Considered													

Visitor Support and Orientation

Visitor support, as used here, includes facilities like visitor centers, restrooms, parking, and picnic areas. Such facilities serve the needs of park visitors and enhance their experience in the park setting.

Assessment

As previously mentioned Santa Susanna Pass State Historic Park is relatively new to the state park system and has no developed facilities at this time. The park lacks a well-defined entrance and arrival point. Multiple entrances and lack of maps or signage contribute to trail confusion and make orientation difficult for first time visitors. No interpretive or educational programs are offered.

Many visitors come from surrounding neighborhoods and communities. They are familiar with the area and readily use available street parking if convenient, or come from home, or use the entrance from Chatsworth Park South. This local park offers a compliment of facilities that support the recreational use of the state park lands, including a parking lot, restrooms, drinking water, and activity centers (community center, Hill-Palmer Homestead Cottage, Chatsworth Museum, and Memorial Library).

The steep landscape of Santa Susanna Pass State Historic Park offers few sites suitable for the development of new facilities. Potential sites for off-street parking are limited to the Spahn Ranch site or cooperative use of local park or open space lands (Lilac Lane, Chatsworth Parks). A couple of secondary entrances might support a few cars as a trail head.

Recommendations

A visitor orientation center would solve a number of the park's issues related to orientation, interpretative programming, and the need for restrooms, drinking water, parking, and the like. Future planning should explore all possible sites and arrangements, including cooperative agreements with other agencies.

Considerations should include combining multiple functions at Spahn Ranch, where an interpretive program focused on equestrian and western movie-making histories would make a complimentary counterpart to family camping, equestrian activities, and related recreational and educational events. Incorporating some of the rustic character of the original ranch buildings and features into the development of new facilities would reference the site's history and help to anchor a new sense of place.

Potential sites within or adjacent to Chatsworth Park South [CPS] offer other possibilities for visitor center development. One site is located on state park property behind the Hill-Palmer cottage and the community center. It would accommodate a small structure, but public access is indirect and use of the current CPS parking lot would not comply with accessibility regulations.

The other CPS site is located on City of Los Angeles property, just south of the linear path that leads to the open space trails. It sits at the base of the hills to the south, which makes an appropriate backdrop. It looks north across the grassy open space to the hills, as well, so it relates well to the rustic state park landscape. A state park visitor orientation/interpretive center would compliment the existing park campus and facilitate cooperative events and educational programs. The existing

Recreation

parking lot is in close proximity. A small, accessible interpretive loop could be developed adjacent to the building, in conjunction with the main trail head into the hills.

Restrooms should be made available at major trailheads. A portable facility should be located at Lilac Lane near the parking area, although it is not state park property. Permanent restrooms and potable water should be eventually developed at the Spahn Ranch entrance if it becomes open to the public. A rest stop for bicycle riders that includes a picnic table would be appropriate somewhere along Santa Susanna Pass Road.

Each trailhead into the park should be given a gateway treatment unique to the site that is sensitive and subordinate to the greater landscape. This would mark visitors' passage into the park wherever they may enter, giving some on-the-ground sense of place to what is now a diffused and undifferentiated boundary.



Santa Susana Pass General Plan Equestrian Profile

Long before the advent of the modern age and automobile travel, horses were used for transportation and agriculture in the Santa Susana Pass area. In the early and mid 1800's, horses were used by California vaqueros (Californios) on the nearby Spanish and Mexican ranchos. These Californios were known as superb horsemen that rode stallions remarkable for their handling ability and endurance. The modern day "Buckaroos" (northwestern United States cowboys) owe many of their traditions to those established by the California vaqueros of the 1800's. These traditions include the training methods and gear used for contemporary western reining and working cow horses, shown in sponsored events locally, nationally and internationally.

In the late 1800's, horses were used for the stagecoach route over Santa Susana Pass and the tired teams were changed at the relay station once located in the Park. Local homesteaders relied on horses for agriculture and transportation. Thoroughbreds were brought to Southern California for sport and raised on nearby ranches. But the local industry waned during California's prohibition of legalized tracks from 1909 to 1933 and racing moved south to the Caliente racetrack in Mexico. The early economic uses for horses as a mode of transportation and power disappeared in the early 1900's but a new use arose for horses and the cowboys of a bygone era as the fledgling film industry moved to Hollywood and the California sunshine.

