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# MALIBU CREEK STATE PARK

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## General Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report Volume 2

SCH No. 2002121108

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

Mike Chrisman  
Secretary for Resources

Ruth Coleman  
California State Parks

Department of Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001



**March 2005**

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**RESPONSE TO COMMENTS AND PROPOSED CHANGES  
TO PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN AND EIR**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) was distributed for public review on November 26, 2003, initiating a 45-day public review period pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and its implementing guidelines. The comment period officially closed on January 16, 2004. During this public review period, a total of twelve letters of comment were received. Three of the letters were from public agencies, and nine were from organizations and citizens. In addition to the letters received during the public review period, two letters were also received after the comment period closed. All of the comment letters are listed in the following table and the corresponding Department responses are provided in Section 3.0. A copy of each comment letter is provided prior to each response.

**2. LIST OF COMMENTORS**

<b>Letter No.</b>	<b>Agency/Organization/Individual</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
1	Ventura County Air Pollution Control District <i>Signed: Andy Brown, Planning &amp; Evaluation Division</i>	December 9, 2003
2	Citizen Letter 1 <i>Signed: Emaline Rich</i>	December 10, 2003
3	International Mountain Bicycling Association <i>Signed: Jim Hasenauer</i>	January 4, 2004
4	California Department of Transportation <i>Signed: Stephen Buswell, IGR/CEQA Branch Chief</i>	January 8, 2004
5	Southern California Association of Governments <i>Signed: Jeffrey M. Smith, AICP, Senior Regional Planner</i>	January 8, 2004
6	Pony Cross Farm <i>Signed: Stephanie Abronson</i>	January 9, 2004
7	California Native Plant Society <i>Signed: Ileene Anderson</i>	January 15, 2004
8	Land Use Preservation Defense Fund <i>Signed: Anne Hoffman, President</i>	January 15, 2004

Letter No.	Agency/Organization/Individual	Date Received
9	Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association <i>Signed: Michael Goodman, On behalf of the CORBA Board of Directors</i>	January 15, 2004
10	Wishtoyo Foundation <i>Signed: Mati Waiya, Executive Director</i>	January 16, 2004
11	Topanga Anthropological Consultants <i>Signed: Chester King, PhD</i>	January 16, 2004
12	Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club <i>Signed: Dave Brown, Conservation Chair</i>	January 16, 2004
13	Law Offices of Bosso, Williams, Sachs, Atack, Gallagher & Sanford <i>Signed: Catherine A. Philipovitch</i>	January 20, 2004
14	Recreation and Equestrian Coalition <i>Signed: Ruth L. Gerson, President</i>	January 29, 2004

### 3. COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EIR AND RESPONSES TO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL POINTS RAISED IN COMMENTS

As described above, a number of comment letters were been received in response to the General Plan and Draft EIR. The comment letters and Department responses are provided below.



December 9, 2003

Mr. Bob Patterson  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108

Subject: Notice of Availability of proposed Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan (California Department of Parks and Recreation)

Dear Mr. Patterson:

Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD) staff has reviewed the Notice of Availability for the Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan Draft EIR. The purpose of the proposed project is to develop a new General Plan for the Malibu Creek State Park. The existing General Plan was prepared over 25 years ago and a new plan is needed to guide future development activities and management objectives at the Park.

Several park management zones are identified in the plan, which are: Core Habitat; Natural Open Space; Cultural/Historic; and Recreation/Operations zones. A number of Park improvements are identified in the General Plan's goals and guidelines, including development of an equestrian campground at Reagan Ranch, establishment of a cultural and historic zone encompassing Sepulveda Adobe and White Oak Farm, development of more centralized visitor use facilities, creation of a new Natural Preserve in Malibu Canyon, and a host of natural and cultural resources management measures for the Park.

#### Project Location

This project is located in the Santa Monica Mountains, along the Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road and Mulholland Highway, south of the City of Calabasas. This property is located in an unincorporated portion of Los Angeles County. The Park is approximately 7,500 acres in size.

#### Project Comments

This project is located within Los Angeles County and not expected to have a significant impact on Ventura County's air quality. The VCAPCD has no additional comments at this time regarding the proposed project.

Malibu Creek State Park NOA of Draft EIR  
December 9, 2003  
Page 2

If you have any questions, contact me by telephone at (805) 645-1439 or by email at [andy@vcapcd.org](mailto:andy@vcapcd.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Andy Brown  
Planning & Evaluation Division



**Letter 1: Ventura County Air Pollution Control District**

Comment No.    Response

1-1                    The Ventura County Air Pollution Control District acknowledges that the General Plan for the Park is not expected to have a significant impact on Ventura County's air quality.

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6445 Lubao Ave  
Woodland Hills,  
CA. 91367  
Dec. 10, 2003

California Dept. of Parks and Rec.  
So. Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Dr. Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108

Dear Mr. Bob Petterson,

Regarding the Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary Plan Draft  
Environmental Report.

I approve your development plans with one exception:—  
the equestrian campground at Reagan Ranch. I don't  
know where you'll put it, but my experience as a hiker  
that it's very unpleasant and unhealthy to hike where horses  
use the trail. Their dried manure gets kicked up as the horses  
pass you by and you breathe it, use good judgement in your choices.

Sincerely,  
Emaline Rich

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**Letter 2: Citizen letter #1, from Emaline Rich**

Comment No.    Response

2-1                    Ms. Rich commented on her opposition to the proposed equestrian campground at Reagan Ranch as well as her negative experience of hiking where horses use the trail. The proposed equestrian facilities are located off the Yearling Trail. Horses are currently allowed in the Reagan Ranch area and on all trails in Malibu Creek State Park, with the exception of the Ann Skager Trail for the Visually Impaired. The comment is included for review and consideration by the Department.

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**I·M·B·A**

International Mountain Bicycling Association PO Box 7578 Boulder CO 80306 USA 303.545.9011 www.imba.com

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International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA)  
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California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
Attn.: Bob Patterson  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108

January 4, 2004

Dear Bob,

I am on the Board of Directors of the International Mountain Bicycling Association, the California Recreational Trails Committee and the California Roundtable on Recreation Parks and Tourism. I am an strong supporter of CDPR, and a frequent user of parks in the SMMNRA. I have attended the two planning meetings for Malibu Creek State Park and submitted a comment letter on August 23, 2003. I have now reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan.

As I indicated in August, I understand that a General Plan is inherently not specific and that trail plans and such will follow but still, we need the General Plan to create a context for decision making that allows for mostly multi-use trails which include bicycles. The fact that responsible bicyclists can share the trails with equestrians and pedestrians is well established in the Santa Monicas. While there are still a few folks who speak against bicycles on trails or for the need for separate facilities, the fact is that CDPR, NPS and the Conservancy have a long, successful history of managing multi-use trails which vary in tread and terrain.

There is no documentation reported in the draft EIR which would indicate that bicyclists have comparatively worse environmental impacts than other trail users. There is no citation of extraordinary user conflict. There is no reference in the bibliography that would lead to either conclusion.

In that light, I have several comments on the Draft EIR:

1. The Draft Environmental Impact Report does not resolve several of the important issues for the bicycling community.

A. The proposed bicycle ban from trails in CORE Habitat Zones is unwarranted.

Bicyclists advised the planning team, that while exceptions could be made, and bikes OK trail corridors could be designated, current State Park policy prohibited bicycles in Natural Preserves. We advised the planning team that a

3-1



new trail use policy was under development in Sacramento which might change this and we advised the planning team that existing bicycle use in Malibu Creek was apparently in Natural Preserves (Bulldog Motorway, a fireroad in Kaslow; and Grasslands Trail in Liberty Canyon.). We asked for language that would indicate that “trail corridors in the preserves will be generally multi-use.”

3-1

The draft environmental impact report changes the designation of “natural preserves” to “CORE Habitat Zones” but does not address the larger issue. The chart on p. 3.5 indicates that mountain bike use is banned both on and off trail in Core Habitat Zones. Hikers and equestrians are to be allowed on trails in Core Habitat Zones. This is not warranted by research on mountain bike impacts. There is no reason to think that responsible, on trail mountain biking will negatively impact the natural resources of Core Habitat Zones. On what basis has this determination been made? It would be better to indicate that in Core Habitat Zones, on trail bicycling is “permitted with restrictions.”

3-2

As indicated above, we are currently riding on two trails in what are now Preserves. Would we lose access to those trails? Most significantly, our legitimate future recreational opportunities in other areas of the park would be significantly jeopardized by the restrictions in the Core Habitat Zones.

3-3

B. The Draft EIR confirms that bicyclists, while a significant group of trail users, have the lowest available trail miles, but doesn't address this inequity..

3-4

I note that in section 4.2.3, you acknowledge that several issues could not be resolved due to current funding and staffing levels, and among them is “appropriate recreational uses”. I understand that, but it is within the realm of the General Plan to envision the general goal of a shared use, community trail system; the equitable allocation of recreational resources in terms of both trail mileage and trail experience; and fact based decision making as the justification for recreational use decisions. The draft EIR is replete with such comments about other issues.

3-5

Page 2.46 lists roads, trails and trail mileage available to user groups. While there are 40.2 miles of roads and trail in Malibu Creek State Park, 14.1 miles of those trail are closed to bicycle use. This is significant, given the number of bicyclists. We have asked many times for some of these trails to be opened to us. The ban of bikes from Core Habitat Zones, would make several of these closures permanent. This would be unacceptable.

3-6

A specific issue concerns the Backbone Trail on state Park land east of Malibu Creek State Park. The planning meetings and documentation didn't consider this park adjacent state land, although I commented on it in my August letter. Since those trails are listed as closed on the chart on p. 2.46, it seems clear that this area should be addressed in this planning process.

As I indicated in my August letter:

The recently adopted General Plan for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area acknowledges that the Backbone Trail is the main multi-use trail corridor across the NRA. To their credit, NPS has taken steps to remove bicycle missing links on this trail. The only missing links in the Backbone Trail that aren't open or don't have a plan to re-route for cyclists (eg, NPS around Boney near Circle X) are between Malibu Creek and Topanga State Parks. This isn't fair and needs to be addressed. The Backbone Trail is the main public recreational trail facility that has been built and paid for with public funds. Bicyclists, like other responsible non-motorized users should have access to the Backbone. We need CDPR to be proactive in opening the Backbone Trail on State Park lands. Again, I know that the Malibu Creek General Plan does speak specifically to trail planning and use, but it does establish the planning context.

3-7

I don't know why the state park land east of Malibu Creek is not being included in this planning. Just east of Malibu Creek is the Stunt Piuma section of the Backbone Trail that runs from Malibu Creek to the



Calabasas Motorway and Red Rock. This is land owned and managed by State Parks. The Malibu Creek General Plan should acknowledge the significant trail linkage and should indicate the goal of opening the State Park sections Backbone Trail to bicycles. (East of Stunt-Pioma is the Hondo Canyon section of the Backbone which is also on State Park lands and which also is closed to bikes.)

3-7

The General Plan should have language which indicates a future desired condition of a connected, shared use community trail system, which fosters responsible use, a trail community and which minimizes adverse impacts.

3-8

II. We are concerned about the implications of some of the language of the draft EIR.

A. Malibu Creek, while splendid is not a "Wilderness" and should not be managed as such. In section 3.2.1, while describing the characteristics of Core Habitat Zones, the draft EIR indicates that these zones are "low intensity areas where visitors can enjoy a wilderness experience and often find solitude". As planners, you should be more careful about the use of the term "wilderness".

We are completely committed to the protection of the wild landscape, habitat and natural resources, but bicycles are banned (we would argue unjustly) from designated state and federal Wilderness. The term creates problems for us. It is wrong to imply that CORE habitat zones will provide a wilderness experience. In such an urban fringe park, it is also problematic to suggest, that hikers and equestrians might find solitude there. At whose expense?

3-9

B. In the draft EIR, the use of the term "passive recreation" seems idiosyncratic. In most recreation literature, "active recreation" indicates activities that require certain organization and infrastructure like sportsfields, courts, pools, gymnasiums, etc.. Passive recreation implies the use of existing, natural conditions for personal enjoyment. With this view, mountain bicycling, like hiking and equestrian use is passive recreation. The motives and pleasures of bicycling are as diverse as those of hikers and equestrians. We're enjoying the scenery, watching wildlife, getting exercise, enjoying the respite from our workaday lives, etc. In several places in the draft EIR, "passive recreation" seems to be defined by the persons's motive. That's problematic and it will lead to planning mistakes.

3-10

III. As we look to the future, there are several objectives in the Draft EIR that should be emphasized for planning.

Bicyclists have commented that there are several missing links for us in accessing the Malibu Creek State Park trail system. Among these are the Backbone Trail to the east; access from the Reagan Ranch area; and access to the ocean to the south. We are pleased that several of the objectives and guidelines in the report would lead to a careful consideration of our needs. REC-1.2, calls for the creation of "trail linkages to minimize recreationalists off trail impacts to natural areas." CTA-1.4 calls for an examination of "trail connectivity." CTA-1.7 calls for a feasibility study of a trail in Malibu Canyon. CTA-1.9 calls for an examination of all park access points. VU-1 emphasizes permitting a wide range of recreational opportunities. REG-1.1 emphasizes cooperation and coordination with other public and private land owners.

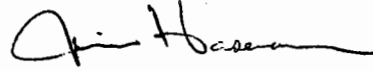
3-11

We would ask you to consider the plight of bicyclists in light of all of the above. We are close to the largest user group, yet we have the fewest available trails and the fewest ways to access the park.

The failure of the draft EIR to acknowledge the Backbone Trail issue and our other missing links from the northwest Reagan Ranch areas and those caused by the threat of a bike ban in the CORE Habitat Zones intensify what are already problems for us. I wish the Draft EIR was more proactive in providing guidance on these issues.

It is somewhat frustrating to have invested as much time in meetings and comments on the development of this draft and to not see bicyclists' issues addressed more directly. While some of them seem to be postponed for future planning efforts, the Core Habitat Zone ban and the imprecise language on wilderness and passive recreation causes me great concern. I hope they will be addressed as our work continues.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Hasenauer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jim Hasenauer

Cc. Keith Demetrek  
Tom Ward

**Letter 3: International Mountain Bicycling Association**

Comment No.    Response

3-1                    The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) commented that bicycles should not be banned from trails in Core Habitat Zones. All existing fire roads and multi-use trails in the Park that are currently open to mountain bicycles would remain open for mountain biking. In early 2004, a new trail policy was adopted by the Department. As stated in this policy, trails developed within state parks must be consistent with the park classification, general plan directives, cultural and natural resource protection, public safety, accessibility, and user compatibility. Local district staff will give preference to multiuse trails over single use trails; however, trail planning must balance access and recreational needs or desires with management requirements to ensure adequate resource protection and public safety. The new policy does not specifically exclude bicycles from Core Habitat Zones or Natural Preserves. As noted on Table 3-1, Mountain Bikes will potentially be allowed in all management zones of the park (Core Habitat, Natural Open Space, Cultural/Historic, Recreation/Operations Zone).

As discussed in the General Plan, the Core Habitat Zone primarily encompasses three existing Natural Preserves (Kaslow, Liberty Canyon, and Udell Gorge) and one proposed Natural Preserve (Malibu Canyon). Bicycles are not precluded on designated trails in Natural Preserve areas according to the current Trail Policy for the California State Park System.

3-2                    IMBA commented that the Draft EIR would change the designation of the Park's Natural Preserves to Core Habitat Zone and would ban bicycles from such zones. As stated in Section 3.2.1 (page 3-2), the Core Habitat Zone includes three existing Natural Preserves and one proposed new preserve. A Natural Preserve is a State Park classification not a management zone designation. The General Plan would not change the status of any Natural Preserves. Land uses within these preserves would continue to be governed by PRC Section

5019.71 and they would continue to be classified and described as Natural Preserves. The Core Habitat area would encompass these preserves and hundreds of additional acres of park land of high biological resource value.

According to departmental policy, bicycles are not precluded in Natural Preserves. See Response 3-1 above.

3-3 IMBA commented that two riding trails are currently in Natural Preserves and that they would lose access to those trails due to the restrictions in the Core Habitat Zones. According to State policy, and as noted earlier, bicycles are not precluded from these areas on designated multiuse trails. See Response 3-1 above.

3-4 IMBA commented that bicyclists have the lowest available trail miles in the Park. As shown on Table 2-4 (page 2-46), approximately half of the trails within Malibu Creek State Park are open to bicyclists, including: Backbone Trail (east of Malibu Canyon Road), Bulldog Road, Craggs Road, Grassland Trail, High Road, Las Virgenes Connector Trail, Las Virgenes Fire Road, Liberty Canyon Road, Lost Cabin Trail, Lookout Fire Road, Mesa Peak Fire Road, Rock Pool Road/Trail, Tapia Spur Trail, and Upper Grasslands Trail. These multi-use trails are provided in appropriate areas of the Park, with respect to resource protection, public safety, recreational value, and other factors. It is the intent of the Department to increase multi-use trails within the Park where appropriate and feasible. See Response 3-1.

The Malibu Creek State Park General Plan provides a broad vision for the long-term management of the Park. Specific trail designations are not programmed in the General Plan; however, the document does provide broad guidance for future management of the Park's trails and trail users. Additional guidelines have been developed that will be included in the Final General Plan. These guidelines further address the need to balance the needs of the various trail users within the Park.

As referenced in the Preliminary General Plan, National Park Service (NPS) is preparing an Interagency Regional Trail Management Plan (TMP) for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) in conjunction with the Department and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The TMP, which is being prepared separately from this General Plan, will serve as a blueprint for establishing the overall direction of future development and management of the trail network over the next 10 to 15 years. The TMP will prescribe policies to streamline interagency management of the trail network throughout the SMMNRA, and will also include a trail policy map depicting the planned trail network. The TMP could potentially result in a program modifying current trail policies, recreational use patterns, and future trail openings and closures. Together, the General Plan and TMP will serve as the overarching trail management program for the Park.

Public scoping for an interagency trail plan began with the Santa Monica Mountains Area Recreational Trails (SMMART) project that culminated in the 1997 SMMART Report. The SMMART Report contains the public's recommendations regarding missing links in the trail network, back country camps along the regional Backbone Trail, trail network sign guidelines, multiple use trail guidelines, and trail system design. The TMP, which builds on these recommendations, will include a public review and comment process for the development of the TMP alternatives. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the TMP was issued in January 2003. Written comments were solicited during the NOI review period. Additional comments will be solicited during the public review period for the Draft EIS, which is scheduled for release later this year.

3-5

IMBA commented that the General Plan should envision the general goal of a shared use community trail system, the equitable allocation of recreational resources, and fact-based decision making for the justification of recreational use decisions. As discussed in Response 3-4, new guidelines have been included in the General Plan which further considers the

needs of the various trail users within the Park. In addition, Section 4.2.3 of the General Plan has been revised to clarify that some issues may not be fully resolved in the General Plan. The intent of this section was not to imply that appropriate recreational uses for the Park could not be discussed and programmed in the General Plan.

As discussed in Section 4.1.3 of the document, this EIR represents the first tier of the environmental review process. Tiering in an EIR, particularly for a broad program-level project such as a general plan, allows agencies to consider broad environmental issues at the general planning stage. Subsequent environmental analysis will occur when specific development projects and management programs are proposed at the Park. Future second-tier environmental review will be based on more detailed information about each proposed action, including facility size, location, and capacity.

- 3-6 IMBA commented that more trails should be open to bicyclists within the Park. As discussed in Response 3-4, approximately half of the Park's trails are currently open to bicyclists. The General Plan and TMP are being prepared to provide an overall direction of future development and management of the trail network in the SMMNRA and at Malibu Creek State Park.
- 3-7 IMBA commented about the need for trail connectivity on the Backbone Trail east of Malibu Creek State Park on State-owned land. Ultimately, the vision for the Backbone Trail system is an entire multi-use trail that connects the Park to other regional open space areas with the SMMNRA. Regional trail planning issues that are not addressed in the General Plan are expected to be addressed in the TMP described in Response 3-4.
- 3-8 IMBA commented that the General Plan should indicate a future desired condition of a connected, shared-use community trail system, which fosters responsible use, a trail community, and which minimizes adverse impacts. The General Plan supports these conditions.

- 3-9 IMBA commented about the use of the term “wilderness” in the Preliminary General Plan. Specifically, the commenter disagrees with the use of this word on page 3-2 of the Preliminary General Plan to describe the desired visitor experience in the Core Habitat Zone. The term “wilderness,” as used in the Preliminary General Plan, does not refer to an official state or federally designated Wilderness Area; rather, the comment refers to the quality or condition of the desired visitors experience in this particular management zone.
- 3-10 IMBA disagrees with the Department’s use of the terms “active recreation” and “passive recreation” in the Preliminary General Plan. Under a traditional planning definition, the terms “passive” and “active” refers to the recreational activities themselves rather than the impacts that the activity has on the environment. Accordingly, the terms are used in this manner in the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR. The terms “active recreation” and “passive recreation” have been added to the glossary of the General Plan.
- 3-11 IMBA commented on the missing links in the Park’s trail system, the need for additional bicycle trails in the Park, and other specific issues raised in their previous comments. As mentioned in the previous responses, the Department is dedicated to providing safe and enjoyable recreational experiences for all park users, including bicyclists. The comment is included for review and consideration by the Department.

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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 7, REGIONAL PLANNING

IGR/CEQA BRANCH

120 SO. SPRING ST.

LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

PHONE (213) 897-4429

FAX (213) 897-1337

*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

January 8, 2004

Mr. Bob Patterson  
California State Department of Parks and  
Recreation, Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
Santa Diego, CA 92108

Malibu State Park General Plan  
IGR/CEQA 031206/EK  
SCH No. 2002121108

Dear Mr. Patterson:

We have received the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the application referenced above, right. For the State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) we have the following comments on it.

As noted on DEIR page 4-22, quantitative projections have not been developed for the Plan. So the DEIR analysis includes qualitative evaluation only. There was no consideration of those aspects of quantitative analysis that we mentioned in our letter of January 7, 2003 regarding the Notice of Preparation.

The implication is that efforts in quantitative analysis would not be justified. We note that any traffic increase from Park Plan improvements might be rather small, especially during hours of typical weekday peak urban congestion and in comparison to the traffic increase from new development that could occur in the area. In any case, we would have liked to see some mention in the DEIR of reasons why Plan impacts on State facilities should be considered nil. Even when a development does not have to meet a mitigation requirement of a local traffic management plan (CMP), Caltrans as a responsible agency under CEQA law can ask for an equitable share of costs for mitigation on State facilities due to cumulative effects from many developments.

In absence of DEIR consideration of impacts on Caltrans facilities, then, we reserve the option to later make specific further comments and ask for mitigation. Should any circumstances occur in which there is measurable or likely significant peak-period impact from activity in the Malibu Creek State Park on State Route 1 or freeway US-101, we might do this. Our comments then could include request for action to mitigate impacts, on the basis that impacting activities would go beyond what was expected in approval of the Park General Plan.

4-1


Mr. Bob Patterson

page two of two

January 8, 2003

If you have any questions for us regarding this matter, please refer to IGR/CEQA No. 031206/EK, and contact me at (213) 897 - 4429 .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Buswell", written over a horizontal line.

STEPHEN BUSWELL  
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Mr. Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse

**Letter 4: California Department of Transportation**

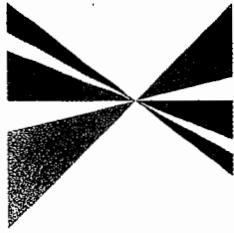
Comment No.    Response

4-1                      Caltrans commented on the level of detail provided in the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR analysis. The Draft EIR prepared for the Preliminary General Plan is a program-level document; therefore, all future development projects at the Park would require additional project-specific CEQA analysis. For example, construction of a new visitor center in the Park would undergo CEQA analysis and traffic impacts would be more thoroughly analyzed and documented at that time. Although these projects are not expected to generate significant traffic impacts, Caltrans would have an opportunity to review and comment on these CEQA documents when they are prepared.

The Preliminary General Plan includes a number of measures to address traffic and circulation problems at the Park. Specifically, Sections 3.3.6 and 3.4.2 include goals and guidelines that would improve traffic and circulation within the Park and at the Main Park Entrance Area.

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



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Los Angeles • Janice Hahn, Los Angeles • Sandra  
Jacobs, El Segundo • Tom LaBonge, Los Angeles •  
Lonnie Lowenthal, Long Beach • Martin Ludlow,  
Los Angeles • Keith McCarthy, Downey • Llewellyn  
Miller, Claremont • Cindy Miscikowski, Los  
Angeles • Paul Nowatka, Torrance • Pam  
O'Connor, Santa Monica • Alex Padilla, Los  
Angeles • Bernard Parks, Los Angeles • Jan Perry,  
Los Angeles • Beatrice Proo, Pico Rivera • Ed  
Reyes, Los Angeles • Greig Smith, Los Angeles •  
Dick Stanford, Azusa • Tom Sykes, Walnut • Paul  
Talbott, Alhambra • Sidney Tyler, Jr., Pasadena •  
Donia Reyes Uranga, Long Beach • Antonio  
Villaraigosa, Los Angeles • Dennis Washburn,  
Catalina • Jack Weiss, Los Angeles • Bob  
Wusefian, Glendale • Dennis P. Zine, Los Angeles

**Orange County:** Chris Norby, Orange County • Ron  
Lates, Los Alamitos • Art Brown, Buena Park • Lou  
Jone, Tustin • Richard Chavez, Anaheim • Debbie  
Cook, Huntington Beach • Cathryn DeYoung,  
Agua Dulce • Niquel • Richard Dixon, Lake Forest • Alta  
Juke, La Palma • Bev Perry, Brea • Tod Ridgeway,  
Newport Beach

**Riverside County:** Marion Ashley, Riverside  
County • Ron Lovridge, Riverside • Jeff Miller,  
Corona • Greg Pettis, Cathedral City • Ron Roberts,  
Remecula • Charles White, Moreno Valley

**San Bernardino County:** Paul Biane, San  
Bernardino County • Bill Alexander, Rancho  
Cucamonga • Edward Burgnon, Town of Apple  
Valley • Lawrence Dale, Barstow • Lee Ann Garcia,  
Grand Terrace • Susan Longville, San Bernardino •  
Gary Oviatt, Ontario • Deborah Robertson, Rialto

**Ventura County:** Judy Mikels, Ventura County •  
Steven Becerra, Simi Valley • Carl Morehouse, San  
Juan Bautista • Toni Young, Port Hueneme

**Riverside County Transportation Commission:**  
Robin Lowe, Hemet

**Ventura County Transportation Commission:** Bill  
Davis, Simi Valley

January 8, 2004

Mr. Bob Patterson  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108

**RE: SCAG Clearinghouse No. I 20030712 Malibu Creek State Park  
Preliminary General Plan**

Dear Mr. Patterson:

Thank you for submitting the **Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan** for review and comment. As areawide clearinghouse for regionally significant projects, SCAG reviews the consistency of local plans, projects and programs with regional plans. This activity is based on SCAG's responsibilities as a regional planning organization pursuant to state and federal laws and regulations. Guidance provided by these reviews is intended to assist local agencies and project sponsors to take actions that contribute to the attainment of regional goals and policies.

We have reviewed the **Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan**, and have determined that the proposed Project is not regionally significant per SCAG Intergovernmental Review (IGR) Criteria and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Section 15206). Therefore, the proposed Project does not warrant comments at this time. Should there be a change in the scope of the proposed Project, we would appreciate the opportunity to review and comment at that time.

A description of the proposed Project was published in SCAG's **December 16-31, 2003** Intergovernmental Review Clearinghouse Report for public review and comment.

The project title and SCAG Clearinghouse number should be used in all correspondence with SCAG concerning this Project. Correspondence should be sent to the attention of the Clearinghouse Coordinator. If you have any questions, please contact me at (213) 236-1867. Thank you.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY M. SMITH, AICP  
Senior Regional Planner  
Intergovernmental Review

5-1

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**Letter 5: Southern California Association of Governments**

Comment No.    Response

5-1                    The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) indicated that the proposed project is not regionally significant per SCAG Intergovernmental Review Criteria and CEQA Guidelines. Accordingly, no comments on the document were provided.

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# PONY CROSS FARM

Mrs. Stephanie Abronson  
543 Cold Canyon Road  
Monte Nido, CA 91302-2206

Phone (818) 222-PONY • Email: [stephanie@abronson.com](mailto:stephanie@abronson.com)

9 January 2004

California Dept. of Parks & Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Dr., Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108

Attn: Bob Patterson

RE: Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan & Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Patterson:

It is exactly one year ago that the first public meeting/workshop was held regarding a new general plan for Malibu Creek State Park. Following are my current concerns:

1. **Appendix B MCSP Public Meeting No. 1: Public Comment Jan. 9, 2003.** There was a second public workshop I attended at the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District held July 23, 2003, but I note that there are no comments from this workshop included in the general plan. This is an oversight that should be rectified. I do know that many of us in attendance at the July meeting spoke to the points with which we were seriously concerned.