Filmmakers first came to the San Fernando Valley because it provided plenty of natural sunlight, open land, interesting topographical features, and good locations. Unemployed cowboys and ranch hands came to the area seeking work in the film industry. Cecil B. De Mille discovered the scenic qualities of the area in 1913 or 1914 and established it as a film location. The filming of movie and television shows created an industry that features western horses racing over many scenes in and around Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. The Iverson Ranch off Santa Susana Pass Road and Corriganville in Simi Valley, noted location ranches in the immediate vicinity, were the site of hundreds of western movie and TV episodes including the Lone Ranger, Zorro, and Roy Rogers films. Mr. Ed was raised in the red barn immediately east of the Park.

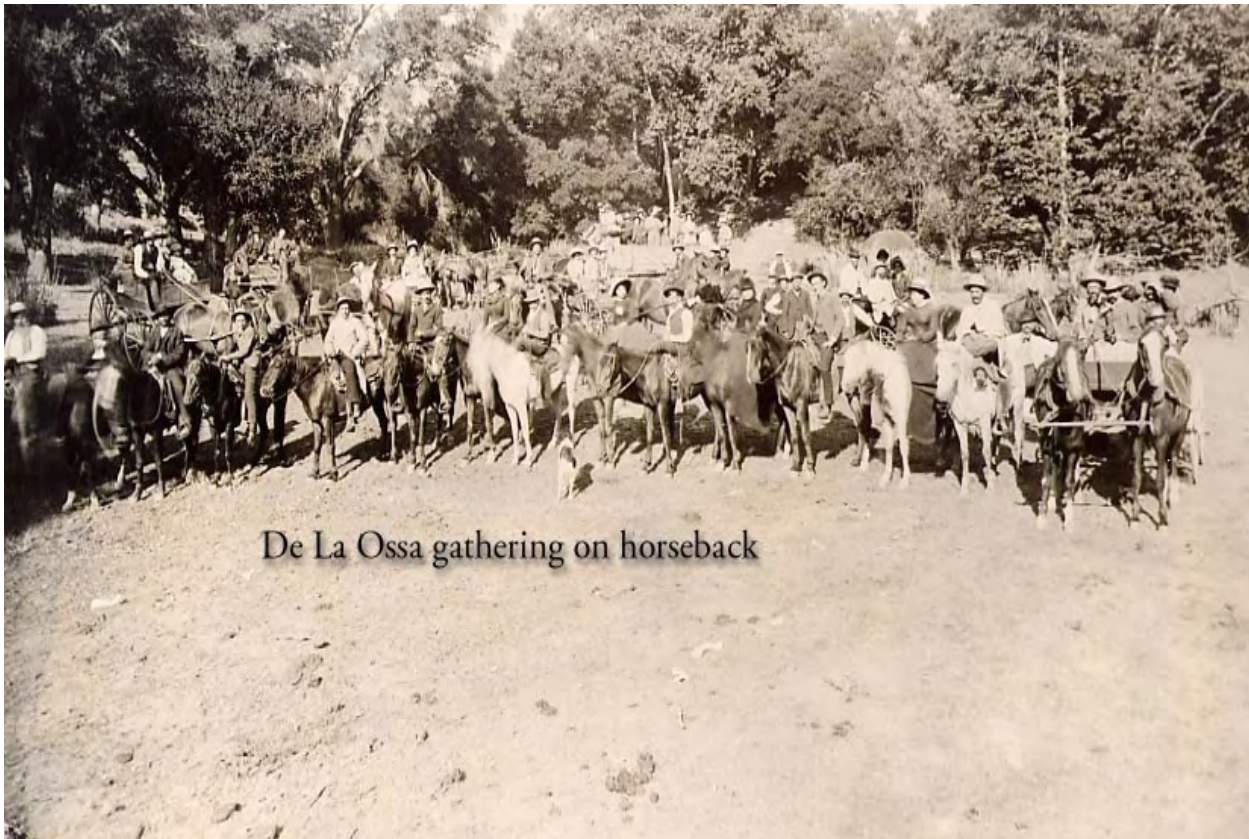
The actors working in this industry bought or built houses and gentlemen's ranches in the nearby area. They include the noted celebrities Roy Rogers, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable, Carole Lombard, John Wayne, Tom Mix, Barbara Stanwyck, Zeppo Marx, William Holden, and Jack Oakie that rode and raised horses in the area. They established the owning and riding of western horses, thoroughbreds and polo ponies as a recreational activity in the area in the 1930's through the 1950's. In the 1940's and 50's, much of the Valley was still connected by dirt roads and many of its residents rode horses to the store or socially. Equestrian use was part of the local rural and agricultural culture and represented a freedom reminiscent of the past.

The San Fernando Valley changed from an agricultural past to a subdivided extension of the City of Los Angeles after World War II. Much of the area was subdivided into residential parcels that allowed horses and boarding stables populated the nearby areas in Simi Valley, Northridge, Chatsworth, and Woodland Hills. These stables offer a variety of riding experiences from instruction to competition in English, dressage, jumping, western events, endurance riding, and trail riding. Two local programs offer therapeutic riding to the physically disabled. Nearby

Pierce College offers an Equine program and state of the art equestrian facility. Although land and other prices have driven up the cost of owning horses, many local equestrians continue to thrive on this recreational lifestyle. As many as 10,000 horses may be present within a 25 mile area surrounding the Park.

Horses are frequently seen on the trails in the Park and organized rides traverse the park. The Rim of the Valley Trail is a riding and hiking trail that connects through Santa Susanna Pass SHP to other parks along the ridgeline of the San Fernando Valley. Horses continue to offer a unique cultural aspect to the Chatsworth and Simi Valley areas. Several hundred horses, horse-drawn wagons, and reenactment groups participate annually in the Chatsworth Christmas Parade. This parade is sponsored by the local Kiwanis Club and is watched by approximately 5,000 people each year. Local organizations such as the Chatsworth ECHO, and ETI Corrals 54 and 118 actively campaign to keep horses in the area and educate the public through the Day of the Horse event and safety contests in the local schools. These organizations also sponsor local horse shows, gymkhanas, youth events, and trail trials or poker rides.

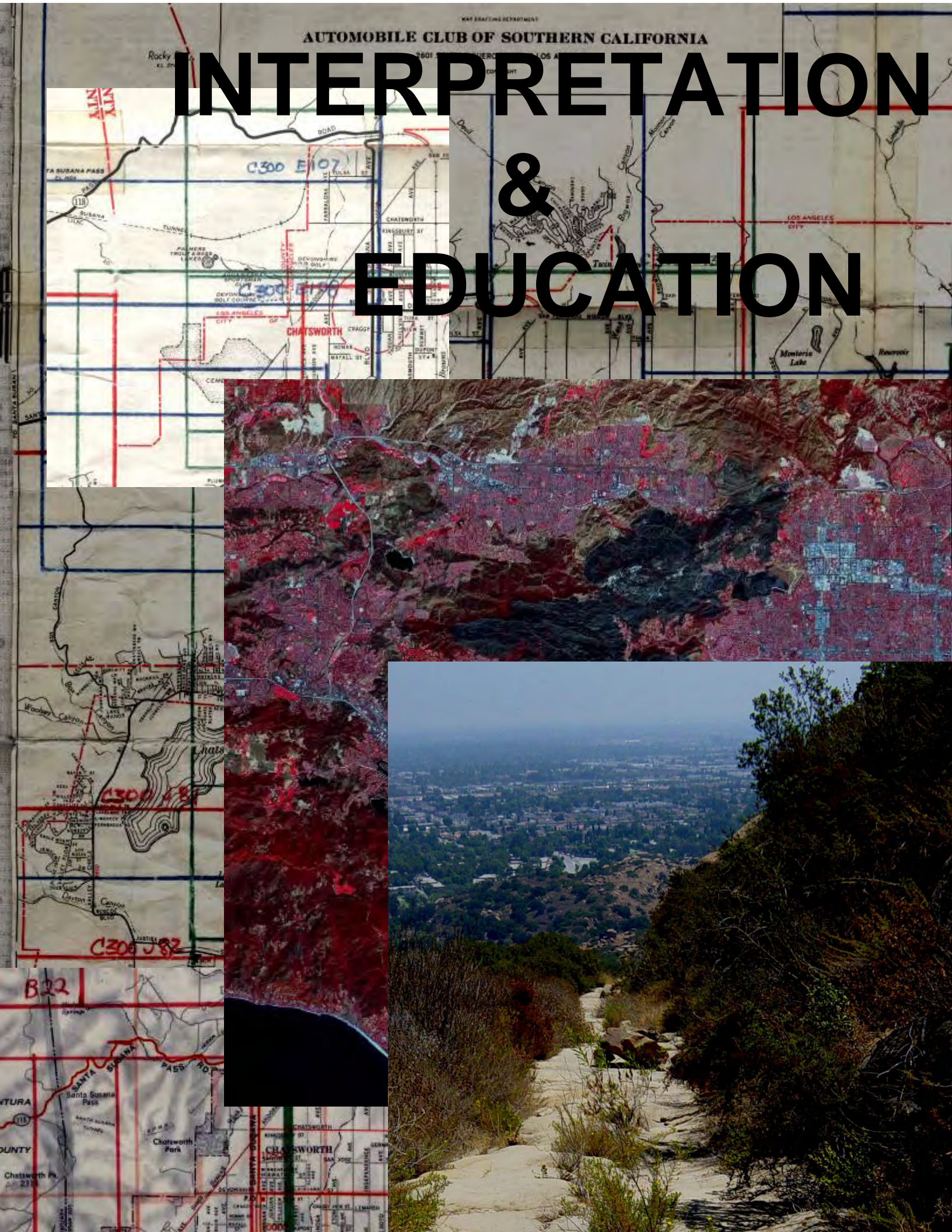
Local equestrians interviewed have expressed a desire to maintain their current trail access and to have off-street parking for staging. Currently they must park along the road on Valley Circle to unload their horses and access the park – or ride along streets. Therefore, an equestrian staging area with a trailer pull-through would be a welcome benefit for this group of park users.