I have chosen to focus on the Appendix B first, as I believe that many of the comments listed are critical to the creation of an adequate and safe trail system within the park and connecting it to the NPS Paramount Ranch and Malibu Lake on the west, to Malibu on the South, to the suburban areas on the north, and to all the neighborhoods and parklands to the east. All of the public comments with regard to equestrian, hiker, and mountain bikers are endemic to the success of this park in such an urban setting. The park must be inviting recreation, not preventing it. Safe trails for all users must be built and maintained. This may lead to greater usage of certain areas more than others, but this recreational usage is crucial to the health and welfare of all park users. We must encourage people to come to this park.

6-1

Chapters III and IV have, what I consider, some serious problems:

2. **What stands out in Chapter III is on page 3-37, Goal RR-2.**

**RR-2.1:** Limiting the stabling capacity to **40 horses** is unreasonable if a public equestrian event were to be held with a staging area in the park. We must invite public equestrian events to the park. Frequently an equestrian event, such as a group trail ride, endurance ride, pleasure drive, Trail Trials, or other type of equestrian event will require stabling for more than 40 equines,

6-2



sometimes up to 100 or more animals. The equestrian camp facility should allow room for the temporary stabling of a larger number of animals.

Should an equestrian event be staged in the park, portable stables can be hired by the sponsoring group as a solution to this dilemma. Regarding the disposal of excess waste manure, a portable dump bin can be brought in to collect this material and thereby remove it from the park.

6-2

To date, there are no known **scientific studies** on an adverse effect of horse waste material causing illness in humans or other species, or causing damage to the environment.

6-3

**RR-2.2:** Part of the solution to this problem is to provide a 2 or 3 yard dump bin to collect all manure, and require patrons of the camp facility to clean the pens and surrounding camping area of all manure before departure.

### 3. Chapter IV, page 4-4, 4.2.3 Areas of Controversy and Issues to be Resolved.

The first paragraph regarding trail usage is correct in that these issues are critical to most park users. In paragraph two, the claim is made that this General Plan cannot resolve these issues and many others in this "planning process." Why? It appears to me that the writers of the plan are not capable of addressing the **seriousness of all the trails situations** with appropriate solutions. It is **grievously under addressed and downplayed in this document.**

6-4

The last pages of the plan contains a list of the public comments (Appendix B, all pages), which focus a lot on recreation and the need for more and varied trails. These public comments must properly be addressed in this document.

With sincere regard,

Stephanie Abronson

**Letter 6: Pony Cross Farm**

Comment No.    Response

6-1                    The Pony Cross Farm commented that the document did not consider the public comments from the second public meeting regarding creation of an adequate and safe trail system in the Park. Although the summary of comments from the second public meeting was inadvertently not included in the Preliminary General Plan, the comments from this meeting were not disregarded in the planning process. A summary of the meeting comments have been added to Appendix C of the General Plan.

The Department is dedicated to providing safe and enjoyable recreational experiences for all park users, including hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists. As discussed in Response 3-4, a TMP is being prepared for the SMMNRA. The TMP will provide a blueprint for establishing the overall direction of future development and management of the trail network over the next ten to fifteen years in the SMMNRA, which includes Malibu Creek State Park. Together, the General Plan and TMP will serve as the overarching trail management program for the Park.

6-2                    The Pony Cross Farm commented on the capacity of the proposed equestrian camp in the Reagan Ranch area of the Park. Specifically, the commenter does not want the General Plan to limit the temporary stabling capacity to 40 horses. Guideline RR-2.1 of the General Plan (page 3-37) indicates that the equestrian camp would initially accommodate up to 15 sites with a two-horse capacity per site. This guideline also states that the additional camp sites could be added up to a maximum capacity of 40 sites (80 horses). The maximum capacity indicated in Guideline RR-2.1 refers to the number of horses that would be allowed at the equestrian camp sites (i.e., a maximum of 40 two-horse equestrian camp sites), not the temporary stabling capacity. The wording of the General Plan has been revised to clarify this distinction. Temporary stabling for special events would continue to occur on a case-by-case

basis and would require approval (via special event permit) by the Department.

6-3 The Pony Cross Farm commented about the lack of scientific studies that document the effects of horse waste on the environment and provided recommendations to dispose of manure at the equestrian camp. The Department agrees that waste disposal at the equestrian campground is an important issue. Guideline RR-2.2 has been revised to further address this issue.

6-4 The Pony Cross Farm commented about the language in Section 4.2.3 that states that some issues cannot be resolved in the Preliminary General Plan process. The intent of this section was not to imply that appropriate recreational uses (including trail use) for the Park could not be discussed and programmed in the General Plan. Section 4.2.3 of the Preliminary General Plan has been revised to clarify that some issues may not be fully resolved in the General Plan. As discussed in Response 3-4, new guidelines have been included in the Preliminary General Plan which further addresses the need to balance the needs of the various trail users within the Park. As discussed above, a summary of comments from the second public meeting has been added to Appendix C.

# California Native Plant Society

January 15, 2004

California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108  
Attn: Bob Patterson

## **RE: Comments on Malibu Creek State Park: Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Dear Mr. Patterson,

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is a non-profit group dedicated to the conservation and protection of California's native plant life and to the education of members and the public about the uniqueness of the California flora. Many of our members in the Los Angeles-Santa Monica Mountains Chapter botanize and hike in Malibu Creek State Park (MCSP), which is a very unique area of the Santa Monica mountains from the plant perspective. Therefore, we request that you incorporate the following additional information into the document.

The CNPS was pleased to see the generalized vegetation map (Figure 6) included in the document, however, the similarity in colors for different vegetation types does make the map hard to distinguish between the vegetation types. Since the map is digital, we also request the evaluation of acreage for each vegetation type. We also noted that eleven plant series/communities identified in Figure 6 were not discussed in the text, but rather lumped into six more generalized categories (Pages 2-20 through 2-24). Some of the generalized categories appear to represent unique plant communities that are tracked by your sister agency, Department of Fish and Game (DFG). Those communities include 1) Valley Oak woodlands, 2) Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forests, 3) Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forests, 4) Southern Mixed Riparian Forests and 5) Southern Riparian Scrub. Except for the Valley Oak Woodland, which is reported on MCSP in the California Natural Diversity Base (CNDDDB 2003), it is unclear if, but likely that, these other important and unique riparian communities occur on MCSP. As you know, riparian woodlands are an endangered plant community in southern California, with reductions of 95-97% of their historic ranges in southern California (Bowler 1990). We request that consistent recognized plant communities (DFG 2002) be used to identify the plant resourced in the final draft of the General Plan/EIR, and that an evaluation of the impacts on these sensitive plant communities be included.

7-1

7-2

Additionally, while oak woodlands (dominated by coast live oaks) are briefly discussed in the document, the Valley Oak Woodlands (a sensitive plant community tracked by DFG) and Valley Oak Savannahs are not specifically discussed in the document except to be referenced as reaching their southern limit in MCSP (Page 2-23), and as an educational/interpretive opportunity (Page 2-42) and as a secondary theme (Page 3-23). These plant communities need to be identified on the vegetation map, and then evaluated for impacts from the proposed General Plan and Final EIR.

7-3



*Dedicated to the preservation of California native flora*

The freshwater marsh (Page 2-24), another riparian community, is not identified on Figure 6, and because of its uniqueness, needs to be identified. Because it is known to occur around Century Lake, this area of occurrence needs to be included in the Core Habitat Zone for maximum conservation.

7-4

The Coastal Sage Scrub section (Page 2-24) acknowledges the rarity of the community but no analysis of the impacts of the Park Plan is presented. How much acreage of coastal sage scrub is within the Core Habitat zones versus Natural Open Space versus Cultural/Historic versus Recreational? A helpful table that needs to be included would disclose the acreage by recognized plant community and Management Zone for each Alternative.

7-5

Fish and Game Code Section 2052 requires state agencies to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance any endangered species or any threatened species and its habitat. For the rare plants identified in Table 2-2, there is no mention of any specific management strategies to protect or enhance any sensitive species known to occur or with potential to occur within the Park. No reference is made to the USFWS Recovery Plan (1999) that provides guidance for conservation and recovery of three of these species – Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*), Marcescent dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *marcescens*) and Santa Monica Mountains dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *ovatifolia*). Some of the conservation and recovery strategies include:

1. Establishing rare plant reserves – The Park Plan fails to identify which/how many populations of these federally and state listed species are within which types of management zones. If all of the sensitive plant locations fall within the "core" areas, then that information needs to be clearly identified in the document in support of the recovery plan goals. If they fall outside the cores, what will the strategies be to ensure species conservation?
2. These rare plants require monitoring. Under the Park Plan, monitoring is only mentioned for exotics (Page 3-8, NR-3.1).
3. Additional surveys for rare plants are needed. Surveys are not specifically mentioned under any of the goals or guidelines in the Park Plan.
4. Research must be undertaken to define life history strategies and population dynamics to guide recovery/conservation efforts. Research opportunities are mentioned only for vegetation communities and restoration (Page 3-7, NR-1.1) in the Park Plan
5. Seed banking needs to be addressed for these species, to prevent extirpation from catastrophic events. This issue is not addressed in the Park Plan.

7-6

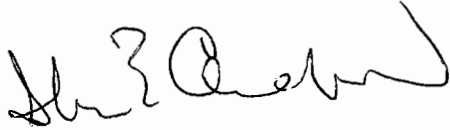
The CNPS urges you to incorporate the recommendations found in the Recovery Plan (1999) for the three species in the Park Plan and final EIR. Additionally, many of these strategies are appropriate for the suite of other sensitive plants that are known from the MCSP and for those that have potential to occur.

Based on the data presented in the General Plan and Draft EIR and the CNPS mission, the CNPS can only support Alternative 2, which provides core level protection of the valuable plant resources along Las Virgenes Creek (including riparian woodland [a sensitive plant community] and Coast Live Oak [Figure 6]) and important linkage connectivity between Malibu Creek and Liberty Canyon. While this linkage is essential to large wildlife, it is also important for plant pollinators and seed dispersers. It also may include for maximum protection some of the freshwater marsh areas.

7-7

These comments when incorporated into the document will make a more coherent and science-based, decision-making document. If you have any questions on any of these comments, please feel free to contact me at (323) 654-5943.

Sincerely,



Ilene Anderson  
Southern California Regional Botanist  
California Native Plant Society

References:

Bowler, P.A. 1990. Riparian Woodland: An Endangered Habitat in Southern California. In *Endangered Plant Communities of Southern California*, A. Schoenherr (ed.). Southern California Botanists, Special Publication No. 3., Claremont, CA. pp. 80-97.

California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) 2003. Version 3.0.3. November 3, 2003.

Department of Fish and Game (DFG) 2002. *List of California Terrestrial Natural Communities Recognized by The California Natural Diversity Database*. May 2002 Edition. Pgs. 77

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) 1999. *Recovery Plan for Six Plants From the Mountains Surrounding the Los Angeles Basin*. Portland, Oregon. Pgs. 63

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**Letter 7: California Native Plant Society**

Comment No.    Response

7-1                    The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) commented that the vegetation map in the General Plan (Figure 6) is not clearly marked. This figure has been revised to more clearly identify the boundaries of the vegetation communities.

7-2                    CNPS commented that the vegetation communities shown on Figure 6 are not consistent with the vegetation communities described in the text. The comment also identifies some vegetation communities that are not discussed on the map or in the General Plan text. The vegetation mapping shown on Figure 6 is based on the same vegetation communities described in the SMMNRA General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS). This was used to ensure consistency between the two planning documents. Section 2.1.2 has been updated to include all of the vegetation communities described on Figure 6. In many cases, the vegetation communities have been consolidated into broader categories of vegetation types.

7-3                    CNPS commented on the need to describe Valley Oak Woodlands and Valley Oak Savannas in the General Plan and evaluate the impacts of the General Plan on these communities. A description of the Valley Oak Woodland and Valley Oak Savannah communities is provided in Section 2.1.2. As discussed in Section 3.4.1 (page 3-31) and Section 4.6.3 (page 4-12), the health of oak woodlands is a key indicator of over-use in the Park. Goals NR-1 and NR-2 and the associated guidelines also provide for the protection of the Park's important natural communities, including oak woodlands and savannas. A new guideline (NR-4) has been added under Goal NR-2 to further emphasize the importance of protecting these unique natural communities in the Park. As discussed in Response 3-5, subsequent environmental analysis will be required prior to implementation of any future development projects or management plans in the Park. Project-related impacts to

important plant communities (including Valley Oak Woodlands and Valley Oak Savannahs) would be undertaken at this time.

- 7-4 CNPS commented on the need to include the freshwater marsh designation of the vegetation map (Figure 6) and within the Core Habitat Zone. A description of the freshwater marsh habitat within the Park is provided in Section 2.1.1 (page 2-22). The vegetation communities in the Park were not mapped at the scale required to accurately define these communities; therefore, the map has not been revised. The Core Habitat Zone encompasses the west side of Century Lake.
- 7-5 CNPS commented on the need to better define the extent and coverage of coastal sage scrub within the Park. As recommended in the General Plan, a comprehensive understanding of the Park's native vegetation is key to improving to protection and enhancement of its natural communities. The management zones identified on Figure 7 provide for extensive protection of the coastal sage scrub communities within the Park. Some of the proposed Recreation/Operations Zone encompasses small portions of this habitat type; however, the vast majority of the coastal sage scrub habitat is located in the Core Habitat, Natural Open Space, and Cultural/Historic Zones. The goals and guidelines identified in the plan would minimize impacts to sensitive plant communities in all management zones.
- 7-6 CNPS commented on the need for specific management strategies for the sensitive plants listed in Table 2-2. A number of measures are provided in Section 3.3.1 to protect and enhance sensitive ecosystems and plants within the Park. An additional guideline (NR-5) has been included in Section 3.3.1 to provide guidance for the conservation and recovery of the plant species listed in Table 2-2.
- 7-7 CNPS commented on their support of Alternative 2. The comment is included for review and consideration by the Department.



## LAND USE PRESERVATION DEFENSE FUND

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Mr. Bob Patterson  
California Department of Parks & Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108  
January 15, 2004

Dear Mr. Patterson,

The **Land Use Preservation Defense Fund (LUPDF)** is a nonprofit advocacy organization, representing the interests of private landowners in the Santa Monica Mountains. LUPDF actively participates in regional and state legislative processes to promote public access to public land and prevent unconstitutional restrictions on private landowners.

We appreciate the opportunity to assist State Parks in creating a General Plan and Environmental Impact Report for the Malibu Creek State Park. We are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed 'Preferred Alternative' Management Plan presented in the Draft version of these documents dated November, 2003.

**Our concern with the Draft Plan focuses on the Plan's proposal to increase the area classified as 'Natural Preserve' from the current 40% of the Park to 80% of the Park area.** This appears to be a violation of Public Resources Code Section 5002.1 which requires that, prior to the reclassification of a unit of the state park system from a State Recreation Unit to a Natural Preserve Unit, the Department shall prepare an inventory of the unit's scenic, natural, and cultural features, including, but not limited to, ecological, archaeological, historical and geological features. The inventory shall be submitted by the department to the State Park and Recreation Commission for its consideration and for public hearings.

8-1

Since the Draft General Plan reclassifies the vast majority of the Park as Natural Preserve and redefines the primary purpose of the Park from providing a balance between recreation and preservation to the following:



# LAND USE PRESERVATION DEFENSE FUND

*"The primary purpose of Malibu Creek State Park is to protect and perpetuate the woodland and riparian features of a ruggedly beautiful natural landscape that has been set aside for the protection of its diverse natural resources."*

We are writing to formally request that you comply with the requirements of PRC 5002.1 and prepare the proper submissions to the State Park and Recreation Commission with a request for consideration of your proposed change of classification.

The LUPDF also respectfully requests that the Draft General Plan be updated to comply with CEQA by:

- 1) Assessing the environmental impact of Plan implementation on **Recreation, Land Use Planning, Housing and Agriculture** in the surrounding community instead of concluding the Plan will have no significant impact on these categories.
- 2) Eliminating references to visual impacts on the **Park of future development on adjacent properties** in that portion of the EIR analyzing aesthetic impacts that would result from the implementation of the proposed General Plan. CEQA does not require your agency to prepare EIR's for hypothetical future development on adjacent private lands.
- 3) Assessing the impact on adjacent lands of **reintroducing and breeding sensitive species** in the Park and **imposing wildlife corridor designations** on private property.

## IMPACT OF THE DRAFT GENERAL PLAN ON RECREATION

Plan Section **3.3.8 Visitor Use and Development**, conveys the LA Region's increasing need for recreational resources. The Draft General Plan Proposes to double the area of "Natural Preserve" from the current 40% of total Park area to 80%. Resource protection is the primary emphasis of the natural preserves; active recreational use, vehicle use, and development are not permitted. Hiking is the only use allowed in the preserves but foot trails are nearly nonexistent in these areas.

Despite a large expected increase in Park visitors above the current levels, the Plan doubles the area of the Park with severely restricted public access and guarantees

# LUPDF

## LAND USE PRESERVATION DEFENSE FUND

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reduced Recreation opportunities in the future by stating “**No more roads or trails will be built in the preserves.**” Malibu Creek is a spectacular natural resource but the Plan eliminates public access to nearly 2,200 acres adjacent to the Creek between Mulholland Highway and Malibu Lagoon State Beach. No trails providing public access to this incredible connecting link are mapped or proposed in Figure 7 – Preferred Plan. It is a breach of the public trust for the Department, in a Park serving the largest urbanized area in the State, to severely limit public access, and in the case of the 2,200 acres along Malibu Creek to the Pacific Ocean, terminate public access.

8-5

By concentrating visitor use to 20% of the area of the Park, the currently crowded trails will become increasingly crowded, park closings on summer weekends due to excess capacity will increase, and the park recreation experience will become an urban experience. The Draft Plan projects that frequent contact with other people is to be expected in the Recreation and Cultural areas of the park. Increasing public access to the 80% of the Park classified as Natural Reserve will relieve pressure on the trails in the Recreation and Cultural areas, where trails are currently, at times, uncomfortably crowded.

### IMPACT OF THE DRAFT GENERAL PLAN ON LAND USE PLANNING

Section 2.1.3 of the Draft Plan proposes to apply the principals of the **Natural Community Conservation Planning Program (NCCP)** in the Park. The LUPDF requests that you provide, in writing, evidence of the Department’s statutory authority to impose on private landowners in communities adjacent to the Park without notifying them and gaining their consent as partners, as required by the program. We believe that the NCCP imposes an additional regulatory burden on private landowners that the Legislature did not intend nor authorize the Department to impose.

8-6

Sections SR 1.2, SR 1.3, and SR 2.0-2.3 state that the Department will provide “input and visual mitigation measures” to local jurisdictions and other state and federal agencies regarding visual impacts of private and public developments and improvements that are visible from the Park. The Department does not have the statutory authority to regulate adjacent private land and we request that the following Goal SR-1 be removed from the Draft Plan:

8-7



# LAND USE PRESERVATION DEFENSE FUND

**Goal SR-1:** *Protect and maintain significant viewsheds within and surrounding the Park from human-induced intrusions, to enhance the visitor experience of the Park's scenic resources.*

It is a cloud on title to have state agencies such as the Department of Parks & Recreation classify the legally developed homes of rural residents of the state as "human induced intrusion" and we ask that such language be removed from the Draft Plan.

8-7

The LUPDF also requests that the Department not take it upon itself to become the enforcement agency for the California Coastal Commission and remove the following Plan provision.

**GOAL REG 2.3** *Actively coordinate with the California Coastal Commission to ensure that all development within the coastal zone is consistent with the County of Los Angeles Malibu LCP/LUP.*

## IMPACT OF THE DRAFT GENERAL PLAN ON HOUSING

The 7,300 acre Malibu Creek State Park comprises only 5% of the area of the SMMNRA but it is creating a plan whose execution depends on the forced cooperation of the remaining 95% of the landowners, the majority of which are private landowners. The Plan's has provisions for Interagency coordination to limit development, impose view easement, to create wildlife corridors that require fencing prohibitions, and impose sensitive habitat designations, as well as eliminate post columbean landscaping. These provisions all conspire to increase the expense of creating housing in the area and constitute a significant environmental impact under CEQA.

8-8

## IMPACT OF THE DRAFT GENERAL PLAN ON AGRICULTURE

The Draft Plan's zero-tolerance approach to pre-european vegetation has the potential to negatively impact surrounding agricultural operations in the Santa Monica Mountains. The EIR should assess the negative impact on agricultural activities of the following Plan Natural Resource goals:

8-9



## LAND USE PRESERVATION DEFENSE FUND

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**NR-1.2:** *Coordinate with neighboring agencies and local groups to develop and implement plans to restore and maintain the native ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains, as appropriate to achieve Park goals.*

**NR-1.3:** *Restore natural processes and functions to parcels that are acquired for their habitat values.*

**NR-2:** *Implement guidelines to provide long term protection and enhancement of sensitive ecosystems and plant species.*

**NR-3:** *Prevent the introduction and spread of exotic, invasive, and nonnative species.*

**NR-3.1:** *Monitor, assess, and document the occurrence, extent, and type of exotics present in the Park and adjacent lands to gain an understanding of the presence and role of exotics in natural ecosystems and identify and eradicate the presence, occurrence, and extent of exotic plant species.*

**NR-3.2:** *Develop management actions to minimize and, where possible, prohibit activities that spread non-native invasive plants. Human activities that disturb the natural ecological system shall be minimized*

8-9

We would like the State Park system to restate references to ecosystem management practices to **PARK** ecosystem practices. The Department does not have the authority to monitor and assess pre-european plants on adjacent private land nor does the community want the Park engaged in such activities.

### **RISKS OF REINTRODUCING DANGEROUS SPECIES**

The Draft Plan proposes to reintroduce sensitive species and makes several specific references to protecting mountain lions.

8-10



## LAND USE PRESERVATION DEFENSE FUND

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**NR-4.3:** *If determined to be scientifically feasible and viable, implement breeding and reintroduction programs with an emphasis on sensitive and threatened species, in consultation with adjacent landowners, and federal and other state agencies.*

8-10

The EIR should evaluate the impact of monitoring, reintroducing, breeding and enhancing the dispersal of mountain lions on adjacent lands. Mountain lions pose a serious danger to the 650,000± annual visitors to the Park, the 1,000,000± residents within a 5 mile radius and to the native wildlife population should an artificially induced surplus population of mountain lions be created by a state sponsored breeding program.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and I would very much appreciate a written response to our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Anne Hoffman'. The signature is fluid and extends to the right.

Anne Hoffman, President



**Letter 8: Land Use Preservation Defense Fund**

Comment No.    Response

8-1                    The Land Use Preservation Defense Fund (LUPDF) commented on the increased coverage of Natural Preserves within the Park. The commenter indicated that the General Plan would “increase the area classified as Natural Preserve from the current 40 percent of the Park to 80 percent of the Park area.” As discussed below, the Plan would increase the amount of park land in the Natural Preserve Category; however, the increase would be substantially less than indicated in the comment.

A summary of the park acreage included in each management zone under the Park Plan is shown in the table below. As discussed in Section 3.2.1, there are currently three Natural Preserves in the Park: Kaslow (1,956 acres), Liberty Canyon (808 acres), and Udell Gorge (238 acres). Under the proposed Park Plan, one new Natural Preserve would be created at the Park. The new Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve would occupy approximately 1,050 acres; therefore, the total acreage of natural preserve area would increase from 38 percent to 51 percent of the total park area. As such, it is incorrect to state that the Plan “reclassifies the vast majority of the Park as Natural Preserves.”

**Malibu Creek State Park - Management Zone Acreages**

Management Zone	Coverage (acres)		Coverage (%)	
	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
Core Habitat				
<i>Natural Preserve</i>	3,002	4,048	38%	51%
<i>Non-Natural Preserve</i>	N/A	508	N/A	6%
Natural Open Space	N/A	2,890	N/A	37%
Cultural/Historic	N/A	218	N/A	3%
Recreation/Operations	N/A	217	N/A	3%
None	4,879	0	62%	0%
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>7,881 acres</b>	<b>7,881 acres</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

As indicated in the comment and mentioned in Sections 2.1.1 and 3.2.1 of the General Plan, Natural Preserves are defined in Section 5019.71 of the PRC. Prior to classification of the new Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve, the Department would be required to comply with all applicable PRC sections and requirements.

8-2 LUPDF commented on the need for further analysis in the EIR in the Recreation, Land Use and Planning, Housing, and Agriculture sections. These impact categories are analyzed in Section 4.5 of the EIR. As discussed, no significant environmental effects would occur as a result of the General Plan with respect to recreation, land use, population and housing, and agriculture. These topics are discussed in more detailed responses below.

8-3 LUPDF commented on the adequacy of the analysis in the EIR related to aesthetic impacts. Specifically the comment indicates that the EIR should not discuss impacts on the Park from future development on adjacent properties. Aesthetic impacts are analyzed in Section 4.6.1 of the EIR. The significance thresholds for aesthetic impacts provided in this section are based on the CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

This EIR is a first tier or program-level environmental document, as described in Response 3-5. As such, it analyzes broad environmental issues related to implementation of the General Plan. As a trustee agency under CEQA, the Department is entitled to comment on CEQA documents for development projects that affect a unit of the State Park system. As mentioned in Section 4.6.1, the Department can recommend mitigation measures to address impacts from projects outside of the park boundaries; however, the decision to implement these measures is not within the jurisdiction of the Department.

8-4 LUPDF commented on the need for the EIR to assess the impacts of sensitive species breeding programs and wildlife corridor designations on adjacent lands. The EIR adequately analyzes these impacts and concludes that no significant

impacts would occur as a result of these General Plan elements.

Goal NR-4 states that the Department will protect, restore, and perpetuate native wildlife populations that are significant to the Park. The sensitive species breeding program identified by the commenter is described in Guideline NR 4-3, which recommends that “if determined to be scientifically feasible and viable, [the Department will] implement breeding and reintroduction programs with an emphasis on sensitive and threatened species, in consultation with adjacent landowners, and federal and other state agencies.” Tables 2-2 and 2-3 of the General Plan provide a list of sensitive plant and animal species that are known to occur in the Park. These include species that are listed as “threatened” or “endangered” on various agency lists and databases. The sensitive mammals that are listed in Table 2-3 include four species of bats and the San Diego Desert wood rat. The mountain lion is not listed in this table and would not be included in any breeding or reintroduction programs at the Park.

The Department understands the need to coordinate with surrounding land owners and jurisdictions regarding important regional planning decisions. As described in Guideline NR-4.3, breeding programs and reintroduction programs would be undertaken in consultation with adjacent landowners and federal and state agencies.

A biological corridor is defined in the General Plan as “interconnected tracts of land characterized by significant natural resource value through which native species can disperse.” The General Plan identifies the need to protect biocorridors and enhance the movement of wildlife through the Park. Guidelines NR-5.1, NR-5.2, NR-5.3, and NR-5.4 would address this need through further analysis of habitat connectivity, coordination with local agencies and land owners, and protection of important wildlife corridors through the Park.

8-5 LUPDF commented on the loss of public access in the Park resulting from implementation of the General Plan. As discussed above, one new Natural Preserve would be created at the Park. The new Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve would occupy approximately 1,050 acres, which would increase the coverage of Natural Preserve land in the Park from 38 percent to 51 percent of the area. The new Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve is located in an area that is largely inaccessible to the public. As such, implementation of the General Plan would not “severely restrict public access” as suggested in the comment. There are several trails located within the natural preserve boundaries. Additionally, Guideline CTA-1.7 indicates the need to “conduct a trail feasibility study for Malibu Canyon.”

8-6 LUPDF commented on the Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP) and the Department’s ability to implement the program. As stated in Section 2.1.3, there are no designated NCCP areas within the Park. The General Plan does not encourage the implementation of an NCCP program in the Park; rather, it adheres to the principles of a NCCP program regarding the protection of habitat and biodiversity.

8-7 LUPDF commented on the jurisdictional authority of the Department with regard to projects outside of the State Park boundaries. The commenter also recommended the removal of Goal SR-1 from the General Plan. No goals or guidelines have been removed; however, Guideline SR-1.3 has been revised to clarify that the Department would provide input to surrounding development projects through formal environmental review processes. See Response 8-3 above.

The Department is required by law to comply with the provisions of the California Coastal Act. As stated in Goal REG-2.3, the Department will actively coordinate with the California Coastal Commission to ensure that all development within the coastal zone is consistent with the adopted LCP. The Department is not the enforcement agency for the California Coastal Commission.