De La Ossa gathering on horseback

Recreation

INTERPRETATION & EDUCATION



Regional Interpretation and Education

[To Be Completed by Interpretation Staff]

Community Events

Annual community events in the Chatsworth area include the Day of the Horse (mid April), the Fine Arts Show (early summer), and the Holiday Parade in December.

Chatsworth Historical Society

The Chatsworth Historical Society was formed in 1963 at a time when the community experienced a population boom and much civic development. It is dedicated to preserving and marking the area's historic sites and landmarks and maintaining collections of historic items, photographs, and artifacts. It is currently housed in the Chatsworth Museum, which is located in a section of Chatsworth Park-South known as The Homestead Acre (opened to the public in 1979). The museum, which is open twice a month, offers exhibits relative to local Chatsworth history and docent-led tours of the Hill-Palmer Homestead Cottage and Gardens. Primary historic themes include the lives of early settlers and the monumental construction of the railroad tunnels through the Santa Susana Mountains. The society presents a spring Garden Festival (last weekend of April) and Pioneer Day (first Sunday in October).

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

This organization has long history supporting the establishment of this park and appreciation for its resources. Members lead interpretive hikes in the park monthly, except during the hottest summer months.

Existing Park Programs and Facilities

The department currently offers no interpretive or educational programs at Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. As previously mentioned programs to date have been conducted by individuals and organizations outside of State Parks. There is an existing network of casual trails, which offer opportunities for outdoor-trail-based interpretive programs.

A free brochure is available on the department's website [see Appendixes]. It contains a general map of the area and limited introductory and interpretive text. An interpretive panel has been installed at a trailhead location associated with Chatsworth Park South [photo to be added].

Because there are no existing programs in place, this inventory will briefly look at the park's potential for interpretive and educational programs, including issues that might relate to them.

Interpretation and Education

Interpretive Potential of Existing Trail Routes

Cross-Terrain Trek

This challenging route combines a number of existing trails into one that zig-zags much of the park, north and south. It can be alternately connected with all access points. The route offers opportunities to apply the following general interpretive themes: geography; geology; topography/geo-morphology; overview of history transect, as well as other natural and cultural topics pertinent to the park.

Historic--Old Santa Susana Pass Stage Coach

This route includes a significant section of the old stage coach route/road, which serves as the iconic heart of the park.. Interpretation should revolve around this focus and explore greater understanding of its historic significance.

Pre-History—Native American

This route includes the Ancestor's Trail and additional areas associated with the Native American presence in the southern areas of the park. It offers contemporary visitors the opportunity to walk the same ground and experience many of the same sights, sounds and scents as those of earlier inhabitants. Interpretive programs could provide greater understanding of these cultures and their unique relationships with this landscape.

Historic Loop—Quarry Mining Homestead

This loop ties together a cluster of historic landscape sites and features, allowing interpretation of past quarrying or mining activities, as well as settlement period homesteading and ranching.

Botanic Transect

This route would connect the Hill-Palmer Cottage and its historic homestead plantings with a native plant trail, providing both a cultural and botanic look at the area's plantings and the changes through time.