- 8-8 LUPDF indicated that the General Plan would result in significant impacts on population and housing by increasing the expense of creating housing in the area. Under CEQA, an impact is considered significant if it would (a) induce substantial population growth in an area either directly or indirectly; (b) displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction or replacement of housing elsewhere; or (c) displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction or replacement of housing elsewhere. The General Plan would not induce substantial population growth, nor would it displace any homes or people. As discussed in Section 4.5.4, the project would not result in any significant impacts related to population and housing.
- 8-9 LUPDF commented on the potential impacts to agricultural resources outside of the park boundaries as a result of ecosystem management practices. Goals NR-1, NR-2, and NR-3 pertain to ecosystem management activities within the park boundaries. Those activities outside of the Park are limited to coordination efforts with cooperating agencies and other partners. Guideline NR-3.1 has been revised to clarify that exotic species eradication activities would be limited to areas within the Park boundaries. Guideline WSA-1.2 (page 3-35) encourages interpretive opportunities near White Oak Farm, which provide public enjoyment and education about early farming life in the region.
- 8-10 LUPDF commented on the impacts associated with a monitoring, reintroducing, breeding, and enhancing the dispersal of mountain lions on adjacent lands. As discussed in Response 8-4 above, mountain lions would not be included in any breeding or reintroduction programs at the Park.

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January 15, 2004

California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108  
Attn: Bob Patterson

Bicyclists can share the trails with equestrians and pedestrians. This is well established in the Santa Monica Mountains. Although there are still some people who continue to oppose bicycles on trails, there is a long history of successful management of trails of varying type by CDPR, NPS and the Conservancy.

There is no documentation reported in the *Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report* which would indicate that bicyclists cause more adverse environmental impacts than other trail users and there is no evidence of any significant user conflict.

1. The *Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (PGPaDEIR)* does not resolve several of the important issues for the bicycling community.
  - A. The proposed bicycle ban from trails in CORE Habitat Zones is unwarranted.

Bicyclists advised the planning team, that while exceptions could be made, and bikes OK trail corridors could be designated, current State Park policy prohibited bicycles in Natural Preserves. We advised the planning team that a new trail use policy was under development in Sacramento which might change this and we advised the planning team that existing bicycle use in Malibu Creek was apparently in Natural Preserves (Bulldog Motorway, a fireroad in Kaslow; and Grasslands Trail in Liberty Canyon.). We asked for language that would indicate that "trail corridors in the preserves will be generally multi-use."

The *PGPaDEIR* changes the designation of "natural preserves" to "CORE Habitat Zones" but does not address the larger issue. The chart on p. 3.5 indicates that mountain bike use is banned both on and off trail in Core Habitat Zones. Hikers and equestrians are to be allowed on trails in Core Habitat Zones. This is not warranted by research on mountain bike impacts. There is no reason to think that responsible, on trail mountain biking will negatively impact the natural resources of Core Habitat Zones. On what basis has this determination been made? It would be better to indicate that in Core Habitat Zones, on trail bicycling is "permitted with restrictions."

As indicated above, we are currently riding on two trails in what are now "Preserves." Would we lose access to those trails? Most significantly, our legitimate future recreational opportunities in other areas of the park would be significantly jeopardized by the restrictions in the Core Habitat Zones.

- B. The *PGPaDEIR* confirms that bicyclists, while a significant group of trail users, have the lowest available trail miles, but does not address this inequity.

I note that in section 4.2.3, you acknowledge that several issues could not be resolved due to current funding and staffing levels, and among them is "appropriate recreational uses." I understand this problem, but it is within the realm of the General Plan to envision the general goal of a shared use, community trail system; the equitable allocation of recreational resources in terms of both trail mileage and trail experience; and fact based decision making as the justification for recreational use decisions. The *PGPaDEIR* is replete with such comments about other issues.

Page 2.46 lists roads, trails and trail mileage available to user groups. While there are 40.2 miles of roads and trail in Malibu Creek State Park, 14.1 miles of those trail are closed to bicycle use. This is significant, given the number of bicyclists. We have asked many times for some of these trails to be opened to us. The ban of bikes from Core Habitat Zones, would make several of these closures permanent. This would be unacceptable.

A specific issue concerns the Backbone Trail on land east of Malibu Creek State Park. The planning meetings and documentation didn't consider this park adjacent state land. Since those trails are listed as closed on the chart on p. 2.46, it seems clear that this area should be addressed in this planning process.

The recently adopted General Plan for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area acknowledges that the Backbone Trail is the main multi-use trail corridor across the NRA. To their credit, NPS has taken steps to remove bicycle missing links on this trail. The only missing links in the Backbone Trail that aren't open or don't have a plan to re-route for cyclists (e.g., NPS around Boney near Circle X) are between Malibu Creek and Topanga State Parks. This isn't fair and needs to be addressed. The Backbone Trail is the main public recreational trail facility that has been built and paid for with public funds. Bicyclists, like other responsible non-motorized users should have access to the Backbone. We need CDPR to be proactive in opening the Backbone Trail on State Park lands. I know that the Malibu Creek General Plan does not speak specifically to trail planning and use, but it does establish the planning context.

I don't know why the state park land east of Malibu Creek is not being included in this planning. Just east of Malibu Creek is the Stunt Piuma section of the Backbone Trail that runs from Malibu Creek to the Calabasas Motorway and Red Rock. This is land owned and managed by State Parks. The Malibu Creek General Plan should



acknowledge the significant trail linkage and should indicate the goal of opening the State Park sections Backbone Trail to bicycles. (East of Stunt-Pioma is the Hondo Canyon section of the Backbone which is also on State Park lands and which also is closed to bikes.)

The General Plan should have language which indicates a future desired condition of a connected, shared use community trail system, which fosters responsible use, a trail community and which minimizes adverse impacts.

2. We are concerned about the implications of some of the language of the *PGPaDEIR*.
  - A. Malibu Creek, while splendid is not a “Wilderness” and should not be managed as such. In section 3.2.1, while describing the characteristics of Core Habitat Zones, the *PGPaDEIR* indicates that these zones are “low intensity areas where visitors can enjoy a wilderness experience and often find solitude.” As planners, you should be more careful about the use of the term “wilderness.”

We are completely committed to the protection of the wild landscape, habitat and natural resources, but bicycles are banned (we would argue unjustly) from designated state and federal Wilderness. The term creates problems for us. It is wrong to imply that CORE Habitat Zones will provide a wilderness experience. In such an urban fringe park, it is also problematic to suggest that hikers and equestrians might find solitude there. At whose expense?
  - B. In the *PGPaDEIR*, the use of the term “passive recreation” seems idiosyncratic. In most recreation literature, “active recreation” indicates activities that require certain organization and infrastructure like sports fields, courts, pools, gymnasiums, etc. Passive recreation implies the use of existing, natural conditions for personal enjoyment. With this view, mountain bicycling, like hiking and equestrian use is passive recreation. The motives and pleasures of bicycling are as diverse as those of hikers and equestrians. We’re enjoying the scenery, watching wildlife, getting exercise, enjoying the respite from our work day lives, etc. In several places in the *PGPaDEIR*, “passive recreation” seems to be defined by the person’s motive. That’s problematic and it will lead to planning mistakes.
- III. As we look to the future, there are several objectives in the *PGPaDEIR* that should be emphasized for planning.

Bicyclists have commented that there are several missing links for us in accessing the Malibu Creek State Park trail system. Among these are the Backbone Trail to the east; access from the Reagan Ranch area; and access to the ocean to the south. We are pleased that several of the objectives and guidelines in the report would lead to a careful consideration of our needs. REC-1.2, calls for the creation of “trail linkages to minimize recreationalists off trail impacts to natural areas.” CTA-1.4 calls for an examination of “trail connectivity.” CTA-1.7 calls for a feasibility study of a trail in Malibu Canyon.

CTA-1.9 calls for an examination of all park access points. VU-1 emphasizes permitting a wide range of recreational opportunities. REG-1.1 emphasizes cooperation and coordination with other public and private land owners.

We would ask you to consider the plight of bicyclists in light of all of the above. We are close to the largest user group, yet we have the fewest available trails and the fewest ways to access the park.

The failure of the *PGPaDEIR* to acknowledge the Backbone Trail issue and our other missing links from the northwest Reagan Ranch areas and those caused by the threat of a bike ban in the CORE Habitat Zones intensify what are already problems for us. The *PGPaDEIR* should be more proactive in providing guidance on these issues.

9-1

It is somewhat frustrating to have invested as much time in meetings and comments on the development of this draft and to not see bicyclists' issues addressed more directly. While some of them seem to be postponed for future planning efforts, the Core Habitat Zone ban and the imprecise language on wilderness and passive recreation is cause for great concern. I hope they will be addressed as our work continues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Goodman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Goodman,  
On behalf of the CORBA Board of Directors

**Letter 9: Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA)**

Comment No.    Response

9-1                    A copy of this letter was submitted by the International Mountain Bicycling Association. Please refer to Responses 3-1 through 3-11 above.

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January 16, 2004

Mr. Bob Patterson  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108

Dear Mr. Patterson,

I am Mati Waiya, Founder and Executive Director of the Wishtoyo Foundation, a non-profit cultural and environmental organization founded in 1997, based in Oxnard, CA. I am in complete agreement with the comments sent to you by Dr. Chester King, of Topanga Anthropological Consultants, concerning the Malibu Creek State Park's Preliminary Plan and Draft EIR.

10-1

The Wishtoyo Foundation protects and preserves the culture and history of coastal communities and fosters responsibility to our waters, marine habitats and watersheds through research, education, community action and where necessary, citizen enforcement. We aim to utilize traditional Chumash beliefs, songs, stories and dances to create self-respect and a greater awareness of our connection with, and dependence upon, the natural Environment.

One of our larger projects, in partnership with Los Angeles Department of Beaches and Harbors, is the construction of a Chumash Demonstration Village and adjacent stream restoration at Nicholas Canyon County Beach in Malibu. In addition, we conduct cultural and environmental education programs, a community-based watershed monitoring program, wetlands restoration projects, agricultural pesticides research and monitoring projects and a variety of other pollution-control programs throughout Ventura County.

I serve on the Cultural / Environmental Transition Team of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger; I actively work with the Native American Heritage Commission and Cal. E.P.A.; I have served for many years as a consultant on Native American cultural issues for the National Parks Service as well as other local, State and Federal agencies.

My concerns regarding the Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan - Draft Environmental Impact Report, are as follows:

- During my visit with Chester King to the Malibu Creek State Park on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004, artifacts were observed on the surface of the earth throughout the site and we are concerned that visitors and hikers in the area with pick up these significant historic materials;
- There is a great need for identification of Native American sites to preserve;
- We would like to see cultural education programs included in the General Plan; and,

10-2

10-3

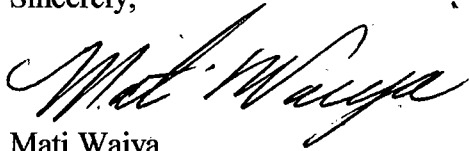
10-4

- We need information on the development's plans for mitigation of impact on cultural resource sites.

If you have any questions concerning these points, please feel free to contact me at my office: (805) 382-4540 or on my cell: (805) 794-1248. I would be happy to discuss any of these issues with you.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Mati Waiya  
Executive Director

CC: Dr. Chester King  
Phil Holmes, NPS

RECIPIENT OF THE EPA'S 2003 ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Letter 10: Wishtoyo Foundation**

Comment No.    Response

- 10-1            The Wishtoyo Foundation commented that they are a non-profit cultural and environmental organization and agree with Dr. Chester King's comments on the General Plan and Draft EIR. See Responses 11-1 through 11-4. The comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.
- 10-2            The Wishtoyo Foundation commented that they are concerned with park visitors taking surface artifacts from the Park. The Cultural/Historic Zone protects significant cultural and historic areas in the Park. Teaching visitors to protect park resources is an important part of the park-wide interpretative programs and would be implemented through Guideline INT-1.5.
- 10-3            The Wishtoyo Foundation commented that Native American sites need to be identified and preserved. Native American sites cannot be identified in the General Plan or distributed to the public; this information is considered confidential and must be placed in Confidential Appendices in park files. Goal CR-1 and Guideline CR-1.1 in Section 3.3.2 stress the importance of identifying, protecting, and interpreting significant archaeological resources.
- 10-4            The Wishtoyo Foundation commented that they would like cultural education programs included in the General Plan. The Department is committed to cultural heritage and cultural education programs. Cultural interpretation is an important part of the General Plan. Goal CR-1 pertains to interpretation of archaeological resources and implementation of Guideline CR-1.1 would specifically create interpretive programs for Native American artifacts and sacred sites. Proposed cultural education programs are described in Section 3.3.7, Park-wide Interpretation. Goal INT-2 pertains to the new educational programs that would be developed at the Park.

10-5

The Wishtoyo Foundation commented that they would like to see the development plans and mitigation for cultural resource impacts. The General Plan is a program-level document, as discussed in Response 3-5. No specific development plans have been prepared. Future second-tier environmental review will be based on more detailed information about each proposed action, including facility size, location, and capacity. This second-tier environmental review would be open to the public and, if necessary, mitigation would be incorporated. Under PRC 5024, the Office of Historic Protection (OHP) would be consulted if a historic resource would be impacted by development plans.



## **Topanga Anthropological Consultants**

**P.O. Box 826**

**Topanga, California 90290**

**(310) 455-2981**

Bob Patterson  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270  
San Diego, CA 92108

### **Comments on Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report**

I am a professional archaeologist, and I specialize in the study of the prehistory of California. I have served as President and Vice-president of the Society of California Archaeology. I have written two chapters in the Handbook of North American Indians volume on California produced by the Smithsonian Institution. My dissertation was selected for publication in a series of 31 outstanding dissertations concerning the archaeology of North American Indians. My writings are frequently referenced and I am recognized as a leading specialist in the field of California Archaeology and Ethnohistory. I have continually studied California Indian sites since 1960. I have conducted a much archaeological research in the Santa Monica Mountains including excavations at sites in Malibu Creek State Park. I am referenced in the plan.

I have advocated acquisition of sites by the public because there is no real protection of sites under private ownership. Cultural sites are non-renewable and are being destroyed at an alarming rate. Unfortunately public ownership seldom provides adequate protection as is evident by the history of treatment of cultural sites within Malibu Creek State Park.

In the 1980's construction of the park entrance and associated widening of Las Virgenes road resulted in significant damage to the village of Talepop. This destruction occurred in an area that had been studied by archaeologists. Inside the park, roads were constructed in village sites and a campground was constructed on a site. This destruction occurred without archaeological studies or Chumash approval despite a Coastal Commission permit requirement of approval by Chumash representatives. The cumulative impacts of this construction have been significant. When bathrooms were constructed in the late 1980's a long trench was excavated through intact site deposits at site LAN-227 and a cremation cemetery was trenched through at LAN-840. These excavations were conducted in sites that were recorded before the park was purchased. More recently the park constructed a fence and placed an entrance sign in site LAN-229. These activities damaged the site. A small amphitheater was built in a site near the Hunter House

and a new headquarters building is being built either in or adjacent to site LAN-229. No noticeable attempt has been made to avoid archaeological impacts.

11-1

The plan divides the park into four management zones. Two of the zones, Core habitat and Natural open space include most of the steeper slopes in the park. Recreation/Operations and Cultural/Historic zones include the less steep areas where village sites, historic buildings and camping and other use areas are present. A large portion of the Recreation/Operations zone included as main park entrance and day use area contains the remains of villages that were occupied over a thousand years ago. Concentration of future development in an area containing village sites and cemeteries over a 1000 years old will result in a continuation of destruction of important cultural sites in the park. Construction related impacts including trenching for utilities, in an area containing a concentration of cultural sites will result in damage. Further concentration of human activity at the sites will result in increased artifact collection. The area contains cultural sites that are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The sites were not studied for the preparation of the EIR or previous development activity. Four cemeteries have been discovered at the sites within the operations zone and the sites probably contain additional undiscovered cemeteries. In the 1970s, one of the cemetery areas at the park in the operations zone was included in a sacred area that was to be avoided during all future construction. The area is not shown in the plan.

11-2

The plan includes no programs for interpretation of cultural sites occupied before the European conquest of California. It states:

The Park offers a wide variety of cultural perspectives reflective of the coastal southern California region. Evidence from thousands of years of Native American inhabitation can be found throughout the Park, providing an opportunity for visitors to learn about the region's first inhabitants. The area's history can be enjoyed by visiting the newly refurbished 19<sup>th</sup> century adobe (Sepulveda Adobe), the ruins of the Mott Adobe, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century hunting club and farm, and ranches owned by former President Ronald Reagan and actor/comedian Bob Hope. Visitors are also drawn to the Park by its long history of television and film activities, including popular filming locations for Tarzan, Roots, Planet of the Apes, M\*A\*S\*H, and Pleasantville.

11-3

It is not clear how finding evidence of thousand years of native inhabitation provides an opportunity to learn about the region's first inhabitants. Presumably discovery and collection of artifacts by visitors will help them learn. The sites should be protected from artifact collectors and interpretive programs should be offered to enable appreciation of the sites and pre-European cultures. The EIR and the Plan makes it seem as though the last 150 years of country club life were more important than the over 10,000 years of occupation that preceded.

The summary of the history of the area states:

There is much evidence of the rich cultural history of the area (Table 1-1). The largest western tribe, the Chumash Indians, first inhabited the region extending from northern San Luis Obispo County, south to Malibu, and west to the Channel Islands. The Chumash still consider many sites in and around the Park as "sacred sites." There is evidence of a Chumash village near the main entrance station on Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Spanish explorers traveled through the region and were soon followed by Spanish missionaries. The Europeans brought livestock and exotic plants as well as new diseases, greatly affecting the Native American villages and bringing the traditional Chumash era to an end.

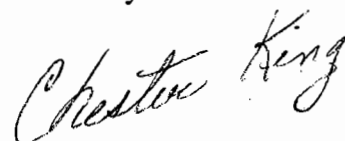
11-4

Many people who identify as European colonists wish that traditional Chumash were eliminated as a result of loss of their lands and exposure to diseases. Chumash traditionalists do not like to hear that they are extinct.

If the plan is going to concentrate development in an area containing a concentration of cultural sites, it should include an appraisal of the sites and identify the impacts that will be caused by development. It should not put the studies off to a time when development has to occur in a site area when it will be too late to avoid impacts. Studies should be conducted to evaluate the sites and determine their boundaries. These studies should be made available as part of the EIR so that they can be evaluated as part of the EIR. The EIR does not assess resources that will be impacted in areas where development will be concentrated. By ignoring these impacts it is able to conclude that there will be no impacts.

11-5

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chester King".

Chester King PhD

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**Letter 11: Topanga Anthropological Consultants**

Comment No.    Response

- 11-1            Topanga Anthropological Consultants commented on the inadequate level of protection of archaeological resources in several areas of the Park in the past. The role of the Department is to protect the Park's resources, including important archaeological and historical sites. A detailed response letter discussing the various archaeological sites in question was prepared by the Department and forwarded to Topanga Anthropological Consultants. As discussed in this letter, the Department has been a good steward of the land in the Park and the Park's important cultural resources have been surveyed and assessed for impacts prior to development projects in sensitive areas.
- 11-2            Topanga Anthropological Consultants commented that they believe that cultural resources in the entrance area are within the Recreation/Operations Zone. See Responses 10-3 and 10-5. Prior to any development within the Recreation/Operations Zone, CEQA review would be required, including consultation with OHP, if necessary. Furthermore, the General Plan seeks to distribute visitor concentration away from the main entrance area by adding Recreation/Operation Zones at Reagan Ranch and Tapia Park.
- 11-3            Topanga Anthropological Consultants commented that the Plan does not discuss interpretation of early park inhabitants. See Response 10-4.
- 11-4            Topanga Anthropological Consultants commented that the General Plan called the Chumash extinct. The General Plan was referring to the era of traditional Chumash lifestyle, not the people.
- 11-5            Topanga Anthropological Consultants commented that development impacts to cultural sites should be evaluated in the EIR. The General Plan and EIR have been revised to further

protect important archaeological resources in the Park. See Responses 3-5, 10-5, and 11-1.



**To: Bob Patterson  
Southern Service Center  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
8885 Rio San Diego Drive  
San Diego, Ca 92108**

**From: Dave Brown, Conservation Chair  
Santa Monica Mountains Task Force  
Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club  
5860 Belbert Circle  
Calabasas, CA 91302  
<DaveBrown91302@earthlink.net>**

**Re: Comments on Malibu Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan and  
Draft EIR for the Santa Monica Mountains Task Force**

**Note: The enclosed comments are being e-mailed to save time. A copy with  
accompanying maps and other documentation will be sent by U.S.  
mail.**

**I – Corrections and additions –**

**Introduction, p. 1- 5, line 3 – It should be noted that the “American  
homesteaders” included several Californios. Not only do we have the  
well-known Sepulveda Adobe, but the Dominguez family had an adobe in  
the upper Las Virgenes Valley, possibly at the site of a large tuna cactus on  
the west side of Las Virgenes Creek a few hundred yards south of the park  
boundary. Tapia Park was named for the Tapia family, the original  
recipients of the Malibu Topanga Sequit land grant in 1802. In addition,  
there is a tuna cactus and other indicators of an old adobe where the  
Yearling Trail crosses Udell Creek on the southern edge of the Reagan  
Meadow.**

12-1

**As the Latino population of Southern California and the Latino  
constituency of Malibu Creek State Park grows, it is important to seek ways  
of helping that constituency identify with the park and see its history as  
relevant to their heritage.**

12-2

**Table 1- 1, p. 1-5, the reference to European explorers in the “14<sup>th</sup> century”  
in the third timeline must be a typo. Cabrillo is believed to have sailed the  
Malibu Coast in October, 1542. (In the surviving transcription of his log**

12-3

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page two, p. 1- 5, cont.**

**there is a reference to a village named “Mugu”, but no reference to “Malibu”.) This timeline should read “16<sup>th</sup> century”.**

**In the fifth timeline there is a reference to “Mexican” settlers in the “mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century”. Inland exploration of California began with Portola in 1769. Although he did not pass near the park going north, newly discovered copies of Father Crespi’s original diary of the expedition make it clear Portola passed through the upper Las Virgenes Valley along the general alignment of Agoura Road in the late morning of January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1770, on his return to San Diego, crossing Las Virgenes Creek about 1.5 miles north of the park. This would represent European “discovery” of the park. Juan Bautista de Anza camped in the same general area on February 22, 1776.**

12-3

**(According to Chester King, Mexican settlement of the Las Virgenes Valley did not begin until after 1800. Mission cattle then quickly overgrazed the area, and arroyo cutting began in Las Virgenes Creek with a major storm in 1815. When the missions were secularized in the 1830’s, the Talopop Indians returned to the area, and were still here at the time of the first U.S. census in 1850.)**

**The 9<sup>th</sup> timeline might note that purchases of land for the park continued after 1975, with approximately 3000 additional acres purchased between 1975 and the present, including Malibu Canyon, several miles of the Backbone Trail corridor, the Sepulveda Adobe, and the April Road area.**

**1.2, page 1- 5, line 6 – the Reagan Ranch was not acquired directly from Ronald Reagan. Reagan sold the property to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox about the time he became Governor in 1966. Fox added it to its Century Ranch holdings, but permitted Reagan to continue to use the property as a weekend ranch. It was Fox that sold Century Ranch – including Reagan Ranch – to the state in 1974. Reagan continued to keep horses on the property and continued to make use of it until the state took possession of the Century Ranch acquisition early in 1976.**

12-4

**1.3, page 1-9, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph – The park’s human history has been influenced by the unique natural conditions of this specific location – its scenery, its variety of natural communities, and its diverse fauna. We will discuss this more fully in the section on “interpretive themes”.**

12-5

**2.1, p. 2-1, Park Summary – The EIR fails to address the conflict between the use of the park for large scale “industrial” film making and its unique legally established role as one of the few places where southern California ecosystems are able to be preserved and where residents of urban Los Angeles can escape the sights and sounds of the city and find solitude.**

12-6



**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page three, p. 2-1, cont.**

**Given the huge deficiency of classified state parks in the Los Angeles region and the continued rapid growth of population in that same region, we do not see how this park can continue to be used for “industrial” film making, with its attendant noise and habitat disturbance, and still meet the habitat needs of its wildlife population and the wilderness and open space needs of its growing human constituency. This conflict is “swept under the carpet” in the EIR by assuming that film making is a normal, beneficial use or even an attraction. In the context of a protected, classified state park it is not, and we fail to see why a film about, for example, Charles Manson has to be made in this unique environment and cannot be made elsewhere.**

**Film making is an artificial human attraction. We are injecting it into a unique natural environment. We are trying to get visitors and schoolchildren who live in a built urban environment filled with man-made distractions and artificial entertainment to “tune into” and for the first time try to understand the rhythms and signs of the unfamiliar natural world around them. Seen from this perspective, the presence of film making may undermine the educational function of the park by confusing and distracting schoolchildren and other visitors and keeping them from concentrating on the more subtle natural processes going on around them. Filming activity may scare away wildlife that would otherwise be visible to visiting schoolchildren and other visitors. It may disrupt nesting and feeding behavior. It may create noises that distract from the park experience of visitors.**

12-6

**The EIR needs a more specific discussion of the actual and potential impacts of film making on park habitats and on the visitor experience, with reference to the description of the “mission” of the park in paragraphs 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 on page 3-1, the fourth primary interpretive theme “bullet” at the top of page 3-23, and the park classifications in the Public Resources Code listed on page 2-2. There needs to be more specific discussion of how the Department plans to mitigate the impacts of filming to a level of insignificance, including an analysis of alternatives, such as finding sites for film making outside the park.**

**2.1.1, Park Conditions and Resources, Surrounding Land Uses, p. 2-11, – The section on the “California Wildlife Center” locates that center “in the El Nido (sic) area”. El Nido is a subdivision in lower Corral Canyon in Malibu. The California Wildlife Center is located in the community of Monte Nido about half a mile southeast of Tapia Park.**

12-7

**Circulation, Roads, p. 2-11 – It should be noted that there is MTA bus service on Agoura Road about a mile north of the park boundary.**

12-8

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page four,**

**Hydrology and Floodplain, page 2-19 – While it is true that “ ... most tributaries of Malibu Creek are ephemeral.”, there is quite a bit of natural year-round water in the park, especially in the Kaslow Natural Preserve. Because year-round water sources are important to wildlife and because year-round water of ten supports very uncommon or relict vegetation, I took pains to map portions of streams that contained years round running or seeping water when I did a flora inventory of the park in late 1974, 1975, and early 1976 at the request of then Area Superintendent Dick Felty.**

**The presence of flowing or seeping water in late autumn of an average or drier than average year (1974-75, 1975-76) before the first rains and/or the presence of flora dependent on permanent water (stream orchis, chain fern, brown dogwood, etc.) was taken to be an indication of permanent water. Based on these criteria, walking the length of every tributary canyon revealed that two of the four southern tributaries of Malibu Creek flow year-round for extensive distances; another flows year-round for several segments and in two tributaries.**

12-9

**Detailed maps of permanent water sources, seeps, and streams in Malibu Creek State Park were submitted to park staff as this information was uncovered so that there would be a permanent record of this information. Somehow, this information appears to have been lost or misplaced. (The hydrology maps in the Park Service’s General Management Plan are wildly inaccurate.)**

**(Las Virgenes Creek does flow all year, but there is reason to believe that that flow may not be natural, but may, instead, be a product of upstream lawn watering, disposal of reclaimed water, runoff from the LVMWD reservoir, etc.)**

**I take issue with the statement that “... the boundaries of the (Malibu Creek flood) zone do not extend above the stream bank.” The elevated sewer line bridge just below the Arizona Crossing was washed out by floodwaters in 1969 and again in 1980. A road into the Rock Pool area that could be driven in the mid-‘70’s was washed out completely in 1978, and, of course, the road between the lake and the former M\*A\*S\*H\* set was washed out completely in the late ‘90’s. In the Cross Creek area homes were flooded and large portions of yards were washed away in the 1980 flood. In January, 1969, 30.61” of rain was recorded at Malibu Lake in 8 days.**

12-10

**It is important that the EIR not rely on generalized estimates from other agencies as to the extent of the floodplain and flood hazard in the Park. Placement of facilities in areas that prove later to be flood prone could prove very costly.**

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page five**

**Biotic Resources, p. 2-20 – The list of regulatory legislation affecting planning for Malibu Creek State Park should include the Coastal Act, which governs development in the portion of the park in the Coastal Zone.**

12-11

**Oak Woodland and Valley Oak Savanna, p. 2-20, 2-21 – Valley Oak Savanna should be considered a distinct plant community rather than being lumped in with woodlands of Coast Live Oak. The two communities occupy different habitats and have very different understories. The Valley Oak savannas in Malibu Creek State Park represent the southernmost extension of this distinctive Californian plant community.**

12-12

**Historic Overview, p. 2-38 – As mentioned earlier, the Portola Expedition did not pass near the Park heading north, but newly discovered diaries do indicate that Portola passed within a mile or so of the park on the return trip and very likely saw it at a distance. He “missed Malibu”, but he did come very close to the northern part of Malibu Creek State Park in the Las Virgenes Valley.**

12-13

**According to Chester King, who did a study of the Talopop site in 1982, the people of Talopop were relocated to the San Fernando Mission shortly after 1800, but they did return to the site after secularization (Chester uncovered Spanish “horno” ovens dating from the 1830’s). The late Juliana Gensley believed the Chumash from Talopop helped Sepulveda build the adobe in the early 1860’s. (Much of this information should be in the report Chester submitted to the Department.)**

12-14

**The filming era is part of the cultural history of the Park, but most films produced here were of limited, transient value. Two exceptions to this rule stand out as having enduring value to our culture, *M\*A\*S\*H\* and Roots*. The former is being commemorated, but the sites where *Roots* was filmed are not being interpreted to my knowledge, yet this miniseries was a milestone in the evolution of race relations in this country.**

12-15

**One way to interpret the film history of the Park is to put up a few plaques showing the use of that particular scenic backdrop in the film. This would serve to integrate the spectacular natural setting with the film history.**

**The last sentence in the paragraph on filming on page 2-39 is an example of the casual acceptance of “industrial” film making that characterizes this EIR.**

**Viewsheds, page 2-44 – This section highlights one of the most important features of Malibu Creek State Park. The “Craggs Road Corridor”, the main**

12-16

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page six**

visitor access into the Park and the “backbone” of its main use areas, is a succession of increasingly scenic enclosed basins and gorges that form distinct viewshed units. As the visitor passes further into these basins and gorges, he gains an increasing realization that he has left behind him the noisy, congested urban environment where he spends most of his waking hours and is entering a natural and scenic landscape where the sounds and distractions of the City are not present.

12-16

Any urban intrusion in the form of noise, obtrusive park or private development, or artificial lighting will shatter this illusion of having escaped the City and mar the visitor’s experience. The section on “viewsheds” shows recognition of the importance of protecting the integrity of the unique visual resources of Malibu Creek State Park.

Designated Scenic Areas and Routes, page 2- 45 – While Mulholland Drive, which is in Topanga State Park, was established by the City of Los Angeles, Mulholland Highway in and around Malibu Creek State Park is under the jurisdiction of the County of Los Angeles. The two Mulhollands are not under a unified planning jurisdiction.

12-17

Traffic, page 2-50 – Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road (one road, two names) is an important commuter route, but is an equally important access to the state and county beaches of Malibu from inland cities, including the west San Fernando Valley. Park and beach users will suffer along with commuters if this road ceases to function efficiently.

12-18

It is also important that the Department take a proactive role in making it clear to local decision makers that widening this road – which is already operating at over its rated capacity – to mitigate traffic congestion would do extreme damage to the resources of Malibu Canyon, in addition to being financially prohibitive.

12-19

Visitor Characteristics, page 2-58 – “Minorities and low income wage earners” might be better represented among park users if a more proactive effort were made to attract them through bilingual signage, press and radio publicity, etc. Publicity on Spanish language stations in the early 1980’s brought a number of Latinos to the park, for example.

12-20

Park Interest Groups, page 2-58 – Missing from this list is the Santa Monica Mountains Task Force of the Sierra Club. It was the Task Force that spearheaded the campaign to classify Malibu Creek as a state park in the mid-70’s, leading thousands of people into the park in an effort that led to the formation of the Malibu Creek Docents. In more recent years Sierra Club trail crews have helped build several park trails.

12-21

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page seven**

**III – Park Plan, 3.1, Purpose and Vision, page 3-1 -**

**As pointed out earlier, 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 are excellent summaries of why Malibu Creek was classified as a state park, what function it performs for this highly urbanized part of the state, and why special planning and eternal vigilance are essential to protect this unique place from incompatible uses, such as film making, and from the impacts of external development.**

12-22

**Park Management Zones, 3.2.1, Core Habitat Zones, page 3.1 –**

**The Santa Monica Mountains Task Force helped inventory the three existing preserves. They represent exceptionally well-preserved examples of distinctive California flora, ecosystems, and landforms. Portions of all three preserves are easily accessible to ordinary citizens able to walk the equivalent of two or three blocks from parking areas and could be made accessible to the disabled by special shuttles over Craggs Road and the road to the Edison substation. We support continued Natural preserve designation for the Kaslow, Liberty Canyon, and Udell Gorge units.**

12-23

**We support the proposed Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve. The canyon has already been designated a “significant ecological area” by Los Angeles County and a “significant watershed” by the Coastal Commission. Its natural values, including one of the southernmost runs of the endangered Southern Steelhead and one of the most spectacular coastal gorges in the state, are well documented.**

**In addition to the Malibu Creek State Park ownership of Malibu Canyon, totaling about 1250 acres, an additional 260 acres comprising most of the east rim of the canyon is owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Most of this land was earmarked for addition to Malibu Creek State Park as Phase II of the Malibu Canyon Acquisition Plan of 1982, but, for some reason the land has not yet been turned over to the Department. If there is to be a Natural Preserve in Malibu Canyon this land should either be made part of Malibu Creek State Park and added to the preserve or, at minimum, the General Plan should specify that these 260 acres will be added to the Natural Preserve when they are turned over to the Department for management.**

12-24

**Table 3-1, Management Zones – We agree there should be no mountain bike use off trail and no mountain bike use in preserves. As mentioned earlier, we do not believe commercial filming should be taking place in natural preserves under any conditions unless it is filming of preserve resources for educational purposes.**

12-25

**We generally favor Alternative 2. This alternative rounds out the boundaries of the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve to create a much more viable core habitat area. Two areas have been added to this preserve in this alternative, the lower east side of Liberty Canyon itself and an area along Las Virgenes Creek between the preserve and Las Virgenes Road. These areas were left out of the preserve boundary when it was first drawn because some Sacramento staff wanted to reserve these areas for recreational vehicle camp grounds. As the park has evolved over the intervening 27 years, demand for that use has not materialized to the extent expected and preservation of natural and scenic values of these lands has become a higher priority as the rest of the area has developed. Designation of Las Virgenes Road as a scenic highway has reinforced the importance of natural and scenic values over developed recreation sites in these areas of the park.**

12-26

**The east side of lower Liberty Canyon is prime bottomland Valley Oak savanna, a habitat largely eliminated from the rest of the state by intensive agriculture and urban development. Bottomland savannas in the park commonly support Valley Oaks 15' to 18' in circumference, but many of these magnificent trees have been lost over the years – some since the park was established - to various destructive human activities. This land is needed to recruit seedlings for the great oaks that could be enjoyed by generations yet to be born if it can be protected by Natural Preserve designation now.**

12-27

**The only intrusions into this part of Liberty Canyon are a utility line and its maintenance road, Neither has serious impact on the savanna ecosystem.**

12-28

**The land between the east boundary of the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve and Las Virgenes Road is also prime Valley Oak savanna habitat, but it has suffered somewhat more impacts from past agricultural uses, although recovery is proceeding and oak saplings are appearing in the grasslands. A rough dirt patrol road passes through the west side of the Las Virgenes Valley, but does not seriously impact the savanna. There are a few large Valley Oaks near the north boundary of the park at the end of this road that should be included in the preserve in any case. (The City of Calabasas owns 180 acres of natural savanna abutting the north boundary of the preserve which it might be willing to have added to the preserve or managed as part of the preserve. It is a de facto preserve at this time.)**

12-29

**The “wildlife corridor” connecting the Liberty Canyon and Kaslow preserves is hilly natural land. There are no existing recreational uses that would interfere with preserve designation. Few park users go into that area.**

12-30

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page nine,**

**The 32 acre inholding in the center of the core habitat of the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve is a serious threat to the integrity of the preserve ecosystem. Human activity on this site is very disruptive to the surrounding habitat, which would otherwise be well isolated from the impacts of surrounding developed areas. Increased human and vehicle activity on this site has also resulted in widening the access road, once an unobtrusive dirt road. Now a wide, graveled road through the most productive Valley Oak habitat in the park, it impacts natural sheet flow – essential to build up of the rich loam required by the oaks – and impacts oak seedlings and saplings in areas bordering it. While immediate purchase of these 32 acres may not be in the cards, the General Plan should develop a long-term strategy for containing and phasing out this incompatible use before it turns into an even more serious intrusion. At minimum the state should acquire a right of first refusal on this property.**

12-31

**Trunk sewer lines and utility lines also threaten to impact the preserves through grading for maintenance roads and repairs to facilities. The park staff needs to maintain a close liaison with the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Southern California Edison, and County road and fire officials to ensure that their normal maintenance activities have minimal impacts on preserve and park resources. This includes having these agencies “check in” with park staff before doing any work in the park.**

12-32

**At the time the Kaslow Natural Preserve was established in 1981 the state was in the process of purchasing additional land in the Bulldog Canyon watershed just west of what was then the park boundary. This land is rugged, unspoiled watershed land and includes some of the Bulldog Creek riparian area. It drains into the Kaslow Natural Preserve and would have been made part of that preserve had the state owned it in 1981. It should be added to the preserve in this General Plan.**

12-33

**A sizeable part of the April Road area, which was purchased at great cost within the last two years to protect a critical habitat linkage, has been designated a “recreation/operations zone”. It has also been posted “no public entry” on the trail through the property, yet loud barking dogs that must interfere with wildlife movement through this area were being kept on this property recently. There is a house and a small nursery on part of this property, but most of the land designated “recreation/operations zone” is hilly natural land and riparian habitat. The intended uses on this part of the park need to be clarified in the General Plan and discussed in more specificity. There is a potential for a trail to link Reagan Ranch to Liberty Canyon through this part of the park, but the “no public entry” sign would seem to preclude public trail use of this area. It is not clear how the proposed designation would impact wildlife movement through this area.**

12-34



**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page ten,**

**Vegetation, Goal NR-2, Guideline NR-2.1, page 3-8 –**

**This is very important, especially in a park as heavily used as Malibu Creek, The database should include site-specific mapping of sensitive flora and habitats, especially in areas where they might be impacted by visitor activity or park and utility maintenance. For example, during the inventory of the park flora I coordinated in 1974-1976, a variety of *sedum* not previously found south of San Luis Obispo was found on the cliff above the left side of the Rock Pool. This information was provided to the Department at the time. Does staff know about this *sedum* today? Does the park have a record of the location of the two clones of Brown Dogwood (*Cornus Glabrata*) found in the park in 1974-76? Again a data base – site specific for truly sensitive or rare species is essential to protecting the resources of Malibu Creek.**

12-35

**It is also essential to map nesting sites of sensitive species and areas of permanent water sources so that visitor activity can be routed away from such sensitive locations.**

12-36

**Goal NR-5, page 3-9 – We strongly support the four guidelines under this goal, but feel there should also be an emphasis on protecting the integrity of core habitat as well.**

12-37

**Along lines mentioned earlier, there should be a “Guideline NR-5.5” to the effect that park staff should maintain regular liaison with inholders and with public and private utilities working in the park to ensure that their activities on park property have the most minimal impact possible on park resources.**

12-38

**Goal NR-6, Guideline NR-6.2, page 3-10 – This should include working with local agencies to see that flammable structures of new development on lands adjoining the park are set back at least 200’ from the park boundary so that the state is not required to clear protected vegetation on park land at public expense. (This goal has been largely achieved in the policies of Los Angeles County’s recently adopted North Area Plan.)**

12-39

**Goal NR-7, page 3-10 - Note that the goal is not simply to “Allow for the free passage of watercourses through the park”, but that those watercourses should be in a “pristine, natural setting” within the Park. This can only be achieved by maximizing the protection of watersheds draining into the Park. This can best be achieved by working with local planning agencies to minimize the impacts on park watersheds and stream from development outside the Park.**

12-40



**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page eleven,**

**Goal NR-8, Guideline NR-8.1, page 3-11 – Between the mouth of Malibu Canyon and Malibu Lagoon the flood plain is much wider than the bed of Malibu Creek and encompasses several existing homes and additional lots capable of being subdivided. In the flood of February 16, 1980, when the creek carried a flow of 38,000 cfs – 85% of its peak flood flow of 45,000 cfs - at least one of the existing homes was flooded, the site of a house built in the 1980's at the end of Palm Lane was covered with fast-moving floodwaters 12" to 18" deep, and portions of two backyards just below the Arizona Crossing disappeared into the creek.**

**The situation is complicated by the fact that the Cross Creek area is a zone of deposition. Malibu Creek drops an average of 150 feet per mile through Malibu Canyon, but drops only 25 feet in the last mile between the mouth of the Canyon and the Lagoon. In peak floods the Creek "drops its load" of sediment and boulders in this final mile through the Serra Retreat community. (this is evident by the large number of boulders – some the size of Volkswagens – in the Creek bed just above Palm Lane.) Over time deposition will raise the creek bed, as it did prior to 1979, when the Creek was dredged, to the probable detriment of the Steelhead and the Tidewater Goby. This elevation of the Creek bed may increase the flood hazard to homes in the flood plain.**

12-41

**If subdivision and development of new homes continue in this area, there will be mounting pressure to channelize this segment of Malibu Creek. Channelization will have a serious negative impact on steelhead migration and on the riparian habitat generally.**

**To avoid having this problem arise, the state needs to work with the City of Malibu to limit further subdivision and development in the flood plain in the Cross Creek area and to find ways to mitigate the very real flood hazard in this area without impacting the natural hydrology and riparian habitat of Malibu Creek. If this is not done, political pressure may eventually force the destructive channelization of the creek in the Cross Creek area**

**Goal CR-1, page 3-11 –**

**Interpretation of cultural resources could be integrated with the Park's natural environment by pointing out the great variety of ecosystems and food sources found in the vicinity of the park entrance and day use area and the large number of cultural sites also found in that area. In the early days of the Park we were told that this was the first area colonized by the Chumash when they began to move inland from the coast.**

12-42

**3.3.4 Scenic Resources and Aesthetics, Goal SR-1, page 3-13 –**

The scenic and visual resources of Malibu Creek State Park are exceptional, even on a statewide basis. To have such spectacular, unspoiled scenery 45 minutes driving time from downtown Los Angeles is nothing short of a miracle. Though there is much talk of habitat and habitat linkages among professionals, it is the high quality of the scenery that draws visitors to this Park. It brings spectacular landscapes comparable to many national parks to the very doorstep of one of the world's great urban centers, and it provides for emotional and spiritual relief from the crowded, poorly planned, congested urban environment in which most residents of the region are forced to live.

12-43

Unspoiled viewsheds are part of the illusion this Park creates. If you cannot see evidence of the urban development you left behind, you can put it out of your mind for the time you are visiting the Park and enjoy a very different environment as if you had gone to a faraway place on vacation. If, instead, unsightly ridgetop or urban development intrudes visually on your park experience, then you are reminded that you haven't really left the City behind, and your visit is marred accordingly.

Guideline SR-1.3 - In recent years local governments have become more sensitive to the need to protect and buffer Malibu Creek, but it is still essential for the Department to continue to speak out on local planning and zoning issues and remind local governments – which have many conflicting pressures on their planning decisions – of the importance of protecting the integrity of this park through proper siting, design, shielding, buffering, and fire clearance setbacks.

Guideline SR-1.1 – Utility lines that are prime candidates for relocation include the line along the west side of Las Virgenes Road near the northeast boundary of the Park. It intrudes very badly on the spectacular views down the Las Virgenes Valley from the road for southbound motorists.

12-44

Another utility that should be relocated is the large utility towers extending from Malibu Lake up to the ridgeline. These towers and the access roads graded to them create serious watershed impacts in the highly sensitive and otherwise pristine Fern Creek and Bulldog watersheds in the Kaslow Natural Preserve.

Another very serious utility impact is the trunk sewer lines that follow Malibu Creek, Las Virgenes Creek, and Liberty Creek through the Liberty

12-45

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page thirteen,**

**Canyon Natural Preserve and along the edge of the Kaslow Natural Preserve. These sewer lines, the maintenance roads serving them, and the rip-rap protecting them have caused very serious damage to the integrity of the exceptionally well-developed and diverse riparian woodland along Malibu Creek and to the banks of Las Virgenes Creek, prime habitat for large Valley Oaks.**

**Furthermore, these sewer lines were built without regard to the location of these natural streams, assuming they would be channelized along alignments in an obsolete 1966 plan. Thus, these sewer lines sometimes run dangerously close to the stream on earthen banks that are easily eroded. In 1969 Sewer lines washed out along Malibu Creek, polluting beaches all around Santa Monica Bay for weeks. The same thing happened in 1980 and a sewer line in the bank of Las Virgenes Creek washed out that year as well, pouring additional pollution into the creek and causing environmentally damaging repairs to the natural stream bank.**

12-45

**The General Plan needs to discuss the long-term need to relocate these sewer lines away from locations where they are badly damaging protected riparian habitats and threatening to pollute the Creek and Santa Monica Bay.**

**Goal SR-2, Guideline SR 2.2 – As mentioned earlier, we strongly support this goal and guideline (see page twelve).**

12-46

**3.3.5, Facilities and Services – the Visitor Center is a concession of sorts in that it handles literature and postcards of the park. This operation could be expanded to include more books and interpretive materials. The need for soft drinks and food is met in great abundance by a large market, several gas stations and several restaurants at the Las Virgenes Road Interchange less than two miles north of the Park.**

12-47

**If a more substantial concession is to be considered for establishment in the Park, then the EIR needs to address the potential litter problem that could be created and how it might be mitigated.**

**Guideline FAC-1.5 – We recognize the need for affordable housing for park staff, but development of additional housing within this relatively small park will create additional visual impacts on the visitor experience – as at the Reagan Ranch buildings - or disrupt park habitat, as along April Road. The need may be real, but it requires further study to ensure that it doesn't result in serious impacts on the Park.**

12-48

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page fourteen,**

**Unifying Theme, page 3-22 – this could be phrased a little more comprehensively to say that the great variety of landscapes in the Park and its striking contrast of soft, rolling, shale-based hills with rugged volcanic buttes and sandstone peaks are a product of plate tectonics. The diversity of rock types creates diverse soils, which create in turn a great variety of different plant communities – grassland, savanna, sage, chaparral, oak woodland, etc. in close proximity to each other. This botanical diversity created a diversity of habitats, which means a variety of food sources for animals and human inhabitants within easy walking distance. This diversity of habitats caused the Chumash to settle here. The grasslands attracted the ranchers, and the great variety of spectacular scenery attracted the movie industry and, ultimately, resulted in the creation of the Park.**

12-49

**Goal FAC-3 – As we stated already in pages two and three, we are not convinced that commercial “industrial” filming operations are compatible with the “mission” of classified state park as described on page 2.1.1. The language of Guideline FAC-3.1 (“where possible”, “continue to evaluate”, etc.) does not engender confidence that the commercial film permit process and filming guidelines will always be able to prevent political pressures from causing the Department to permit filming activities that may impact park resources or interfere with visitor use and enjoyment.**

12-50

**Goal FAC-4, page 3-16 – As mentioned earlier, it may be necessary to permit pre-existing utilities with easements through park land to conduct maintenance operations, but staff should be sure to maintain liaison with these utilities to ensure that their maintenance and road grading operations have minimal impact on park resources.**

12-51

**Goal CTA-1 – We support this goal and the guidelines listed on page 3-17.**

12-52

**Guideline CTA-1.7 – As mentioned earlier, a trail feasibility study for Malibu Canyon should consider the option of routing the trail along the approximately 1500’ contour on the east rim of the Canyon, where there are spectacular views of the Canyon and the Malibu Coast. A majority of the east rim of the Canyon is on land owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Maps of DPR and Conservancy holdings on the east side of Malibu Canyon will be included in the mailed version of our testimony.**

12-53

**Guideline INT-1.3 – Information on natural hazards of the Park is important, because most visitors come from a tame, controlled, manicured urban or suburban environment where people do not focus on natural hazards and have little experience with them. Solid information can both dispel irrational fears and teach people to watch out for the real ones, learning a respect for natural forces in the process.**

12-54

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page fifteen,**

**Goal INT- 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 – As mentioned in our comments on the “unifying theme” on the previous page, natural, archaeological, and historical resources are all interconnected in this park. Interpretive and educational programs may want to take that into account.**

12-55

**Goal INT- 2.4 – The geological resources of Malibu Creek should be a major interpretive theme. There are exceptional examples in the park of ongoing geological processes. (The Gorge, for example, is a classic entrenched meander, which should lead easily to asking questions about how it got “entrenched”. There are incipient entrenched meanders to be seen along Malibu Creek below The Gorge. Why is it that Malibu Creek weaves in and out of the hard rock of the Goat Buttes? Why didn’t it just go around them? If the Goat Buttes are entrenched meanders, where did the meanders come from? Why is the vegetation north of the Goat Buttes so different from the vegetation of the Buttes themselves and the mountains to the south? The opportunities for education and interpretation are endless.)**

12-56

**INT- 3.7 – The original docent group did establish an oral history program and got some very good interviews with early settlers of the Park. On May 8, 1977 a group of docents spent a good part of the day with Ronald Reagan at his old barn. Has any of this been organized into an oral history file?**

12-57

**Guideline INT 4.3 – Outreach and partnerships with area schools is essential, not only to transmit to area children information about the Park, but also to sensitize them to the importance of the natural environment in general and the stewardship required to protect it for coming generations.**

12-58

**Guideline INT 4-5 – White Oak Farm certainly has qualities that lend itself to agricultural interpretation, but, for some reason this program has “never gotten off the ground”, and nature has stepped in and begun the process of restoration of the Valley Oak savanna that once occupied this site. (The field to the east of the farmhouse contained three Valley Oaks from 15’ to 17’ in circumference until a fire in 1982 killed them.) Valley Oak saplings and willow riparian growth have already put in an appearance along the gullies and streams in the meadow between the Hope farmhouse and Mulholland. If an educational farm program is to be established here, it will be important to define the size of the area to be impacted and inventory its resources and assess its impacts through some sort of public process before proceeding.**

12-59

**3.3.7, Park-wide Interpretation, Primary Themes, page 3.22 – These are very good themes to serve as the foundation for park interpretive programs. The fourth “bullet” really summarizes the function this park serves and**

12-60

**explains why we have a problem mixing this important park function with the make-believe world of film-making.**

**12-60**

**Goal VU-2. Guideline VU 2-4, page 3-24 – As we said earlier in our testimony, it is not possible to “protect sensitive animal and native plant populations” unless there is a site specific record of where they are, especially in areas that see a lot of public use, easement grading, etc.**

**12-61**

**3.3.9 Relationships with Local Landowners and Acquisitions – The term “landowner” does not have the same meaning and application in the area around Malibu Creek State Park as it has in other, more rural areas of the state, where “landowner” usually means a local farmer or rancher with a permanent stake in the community and the land. In the Las Virgenes area surrounding Malibu Creek State Park most of the land is not suitable for grazing or cultivation, and that which was never provided much more than a hardscrabble living.**

**Proximity to urban Los Angeles caused land values in the area to escalate to levels where an investment in vacant land can no longer begin to be recouped by farming or ranching; only by development or sale to a developer. Land in the area is either held by residents who do have a stake in the community and care about the land and its resources or by real estate investors, who have only a transient interest in the land as a financial investment, which may be represented by an option or a share.**

**12-62**

**There are, of course, exceptions to the above stereotypes – families with long-term attachments to their land, but they are becoming fewer with each passing year. The best support base for the Park is local homeowners rather than owners of vacant land. They can best be reached through their community’s homeowner association, especially those in rural communities like Monte Nido and Malibou Lake and through their local governments.**

**Goal REG-2 as we’ve said several times already, but this goal says it particularly well. The Department needs to “Participate in regional development processes to ensure the protection of the integrity of natural, cultural, aesthetic, and recreational resources in and surrounding the Park.”**

**12-63**

**Goal REG-3 puts too much emphasis on connectivity. Acquisitions of land surrounding the Park should also be pursued to protect critical scenic park viewsheds such as the remainder of the east rim of Malibu Canyon, the northwest viewshed of Liberty Canyon, the lower west side of Malibu Canyon, and the inholding in the center of the Liberty Canyon Preserve.**

**12-64**

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page seventeen**

**3.3.11 Visitor Carrying Capacity, page 3-28 – Given the requirements of Section 5001.96, is filming activity counted as “attendance” under this section of the PRC? Could a situation arise where visitor use would have to be restricted because commercial film-making use had used up the “carrying capacity” of the Park’s natural resources? Could political considerations force the Department to accept degradation of the Park’s resources rather than limit visitor use?**

12-65

**The statement that “Determination of resource location and significance allows management to create guidelines for future public use and access to the Park” seems to be an endorsement of our request for site specific mapping of sensitive resources.**

12-66

**3.4.1 – It should be noted that Tapia Park south of the perimeter road that has now become a wide trail has flooded several times in the past forty years (1969, 1978, 1980, etc.) The County put concrete picnic tables in this area, and they were destroyed or uprooted by flooding on several occasions. Developed facilities should be kept out of the flood plain.**

12-67

**You are right about Tapia Park being an urban park in a (spectacular) natural setting, about facilities being in need of replacement, and about the presence of “sensitive natural communities”, including oak forests in relatively pristine condition in the western part of the unit.**

12-68

**Tapia contains a surprising diversity of native tree species, including the southernmost Valley Oaks on the California mainland. There are also introduced native species not found elsewhere in the region (Redbud, Box Elder, etc.) The tree population here should be inventoried and selected specimens marked with (bilingual) descriptive plaques. There should also be a bilingual plaque commemorating the Tapia family and its role in local history.**

12-69

12-70

**3.4.2 Main Park Entrance Area, page 3-32 – We agree this area should continue to be the “primary entry node” and center of visitor services. We also agree that the spectacular views from this area should be protected from blockage, and that “disturbance” of the patches of natural habitat remaining in this area “should be avoided”.**

12-71

**MPE- 1.3 – We agree that the Visitor Center would serve the needs of visitors much better if it were relocated to the Main Park Entrance Area. The problem is where could it be located without impacting park views or cultural resources?**

12-72



Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page eighteen,

MPE-2.1, page 3-33 – One possible area where visitor use could impact sensitive resources is the southern edge of the Hunter Ranch Campground. Some of the most interesting and diverse flora in the park is in the ecotones where grasslands interface with well-developed, closed canopy live oak forests. Such areas also have a potential for nature trails and even trails for the disabled. The interface between the oak forest and the grassland on Hunter Ranch should be examined to see if human activity (foot traffic, etc.) is damaging wildflowers, native grasses, and other interesting flora in the interface.

12-73

Guideline MPE-2.4, page 3-34 – Of the native plants and shrubs planted in the Hunter Ranch Campground most subsequently died of neglect. The one that survived and flourished with minimal care was the Mexican Elderberry, (*Sambucus Glauca*).

12-74

3.4.4 Craggs (sic) Road Corridor – The correct local spelling is “Craggs” for Mt. Craggs, the 1700’ sharply pointed peak on the boundary between the Park and the adjoining Salvation Army Camp. Mt. Craggs is a local landmark With associations with local history. It would be best to stick to the traditional local spelling.

12-75

Goal CRC-1, Guideline CRC-1.1 – We strongly agree with this goal. The Rock Pool area is a major attraction to visitors that is matched only by its sensitivity. Preserve boundaries were drawn very carefully in this area to accommodate both public use and protection of sensitive resources. (This location has a very cold microclimate - down to zero F. once in the 1950’s, according to Jack Torpin - which may explain the presence of *Sedum Spathulifolium* var. *Spathulifolium*, which was found on the east wall of the Rock Pool in 1974. According to the botany student who found it, this plant had never been found before south of San Luis Obispo.) A botanical inventory of the rocks and cliffs in the Rock Pool area should be done to verify the existence of the *Sedum* and to determine if any other rare species, such as *Dudleya Cymosa* var, *Marscescens* are present.

12-76

Another important resource is the stretch of relatively pristine riparian woodland on the east side of the creek below the Rock Pool. Given the extent to which the rich, highly developed riparian forests along Malibu Creek have been destroyed or badly impacted by roads and sewer construction through most of the Park, this small segment of untouched riparian woodland – which is part of the Kaslow Natural Preserve – should be protected from high levels of foot traffic and visitor use. At the present time visitor use is confined to the west bank in this area. It should stay that way.