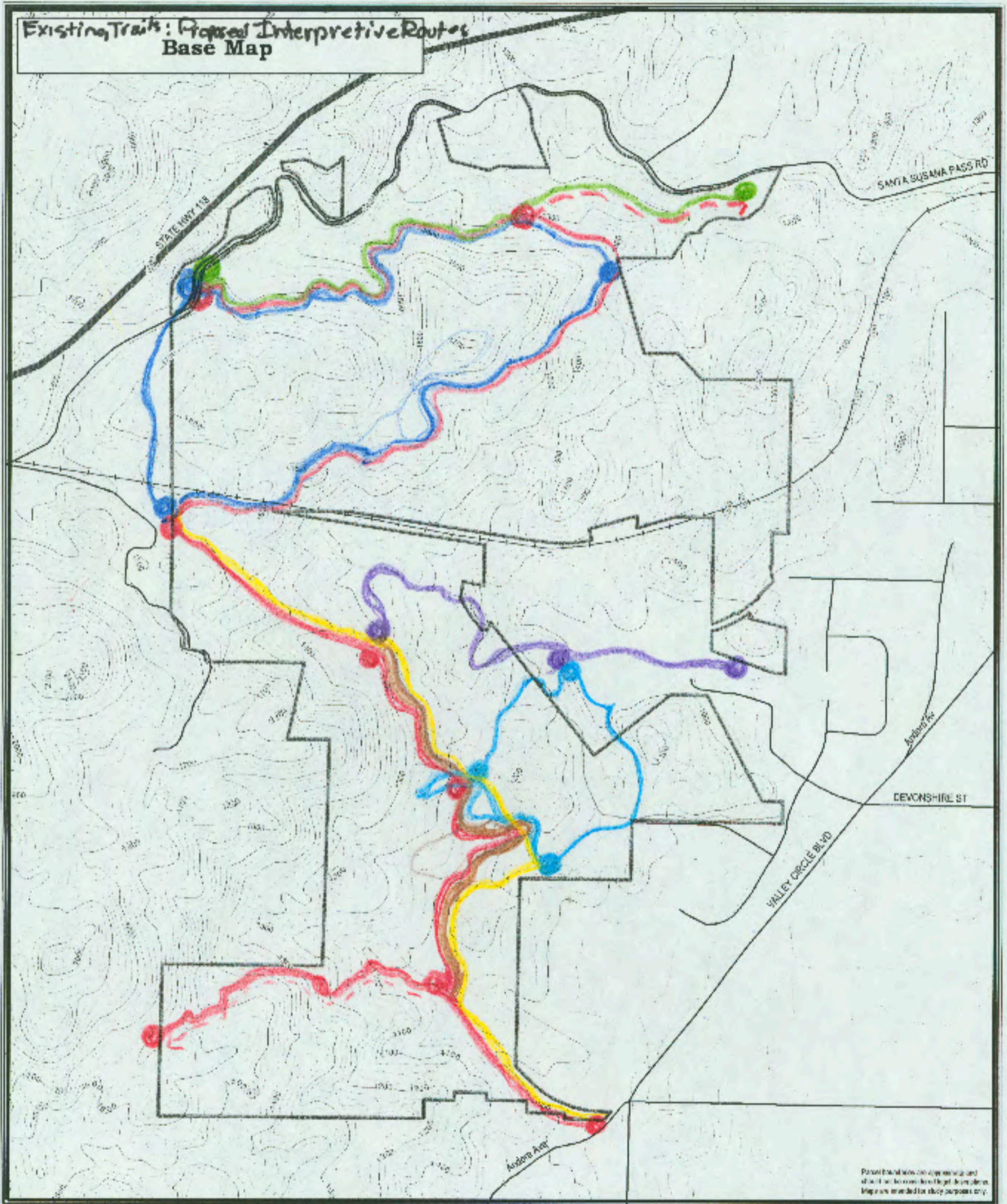
North Section Loop

This scenic loop offers a great overview of the northern section of the park and includes some of the park's best vantage points. The route would be conducive to a variety of interpretive or educational themes related to the park's natural and cultural resources.

North Quarter Habitat Transect

This northerly east-west route allows visitors to enjoy a rich chaparral habitat as well as the riparian corridor. It offers opportunities to experience the region's wildlife and educate visitors about critical habitats and bio-linkages.

Existing Trails: Proposed Interpretive Routes
Base Map



Proposed routes are for general information and should not be used for legal purposes. Maps are provided for display purposes only.