12-77



**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page nineteen,**

**CRC-1.2, CRC-1.3 – Construction of restrooms, boardwalks, etc. in the Rock Pool area is a good idea in theory, but it comes up against the hard fact that, contrary to what the maps or the book may say, the entire area between the canyon walls below the Rock Pool is flood plain, including an overflow channel along the west wall of the canyon. There was once a road into the Rock Pool. I drove in there several times in 1974-1977. In the 1977-78 rainy season 60” of rain was recorded in the Park in ten weeks. The road was not only flooded; it was scoured out and covered with the large number of boulders visible today. The flood of February 16, 1980, repeated the events of 1978, as did the floods of 1983, 1997, etc. The Gorge is so narrow and confining that floodwaters burst out of it with exceptional force, carrying off or scouring out everything in their way. This needs to be kept in mind when planning any boardwalks or restroom facilities in this area.**

12-78

**Goal CRC-2.1 – The Craggs Road Corridor is primarily used by pedestrians – as opposed to hikers - in small, often family-sized groups often including several children ranging from toddlers to teens and extended family members. Contrary to the statement at the top of page 2-58, pedestrian users of the Craggs Road Corridor are largely Latinos, and Spanish is heard at least as often as English. Pedestrians tend to stop off at certain stopping places or final destinations – the Las Virgenes Creek crossing, the Malibu Creek Arizona Crossing, and the Rock Pool. A great deal of information about park resources and how to protect them could be transmitted at these quasi-destinations through the use of bilingual signage.**

12-79

**The mention of “staging areas for film activities” along the Craggs Road Corridor causes us to point out once again the conflict between public recreational use of the Park, protection of sensitive Park resources, and use of the Park as an outdoor filming location. Does the term “staging area” imply the use of Craggs Road for vehicular access to filming locations? How will this vehicle traffic affect the enjoyment of the park experience by visitors? How will it impact sensitive park resources?**

12-80

**CRC-2.4 – There is vehicle access to the Hunt House now. I just attended a docent meeting there, and everyone drove in, as did a group from the Native Plant Society that was planting oak trees on the flats. Would replacement of the Arizona Crossing generate a level of vehicle traffic that would interfere with public use of the crossing for water-oriented recreation?**

12-81

**Goal CRC-3, Guideline CRC-3.1 – We support redevelopment of the public use areas adjacent to the east end of Century Lake. The south side of the Lake is sensitive marsh and forest habitat and part of the Kaslow Natural Preserve and should be left in its present, natural state.**

12-82

Reagan Ranch, page 3-36 – In planning for Reagan Ranch, bear in mind that the oak woodland and the Udell Gorge are natural preserves, while other portions of this part of the Park are degraded or taken over by introduced weeds. The Preserve boundary was drawn very carefully to protect the oak woodland and the *Dudleya Cymosa Marscescens*. It was also drawn to protect a strip of meadow bordering the oak woodland where there are particularly good displays of annual wildflowers in season, including, reportedly *Pentachaeta (Chaetopapa) Lyonii*. Planners should be aware of the location of the Preserve boundaries when planning sites for visitor facilities, since those boundaries come very close to existing developed areas in some locations. It's also important not to route heavily used trails through the wildflower area.

12-83

There are also cultural resources in the Reagan Ranch, both within the Preserve and outside of it. There is at least one Chumash hunting cave, a possible adobe site from the Mexican Era, the possible remains of an old well, a barbecue pit made of native rock that may well have been constructed by Reagan himself, Reagan's old swimming pool (with "RR" and "NDR" carved inside a heart in the concrete), and most of the trails on the property, which were laid out by Reagan in the 1950's with a "bobcat"-type bulldozer. The other buildings at ranch "headquarters" also date from or predate the Reagan ownership of the property.

12-84

Reagan Ranch, Goal RR-1, Guideline RR-1.1, page 3-37 – The current ranch structures, whatever their historic and cultural value may be, are a serious visual intrusion on what is in many respects the scenic climax of Mulholland Scenic Highway. However, the cure could be worse than the disease if visual mitigation is not planned very carefully. The Reagan Meadow, the wooded slope south of it, and the Goat Buttes behind that are one of the most scenic landforms in this part of the state. Planting trees to screen the buildings might mitigate some of the visual impacts of the buildings, but it might also disrupt the visual harmony of meadow, woodland, and butte.

12-85

As mentioned above "set(ing) back new developments from Mulholland Highway (to) screen them from public view" could result in encroachments on the woodland or the strip of wildflower meadow bordering it within the preserve boundary. Biological resources could be impacted here in an effort to mitigate scenic resources.

12-86

Goal RR-2, Guideline RR-2.1, page 3-37 – We support the equestrian campground as long as it is situated well away from the Preserve boundary and the strip of wildflower meadow. We understand a site is being

12-87

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page twenty-one,**

**considered west of the Ranch buildings north of the entrance driveway. This is a good site in terms of botanical resources, in fact, in a cursory inspection of the site, about the only native botanical resource I could find was a small oak sapling that could easily be protected. This is a good site for an equestrian campground. Visual impacts could be screened with trees, and, in this location, that would not create the same conflict with existing landforms as it might east of the ranch buildings. However, it would be important to design those tree plantings to make sure they did not block more distant views of the Santa Monica Mountains west of Malibu Lake.**

12-87

**Goal RR-3, Guideline RR-3.2, page 3-37 – We support restoration and reuse of the Reagan Ranch buildings. If staff housing is to be relocated to an area closer to Cornell Road, it will be important not to encroach into the Preserve or into the natural swale and wildflower meadow bordering on the oak woodland south of the meadow.**

12-88

**Goal RR-4, Guideline RR-4.1, page 3-37 – The parking lot is already in place. This is a good location for a small trailhead. Restroom facilities sensitively designed would be appropriate.**

12-89

**3.5, Issue Resolution, Protection of Scenic Resources – As mentioned earlier, the protection of scenic resources should include acquisition as a tool to protect sensitive park viewsheds, such as portions of the east rim of Malibu Canyon and the inholding in Liberty Canyon.**

12-90

**We note – as we have already noted - that there is no mention of film making as an issue to be resolved in this General Plan. There is talk of balancing “recreational uses, development, and resource protection” (page 4-4), but no mention of this controversial commercial use of the Park.**

12-91

**There is mention that “some users feel unsafe due to the mix of users on trails”(page 4-4), a possible indirect reference to the conflict between mountain bicyclists and other trail users.**

12-92

**Because of the astronomically high price of real estate in the Los Angeles region, few natural areas have been able to be acquired that contain the sort of level, usable trails found in the Craggs Road Corridor in Malibu Creek. This park is one of the few parks in the region where senior citizens and families with small children can walk on relatively level roads into scenic natural landscapes where they can escape for a time the sights and sounds of their urban environment. This is a major factor in the popularity of this Park.**

12-93

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page twenty-two,**

**One of the sources of conflict relating to mountain bikes comes from older hikers and walkers. Because such people realize their reflexes are no longer as quick and their bodies no longer as nimble as they once were, they are intimidated or even frightened by the prospect of speeding mountain bikes on steep, winding single-track trails. Their concerns are justified. In my observation mountain bikers often become so stimulated by the rush of wind in their faces that they speed, especially on downhill grades such as the road up to Century Lake. People who are elderly or disabled or families with small children may fear that they cannot move out of the way fast enough and may avoid those trails which have frequent mountain bike use, effectively depriving themselves of access to many parts of the Park. Mountain bicyclists are usually young and athletic and can gain access to back country fire roads for recreational riding. Less athletic citizens - elderly walkers, birders, and families with children - are pretty well confined to relatively level dirt roads such as Craggs Road and Mott Road. The highest priority for use of these roads should be those citizens who do not have the ability to hike up steep trails or deep into the backcountry due to age or physical disability.**

12-94

**On the Craggs Road Corridor bicyclists should be held to a strict speed limit and that limit should be strictly enforced. Shortage of patrol rangers may not make this a major deterrent. One way around this is to charge bicyclists a small fee for a numbered tag. That way any park user could identify someone operating his bicycle in an unsafe manner and report that individual to staff.**

12-95

**At one time there seemed to be a consensus emerging among trail users that bicyclists could use "double track" trails and would be banned from "single track" trails. That consensus seems to have broken down under constant pressure from bicyclists, and some narrow single-track trails are seeing use by bicyclists (Grasslands Trail, for example, even within the Liberty Canyon Preserve). Again, heavy or high-speed bicycle use on narrow trails will tend to deter elderly users or families with small children from using those trails - with justification. On steep trails with switchbacks the problem is magnified by poor visibility due to high chaparral or blind curves.**

12-96

**4.6 Environmental Impacts, Impact Analysis, page 4-20 - In the face of the 25 year flood history of this park, including flood damage to the Rock Pool area, washout of the Arizona Crossing, washout of Craggs Road between Century Lake and the old M\*A\*S\*H\* set, and the flood damage in the Cross Creek area in 1980, we have to take strong issue with the statement that "The Park has not had a history of flood control problems." And that "flood zones are primarily limited to the banks of creeks ... "**

12-97

**Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, page twenty-three,**

**As we mentioned earlier, our first choice of plans is Alternative Two, the expansion of the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve. Most important here is to add the lower east side of Liberty Canyon to the preserve. Next would be to add savanna lands at the upper west side of Las Virgenes Canyon and the riparian woodland of Las Virgenes Creek to its east bank.**

12-98

**We support the Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve and suggest the Department work with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, an existing state agency, with a view to adding their holdings on the upper east side of the Canyon to the Preserve.**

12-99

**The Sierra Club also strongly supports the removal of the Rindge Dam and the restoration of a spawning run of the endangered Southern Steelhead to Malibu Creek and Las Virgenes and Cold Creeks.**

12-100

**The intended designation of area shown in yellow on the Preferred Plan and Alternative Two maps is unclear to us because the text of the preserve map didn't print out clearly. We assume this is some sort of cultural zone relating to the proposed educational farm, but it also includes an outstanding willow riparian forest along Las Virgenes Creek and patches of degraded prime Valley Oak savanna and Valley Oak sapling reproduction. It is not clear to what extent this area will be modified for agricultural use. Will it be unnaturally irrigated, encouraging the growth of introduced weeds? Will fruits and vegetables be planted here that will prove a major attraction to coyotes and deer? Will there be any sort of abatement action to protect these plantings? The yellow area is mapped so that it extends like a "finger" into an area of lower Liberty Canyon that includes several large Valley Oaks and a very well-developed riparian woodland. The "finger" should be cut back about 100 yards and the "tip" of the "finger" should be made part of the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve.**

12-101

**As we mentioned earlier, the "Recreation/Operations Zone" in April Road encompasses riparian habitat and about 20 acres of undisturbed woodland, sage, and chaparral in addition to a house. The General Plan needs to state what uses are intended here that require designation of so much acreage and why it is presently closed to through public trail use.**

12-102

**Our second choice is the Preferred Plan, while the Alternative One is our third choice.**

12-103

Sincerely,



**Dave Brown  
Conservation Chair**

The enclosed maps show land owned by another state agency, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, that borders directly on the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve, the Kaslow Natural Preserve, and the proposed Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve. Much of this land has an important watershed and viewshed relationship to the existing or proposed preserve and is a component part of the preserve habitat. The enclosed marked up copy of one of the maps from the General Plan shows critical ridgelines on Conservancy lands outside Malibu Creek State Park that mark the limit of lands that drain into the existing and proposed preserves.

The Conservancy has acquired 260 acres of the east rim of Malibu Canyon that borders directly on the proposed preserve and drains into it. Approximately 200 acres of this land was authorized for DPR acquisition in the Malibu Canyon Acquisition Plan of 1982 and was preacquired by the Conservancy with state and county park bond funds starting in 1990. Since the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was established to pre-acquire land for DPR and other park agencies, it would make sense to turn management of these lands over to DPR or, if that is not feasible at this time, state in the General Plan that these lands should become part of the Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve should they ever be turned over to DPR and ask the Conservancy to manage them as preserve – which they are pretty well doing now.

12-104

The contours on the Malibu Canyon topo map give some idea of the topography of both the Conservancy and DPR holdings in the Canyon. Note how the topography is much less rugged above 1500' elevation on Conservancy land, making a trail along the Canyon rim much more feasible at this point.

12-105

The ridgeline defining the northwest watershed limit of the Liberty Canyon Preserve is part of the "Wildlife Corridor" connecting Malibu Creek to parks and mountainous areas to the north. It is also the very prominent northwestern viewshed limit for the Park itself.

12-106

The eastern ridgeline of the proposed Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve is part of one of the most scenic coastal canyons in the state.

12-107

Bordering the southwest corner of the Park and the Kaslow Natural Preserve is a 160 acre wilderness parcel recently acquired by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy that includes part of the watershed of Bulldog Canyon, which comprises a large part of the Kaslow Natural Preserve. 40 acres of this property was authorized for DPR acquisition in the 1980's, but funds ran out before it could be acquired.

12-108

**Letter 12: Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club**

<u>Comment No.</u>	<u>Response</u>
12-1	The Santa Monica Mountains Task Force (SMMTF) commented that Californios were a part of the American homesteaders. The text in Section 1.1 (page 1-5) has been modified to acknowledge the Californios.
12-2	SMMTF noted the importance of connecting the growing Latino population to their local heritage. The Preliminary General Plan recognizes the growing Latino population in southern California (page 2-57). Guidelines CTA-1.2, INT-1.6, REC-1.4, and REC-1.5 have been modified to provide bilingual wayfinding and interpretive signage to increase awareness and benefit of the largest population in Los Angeles.
12-3	SMMTF commented that several dates within Table 1-1 (page 1-5) are slightly off or incorrect. Table 1-1 has been revised to correct these discrepancies.
12-4	SMMTF noted that Reagan Ranch was acquired by the State from 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Fox along with the rest of Century Ranch in 1974, not directly from former President Reagan. Section 1.2 (page 1-5) of the Preliminary General Plan has been modified to reflect the correct acquisition information.
12-5	SMMTF commented on the Park's human history and how it has been influenced by several factors. The Department concurs that the history of the Park has been largely influenced by its unique natural conditions. The comment is included for review and consideration by the Department.
12-6	SMMTF commented that the Draft EIR does not fully address large-scale filming activities and the disturbance that such activities can have on the visitors, wildlife, and vegetation. The Department allows filming to occur in State Parks in a manner consistent with the Guidelines for Filming in California State

Parks. Goal FAC-3 seeks to regulate filming to ensure compatibility with natural and cultural goals and values. Guideline FAC-3.1 encourages the restriction of filming and staging to existing developed areas. Filming would continue to operate under the commercial film permit process and all filming activities will be evaluated for environmental impacts. Although the General Plan does not restrict filming in the Park, it does encourage responsible filming activities that minimize environmental impacts.

- 12-7 SMMTF noted that the California Wildlife Center is located in Monte Nido, not El Nido. The General Plan has been revised accordingly.
- 12-8 SMMTF commented that there is Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) bus service about 1 mile north of the Park at Agoura Road. The comment has been noted and the Circulation section on page 2-11 has been modified to better describe the public transportation in the area.
- 12-9 SMMTF commented on the hydrological conditions of the Park's watercourses. No changes to the General Plan are required.
- 12-10 SMMTF commented on the need to more accurately define the flood zone within the Park. The definition of the flood zone in Section 2.12 (page 2-19) has been modified to more accurately reflect the flood boundaries within the Park. Future development in flood prone areas would be subject to FEMA requirements.
- 12-11 SMMTF commented that the regulatory legislation affecting planning for the Park listed under Biotic Resources (page 2-20) should include the Coastal Act. The Biotic Resources section lists the regulations and policies that protect biological resource in California and that are relevant to the Park. The Coastal Act is described in the General Plan on page 2-53 under the Regional Planning Influence and Cooperation section.



- 12-12 SMMTF commented that the Valley Oak Savanna and Oak Woodland should not be lumped together as the two communities occupy different habitats and have very different understories. See Response 7-3.
- 12-13 SMMTF commented that the Portola Expedition did not pass near the Park heading north, but did pass within approximately 1 mile of the Park heading south. The information in question was obtained from Milt McAuley's *Hiking Trails of Malibu Creek State Park (Santa Monica Mountains), Second Edition* published in 1996. Without a more recent published citation, no change to the General Plan will be undertaken.
- 12-14 SMMTF commented that the people of Talepop were relocated to San Fernando Mission and later returned. See Response 12-13. The comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.
- 12-15 SMMTF commented that while filming is part of the cultural history, most of the films produced in the Park are not of value, with the exception of M\*A\*S\*H\* and Roots. SMMTF also recommended that interpretive plaques explaining the scenic backdrops of these films be created. The Preliminary General Plan identifies filming history as one of the key interpretive periods that will influence interpretive programming at the Park (page 3-22). An interpretive plan for the Park will be prepared subsequent to the completion of this General Plan. The plan will build upon these themes and goals presented in the General Plan.
- 12-16 SMMTF acknowledged that the viewsheds in the Park are extremely important to visitors, who can experience an escape from city life. They also note that any intrusion of artificial light will ruin this experience. Visual impacts, including light and glare, are analyzed in Section 4.6.1 of the EIR. The comments are provided for review and consideration by the Department.
- 12-17 SMMTF commented that Mulholland Drive was established by the City of Los Angeles and Mulholland Highway is under the

jurisdiction of the County of Los Angeles. The document has been revised to reflect this distinction.

- 12-18 SMMTF commented that Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road is an important road for commuting and for inland access to the state and county beaches and that Park and beach goers also suffer if the road functions inefficiently. The General Plan includes measures to improve traffic safety at the park entrance on Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road. The comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-19 SMMTF requested that the Department take a proactive role with local authorities indicating that widening Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road would be a detriment to the natural resources as well as financially prohibitive. The comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-20 SMMTF commented that minorities and low income wage earners might be drawn to the Park if more efforts were made to attract them through bilingual signage and advertising. As noted in response 12-1, Guidelines INT-1.6, REC-1.4, and REC-1.5 have been modified to incorporate bilingual interpretive programs and park signage.
- 12-21 SMMTF commented that their group was not listed in the Park Interest Groups section on page 2-58 of the Preliminary General Plan. The group was inadvertently left off the list and to the document has been revised to correct this mistake.
- 12-22 SMMTF noted that sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 are excellent summaries of why Malibu Creek was classified as a state park. The comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-23 SMMTF helped to inventory the three natural preserves and supports the continued natural preserve designation as well as the addition of Malibu Canyon. The comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.

- 12-24 SMMTF noted that land comprising the east rim of Malibu Canyon is owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and was earmarked for acquisition by the Department in 1982. The commenter indicated that this land should be included in the General Plan. A trail feasibility study would be done prior to construction of a trail through Malibu Canyon. If it is determined that the land owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy is the best location for a trail, the Department would work with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to jointly administer the creation of the new trail or to acquire the land. This land is not currently managed by the Department; therefore, it cannot be included in the General Plan planning boundaries.
- 12-25 SMMTF believes that there should be no mountain biking in natural preserves, nor any commercial filming unless it is for educational purposes. State Parks policy indicates that mountain biking is allowed in preserves on designated multiuse trails. Filming is allowed in the natural preserves by permit and with restrictions so as to not disturb or destroy the resources. See Responses 3-2 and 12-6.
- 12-26 SMMTF indicated their support for Alternative 2 as it creates a more viable Core Habitat area. The commenter notes that the land added to Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve was originally not included in the preserve because of potential recreational facilities in those areas. The area between the preserve and Las Virgenes Road is designated as a Cultural/Historic Zone due to the opportunities for interpretive elements along this corridor. The designation of this area as a Cultural/Historic Zone does not preclude habitat enhancement and restoration activities. In fact, oak and riparian woodlands would likely be a central theme in this area, given the importance of these two vegetation communities to early inhabitants of the region.
- 12-27 SMMTF commented that the lower Liberty Canyon is prime bottomland Valley Oak Savanna and that it could and should be protected by Natural Preserve designation. The comment has been provided for review and consideration to the Department.

- 12-28 SMMTF commented that the utility line and maintenance road are the only intrusions into Liberty Canyon and that they are not a serious threat to the ecosystem. The comment has been provided for review and consideration to the Department.
- 12-29 SMMTF commented that the land between Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve and Las Virgenes Road is Valley Oak Savanna habitat that has suffered some impacts from past agricultural uses but is recovering. See Response 12-26. Although not designated as Core Habitat, this area would be protected from extensive development through its designation as a Cultural/Historic Zone. A new guideline has been added to Section 3.4.3 (WSA-1.3) that provides further direction for future development of the Cultural/Historic Zone north of White Oak Farm. The intent of this area is to provide interpretive elements that focus on early human settlement and the importance of the oak and riparian woodlands to the development of these cultures. The comment has been provided for review and consideration to the Department.
- 12-30 SMMTF commented that the area that serves as the wildlife corridor between the Liberty Canyon and Kaslow natural preserves is hilly and is rarely used by park users. The recommendation to include this area in the preserve has been provided for review and consideration to the Department.
- 12-31 SMMTF commented that the 32-acre inholding in the center of the core habitat of the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve is a serious threat to the integrity of the preserve ecosystem and that the Department should obtain a right of first refusal. The comment has been provided for review and consideration to the Department.
- 12-32 SMMTF commented that trunk sewer lines and utility lines threaten to impact the preserves due to road maintenance and repairs to facilities. The commenter suggests that the park staff maintain a close liaison with the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Southern California Edison, and County officials to

ensure that maintenance activities have minimal impacts on park resources. Guideline FAC-4.1 addresses the need to manage utilities and utility access roads in the Park.

- 12-33 SMMTF commented that the land in the Bulldog Canyon watershed just west of the Kaslow Natural Preserve should be added to the preserve in the General Plan. The recommendation to extend the natural preserve boundaries has been provided for review and consideration to the Department.
- 12-34 SMMTF commented that the April Road area was purchased to provide a critical habitat linkage, yet a trail running through April Road is posted no public entry and barking dogs are often heard. The commenter is also concerned that the area is considered a Recreation/Operations Zone. April Road was previously developed by private landowners. A small nursery/greenhouse has been added by the Department for native plant recovery programs. April Road is designated a Recreation/Operations Zone because of its current level of development and based on the potential to relocate park support facilities to an area with existing infrastructure. The area is not conducive to more intensive development because of the topography and the dangerous entrance/exit off Mulholland Highway; however, it will continue to be used by park staff.
- 12-35 SMMTF acknowledged that Goal NR-2 and Guideline NR-2.1 are very important. The commenter also identified the need for a sensitive species map and database that identifies important plant communities in the Park. Guideline NR-2.1 calls for such a database; however, it would not be published in the General Plan in order to protect these important resources from human intrusion.
- 12-36 SMMTF commented that it is essential to map nesting sites of sensitive species and areas of permanent water sources so that visitor activity can be routed away from such locations. See Response 12-35. The comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.

- 12-37 SMMTF strongly supports Goal NR-5 and the four guidelines but feels that protecting the integrity of core habitat should also be included. The Core Habitat management zone is defined in Section 3.2.1. The definition of this zone reflects the critical importance of these areas.
- 12-38 SMMTF commented that a new guideline should be added, stating that park staff maintain regular liaison with inholders and with public and private utilities working in the Park to ensure that impacts on park resources are minimal. The goals and guidelines in Section 3.3.5 and Section 3.3.9 address these issues through establishment of coordination requirements and resource management measures.
- 12-39 SMMTF commented that guideline NR-6.2 should include working with local agencies to see that development of flammable structures on adjoining land is set back at least 200 feet from the park boundary. The Department cannot regulate development of privately-owned land around the Park; however, they can comment on development projects and provide recommended mitigation measures through normal environmental review processes (i.e. CEQA). As indicated in the comment, the County's North Area Plan also identifies setback requirements.
- 12-40 SMMTF commented that Goal NR-7 (page 3-10) can only be achieved by maximizing the protection of watersheds draining into the Park through working with local planning agencies. Watershed protection and coordination with neighboring landowners is encouraged in Goals NR-8 and REG-1.
- 12-41 SMMTF commented that the floodplain between the mouth of Malibu Canyon and Malibu Lagoon is very wide and that many homes have been flooded in this area. The commenter noted that the area could be subdivided and developed, which would create more pressure to channelize the creek. See Response 12-39 regarding regulation of privately-owned land around the Park. Guideline REG-1.1 encourages coordination with

neighboring land owners, which could include the properties identified in the comment.

- 12-42 SMMTF commented that the cultural resources could be integrated with the Park's natural environment. An interpretive program would be created for the Park. Implementation of Guideline INT-1.1 would create multi-sensory interpretation around the Park, and allow for interpretation of the Park's cultural and natural resources.
- 12-43 SMMTF stressed the importance of Goal SR-1 as the Park has exceptional scenic and visual resources. The commenter would like the Department to continue to speak out on local planning and zoning issues and remind local authorities of the importance of protecting the integrity of the Park through proper siting, design, shielding, buffering, and fire clearance setbacks. The importance of coordination with surrounding agencies and land owners is described in Section 3.3.9 Goals REG-1, REG-2, and REG-3, and their supporting guidelines would address these issues.
- 12-44 SMMTF commented that two utility lines need to be moved because of their impacts to resources: the line along the Westside of Las Virgenes Road in the northeast boundary of the Park; and the utility towers extending from Malibu Lake up to the ridgelines. Guideline FAC-4.2 has been added to the General Plan to ensure that, where possible, utility lines are relocated away from sensitive areas, including ridgelines, streams, and other areas of high resource value.
- 12-45 SMMTF commented that the sewer lines that follow Malibu Creek, Las Virgenes Creek, and Liberty Creek create serious impacts on the resources. The commenter would like the General Plan to discuss the long-term need to relocate these sewer lines. See Response 12-44.
- 12-46 SMMTF expressed their strong support for Goal SR-2 and Guideline SR-2.2. The comment has been provided for review and consideration to the Department.

- 12-47 SMMTF commented that the creation of a new visitor center would require further environmental analysis to address litter problems. Goal FAC-2 states that any concessions must enhance the recreational and/or educational experience while being consistent with the Park's purpose. Prior to development of any new concessions at the Park (including a visitor center), a feasibility study would be completed per Guideline FAC-2.2 and appropriate CEQA analysis would be conducted.
- 12-48 SMMTF commented on park staff housing, and while SMMTF recognizes the need for affordable housing, they are concerned about the potential impacts on visual and natural resources. Prior to adding new housing or converting facilities to staff housing, proper CEQA analysis would be conducted. Also, the guidelines associated with Goal FAC-1 would ensure that park facilities (including staff housing) would be consolidated to minimize impacts on the natural environment.
- 12-49 SMMTF commented that the Unifying Theme (page 3-22) should be more comprehensive. The comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.
- 12-50 SMMTF noted their concern about commercial filming operations and the language used in Guideline FAC-3.1. See Response 12-6.
- 12-51 SMMTF commented that park staff should maintain liaison with the utility companies with pre-existing utility easements in the Park to ensure that their maintenance and road grading operations have minimal impact on park resources. See Responses 12-44 and 12-45.
- 12-52 SMMTF acknowledges their support for Goal CTA-1. The comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.
- 12-53 SMMTF commented that the trail feasibility study for Malibu Canyon should consider the option of routing the trail along the



approximately 1,500-foot contour on the east rim of the canyon. Much of this land is owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy; however, this would not preclude the Department from coordinating with the conservancy to develop a trail along the east rim of the canyon, if it is determined to be feasible. The intent of the Department is to develop a trail connecting the Park to the Pacific Ocean through Malibu Canyon.

- 12-54 SMMTF acknowledged that Guideline INT-1.3 is an important measure for educating the public. The comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-55 SMMTF commented that all of the Park's resources are interconnected and that the interpretive and educational programs may want to take that into account. The interpretive themes identified in Section 3.3.7 are not intended to be exclusive of each other. The Interpretive Master Plan for the Park will integrate and expand upon these themes to develop a unified interpretive program from the Park.
- 12-56 SMMTF commented that the geological resources and ongoing geological processes should be a major interpretive theme. Interpretation of geologic resources is specifically identified in Guideline INT-2.4. The Department concurs with the importance of these resources as an interpretive theme.
- 12-57 SMMTF commented that the original docent group did establish an oral history program and wondered if this information has been organized into an oral history file. This comment does not pertain to the environmental analysis or environmental effects of the General Plan. In accordance with CEQA, a response is not required; however, the comment is included for review and consideration by the Department.
- 12-58 SMMTF agreed that outreach and partnerships with areas schools is essential as outlined in Guideline INT-4.5. This comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.

- 12-59 SMMTF commented that the size of the area used for agricultural interpretation should be defined to impact the least number of resources through a public process. All future development projects and management plans would be subject to environmental analysis. The recommendation to establish a public process to define the interpretive facilities at White Oak Farm has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-60 SMMTF commented that the Primary Themes (page 3-22) would serve as a good foundation for park interpretive programs. As suggested, these themes will serve as the basis for the Park's Interpretive Master Plan.
- 12-61 SMMTF commented that, in order to protect sensitive animal and native plant populations, site specific records are necessary. As noted in 12-35, park staff have records of the native flora and fauna. In addition, comprehensive data for long-term management of the Park's resources would be collected and utilized as described in the numerous resource management goals outlined in the General Plan.
- 12-62 SMMTF commented about the nature of the surrounding land owners. Goal REG-1 seeks to create partnerships with the surrounding public and private landowners, including homeowners and owners of vacant land. This comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-63 SMMTF commented on their support for the Goal REG-2. This comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-64 SMMTF commented that Goal REG-3 and Guideline REG-3.1 put too much emphasis on connectivity and none on protecting the scenic park viewsheds through acquisition. The goal and guideline have been modified to reflect the importance scenic resources as well as natural and cultural resources.

- 12-65 SMMTF questioned if filming activity counted as attendance, and if so, could visitor use be restricted due to commercial filming using up the carrying capacity. The protection of resources and the visitor experience are of greater importance to the Department and its mission than commercial filming. Commercial filming is allowed only by permit. As noted on page 3-29, if the Department determines that the entire Park or any specific area is not meeting the desired visitor experience or resource protection goals, management action can be initiated to identify and rectify the situation. Goal FAC-3 specifically aims to regulate commercial filming activity in the Park to ensure compatibility with visitor use and natural and cultural goals and values.
- 12-66 SMMTF noted that the sentence “Determination of resource location and significance allows management to create guidelines for future public use and access to the Park” is an endorsement of their request for site specific mapping of sensitive resources. The Department intends to develop a comprehensive vegetation map of the Park, including sensitive plant communities. As discussed above, some information would be used for planning purposes only, in order to protect important resources from human intrusion.
- 12-67 SMMTF commented that developed facilities in Tapia Park should be kept out of the floodplain, as floods have destroyed permanent facilities. Per Guideline TAP-2.1, Tapia Park would be developed with consideration of the surrounding natural environment. See Response 12-10.
- 12-68 SMMTF acknowledged that Tapia is an urban park in a natural setting and that sensitive natural communities are present. The Department concurs with this statement.
- 12-69 SMMTF commented that the diverse native tree species should be inventoried and select specimens marked with bilingual plaques. Goal TAP-2 and Guidelines TAP-2.1 and TAP-2.2 would create multi-language interpretive programs and displays that describe the unique natural resources in the area.

- 12-70 SMMTF commented that a bilingual plaque, commemorating the Tapia family and its role in local history, be placed at Tapia Park. Goal TAP-2 and Guidelines TAP-2.1 and TAP-2.2 would create multi-language interpretive programs and displays on the unique cultural resources in the area.
- 12-71 SMMTF commented that the main park entrance should remain the primary entry node and center of visitor services as explained on in Section 3.4.2, page 3-32. This comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-72 SMMTF agrees that the visitor center would better serve visitors if it was moved to the main park entrance area; however, they are concerned about where to site the building to ensure the least impact to cultural and scenic resources. As discussed above, relocation of the visitor center would be subject to further environmental analysis, including impacts to cultural and scenic resources.
- 12-73 SMMTF commented that visitors could impact the sensitive resources at the southern edge of the campground. The commenter would like to see the area examined to assess if the human activity is damaging the wildflowers, native grasses, and other interesting flora. This suggestion would be accomplished through implementation of Guideline MPE-2.1 (page 3-33).
- 12-74 SMMTF noted that most of the native plants and shrubs that were planted at Hunter Ranch campground died of neglect and the Mexican Elderberry flourished with minimal care. Guideline MPE-2.4 has been modified to ensure that native, easy to maintain plants and shrubs are used in the vegetative screening between camp sites.
- 12-75 SMMTF commented that the correct spelling for Craggs is with one “g” after Mount Crag, and that the Park should use the traditional local spelling. References to “Crag” have been changed to the traditional spelling.

- 12-76 SMMTF acknowledged their agreement with Goal CRC-1 and Guideline CRC-1.1. They also noted that the area is very sensitive and that a botanical inventory of the rocks and cliffs should be done to verify the existence of sensitive species. See Response 7-6.
- 12-77 SMMTF commented that the area on the eastside of the creek below the Rock Pool is also an important resource and should be protected from visitor impacts. Implementing Goal NR-2 and Guideline NR-2.1 for this area would help to ensure that Goal CRC-1 and the subsequent Guidelines are accomplished. See Response 7-6.
- 12-78 SMMTF suggests that new facilities in the Rock Pool area would be subject to flood damage. Guideline CRC-1.3 has been revised to include consideration of these factors.
- 12-79 SMMTF commented that the Craggs Road Corridor is primarily used by pedestrians, and that a large percentage of the users are Spanish speakers. The commenter advised that bilingual information about park resources could be placed at strategic locations. The goals and guidelines in Section 3.3.7 would encourage such facilities along Craggs Road Corridor.
- 12-80 SMMTF commented that they are concerned with the staging areas for film activities along Craggs Road Corridor, as it may impact natural resources and degrade park users' experience. The commenter is worried that staging areas would allow trucks to be driven along Craggs Road Corridor. As discussed above, all commercial filming is subject to permit and restrictions. The staging areas on Craggs Road Corridor, mentioned in Guideline CRC-2.1, refer to specific locations where film crews could locate equipment without impacting sensitive resources. No unauthorized vehicles are allowed past the Hunt House Visitor Center on Craggs Road.
- 12-81 SMMTF commented that there is vehicle access to the Hunt House and questioned if replacing the dip crossing would generate a level of vehicle traffic that would interfere with public

use of the crossing for water-oriented recreation. Replacement of the dip crossing would alleviate some trail use conflicts on Craggs Road. Vehicles would use the dip crossing intermittently and it would not be open to the general public. No major recreational use conflicts are expected to occur as a result of the crossing improvements.

12-82 SMMTF commented that they support the redevelopment of the public use areas adjacent to the east end of Century Lake (Goal CRC-3, Guideline CRC-3.1), but not the south side of the lake that is part of Kaslow Natural Preserve. The south side of Century Lake is within Kaslow Natural Preserve and cannot be developed for recreation. This comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.

12-83 SMMTF commented that when planning for Reagan Ranch, the Department should consider that the oak woodland and Udell Gorge to the south of Reagan Ranch are in Natural Preserves. All development in this area will be undertaken in an environmentally sensitive manner, to ensure impacts are minimal to the natural resources. No development will occur within the Udell Gorge Natural Preserve.

12-84 SMMTF commented that Reagan Ranch has abundant cultural resources from the Chumash hunting cave to Reagan's old swimming pool. Cultural resources would be protected and interpreted through the interpretive goals and guidelines (Section 3.3.7) and the interpretive themes. Also, an adaptive reuse study would be conducted at Reagan Ranch to appropriately use and restore the areas historic structures. This comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.

12-85 SMMTF suggested that the visual mitigation in the Reagan Ranch area should be done thoughtfully so as not to impact the harmony of meadow, woodland, and butte. As described in Guideline RR-1.1, a number of potential measures are suggested to reduce or avoid visual impacts from Mulholland Highway. The suggestions to carefully select and implement

vegetative screening will be provided to the Department for review and consideration.

- 12-86 SMMTF commented that mitigating visual impacts from new development could impact biological resources. See Response 12-83. The biological resources at Reagan Ranch would be protected through implementation of Goal FAC-1 and Guideline FAC-1.3.
- 12-87 SMMTF commented on the setting of the proposed equestrian campground. Specifically, they support its proposed location west of the ranch and north of the entrance driveway with vegetation for screening. See Responses 12-83, 12-85, and 12-86.
- 12-88 SMMTF commented that they support the restoration and reuse of Reagan Ranch, but if staff housing is relocated, it should be sited away from the natural preserve and sensitive resources. As mentioned in Response 12-83, no development would occur in the Natural Preserve. Any new development must protect the biological resources by adhering to Goal FAC-1 and Guideline FAC-1.3. Thus, facilities would be sited appropriately.
- 12-89 SMMTF commented that the parking lot at Reagan Ranch is already in place and is a good location to place sensitively designed restroom facilities. All new facilities would be designed and sited in accordance with Goal SUST-1 and the subsequent guidelines related to sustainable development.
- 12-90 SMMTF commented that acquisition should be a tool to protect scenic resources. As discussed in Response 12-64, Goal REG-3 and Guideline REG-3.1 have been modified to include the protection of scenic resources as a consideration for land acquisition.
- 12-91 SMMTF commented that filming is not listed as an issue to be resolved in Section 3.5. Filming has been added to the list as suggested by the commenter.

- 12-92 SMMTF commented about the potential conflict between mountain bicyclists and other trail users. See Response 3-5. As discussed at the end of Section 3.5, a trail management plan is recommended for the Park.
- 12-93 SMMTF commented that the popularity of the Park is partly due to the lack of natural areas in Los Angeles and the accessibility of the trails for users that can enjoy level trails. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-94 SMMTF commented that conflicts exist between mountain bikers and older hikers and walkers. The commenter concluded that the highest priority in relatively flat terrain should be for those less athletic and less mobile users, who cannot access the steeper terrain. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-95 SMMTF commented that a strict speed limit should be enforced on the Craggs Road Corridor and noted a possible method for enforcement. Guideline CRC-2.1 recommends a circulation plan for the Craggs Road corridor to minimize conflicts between different user groups along this heavily used corridor. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-96 SMMTF commented that bicyclists are found on single track trails within the Park and that this deters families with small children and elderly users from using such trails. Development of a trail management plan, trail map, and other methods of improving trail circulation in the Park are included in Section 3.3.6. The Department concurs that many trails in the Park are not suitable for multiple uses. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-97 SMMTF commented that Section 4.6 is incorrect in assuming that the Park has not had a history of flood control problems or that the flood zones are primarily limited to the banks of creeks. See Response 12-10. Section 4.6.7 has been revised to reflect the potential for flooding in some areas of the Park.



- 12-98 SMMTF commented that they prefer Alternative 2. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-99 SMMTF commented that they support the Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve and suggest that the Department work with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to acquire additional lands. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-100 SMMTF commented that they strongly support the removal of Rindge Dam and the restoration of a spawning run of the endangered southern steelhead. The Department is committed to enhancing and restoring native habitat for sensitive species in the Park, including the steelhead. The removal of Rindge Dam is currently under consideration by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-101 SMMTF commented that there are outstanding willow riparian forests along Las Virgenes Creek and patches of degraded prime Valley Oak Savanna with in the Cultural/Historic Zone east of Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve. See Response 12-29.
- 12-102 SMMTF commented that April Road encompasses riparian habitat and about 20 acres of undisturbed woodland, sage, and chaparral. The commenter would like the General Plan to state the intended uses. See Response 12-34.
- 12-103 SMMTF commented that their second choice is the Preferred Plan and Alternative 1 is their third choice. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-104 SMMTF commented that land comprising the east rim of the canyon is owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and was earmarked for acquisition by the Department in 1982, as mentioned in comment 12-24. The commenter believes that

this land should be included in the planning area defined in the General Plan and EIR. See Response 12-24.

- 12-105 SMMTF commented that the topography of Malibu Canyon at about 1,500 feet, the section owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, is less rugged and the topography is more feasible for creating a trail through the canyon. See Response 12-24.
- 12-106 SMMTF commented that the northwestern section of Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve is an important wildlife corridor as well as an important viewshed for the Park. See Response 12-30. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-107 SMMTF commented that the eastern ridgeline of the proposed Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve is one of the most scenic coastal canyons in the state. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 12-108 SMMTF commented that the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy recently acquired 160 acres bordering the southwest corner of the Park and Kaslow Natural Preserve. The commenter noted that 40 acres of this property were authorized for acquisition by the Department in the 1980s, but that funds were not available. This comment is provided to the Department for review and consideration.

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January 16, 2004

VIA FACSIMILE & U.S. MAIL

Ron Shafer, District Superintendent  
Angeles District  
California State Parks  
1925 Las Virgenes Road  
Calabasas, CA 91302

**Re: Comments on Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR for  
Malibu Creek State park**

Dear Mr. Shafer:

This office represents Malibu Ocean Ranches LLC, Creekside Ranch LLC (doing business in California as Creekside Malibu Ranch LLC), Meadowlands Ranch LLC, Stoney Heights LLC, Jean Ross LLC, Mika Heights LLC, Catherine Isabel LLC and Brian A. Sweeney, all owners of land in the Santa Monica Mountains that would be affected by the draft Malibu Creek State Park General Plan (the "Draft Plan"). Our clients own approximately 2,000 acres of land immediately surrounding the Park. By virtue of these holdings, our clients will be, by far, *the most directly impacted private landowners* as a result of the Draft Plan. The Draft Plan is an obvious effort to devalue our clients' properties. This letter responds to the Draft Plan.

13-1

The Draft Plan does not properly consider impacts on neighboring properties. Rather than reflecting a spirit of cooperation and coordination, the Draft Plan indicates an unfriendly, one-sided approach to land management. Given the direct impacts to our clients, our clients' comments must be given great weight, and our reasonable requests for changes, as set forth below, should be incorporated into the Draft Plan.

13-2

As a preliminary matter, we note that the timing of the release of the Draft Plan (right before the holidays) left interested parties insufficient time to analyze the Draft Plan and comment thereon. An extension of time to respond to the Draft Plan should be granted, so that all interested parties have an opportunity to comment.

13-3

ANGELES DISTRICT  
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CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

### **I. Natural Communities Conservation Program**

The Draft Plan states that there are no designated Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP) areas within the Park, but that the Draft Plan “adheres to the principles established in the NCCP regarding the protection of habitat and biodiversity.” This statement should be deleted, as it is not appropriate for the Draft Plan to adhere to policies in a separate program implemented by the Legislature that covers no portion of the Park. If the Legislature intended for the Park to be covered by the NCCP, it would have expressly so provided.

13-4

### **II. Water Courses**

Goal NR-7 of the Draft Plan (at p. 3-10) calls for allowing for the free passage of water courses through the Park, in a pristine, natural setting. This Goal is not consistent with our clients’ water rights to Malibu Creek, and, despite its language, it cannot legally alter our clients’ water rights. Specifically, our clients’ property includes the land along Malibu Canyon Road that is adjacent to Pepperdine University, commonly referred to as “Rancho Francisco.” The water rights that benefit the Rancho Francisco property are outlined in the Grant Deed from Marblehead Land Company to Adamson, recorded on October 10, 1939 in Book 16917, Page 285 of the Official Records of Los Angeles County. The deed provides that the grantor and the grantee covenant that:

13-5

1. The grantee and their successors and assigns are given the right to drill and maintain water wells and water storage tanks at any location or locations on the property and to “take such quantity of water from said well or wells as shall be equivalent to a continuous flow of not exceeding one statutory miner’s inch accumulated over each calendar yearly period.” The right to take such water shall terminate when Marblehead Land Company or Malibu Water Company: a) has constructed all necessary facilities to furnish at the boundary of the property an equivalent supply of water suitable for domestic uses; b) has a supply of such water available to make such equivalent service; c) is obligated as a public utility to make such service; and d) has notified the grantee in writing of these circumstances. If the public water service thereafter becomes unavailable to serve the property, then the grantee has the right to take water from wells and springs (as already noted with respect to wells, and subsequently noted with respect to springs) until the public utility service is again available.



2. Grantee and their successors and assigns have the right to take water from springs on the property and to construct and maintain check dams thereon for the purpose of impounding surface waters; this right terminates when the right to divert water from wells terminates (as noted above).

3. Grantee and their successors and assigns have the right to the water in the dam which may be constructed in Malibu Creek Canyon. They may take "from said dam such quantity of water as shall be equivalent at least to that herein permitted to be taken from wells." This right terminates when the right to divert water from wells terminates (as noted above).

13-5

The conditions outlined in paragraph 1, above, have not been satisfied. There is no public water service to the Rancho Francisco property. Accordingly, the rights outlined in the deed still apply (i.e. the owners of the parcels conveyed by the deed have the right to take one statutory miner's inch per year of water from wells, springs and/or the dam to Malibu Creek Canyon). The Draft Plan cannot legally alter these water rights held by our clients. We would suggest that you modify Goal NR-7 to read as follows: "Subject to private water rights, allow for the free passage of water courses through the Park, in a pristine, natural setting."

Similarly, to the extent that goals relating to protection of wildlife resources may be interpreted in a manner contrary to our clients' water rights, those goals need to be revised. By way of example, the second sentence of Guideline NR-5.3 should read: "Subject to private water rights, protect and enhance these important habitat movement corridors throughout the Park."

13-6

### **III. Scenic Resources**

We take issue with the Scenic Resources and Aesthetics Goals of the Draft Plan to the extent that they purport to regulate development on property that is not within the Park. Specifically, Goal SR-1 calls for protecting and maintaining significant "viewsheds within and surrounding the Park . . ." (Draft Plan, p. 3-13). The State has no authority to regulate development on surrounding parcels that are not part of the Park. Any attempt to do so is clearly an effort to devalue surrounding properties so that those properties may ultimately be acquired by the State (or other public or nonprofit entity) at a discounted price.

13-7

Similarly, the environmental analysis of the scenic resources portion of the Draft Plan is flawed in that it essentially assumes that views from the Park *over private property* are entitled to protection. The Park has no such viewshed easement, and cannot properly acquire one without payment of just compensation.

We suggest that Goal SR-1 be revised to read as follows: "Protect and maintain significant viewsheds within the Park while respecting neighboring properties' development rights, to enhance the visitor experience of the Park's scenic resources; work cooperatively with landowners in an effort to encourage development outside the Park to be designed in such a manner as to respect significant viewsheds." Guideline SR-1.3 should be deleted, but, if it is not deleted, at a minimum it should be revised to read as follows: "Provide constructive input for visual mitigation measures to local jurisdictions, other state agencies, federal agencies and private property owners regarding how development that is visible from designated trails within the Park might be screened or designed with appropriate color pallets to minimize visual impacts from such designated trails."

13-7

We suggest that Goal SR-2 be revised to read: "Maintain aesthetically pleasing facilities and scenic views within the Park for visitor enjoyment that do not detract from the Park's natural and cultural resources." The second sentence of Guideline SR-2.2 should be deleted.

13-8

Finally, the Draft Plan should include provisions that respect neighboring landowners' rights, particularly in light of the Draft Plan's call to expand the Park. For example, a new goal of the Draft Plan's scenic resources section should be: "Locate and construct Park trails in such a manner as to respect and avoid being within the view of nearby properties, wherever possible."

13-9

#### **IV. Visitor Use and Development**

Section 3.3.9 of the Draft Plan notes that the Park is surrounded by land owned by other public agencies and by private landowners. (Draft Plan, p. 3-25). That Section further states that "Park planning should be coordinated to ensure compatibility with the goals of federal, State, and local jurisdictions and stakeholders." Goal REG-2, however, does not reflect a spirit of coordination and cooperation. Rather, that Goal effectively calls for limiting development of surrounding parcels, and essentially making

13-10

development as difficult as possible. Again, this is an effort to devalue surrounding parcels so that they may ultimately be acquired by the State or other public or nonprofit agencies at a discounted value, or worse, an attempt to impermissibly prohibit development on those parcels without payment of just compensation.

Goal REG-2 should be revised to read: "Participate in regional development processes to encourage voluntary protection of natural, cultural, aesthetic, and recreational resources in and surrounding the Park." Guideline REG-2.1 should be revised to read as follows: "Work cooperatively with landowners to encourage voluntary protection of the natural, cultural and aesthetic experience within the Park." Guideline REG-2.3, relating to coordinating with the California Coastal Commission, should be deleted, as that agency's duties are clearly defined in State law, and do not provide for active coordination with the Department of Parks and Recreation.

13-10

Finally, while the Draft Plan advocates expanding the Park, it makes no mention of any objective to minimize loss of privacy, peace and tranquility to neighboring property owners whose lands do not currently border the Park. This goal should be incorporated into the Draft Plan. For example, we suggest adding Guideline REG-3.2 as follows: "Work cooperatively with adjacent landowners to ensure that new acquisitions will not unreasonably cause loss of privacy, peace or tranquility to such owners."

13-11

#### **V. Wildlife Movement**

The Draft Plan would place land to the immediate north and south of our clients' holdings within the Core Habitat Zone. While our clients do not mind allowing for wildlife corridors through their properties, they do object to any attempt to allow for free movement of wildlife throughout their properties. Our clients intend to develop their properties; therefore, wildlife corridors on our clients' properties would need to be carefully located so as not to be inconsistent with such development. Further, no public agency can lawfully require dedication of a trail easement over private property as a condition to allowing development. To the extent that the Draft Plan attempts to give governments more this power, it violates private property rights.

13-12

The Park's efforts at wildlife management should be confined *within* the Park. Specifically, Goal NR-5 should be modified to read: "Protecting biocorridors within the Park and enhancing the movement of wildlife within the Park is essential to the survival

13-13

of local species. The Park will work to maintain and enhance the dispersal and movement of native animals within Park boundaries.”

13-13

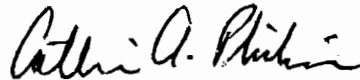
**VI. Effect on Agriculture**

We note that the Draft Plan neglects to analyze the impacts of the policies of the Draft Plan on agricultural resources. Specifically, if development on adjacent parcels is restricted based on this Draft Plan, such policies will also result in the reduction (and possible cessation) of agriculture on adjacent lands. All of the areas of the Draft Plan discussed above would potentially negatively impact agriculture. Restrictions on the use of water would adversely affect agriculture. Policies requiring the protection of viewsheds would negatively affect agriculture, as structures and support facilities are an essential component of agricultural operations. Visitor use policies would also be detrimental to agriculture to the extent that they could be construed to limit the use of pesticides, the keeping of livestock, the cultivation of fields, and the construction of support facilities. Finally, wildlife protection policies could negatively affect agriculture on adjacent lands to the extent that those policies are used as “open space” measures to allow for free passage of wildlife through private property. The Draft Plan should carefully evaluate such negative impacts on agriculture, a priority resource for the State.

13-14

We hope that you will carefully consider our comments and make appropriate revisions to the Draft Plan.

Very truly yours,



Catherine A. Philipovitch

cc: Clients  
Sutnar + Sutnar  
Michael Crisman, Secretary for Resources



**Letter 13: Law Offices of Bosso, Williams, Sachs, Atack, Gallagher & Sanford**

Comment No.    Response

13-1                    The Law Offices of Bosso, Williams, Sachs, Atack, Gallagher & Sanford (BWSAGS) commented that through the General Plan the Department is trying to devalue the surrounding land. General Plans are written to provide broad vision and long-term management that protects the natural, cultural, aesthetic, and recreational resources for the people of California. The goals and guidelines included in the Malibu Creek State Park General Plan apply only to management of State Park lands. Cooperation with surrounding land owners and agencies is also encouraged in the plan.

13-2                    BWSAGS commented that the General Plan does not properly consider impacts on neighboring properties. Land management for public benefit, coordination, and cooperation are integral parts of the General Plan. To achieve the natural resource protection sought in Goals NR-1 and NR-5, Guidelines NR-1.2 and NR-5.2 are proposed. These guidelines specifically state that the Department should coordinate with the neighboring agencies and land owners. Furthermore, Section 3.3.9 discusses the importance of coordinating with adjacent landowners. The creation of partnerships with surrounding landowners is the stated intent of Goal REG-1. Furthermore, Guidelines REG-1.1 and REG-1.2 would help the Department to achieve the goal of cooperation and coordination.

13-3                    BWSAGS commented that the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR were released with insufficient time for analysis. The Notice of Availability of the draft EIR was released on December 2, 2003. The 45-day comment period ended on January 16, 2004. This is the required length of an EIR public period as described under CEQA. In addition, the Department accepted letters received up to one week after the comment period officially closed.

- 13-4 BWSAGS would like all references to NCCPs deleted. See Response 8-6.
- 13-5 BWSAGS commented that Goal NR-7 is not consistent with their client's water rights and should be revised. The implementation of Guidelines NR-7.1, NR-7.2, and NR-7.3 to achieve Goal NR-7 would not interfere with the landowner's water rights, but would rather protect and restore the natural resources within the Park that are under the jurisdiction of the Department and other State and Federal agencies.
- 13-6 BWSAGS commented that Guideline NR-5.3 should be revised to note the private water rights. Guideline NR-5.3 does not infringe on those with water rights to Malibu Creek. As noted in Table 2-3, southern steelhead trout are a federal endangered species and a California State Species of Concern. The Department has a responsibility to protect such species. The USACOE is studying the feasibility of Rindge Dam independent of this General Plan.
- 13-7 BWSAGS requested that Goal SR-1 be revised and that Guideline SR-1.3 be deleted. See Response 8-7.
- 13-8 BWSAGS suggested that Goal SR-2 be revised and that Guideline SR-2.2 be deleted. The Department is responsible for protecting aesthetic resources within the Park and Goal SR-2 realizes this responsibility. Guideline SR-2.2 has been revised to clarify that input would be received through the environmental review process under CEQA.
- 13-9 BWSAGS commented that a new scenic resource goal should be added to protect landowner's rights. See Response 4-1. Pursuant to CEQA, stakeholders, including adjacent landowners, would be given the opportunity to comment on specific projects and the aesthetic impacts through the environmental review process.

- 13-10 BWSAGS commented that Goal REG-2 does not reflect a spirit of coordination and cooperation and that Goal REG-2, Guideline REG-2.1, and REG-2.3 should be revised. See Responses 8-7 and 13-2.
- 13-11 BWSAGS suggested the creation of an additional guideline under Goal REG-3 to minimize the loss of privacy on neighboring property. See Response 13-9. If additional lands are acquired by the Department, project plans and an environmental review would be necessary prior to any development. Adjacent landholders would be given the opportunity to comment on the specific project per CEQA. In addition, the vast majority of park land that adjoins private property is included in Core Habitat and Natural Open Space management zones, which would limit any future development in these areas.
- 13-12 BWSAGS commented that the General Plan would violate private property rights and give free movement of wildlife through their client's properties. Wildlife corridors are not created by the plan; rather, existing wildlife movement patterns would be maintained and protected within the Park through land management strategies and resource protection guidelines. The General Plan does not make any reference to dedicating a trail easement on private property, nor would the Department have the authority to do so. Wildlife and their natural movement corridors would be protected within the Park and on other resource protection agency lands per state and federal laws.
- 13-13 BWSAGS suggested that Goal NR-5 be modified. The Department does not have and would not have jurisdiction over land that it does not own; however, the Department would be involved with land management activities in the Santa Monica Mountains under CEQA, to protect natural resources, including wildlife.

13-14            BWSAGS commented that the Draft EIR does not analyze impacts on agricultural resources. See Response 8-9. Section 4.5.2 discusses that there is no prime farmland adjacent to the Park. As discussed in Response 3-5, this General Plan and EIR is a program-level document. Any future development within the Park would be subject to further environmental review under CEQA.

# RECREATION AND EQUESTRIAN COALITION

P.O. Box 245 Agoura Hills, California 91376 818-991-1236

January 29, 2004

California Department of Parks & Recreation  
Southern Service Center  
8885 Rio San Diego Dr. #270  
San Diego, CA 92108

## MALIBU CREEK STATE PARK PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN & DRAFT EIR

One of the major problems with this Plan is the public's lack of access to it. Although it was stated that copies of the Plan were at the District Headquarters, they were not there. Borrowing an office copy to make a copy did not work since the Plan is copyrighted and businesses would not copy it. The extended delay in obtaining a CD was an added problem. It is understandable that you did not have the funds for printing hundreds of copies, but the CD should have been made available initially instead of weeks later. Distributing the Plan so it would have to be read over the Christmas/New Year holidays exacerbated the situation. It would be more considerate of the public to remember these problems when planning future drafts for distribution.

14-1

ALTERNATIVE 1 is the most balanced, being visitor friendly while still protecting habitat and wildlife. With the greatest area of Open Space available, Alternative 1 would be the best balance for conserving land and resources while providing recreation. It appears that Balance is a key factor for management of the Park, and it is vital for satisfying all the objectives, goals, needs, and details that must be addressed. This alternative is closest to the Open Space perspective that the general public has been lobbying for during the past two decades.

14-2

ALTERNATIVE 2 would almost be a 'taking' of the lands away from the public's use. Since the Park is supposed to be managed for the public's use and enjoyment as well as the protection of resources, this alternative would fail to give the public the use of their lands.

PRESERVES are extremely limiting for the people, especially for those who do not hike. There are already three large preserves of 3000 acres for the conservation of habitat, so doubling the preserve area with another preserve merely is anti-recreational. Preserve designation is the most stringent restriction for an Urban Parkland. It creates far more crowding and negative impacts in the rest of the park and on the trails. The crowding of visitors increases the user conflicts among various users, instead of dispersing the people to a wider area so everyone has a feeling of truly being in a more natural environment. People do not go to the park to see throngs of other people; they go for the experience of seeing fewer people and more of nature.

14-3

Ecosystems and the well being of humans can be compatible. People have been living, developing and recreating in these mountains and on the lands adjoining MCSP for many, many years. It is common knowledge that the population will be increasing, another factor to remember in designating land areas and their permitted uses. Diversified recreation areas will ensure that the people and the land both benefit.

14-4

One of the primary objectives of the MCSP Plan is to “balance ecological and human processes” - the conservation of the natural resources with human interaction. It appears that mainly preservation is being seriously considered. Keeping in mind that not everyone is a bird watcher, there needs to be more consideration and planning made for the present recreation users, as well as the known increase of population that will include even more recreation minded people. While the preferred Plan acknowledges the increased population, nevertheless, it makes no provision for more trails and limits the lands available for future trails to accommodate the expected increase of visitors. If the proposed Malibu Canyon Preserve land was the only area for certain plants and animals in the entire Park, then the designation could be understood. However, that is not the case; and it would be a disservice to the public to cut off public access to such a large area that would give the public great benefit. The land is already protected. Balance is important.