Legend

Regional Roads

- State Hwy
- Local Road
- Service Road
- - - Trail
- + Railroad
- Park Boundary

Contours

- 100ft Interval
- - - 25ft Interval

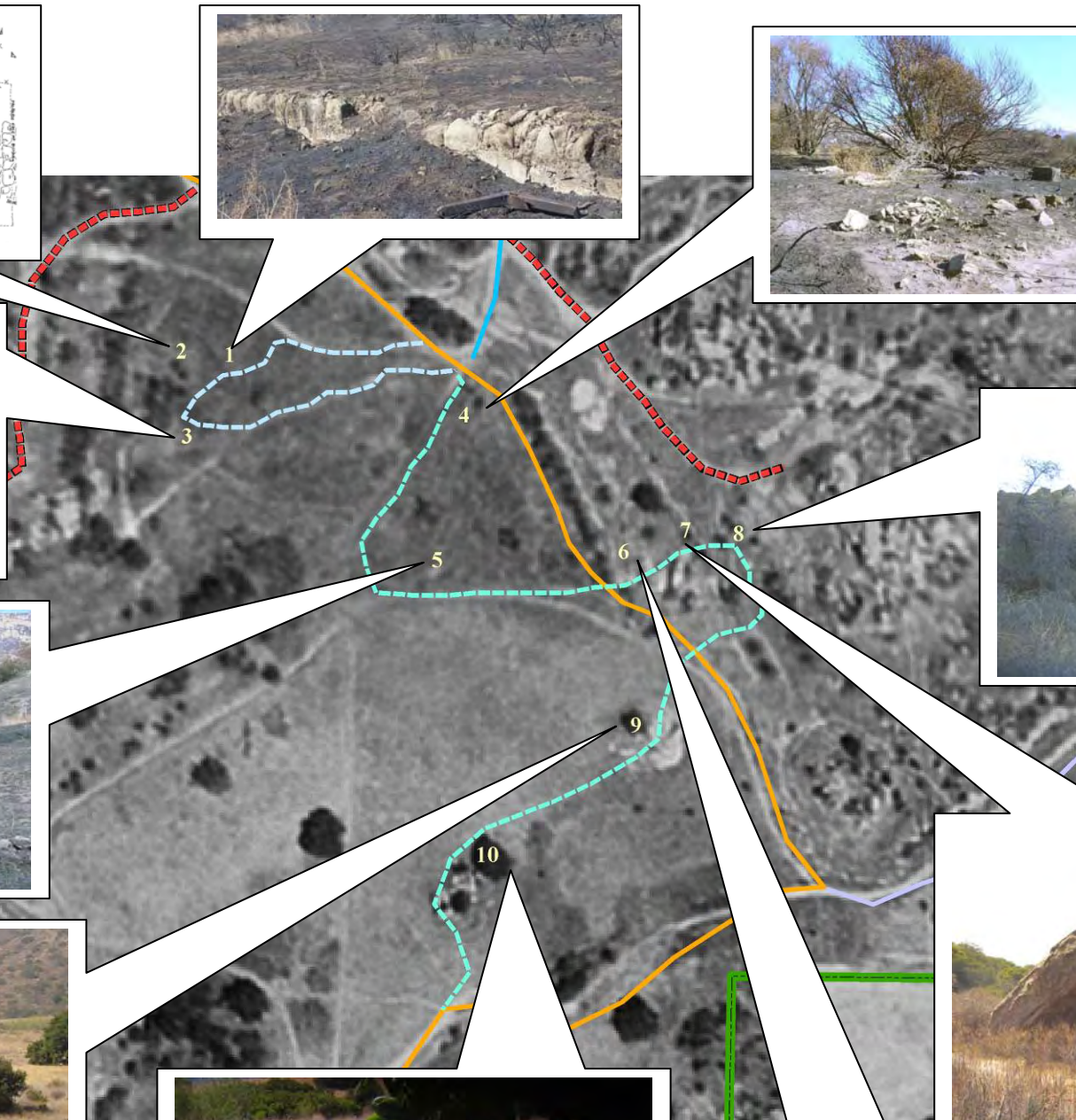
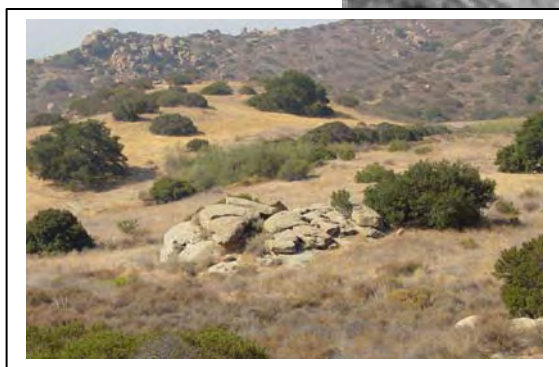
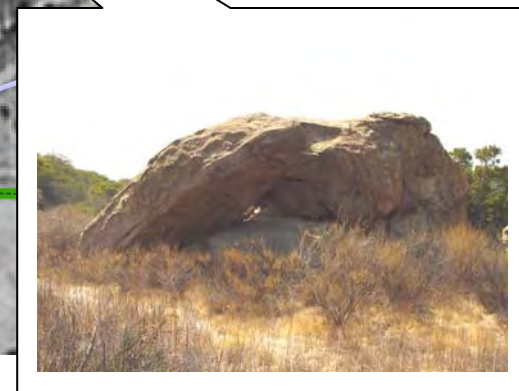
- CROSS TERRAIN TREK - GEO-TOPOGRAPHIC
- STAGE COACH -
- PREHISTORIC - NATIVE AMERICAN
- HISTORIC LOOP - GUARDIAN - MIN. HOMESTEAD
- HILL - PALMER - VEGET./PLANT MATERIAL
- NORTH SECTION LOOP
- NATURAL RESOURCES - WILDLIFE - VEG. - N QTR HABITAT TRANSITION