14-5

Mother Nature often takes it upon herself, now and then, to make a clean sweep using floods, fires, landslides, earthquakes and other natural occurrences. Although people label these occurrences natural disasters, they are, in fact, a way for nature to regenerate and redistribute. Immediately after fires there is new growth sprouting, and certain plants only come to life after a hot fire. Natural occurrences have transformed the landscape for centuries. Protecting some of the plant and animal habitats is important, but always pushing man aside for the natural resources is forgetting that man has always been a part of the natural resources. Severely limiting human access is an extreme measure in an urban parkland that is supposed to provide public recreational opportunities. Many plants and animals can be propagated in already designated areas so that more vast areas do not have to be set aside that exclude recreational use and enjoyment. Man’s impact is nothing compared with Nature’s natural occurrences. Balance is important – balancing the conservation of natural resources with the public’s right to recreation on their lands.

It is stated that the “primary purpose of the Park is to protect and perpetuate ...” but what about the recreation purpose of seeing the inside of the park? People do not visit the Park to only see the visitor center. The majority travel the trails. Designating Malibu Canyon as a preserve could preclude trail connections from Mesa Peak FR/Puerco Canyon FR across Malibu Canyon in the southern area to connect with the present trails in the lower portion of Malibu Canyon.

14-6

Page 3-12: REC-1.1 If you are serious about working “to ensure compatibility between existing users,” then an alternative, secondary trail between Tapia and MCSP is a necessity for safety as well as to decrease user conflicts. Quality Recreational Activities are an important consideration. By default, Tapia will become a bike trail as more and more other users refuse to take a chance on risking their safety and reducing the quality of their experience in the Park. Although the Tapia Spur Trail is designated as multi-use, hikers and equestrians are at risk. It is important to consider having another trail for the 1-mile distance that would serve the traditional recreation community of hikers and equestrians. Changing a narrow, multi-blind-cornered trail to multi-use is ignoring the concerns of valid trail users. There is a lack of quality in the trail experience when anxiety and fear are present at every blind curve. Re-opening the Ladies Trail would benefit everyone. One trail could be designated for bikes, and the safety of all would be considered. With an increased population expected, it is even more critical to have a safe trail between Tapia and MCSP for all users. Quality Recreational Activities should be kept in mind.

14-7

There is a state designated scenic highway through Malibu canyon, and yet there is no trail that reasonably parallels it or gives visitors a closer look. The canyon, the creek and the vistas are magnificent and should be accessible for people who like to travel slowly rather than driving along in a vehicle with fleeting views of portions of the area. A trail would be worthwhile.

14-8

REAGAN RANCH - RR-2 and RR-3

Regarding the horse campground, it appears that recommendations in this draft were made without the benefit of scientific data. Good decisions should be grounded in science instead of through subjective preferences. The phrase “do not exceed a capacity of 40 horses at the equestrian camp” is singularly defining of the planners’ bias. One equestrian campground within several thousands of acres is quite minimal, considering that the historical and cultural background of the Park is extensively equestrian with the ranching and farming operations of the past settlers. There is approximately 8,000 to 10,000 horses in the Santa Monica Mountains. Horse people from other areas will be coming to visit and camp in this Park. Although hikers and bikers outnumber equestrians; nevertheless, horseback riders are one of the three major park users. Since there is no horse campground in the SMMNRA, this facility will be greatly appreciated and used regularly.

14-9

It will be much more of a significant environmental impact to build a new visitor center as compared to an equestrian campground that handles more than for 40 horses. The new visitor center will require extensive grading, construction of a good-sized building and parking lot, and other major facilities associated with a visitor center. The campground needs very little grading, only a small restroom building, and no major construction facilities. The environmental concerns have already been addressed with planned best management practices, BMPs. There does not seem to be either logical or financial reasons to relocate the maintenance and housing facilities at Reagan Ranch, unless there is talk of having horses in the stables. In view of the economy of the State, and since the department does not seem interested in having horses for staff, the present uses of the stables and barn as storage and office areas are very good. The heavy equipment storage area is perfect due to its easy vehicle access for regular use and for emergencies. Since the stables are of historic value, they can be restored on the outside, yet still be used for storage inside.

14-10

There is no scientific data that horses’ waste imperils humans. It is not a cause of any zootic diseases, diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans. Horses are herbivores and their waste is bio-degradable. Further, manure is a desired product that is sold at garden nurseries as a plant enhancement. Horses are very compatible with wildlife. Horse corrals are wildlife friendly, with coyotes easily going through them as well as plenty of space for animals to go around them. This equestrian campground is not designated as a group campground per se; it is for individual use, although groups can use it. There are several incorrect references in the draft that it is for groups. There are often special events that will bring in over 100 horseback riders, so limiting to 40 is unrealistic. Initially, the campground should have 15 campsites with 2 corrals at each site, plus 5 corrals scattered through the campground, and an overflow area.

14-11

Page 3-9 NR-5.1: Since wildlife has been moving around and surviving well, it is unclear why expanded preserve areas are considered. Why are they? Wildlife co-exists with present recreational users. Wildlife is not impacted by people unless they go to the high intensity, crowded areas where people are impacted by people. Present wildlife corridors seem to be working, as the animals are obviously not disturbed by the people they see and continue to use their trails and passageways. **NOTE:** wildlife does not move away from horses unless the riders are talking. Wildlife considers horses as other animals like themselves. It is common to walk a horse very close to deer and coyotes.

14-12

## CIRCULATION, TRAILS & ACCESS

Page 3-17 CTA-1 Safe access will only be achieved between Tapia and MCSP with a secondary trail.

14-13

TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION – there was no discussion of trails. It is interesting that “implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact related to transportation and circulation if it would substantially increase hazards due to design features (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses ...” This criteria should also apply to trails, e.g. Tapia Spur Trail. Why should safety only be considered for vehicles?

14-14

## INTERPRETATION

Page 3-18 INT-1 The education program should incorporate Leave No Trace (LNT) ethics.

14-15

Page 3-19 INT-2.2 Historical resources must include ranches/ farms that had livestock and crops.

14-16

INT-2.3 It is wrong to single out the recreation user as impacting the resources without taking all things into account, including staff and their vehicles, as well as wildlife.

14-17

Page 3-20 INT-3.5 What is a Scope of Collections Statement?

14-18

INT-3.7 Storytelling should be included to assist in keeping the history alive.

14-19

INT-4.2 Outreach should include individuals, not just groups.

14-20

Page 3-21 INT4.5 This has been a long talked-about plan for years. I hope it materializes.

14-21

## VISITOR USE

Page 3-25 3.3.9 Visitor-serving facilities by private landowners should be encouraged, since the Park does not have the wherewithal to develop businesses for the public’s use.

14-22

Page 3-6 3.2.4 In discussing the Recreation/Operations Zone there was a fleeting reference to April Road property, but I did not see more information and the map was difficult to read.

14-23

## MISCELLANEOUS

Page 3-38 Not addressing the trail issue by lumping it with “attention beyond the scope of the General Plan” appears to relegate it to minimum attention. Why not address the Trail issue and leave some other issues for “beyond the scope ...?” The environmental requirements and protections are already in place for the land, but the trail problems impacting recreation, circulation, user conflict, connectors, health and welfare of the visitor, new trails, etc. are pushed to the bottom of the attention list.

14-24

Since there were already thousands of homes surrounding the lands when the State acquired land for the Park, it was already a known fact that this is not a pristine area, that private homes were throughout the mountains and bordered the Park, and that vacant private land would eventually have more homes built upon it. Viewshed is caught in the balancing game between private property development and providing for public enjoyment. If this area were truly pristine, unspoiled by man, then limiting what is in the views could be considered. However, with thousands of homes and other developments surrounding MCSP, it is not correct to say this area was or is pristine; and it is discriminatory to make it difficult for others to build in the area while having accepted the prior developments.

14-25



I did not find the comments from the second public meeting held in July 2003, though I could have missed them.

14-26

I realize that putting together a document to cover all of the issues associated with MCSP is quite an undertaking. I know that there was considerable time spent in researching, verifying and compiling information. It is unfortunate that the public is given so little time to review such a large document, compared to how much time you have taken in preparing it.

14-27

I appreciate the opportunity to make comments on the Plan and hope to discuss further some of the issues at a later date. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ruth L. Gerson".

Ruth L. Gerson  
President

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**Letter 14: Recreation and Equestrian Coalition**

Comment No.    Response

- 14-1            The Recreation and Equestrian Coalition (REC) commented that the General Plan was not accessible enough for the public during the public comment period. The document was available for public review for 45 days, as required by CEQA guidelines and Department policies. In addition, the Department accepted letters received up to one week after the comment period officially closed.
- 14-2            REC commented on their support for Alternative 1. This comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.
- 14-3            REC commented that Natural Preserves limit recreational opportunities. Under the Park Plan, the total acreage of natural preserve land would increase from 38 percent to 51 percent with the addition of Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve. See Responses 8-1 and 8-5. Maintaining adequate recreational opportunities in the Park is important to allow visitors quality outdoor experiences while not inflicting significant negative impacts on the Park's resources. The designation of the new Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve does not exclude recreational use of the canyon. In fact, the General Plan calls for a trail feasibility study to be completed in Malibu Canyon. If a trail is feasible, it is anticipated that one would be constructed through the canyon, ultimately connecting the interior portions of the Park to the ocean. As discussed in Response 3-4, NPS is working on a TMP for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. While recreation is an important part of the Park's purpose, it is also the duty of the Department to protect rare and sensitive species. The Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve would be established to protect southern steelhead trout, coastal sage scrub, habitat, important views, and other sensitive resources.

- 14-4 REC commented that people and ecosystems are compatible. The vision of the General Plan is in agreement with this statement. The comment has been provided for review and consideration by the Department.
- 14-5 REC commented that the General Plan favors preservation over recreation. The comment also discusses the importance of balancing natural resource protection with park access and recreational opportunities. See Response 14-3.
- 14-6 REC commented that the new Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve could preclude a trail through the canyon. The intent of the Department is to develop a trail through this area, if feasible. See Response 14-3.
- 14-7 REC commented that an additional trail is necessary between Tapia Park and the main park area. See Response 3-4. The Tapia Spur Trail currently connects Tapia Park to the main park entrance area. The General Plan would allow an additional trail between Tapia Park and the main park area if it is feasible and deemed necessary for safety reasons.
- 14-8 REC would like a trail built through Malibu Canyon so that trail users could enjoy the spectacular scenery. See Responses 3-4 and 14-3.
- 14-9 REC commented that there is no need to limit the capacity at the new equestrian camp to 40 horses. See Response 6-2. Guideline RR-2.1 has been revised to identify the maximum number of equestrian camp sites. The equestrian camp does not preclude equestrian events when large numbers of horses will need stabling. Such events are at the discretion of the park staff and are allowed with the appropriate special event permit.
- 14-10 REC commented that the construction of the new equestrian camp will not be a significant environmental impact. It is agreed that the equestrian camp is a necessary recreational facility that will benefit a number of park users and will not create significant environmental impacts. The goals and guidelines in Section

3.4.5 would ensure that equestrian facilities are developed in an environmentally sensitive manner. The comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.

- 14-11 REC commented that there is no scientific data that horses' waste is detrimental to humans. See Response 6-2. Horse waste is natural but concentrated waste needs to be managed to avoid potential water quality impacts from nutrient loading in the Park's watercourses. As discussed in Response 6-3, Guideline RR-2.2 has been revised to ensure proper waste management.
- 14-12 REC commented that preserves do not need to be expanded to protect wildlife corridors. Protecting biocorridors is important to allow the natural migration of species. As expressed in Guideline NR-5.1, Natural Preserves would only be expanded to protect those biocorridors that are considered critical habitat for survival of a species.
- 14-13 REC commented that a second trail is needed between Tapia and the main park entrance. See Responses 14-7 and 3-4.
- 14-14 REC commented that the Section 4.6.9, Transportation and Circulation, should also analyze the impacts of safety on trails. The significance thresholds described in Section 4.6.9 are based on criteria from the CEQA Guidelines, Appendix B. Trail safety issues are addressed in the General Plan goals and guidelines in Sections 3.3.6, 3.3.3, and other sections of the park plan.
- 14-15 REC would like to see "Leave No Trace" ethics incorporated into interpretive programs. Guideline INT-1.4 has been revised to incorporate these policies.
- 14-16 REC commented that the historical resources interpreted must include ranches and farms. Ranching and farming was a way of life in the Santa Monica Mountains. As discussed in Section 3.3.7, the Ranching, Farming, and Hunting Era is one of the key interpretive periods for the Park. Guideline WSA-1.2

encourages the development of a living history exhibit at White Oak Farm, which provides public enjoyment and education about early farming life in the region.

- 14-17 REC commented that recreational activities should not be signaled out as having an impact on the Park's resources. This is one of several topics that are listed under INT-2.3, which specifically addresses interpretation of the Park's natural resources. Visitor education about recreational activities and their potential impacts on the Park is only one of several components of a successful interpretive program, which would also include education of park staff.
- 14-18 REC would like the definition of a Scope of Collections statement. The glossary has been updated to define the phrase.
- 14-19 REC commented that storytelling should be included in the oral history program. The Department agrees that storytelling is an important way to record the history of the Park. Guideline INT-3.7 was provided to establish an oral history program for the Park, which would include interviews and storytelling to record important information about the Park's history.
- 14-20 REC commented that outreach should also include individuals. The Department maintains a database of agencies, organizations, and individuals that all receive information about the Park, including the General Plan and EIR public notices. Interpretive programs will involve individuals as well as groups and community organizations.
- 14-21 REC would like to see Guideline INT-4.5 materialize. The General Plan fully supports interpretive programs at White Oak Farm. The comment has been provided for review and consideration for the Department.

- 14-22 REC commented that they would like private landowners to be encouraged to develop visitor-serving facilities. The comment has been provided to the Department for review and consideration.
- 14-23 REC commented that it April Road was barely mentioned and was unreadable on the maps. April Road is discussed in Section 3.2.4 Recreation/Operations Zone and is shown on Figure 7. The April Road area is used for park operations and maintenance, and would continue to be used for these activities under the Park Plan.
- 14-24 REC commented that trail issues should be addressed better in the General Plan. The Malibu Creek State Park General Plan provides a broad vision for the long-term management of the Park. Specific trail designations are not programmed in the General Plan; however, the document does provide broad guidance for future management of the Park's trails and trail use. Additional guidelines have been developed that will be included in the Final General Plan. These guidelines further address the need to balance the needs of the various trail users within the Park. See Responses 3.4 and 3.5.
- 14-25 REC commented that the viewshed around the Park is not pristine and that commenting on new development is unfair. Although development does exist in some areas that are visible from the Park, the Park does offer thousands of acres of pristine habitat that are isolated from development. See Response 13-8.
- 14-26 REC commented on the fact that the comments from the second public meeting were not included in the Draft General Plan. See Response 6-1.
- 14-27 REC commented that the public should have been given more time to review the General Plan. See Response 13-3.

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#### **4. RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE GENERAL PLAN**

The following section describes the recommended changes to the General Plan and Draft EIR, as a result of comments on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR, as well as any other staff-directed changes that are not related to the public review. For each revision, it is indicated whether the change resulted from staff direction or public comments. These changes have been incorporated into the General Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report and are described below.

##### **GLOBAL CHANGES**

- Changed the spelling of Craggs Road to have only one “g.” (Staff-Directed Change)
- Corrected the park acreage from 7,553 to 7,881. (Staff-Directed Change)
- Changed all references to Century Lake Dam construction from 1901 to 1910 (Staff-Direct Change).

##### **FIGURES**

###### **Figure 6 – Vegetation** (re: Response 7-1)

- The vegetation map has been revised to more clearly show the vegetation communities.

###### **Figure 7 - Preferred Plan** (re: Response 3-3 and Staff-Directed Change)

- Removed Mesa Peak Fire Road from Core Habitat Zone and designated it Natural Open Space
- Added label for Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve
- Added labels for Insert A and Insert B

###### **Figure 8 – Alternative 1** (re: Response 3-3 and Staff-Directed Change)

- Added label for Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve
- Added labels for Insert A and Insert B

###### **Figure 9 – Alternative 2** (re: Response 3-3 and Staff-Directed Change)

- Added label for Malibu Canyon Natural Preserve
- Added labels for Insert A and Insert B

**TABLES**

**Table 1-1 - Timeline of Land Use in Malibu Creek State Park Area**

- Inserted updated timeline. (re: Response 12-3)

8400 BP	Early human settlement in the Santa Monica Mountains
	Chumash occupy the coastal region from San Luis Obispo to Malibu Canyon
1542 AD	First documented contact of Chumash with European explorers
1770-1820s	Euro-American explorers and travelers first pass through Santa Monica Mountains
1802 - 1840s	Early Hispanic settlers establish first land grants in park area
1850 – 1900	Hispanic and American settlers create small rural community
1863	Sepulveda Adobe constructed at present location
1910-1930s	Crags Country Club established along Malibu Creek in future park
1924	Mulholland Highway helps open access to Santa Monicas and Las Virgenes Valley from urban Los Angeles
1920s	Curtis Colyear establishes his “gentleman ranch” at White Oak Farm site
1938	Los Angeles County establishes public park on old Tapia property along Malibu Creek
1946	20 <sup>th</sup> Century Fox purchases property for large film location ranch
1948 -1953	Malibu Canyon Road constructed, opens access from coast
1973 – 1975	California Department of Parks and Recreation purchased 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Ranch and additional parcels
1976	Department opens park to the public on July 10 <sup>th</sup>
1978	First General Improvement Plan adopted for Malibu Creek State Park and Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area dedicated
2002	Malibu Creek State Park general plan amendment process begun

**Table 2-4 - Trails and Fire Roads in Malibu Creek State Park**

- Table was revised to correct mileage (re: Staff-Directed Change):

Trail Name	Miles	Hikers	Bicycles	Horses
Ann Skager Trail for the Visually Impaired	0.4	✓		
Backbone Trail (west of Corral Canyon)	2.8	✓	✓	✓
Bulldog Road	4.3	✓	✓	✓
Cage Creek Trail	0.3	✓		✓
Chaparral Trail	0.6	✓		✓
Cistern Trail	0.3	✓		✓
Crags Road	2.4	✓	✓	✓
Deer Leg Trail	0.6	✓		✓
Forest Trail	0.5	✓		✓
Grassland Trail	0.7	✓	✓	✓
High Road	0.6	✓	✓	✓
Lake Vista Trail	0.6	✓		✓

Trail Name	Miles	Hikers	Bicycles	Horses
Las Virgenes Connector Trail	0.6	✓	✓	✓
Las Virgenes Fire Road	1.4	✓	✓	✓
Liberty Canyon Road	1.2	✓	✓	✓
Lost Cabin Trail	0.7	✓	✓	✓
Lookout Trail	0.9	✓		✓
Lookout Fire Road	1.0	✓	✓	✓
Mesa Peak Fire Road	6.3	✓	✓	✓
Mott Road	0.7	✓	✓	✓
Phantom Trail	2.1	✓		✓
Piuma Trail	1.9	✓		✓
Rock Pool Road/Trail	0.2	✓	✓	✓
Saddle Peak Trail	3.2	✓		✓
Talepop Trail	1.8	✓		✓
Tapia Spur Trail	1.3	✓	✓	✓
Upper Grassland Trail	0.4	✓	✓	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.8</b>			

✓ = use allowed

Source: State of California- The Resources Agency, Department of Parks and Recreation, Malibu Creek State Park Brochure, 1994.

**Table 3-1. Malibu Creek State Park: Management Zones Recreation Compatibility Matrix<sup>1</sup>**

- Revised table (Staff-Directed Change):

		Core Habitat Zone	Natural Open Space Zone	Cultural/ Historic Zone	Recreation/ Operations Zone
<b>Public / Visitor Uses and Facilities</b>	Camping in designated areas	x	x	x	✓
	Hiking on designated trails	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Hiking (off trails)	x	✓	x	✓
	Equestrian on designated trails	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mountain Bikes on designated trails	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Other recreation <sup>2</sup>	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖
	Motorized equipment and vehicles on paved roads	x	✓	✓	✓

Comments and Response to Comments

		Core Habitat Zone	Natural Open Space Zone	Cultural/ Historic Zone	Recreation/ Operations Zone
	Emergency access	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Parking in designated lots	x	✓	✓	✓
	Transportation hub	x	✓	✓	✓
	Education / Interpretation	⊖	✓	✓	✓
	Commercial filming / photography	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖
	Picnicking and picnic facilities	x	✓	✓	✓
	Buildings for visitor support	x	⊖	⊖	✓
	Group camp facilities	x	x	x	✓
<b>Operational / Administrative Uses and Facilities</b>	Utilities	x	✓	✓	✓
	Souvenirs / Concessions	x	x	✓	✓
	New employee housing	x	✓	x	✓
	Special events	x	📄	📄	📄
	Research	📄	📄	📄	📄
	Administrative / Maintenance facility	x	✓	✓	✓
	Ecological restoration	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>1 This table is provided for general guidance purposes and is subject to future Departmental policy changes.</p> <p>2 May include, but is not limited to rock climbing, orienteering, geocaching, swimming, and other active recreation.</p>					

<b>Legend</b>			
✓	Compatible	⊖	Check with District
x	Not Compatible	📄	Special Use Permit Required

## 1.1 PARK LOCATION AND HISTORY

- More clearly defined the location on the Park in relation to other national and state parks by adding the following sentence to the second paragraph (Staff-Directed Change):

*A number of large protected areas within the Santa Monica Mountains surround the Park, including Paramount Ranch and Castro Crest, located approximately 3 miles west of Topanga State Park and 10 miles east of Point Mugu State Park.*

- Replaced the fourth paragraph with the following four paragraphs (Staff-Directed Change):

*The Malibu Creek State Park lands have a rich cultural history (Table 1-1). One of the largest western tribes, the Chumash Indians, inhabited the current park lands and the surrounding region for many centuries. The Chumash village located near the mouth of Malibu Creek was named “Humaliwo” which means “the surf sounds loudly.” Today, the Chumash still recognize many of the sites and properties in and around the park as integral to their continuing cultural heritage. Archaeological and ethnographic sites associated with the Chumash are found throughout the park. The arrival of the Spanish Colonial explorers, missionaries, and settlers in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century brought substantial changes to the Chumash world. The Euro-Americans’ establishment of new land uses and institutions caused disruption of traditional Chumash political, social, and economic lifeways. Their introduction of new plants, livestock, and land management activities also made a major alteration to the previous cultural landscape of the region.*

*At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Euro-Americans began to travel through and settle on the current park lands. These new settlers joined the remaining Chumash in the area and established small ranch homesteads. Several private land grants were established in and around the park in the Spanish Colonial and later Mexican Republic Periods. After the Mexican-American War and the United States purchase of Alta California, several of these pioneering Hispanic families confirmed their land grants while other areas of the future park became part of the public domain. Over the latter half of the century additional Hispanic and American settlers moved into the area and set up small farms and ranches. These settlers formed a small rural “one-room schoolhouse” community that existed into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

*As Los Angeles grew rapidly into a major urban metropolis in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the isolation of the Las Virgenes-Malibu Creek area ended. The advent of the automobile, opening of roads such as the Mulholland Highway, and the picturesque scenery soon attracted thousands of recreationists, new residents, and the film industry to the Santa Monicas--and Malibu Creek. Private institutions such as the Craggs Country Club, as well as “gentlemen’s ranches” such as at the White Oak Farm, were typical of the new settlement patterns. Many of these new residents were prominent businessmen and entertainment stars who looked to the area for respite from the hectic urban world of Los Angeles. Motion picture studios found the ecologically and geographically diverse area perfect for filming and in 1946 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox purchased the core area of the future park as a location ranch.*

*The interest in opening the Santa Monica Mountains to recreation for the greater public in the latter 20<sup>th</sup> century was fueled by the growing environmental movement of 1960s and 1970s, and resulted in the creation of Malibu Creek State Park in 1976, and the dedication of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in 1978. By the year 2004, Malibu Creek State Park represented one of the largest public owned units in the 153,672 acre Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.*

- Revised the second sentence on page 1-5 to read (re: Response 12-1):

*After the Mexican-American War, the rancheros sold pieces of their large land holdings to American homesteaders and several Californios.*

## **1.2 PURPOSE FOR ACQUISITION**

- Revised the first paragraph to read (Staff-Directed Change):

*The current boundaries of Malibu Creek State Park are shown in Figure 2. As noted above, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Corporation owned the core property of the present-day park from 1946 to 1974. During the next few years the State purchased additional large parcels from the family of noted entertainer Bob Hope and of former governor, and future President, Ronald Reagan. This included a 1,000-acre parcel north of Mulholland Highway purchased in 1975. The State Park Commission classified the land as Malibu Creek State Park in order to restore and preserve the natural beauty of the area, and opened it to the public on July 10, 1976.*

## 2.1.1 PARK CLASSIFICATION

### Natural Preserves

- Deleted the following sentence (re: Staff-Directed Change):

*No more roads or trails will be built in the preserves.*

### California Wildlife Center

- Replaced El Nido with Monte Nido in the first sentence under the California Wildlife Center (re: Response 12-7):

*The California Wildlife Center, a non-profit organization, is located on Park property in the Monte Nido area on Piuma Road, approximately 0.5 mile southeast of Tapia Park.*

### Circulation

- Added the following information on public transportation in the second paragraph after the second sentence (re: Response 12-8):

*A Metropolitan Transportation Authority bus services Agoura Road approximately 1 mile north of the park boundary (MTA 2003).*

## 2.1.2 SIGNIFICANT RESOURCE VALUES AND CONSTRAINTS

### Hydrology and Floodplain

- Revised the second paragraph under Hydrology and Floodplain to read (re: Response 12-10):

*Within the Park there are two primary watercourses: Malibu Creek and Las Virgenes Creek. Malibu Creek eventually drains into Santa Monica Bay through Malibu Lagoon (USDA 1997). Many tributaries of Malibu Creek are ephemeral; however, irrigation water as well as water released from Malibou Lake, has created year round flows down Malibu Creek and some of its tributaries. Las Virgenes Creek flows year round; however, some of these flows are fed by urban runoff from the upstream water shed. Both Malibu Creek and Las Virgenes Creek are in designated 100-year flood zones. In some areas, the boundaries of this zone do not extend above the stream bank. In some flood-prone areas of the Park, major floods have occurred.*

### Plant Communities

- The first paragraph was updated to read (re: Response 12-3):

*The Park is a biologically diverse coastal setting that supports a variety of vegetation communities. Regional vegetation mapping prepared for the SMMNRA General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS) indicates that at least ten vegetation communities have been identified as occurring within the Park boundaries (Figure 6); other cover types (e.g., rock outcrops) have also been mapped. The vegetation communities are generally discussed in the GMP/EIS, and other descriptions are provided in Hiking Trails of Malibu Creek State Park, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. No focused or updated vegetation mapping was conducted for the preparation of this General Plan. The vegetation communities depicted on Figure 6 can be summarized within six general habitat types, including coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grassland/herbaceous, oak woodland, marsh, and riparian woodland. These general categories, and the subtypes of vegetation communities known for the Park based on existing mapping, are described below. The vegetation information herein is based on the documents noted above, plus descriptions provided in R.F. Holland's Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (1986) and in Barbour and Major's Terrestrial Vegetation of California (1988). To the extent possible using existing information, the vegetation communities noted are consistent with the List of California Terrestrial Natural Communities, recognized by the CNDDDB (DFG 2003). Several of the vegetation communities within the Park are considered rare by the state, and thus are of high priority for inventory in the CNDDDB (DFG 2003); this is noted below where relevant. In addition to the vegetation community information, this section provides information on sensitive plant species known to occur, or that have the potential to occur, within the boundaries of the Park.*

### **Coastal Sage Scrub**

- A final sentence was added to the paragraph (re: Response 12-3):

*In the southeastern portion of the Park, an area is mapped as coastal sage scrub/chaparral transition, indicating an area where elements of both of these communities intergrade. Other locations of coastal sage scrub/chaparral transition are expected to occur within the Park.*

### **Chaparral**



- The following sentences were added to the end of the paragraph (re: Response 12-3):

*Both chamise chaparral and northern mixed chaparral are noted as occurring within the Park based on regional vegetation mapping in the SMMNRA GMP/EIS. Chamise chaparral is considered a vegetation alliance that includes several vegetation associations based on the species that co-occur with chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) (CDFG 2003); the associated species generally contribute little to the total cover within this vegetation community. Northern mixed chaparral may also include chamise; however, scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*), and species of ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp.) and manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* spp.) co-dominate and characterize this vegetation community. The chamise chaparral would be found on more xeric slopes and ridges, compared to the northern mixed chaparral. Other species associated with chaparral in the Park include, but are not limited to, currant (*Ribes* sp.), fuchsia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*), holly-leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*), holly-leaf redberry (*Rhamnus ilicifolia*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) (McAuley 1996b).*

### **Grassland**

- The following sentence was added after the second sentence of the first paragraph (re: Response 12-3):

*The native grasslands within the Park, although not depicted on Figure 6, are considered sensitive habitats, and this vegetation community is a high priority for inventory in the CNDDDB.*

- The following sentence was added to the end of the second paragraph (re: Response 12-3):

*Non-native grasslands/herbaceous areas are mapped within the Park and are shown concentrated in the northern portion of the Park, east of Las Virgenes Road, along Mulholland Parkway, and along Mesa Peak Road.*

### **Oak Woodland**

- Valley Oak Savanna was removed from the title for clarification (re: Response 12-3).