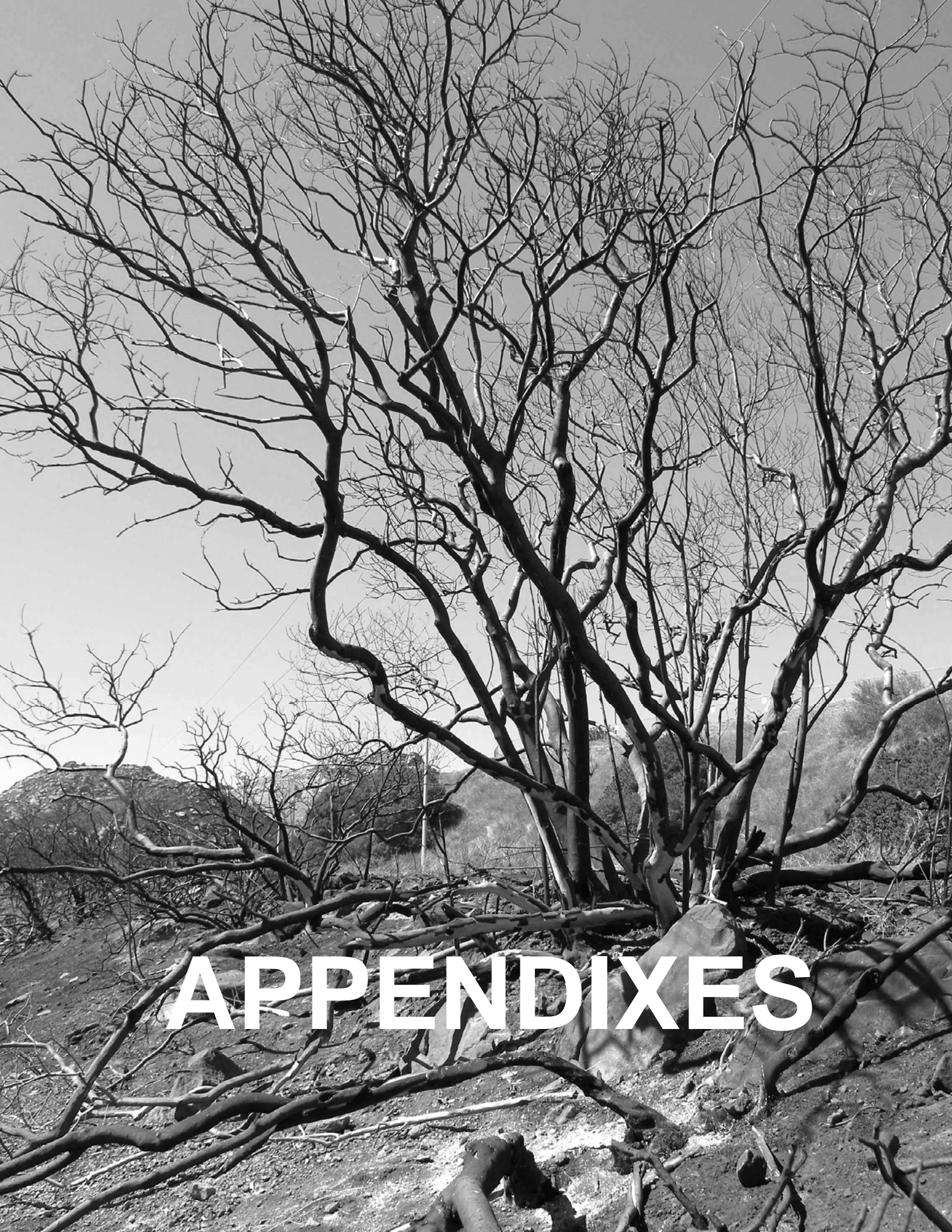
Santa Susana Pass
State Historic Park



POTENTIAL INTERPRETIVE TOPICS

General Interpretive Topics	Representative Materials	Landscape Features	Regional Resources
<i>Cultural Resources</i>			
a. Native American	Artifacts	Sites/Features/Plant Materials	ask Marla
b. Travel Routes/Transportation: State Coach, Trains	Maps, Images, Historic Artifacts	Tunnels, Tracks, Trails Road Remnants	ask Alex
c. Mining		Related Sites, Scars	ask Alex
d. Ranching/Homesteading		Related Sites, Features	Hill-Palmer Acre and Others
e. Movie Industry	Films, Stills, Photos	On-site; Off-site Locations	Corriganville Park Gene Autry Museum
f. Equestrian History/Activities		Trails, Spahn Ranch Site	Gene Autry Museum
<i>Natural Resources</i>			
a. Topography/Geology	Maps/Models	Site Topography, Boulders	
b. Plant Life	Herbarium Materials, Veg Map; Photos	Plants/Plant Communities	
c. Wildlife		Wildlife Corridors/ Habitat	





APPENDIXES



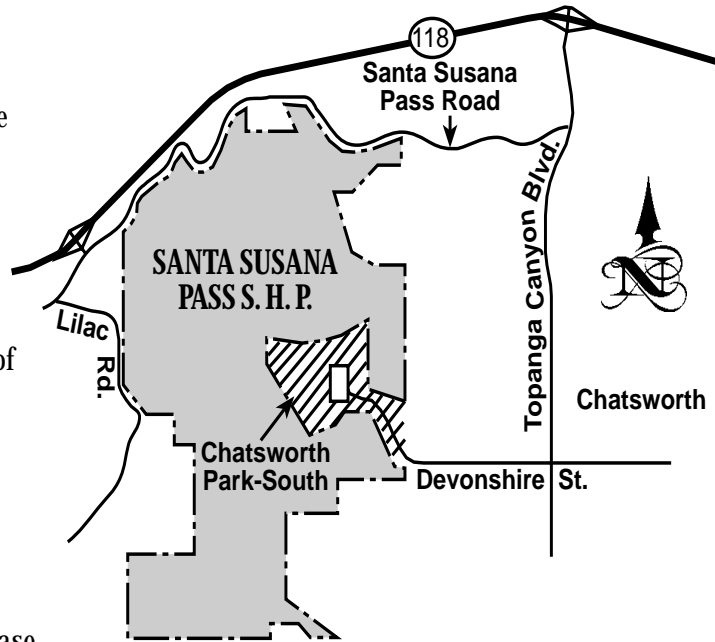
I.
DPR Recreational Component (Analysis)

II.
Select Maps: Los Angeles General Plan Transportation Element

Hiking Tips

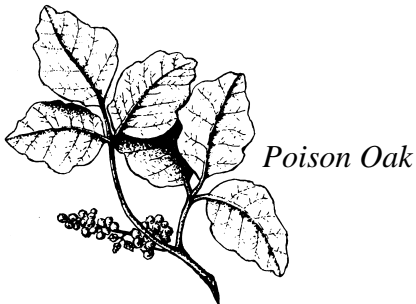
Until trails are established and marked by California State Parks, please help us preserve the unique natural and cultural features of Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park and observe the following:

- Hike only on safe pathways. Veering onto untrodden areas destroys the natural environment and increases your chances of coming into contact with poison oak, rattlesnakes and ticks.
- Everything, from the barest twig to the rustiest horseshoe, is now a part of this California State Park. If you see anything suspicious, including the removal or disturbance of our precious resources, please report it immediately.
- Know your physical limits. Summer temperatures can reach 100 degrees and the terrain is rugged.
- Always carry plenty of water. And remember to drink it!
- Don't hike alone. Use the "buddy" system. Tell a friend or family member of your plans. Let them know when you plan to return.
- In case of an emergency, please call 911.



- *Park hours are 8 a.m. to sunset daily. For your safety and that of the park community, please observe these access hours.*
- *Access to the park is from Chatsworth Park South on the southeast side, or from a signed trailhead off Lilac Road toward the west.*
- *Dogs are not permitted in the park.*
- *Fires are not permitted. This is a high fire-danger area.*

**Santa Susana Pass
State Historic Park
c/o Topanga Sector
1501 Will Rogers State Park Road
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
(310) 454-8212**



Poison Oak

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The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

For general state park information, contact the California State Parks Communications Office, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001, or call 1-800-777-0369. Outside the U.S., call (916) 653-6995, or visit our website at www.parks.ca.gov.

Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need special assistance should contact the park at (310) 454-8212. This publication is available in alternate formats by contacting the Communications Office. To use the California Relay Service with TDD, call (888) 877-5378 or without TDD, call (888) 877-5379.



GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARY D. NICHOLS
Secretary for Resources

RUSTY AREIAS
Director, California State Parks

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SANTA SUSANA PASS State Historic Park