- The section was revised to read (re: Response 12-3):

*The oak woodland plant community within the Park is dominated by coast live oaks (Quercus agrifolia). On Figure 6, areas of coast live oak woodland are shown scattered throughout the Park. This community is associated with north slopes and canyon bottoms or shaded ravines. In some areas, thick oak woodland, which also includes elderberry (Sambucus mexicana), walnut (Juglans californica), laurel sumac, and several herbaceous plants, forms a forest environment. A number of small shrubs also occur within the protective borders of the oak woodland. Valley oaks (Quercus lobata) once covered large areas of flatlands forming open savannas, but now remain only as a few isolated stands. The valley oak grows in fertile soils and is the largest native oak within the Park. The valley oak woodlands at the Park define the southernmost extent of this species' range. Oak woodland communities are considered to be sensitive due to their scarcity, limited range, and high wildlife value. In particular, valley oak woodland is a high priority for inventory in the CNDDDB.*

### **Marsh**

- The *Freshwater Marsh* section was renamed *Marsh* (Staff-Direct Change):
- The *Marsh* section was updated and expanded (Staff-Direct Change):

*Both coastal salt marsh and freshwater marsh vegetation communities occur within or near the boundaries of the Park. Areas of salt marsh occur just outside of the Park and are limited to the Malibu Lagoon and Malibu Creek river mouth areas at the coast (Figure 6). Typical plants in this community include pickleweed (Salicornia sp.), salt grass (Distichlis spicata), and sea blite (Sueda californica). Although freshwater marsh is not identified in the regional mapping prepared for the Park area (Figure 6), this vegetation community does occur within the Park around Century Lake and at other locations along Malibu Creek. Freshwater marsh is a community dominated by perennial, emergent monocots (flowering plants that have one seed leaf), which grow in standing fresh water. Freshwater marsh species common in the Park include cattails (Typha spp.), bulrushes (Scirpus spp.), and sedges (Carex spp.). This plant community provides excellent habitat for animals and birds.*

### **Riparian Woodland**

- The following sentence was added to the end of the section (re: Staff-Directed Change):

*Riparian woodlands are an endangered plant community in southern California (Bowler 1990). Several riparian forest and woodland vegetation communities, including southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest and southern riparian scrub, are considered high priorities for inventory in the CNDDDB. Several of these subtypes of riparian woodland or forest habitats do occur within the Park boundaries (CNPS 2004).*

### **Sensitive Plants**

- The following two sentences were added to the end of the sensitive plants section (re: Staff-Directed Change):

*Two of the five sensitive plant species known to occur within the Park are listed as threatened by the USFWS, another is listed as endangered (Table 2-2). A recovery plan finalized by USFWS in 1999 provides guidance for conservation and recovery strategies for the three listed plant species known to occur within the Park.*

### **Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Linkages**

- The fifth paragraph has been revised to read (re: Staff-Directed Change):

*NPS has identified the continuing losses and fragmentation of open space, and the resultant loss of habitat connectivity within the region, as a serious threat to continued survival of the mountain lion and large mammal population in the Santa Monica Mountains and the surrounding area. To determine the breadth of the problem and potential solutions, conservation biologists for the SMMNRA are researching habitat use and area requirements for target species; monitoring human activity impacts on wildlife; and creating management strategies to identify, protect, and restore essential habitat areas, linkages, and corridors (NPS 2002).*

### **Cultural Resources**

- The title Native American Prehistoric Background was changed to *American Indian Prehistoric Background* (Staff-Directed Change)
- Under American Indian Prehistoric Background, the second half of the first paragraph was revised to read (Staff-Directed Change):

*Early Period occupations are typically identified by the presence of handstones (manos) and millingstones (metates), while occupations dating later than 3-4000 B.C. contain a mortar and pestle complex as well, signifying the exploitation of acorns (King 2000). The oldest Early Period settlements tend to be small and are frequently located on elevated land features well suited for defense. Later in the period some settlements increased in size, with the largest reaching a population size of several hundred persons. These larger settlements tend to be less defensively situated (King 2000).*

- The following sentence was added in the second paragraph after the second sentence (Staff-Directed Change):

*This was accomplished in part through use of the circular shell fishhook on the coast and more abundant and diverse hunting equipment.*

- The last sentence of the second paragraph was revised to read (Staff-Directed Change):

*This is likely because Malibu Creek was the only stream running the entire width of the Santa Monica Mountains, emptying into Santa Monica Bay near Humaliwo (CA-LAN-264), the ethnographic Chumash village from which Malibu derives its name.*

- The fourth paragraph was revised as follows (Staff-Directed Change):

*The Late Period is characterized by a dramatic increase in population. A highly effective subsistence regime, which varied geographically, had evolved by this time. The Chumash inhabiting the coast and the Channel Islands relied primarily upon marine resources for their subsistence (Landberg 1965). Exploitation of fish, shellfish, sea mammals, and waterfowl allowed for populations in excess of 1,000 in coastal villages. These likely represented the most populous settlements west of the Mississippi (Moratto 1984). An extensive trading network linked Chumash settlements situated in different ecological zones, thereby diversifying the distribution of resources. The exchange system relied upon the use of olivella bead money produced primarily on the Channel Islands (King 1976). The most powerful Chumash chiefs, often exercising a degree of political control over other villages, resided in the largest settlements along the mainland coast. This power was derived*

*from their ability to broker exchanges between the offshore islands and inland areas (King 1982).*

### **Historic Overview**

- The Historic Overview section was rewritten to include more detail and clarify dates (Staff-Directed Change).

#### *Hispanic Period (1770s to 1845)*

*Historic activity in the current park property area begins with the Spanish Colonial Period of Alta California. The Chumash's first encounter with the Spanish Colonial explorers dates to Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo's 1542 voyage along the Alta California coast. The Spanish Period began in earnest when early Spanish soldiers, missionaries, and colonists such as the Portola (1770) and Anza Expeditions (1776) passed through the region. The Anza Expedition camped near Las Virgenes Creek along this newly established north-south route in the current City of Calabasas. Established as the El Camino Real (the King's Highway), this became the main route connecting the Spanish military, religious, and civil settlements established in Alta California.*

*Although the Spanish established Missions at San Buenaventura (1782) to the north and San Fernando (1797) to the southeast in an effort to convert the local Chumash and Tongva into colonial subjects, very little documented development activity occurred on the current park property during this time.*

*One of the few documented land uses dates to 1801 or 1802 when California Governor Arrellaga gave Miguel Ortega a provisional grant of land known as the Rancho de Santa Gertrudis de Las Virgenes where he and his family lived and grazed cattle (Bancroft 1886, 2:211). (Ortega's home is not considered to have been on the park property). The eventual boundaries of this provisional grant would encompass the northern portion of the park along the current Las Virgenes Road. During this period additional provisional grants gave names to other local areas such as Topanga Malibu Sequit (to the south along the coast), Amarga (to the west of the current Park property), and El Triunfo (to the south of the Las Virgenes grant but encompassing the current core area of the park).*

*Miguel Ortega died in 1809 and his family moved back to Los Angeles. With the decline in civilian activity, Governor Sola ceded the lands known as*

*Ranchos Las Virgenes, Agua Amarga, and El Triunfo to the Mission San Fernando as grazing lands (Carrico et. al. 1988:2-1, 2-2). Still Las Virgenes Valley did see use as a transportation route. The Tapia family (grantees of the Topanga Malibu Sequit Rancho) operated a pack service along the El Camino Real. In doing so Bartolomeo Tapia established a regular camping spot at a large white oak he marked with a carved cross--this spot would be known as the "Cruz de Tapia" (Land Case Docket 532:90). Long gone, the "Cruz de Tapia" was located in the current boundaries of today's City of Calabasas.*

*While there is substantial evidence of the persistence of Chumash socioeconomic and political structure into the early historic era in the region, the Spanish colonization, especially the Mission system, had a devastating effect on the native peoples. Introduction of infectious diseases and a general disruption of political, social, and economic life-ways caused significant declines in local Indian populations (Johnson 1989); however, throughout these tumultuous times, local Chumash continued to live and work in the area. Their descendents today still hold great significance to some of the sites and locations that have been important to these peoples for many centuries.*

*After Mexican Independence in 1821, the Missions control in California declined while provisions were made to increase the opportunity for private citizens to obtain land. This culminated in the secularization of the Missions and the opening of their lands for private grants.*

*In 1833, Domingo Carrillo of Santa Barbara and Nemesio Dominguez of Los Angeles each petitioned for two leagues of separate land known together as the Rancho Las Virgenes from the Mission San Fernando's jurisdiction. In 1834, the Governor granted the rancho lands to the two men. Three years later Carrillo sold his interest in the rancho (two leagues) to Nemesio's relative Jose Maria Dominguez. At the same time Dominguez also requested an additional two leagues of land known to be located in the old Canon de Triunfo (assumed to be in the core area of today's park). In 1845, Jose Maria Dominguez conveyed the Rancho Las Virgenes claim to Maria Antonia Machado (Land Case Docket 532:20; Expediente 54:6-10). However, Mexican land records (Expedientes) do not indicate that the Triunfo lands were ever officially ceded to Dominguez, or that he pursued the request further. This would make the Triunfo lands unclaimed when the Americans*

took over in 1846. The Tapia family continued to own the Malibu grant until 1848.

*Early American Period (1845-1898)*

*The United States obtained ownership of Alta California in 1848. The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo ceded the land to the U.S. and called for protection of Mexican-era land grants. In 1851, the U.S. Congress passed the California Land Act that established the process for Mexican grant claimants to file proof of their title. In 1852, Maria Antonia Machado petitioned for her claim for the Rancho Las Virgenes. The Land Commission approved the grant in 1854 and in 1857 the District Court confirmed title of Rancho Las Virgenes to Machado. The U.S. appealed the case but the appeal was dismissed in 1858 (Land Case Docket 532:40-45). The claimants then waited for the General Land Office to survey and submit a plat map confirming the boundaries of the grant. With the backlog of rancho surveys and the outbreak of the Civil War in the 1860s, the owners of Rancho Las Virgenes would have to wait until the early 1870s for their first plat (Land Case Docket 532; Griswold del Castillo 1990).*

*In the meantime a small, but growing population of Hispanic and American settlers began to move into the area. The lands within and just to the southeast of the Las Virgenes grant were already seeing occupation. Maria Machado and her sons Jose and Pedro Reyes as well as her son-in-laws D. W. Vejar and Bernardo Botiller were living on the western end of the rancho near the El Camino Real (Land Case Plat Map 1881). Just off the southeastern end of the rancho in the Las Virgenes Valley, just north of the site of the Sepulveda Adobe were the houses of Nemesio Dominguez and Apolonio Dominguez (Reynolds 1874). The 1850 U.S. Census notes the two households and lists a young daughter in Apolonio's family named Soledad--the future wife of another local settler, Pedro Sepulveda (Census 1850).*

*Although no Tapia family members were listed as living in the Canon de Triunfo in 1850, they certainly were familiar with the area, occasionally traveling up the Canon de Malibu from their coastal rancho to reach the grazing lands of the upper creek (Greene 1980; Robinson 1958; Smith 1987; Goldsworthy Plat 1872). Pedro Sepulveda noted in an 1874 court testimony that he first visited the area in 1850 and noted the other families living on both the Las Virgenes Rancho and other "public" lands (Land Case Docket 532:90). Previously he had become one of those new settlers. On November*

28, 1857 Pedro Sepulveda married Maria Magdalena Soledad Dominguez in Los Angeles (Farnsworth and Farnsworth 1990:4). During the next two years Pedro and his wife constructed an adobe house on a tributary a short distance southwest of the Dominguez House off the Las Virgenes lands. Reportedly the house was too close to the stream and a flood in 1860 washed the building away (Smith 1987). Pedro along with local Indians built a new house (the current standing structure) in 1863.

During the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Canon de Triunfo saw continued growth. In addition to the Sepulveda, Dominguez, and Tapias, other families continued to move into the area. These families “homesteaded” in the Canon de Triunfo due to their belief it was government land not within the boundaries of the Las Virgenes Rancho. The small farming and ranching community in the Las Virgenes Valley grew such that a small schoolhouse was built a few hundred yards northeast of the Sepulveda Adobe along the old road that Las Virgenes Road closely follows today (GLO Plat Map 1898).

Interestingly, the Las Virgenes Valley (as the area became known) residents’ title to their lands was not often recorded. Appeals to the General Land Office’s surveys of the Las Virgenes Rancho in the 1870s and early 1880s caused confusion as to the title of the Canon de Triunfo lands. Various petitions to enlarge or reduce the surveys during this period were filed on behalf of both the Machado heirs and several settlers of the Triunfo Canyon. The “settlers and squatters” of Triunfo Canon, as the Las Virgenes Rancho heirs called them, filed against the additions shown in the government’s 1881 survey. These men, John Ballard, Benjamin Franklin, F. W. Alexander, G. A. Frasher, George W. Hamilton, and Manville Morrena, hired a Washington D.C. law firm to represent them. The General Land Office heard their claim and made the decision that Triunfo Canon had never been confirmed to Jose Dominguez. A new patent was granted on July 19, 1883 but the final survey, which is the one in use today, was not completed until 1896 (Land Case Docket 532:161-164, 299-315; GLO Plat Map 1898).

The publication of the GLO Sectional Plat Map in 1898 changed the situation for the local landowners. In 1901, Las Virgenes Valley residents such as Raimundo Tapia, Gustav Kleman, Mary Chapman, Homer Scott, Severo Sasueta, Jesus Belarde, George Morrison, and Ynez de Botiller (living at the site of the park’s White Oak Farm), all filed patents for their homesteaded properties (GLO Tract Book T1S, R18W).



*By the turn-of-the-century the small one-room schoolhouse community of Las Virgenes was fully established and most titles secure. Both the Sepulveda Adobe and the original structure located at the White Oak Farm area of the park date from this period. The Sepulveda Adobe would eventually be sold to Joseph Hunter, while the Botillier family lived at the White Oak site (Ovnick et al. 2000; Newland 1997).*

*Early Twentieth Century Period (1900-1930s)*

*In the meantime, land use in the Santa Monica Mountains experienced change. Due to the acquisition of a sufficient water source from out of the region, growing citrus and oil industries, and the pleasant climate, southern California was becoming a populous and wealthy region (Starr 1985; 1990). With the simultaneous proliferation of automobiles, a growing road network, and a new appreciation for outdoor recreation resulting from the Conservation and “Back to Nature” movements, beautiful and pristine locations such as the Santa Monica Mountains soon became recreational destinations (Belasco 1979; Schmitt 1969).*

*Summer camps, recreational residences, and private sporting clubs were established throughout the rugged and beautiful mountains of Southern California (Baur 1959). The Santa Monica Mountains were no exception. In the first two decades of the century such recreational activity came directly to the lands now within the Park.*

*In 1910, a group of sixty prominent businessmen established the exclusive Craggs Country Club along Malibu Creek within today’s park. The Craggs, which consisted of a multi-story clubhouse/lodge as well as several homes for caretakers and members, was a place where high-society members could enjoy the beautiful natural setting for fishing, hunting, hiking, networking and socializing (Ovnick et al. 2000; Maslach 2000). Structures associated with the Craggs are still extant today including the dam they built to create today’s Century Lake. The Hunt House (current park visitor center), the ruins of the Mott Adobe, and the foundations of the lodge building all date their origins to the Club. The Club was active well into the 1930s when it closed as result of declining membership and the property later sold.*

*Access to the Santa Monica Mountains for such recreational uses was buoyed by the development of new roads such as the Mulholland Highway (which*

*bisects the Park). The original 22-mile section from Hollywood to Calabasas opened in December 1924. Hailed by the Los Angeles City Engineering Department as an achievement of civil engineering over nature, it provided direct vehicular access to what had been rugged and remote territory (Roth 2001). Although it did not result in mass suburbanization of the Santa Monica Mountains as some real estate speculators had hoped, it did provide access to those who could afford to develop residential and recreational retreats. The expansion of the highway west of the Las Virgenes Road continued to open up the area to residential and recreational development such as at Malibou Lake west of the Park.*

*As such, many prominent businessmen and celebrities built “country homes” or “gentlemen’s ranches” as they were sometimes called in the Santa Monica Mountains. Many prominent citizens and entertainment stars flocked to the mountains to live, play, and enjoy the solitude and natural beauty. One of the most noteworthy examples found in the Park is the Colyear’s White Oak Ranch. Colyear was a noted Los Angeles businessman who had purchased the property from the pioneer Botillier family in the late 1920s. The current house, barn, and ranch complex dates to the late 1920s when these improved roads and automobiles made such “country homes” extremely popular (Ovnick et al 2000).*

*Development plans from the coast would also affect the current park properties. In 1924-25 the Rindge Family, then owners of the Malibu Ranch, constructed a 100-foot high concrete arch dam in the rugged Malibu Canyon approximately 2 miles from the coast. The reservoir was expected to provide water for the family’s agricultural and residential development needs; however, the family’s plans did not come to fruition due to extensive legal battles that forced them to sell off much of their property. Over the years the reservoir filled with sediments and in 1967 the State declared the dam non-functional (Rindge Dam File 1970-2000).*

*Motion picture filming in the Santa Monica Mountains also started as soon as the industry began to establish itself in southern California in the early 1900s and blossomed with the opening of roads such as the Mulholland Highway. The film industry’s use of the rugged and picturesque landscapes of the Malibu Creek parklands is documented well back into the 1920s. Filming increased rapidly in the 1930s as production companies regularly used the area including the future park property (Smith 2003). One of the first major*

*films to be completed was 20th Century Fox's filming of the award-winning How Green Was My Valley in 1941. So impressed with the property's filming possibilities, in 1946 Fox purchased over 2,000 acres of the former Crags Country Club and additional properties (Maslach 2000; Ovnick et al 2000). The Paramount Ranch, another prominent "film ranch," is located just west of the Park on National Park Service property.*

*During 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's nearly 30-year ownership, many feature films and television shows were taped against the beautiful Malibu Creek backdrop. Some of the most noteworthy include Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House, South Pacific, Planet of the Apes, Dr. Doolittle, and M\*A\*S\*H (to name just a few) (Maslach 2000; Ovnick 2000). Fox altered much of the landscape of the area around today's core park area. Grading of land, building of sets, and a large filming tank were results of the intensive "film ranch" operations. Today, some scattered remains of the filming era are still extant in the park. One of the most notable is the Hunter House (now a Park office) that was originally built as a set for the 1948 film, Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House (Ovnick 2000; DPR 1975:46).*

#### *Post-World War II (1946-Present)*

*The entertainment industry's love affair with the Santa Monica Mountains and the Malibu Creek area did not only exist with the studios. Many prominent celebrities found the area a welcome retreat from the rapidly urbanizing Los Angeles. At Malibu Creek two such cases existed. One at the White Oak Ranch, which was purchased by the family of the world famous entertainer Bob Hope and on the western end of the park near Malibou Lake, motion picture star and later politician, Ronald Reagan built a small horse ranch which he used as a family retreat (Malibu Creek History Files).*

*Recreation in the area was not solely for the wealthy or famous. In the 1930s Los Angeles County looked to establish a public park on property near Malibu Creek. In 1938 the County Supervisors, led by Supervisor John Anson Ford, established a County Park on 154 acres of property previously homesteaded by Jose Antonio Tapia. One year later they built a 16-acre boys probation camp to house and feed "impoverished youth" of newly arrived Depression-Era families known as Malibu Boys Camp. The Park and youth camp closed during World War II but the re-opened and re-named Tapia Park in 1954 to coincide with the completion of the Malibu Canyon Road (constructed 1948-1953). In 1961, the County transferred 38.56 acres to the Probation*

*Department for establishment of the David Gonzales Boy's Camp and in 1966 closed the Malibu Boys Camp and demolished the camp structures (Cooley et al. 2003:22-23).*

### **Archaeological Information**

- The second and third paragraphs were revised for clarity (Staff-Directed Change):

*As an important location for abundant fresh water throughout the year, the areas along Malibu Creek and its tributaries appear to have been ideal locations for prehistoric villages. Although sites have been found scattered about the Park, the major concentrations are clearly along and near the confluences of streams. In particular, at least four village sites have been identified to the west of Las Virgenes Road near the intersection of Mulholland Highway and to the south near the present park entrance where the Stokes, Las Virgenes, Liberty, and Malibu Creeks converge. It has been suggested that one of these (CA-LAN-229) is the ethnographic Chumash village of Talepop, recorded as the home to a number of Chumash who entered the missions around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (King et al. 1968; King et al. 1982; King 2000: 60; McLendon and Johnson 1999:87).*

*The Park's cultural resources from the historic period include a variety of structures, sites, and cultural landscape features reflective of the previous land uses found at the park. Evaluated within the contexts of early California settlement, resort and recreational life, and the film and entertainment industry many of these resources are both individually and collectively significant and provide unique opportunities for interpretive and educational experiences. Spread throughout the park, many of these individual remnants of past activities and land uses in the form of structures, foundations, brick kilns, movie set props, retaining walls, refuse dumps, and ruins may contribute to larger contextually associated historic districts and cultural landscapes. A number of noteworthy structures and sites stand out among these many potentially historic resources.*

- The paragraph under *Sepulveda Adobe* (CA-LAN-1426H) was revised for more detail (Staff-Directed Change):

*Built by Pedro Sepulveda in 1863 following a flood that swept away his first residence, the Sepulveda Adobe is located on the north side of Mulholland*

*Highway approximately 500 feet west of Las Virgenes Road. The architectural design and materials used in the construction of the Sepulveda Adobe reflect the adaptation of the Spanish/Mexican vernacular style in the Early American Period (Sanchez and Allen 1987; Felton and Newland 2001). Built in a foundation of stones, the original structure consisted of two rooms and a porch running the length of the house. Its walls were manufactured from sun-dried adobe blocks, which were mortared and plastered with adobe and then whitewashed (Sanchez and Allen 1987). Archaeological excavations of the Sepulveda Adobe indicate the presence of a prehistoric component extending to a depth of 20 centimeter (cm) (Foster and Greenwood 1987; Sanchez and Allen 1987). The Sepulveda Adobe is unique as one of the last remnants of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Las Virgenes Valley community.*

- A new section called Rindge Dam was inserted after the Sepulveda Adobe section (re: Response 12-3):

*Rindge Dam*

*The Rindge Dam, located 2 miles upstream from Malibu Lagoon, was constructed by the Rindge family in the mid 1920s. Measuring 175 feet in width and 90 feet in height, the Rindge Dam was originally constructed to create a 574 acre-foot water retention basin for use in agricultural irrigation. Since its construction, over 700,000 cubic yards of sediment have become trapped behind the dam allowing Malibu Creek's peak flows to spill over its crest. No longer effective as a water retention facility, removal of the dam is currently being considered, primarily to alleviate the limitations it imposes on the migration of the steelhead trout (American Rivers 2003; Environmental Protection Agency 2003; Friends of the River 2003).*

- The Mott Adobe Ruins (CA-LAN-735) section was revised for clarity (Staff-Directed Change):

*The Mott Adobe was a vacation home built around 1925 by Los Angeles lawyer and member of Craggs Country Club Johnny Mott on Mott Road just off Craggs Road. The structure is a Spanish Colonial Revival style adobe block structure with a two-door garage, featuring local bricks, wooden doors and beams, and wrought iron fixtures (Newland 2000). Only portions of the building are still standing.*

- The White Oak Farm/Colyear Ranch section was revised to read (Staff-Directed Change):

*White Oak Farm encompasses 1,022 acres of the Santa Monica Mountains, west of Las Virgenes Canyon Road north of Mulholland Highway. Originally owned by the Botilliers and the White Oak Farm property was later sold to the Velarde's a family of farmers. The Velarde's sold the property to Curtis Colyear, who then sold it to Jennings and Ruth Shamel in 1947. In 1952, Bob and Delores Hope purchased the property from the Shamels. The Hopes sold the property to the State in 1975 and named it Malibu Creek State Park. It is currently a residence for one park ranger (Newland 2000).*

- The reference under the Mendenhall Oak section was revised to be *McAuley 1996* (Staff-Directed Change).

### **Aesthetic Resources**

- Changed the reference under Designated Scenic Areas and Routes (page 2-45) from NPS 2002 to NPS 2000 (re: Response 12-17).

### **Other Activities**

- Revised the paragraph under Other Activities (page 2-47) to read (re: Staff-Directed Change):

*The size and diversity of resources at the Park allow for a variety of activities throughout the year, including, filming, special events, school tours and group visits, field investigation work by university students, and extreme sporting events. Many park visitors simply sight-see and explore the Park.*

## **2.1.3 PLANNING INFLUENCES**

### **System-wide Planning**

- The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement section was revised to add more detail (Staff-Directed Change):

*The SMMNRA GMP/EIS was developed by the NPS and other agencies to provide a framework for managing development, recreation, and natural and cultural resources in the SMMNRA for the next 15 to 20 years. Five alternatives were developed and the preferred alternative was created from the main themes of the preservation alternative, education alternative, and recreation alternative. The preferred alternative designates 80 percent of parkland as low intensity with small pockets of concentrated high intensity in*

*non-sensitive or developed areas. The preferred alternative also includes the preparation of the Trail Management Plan (TMP) for the SMMNRA.*

*The Park, located within the SMMNRA, is subject to the management goals, policies, and guidelines established in the SMMNRA GMP/EIS. In 1978, NPS was granted authority to promote joint administration of the parklands within SMMNRA with the Department and SMMC. All three agencies collaborated to develop management for SMMNRA, which, combined with this General Plan, will guide management of the Park for the next 15 to 20 years. The elements of this plan are consistent with the management strategies and themes of the SMMNRA GMP/EIS.*

- The following sentence was added to the end of the County of Los Angeles Malibu LCP/LUP section (Staff-Directed Change):

*The General Plan is consistent with the regulations described in the County of Los Angeles Malibu LCP/LUP and future development is subject to the applicable LCP/LUP guidelines.*

### **Park Interest Groups**

- The following paragraph has been added to list of interest groups (re: Response 12-21):

*Santa Monica Mountains Task Force of the Sierra Club (SMMTF) - SMMTF, formed in 1972 by the Sierra Club, educates the public on the importance of the Santa Monica Mountains as a cultural, natural, and recreational resource. SMMTF also works closely with local jurisdictions to prioritize key land for protection.*

### **3.2.1 CORE HABITAT ZONE**

- The following sentence was added to the end of the first paragraph (Staff-Directed Change):

*It is important to note that Natural Preserves are State Park subclassifications, not General Plan management zones. The Core Habitat management zone encompasses other biologically important areas of the Park outside of the preserve boundaries.*

- The following text replaces the last sentence of the third paragraph (Staff-Directed Change):

*The 1,050-acre preserve protects rare and endangered species habitat, including that of the important southern steelhead trout, unique geological formations, spectacular scenic vistas, and the ecological integrity of the creek, which drains into Malibu Lagoon, an important and protected coastal lagoon. The new preserve would also protect several other sensitive plant and animal species and some of the largest and most pristine expanses of coastal sage scrub in the Park.*

### **3.3.1 NATURAL AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

- The following sentence was added to NR-2.1 (Staff-Directed Change):

*Additional surveys for sensitive plant species will be identified, and conducted as needed.*

- Revised Guideline NR-2.2 to read (Staff-Directed Change):

*As understanding of sensitive plant species improves, plans shall be created to improve the specific management of Park-wide and regionally important ecosystems and species. To this end, undertake and support research opportunities concerning the life history strategies and population dynamics of key plant species within the Park; the findings shall be used to guide recovery and conservation efforts.*

- Added Guideline NR-2.4 (re: Response 7-3):

*Prepare an enhancement and recovery plan for the Valley Oak Woodlands and Valley Oak Savannah within the Park.*

- Added Guideline NR-2.5 (re: Response 7-6):

*Prepare conservation and recovery plan for the following sensitive plant species in the Park: Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*), Marcescent dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *marcescens*), and Santa Monica Mountains Dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *ovatifolia*). These conservation and recovery plans may include establishment of rare plant preserves, monitoring, surveys, ongoing research, and seed banking activities.*



- Added Guideline NR-2.6 (Staff-Directed Change):

*Prepare a comprehensive grassland restoration program for the Park.*

- Revised Guideline NR-3.1 to read (re: Response 8-9):

*Monitor, assess, and document the occurrence, extent, and type of exotics present in the Park and adjacent lands to gain an understanding of the presence and role of exotics in natural ecosystems and identify and eradicate the presence, occurrence, and extent of exotic plant species in the Park.*

- Revised Guideline NR-7.2 to read (Staff-Directed Change):

*Develop and implement best management practices (BMPs) to capture and treat stormwater runoff from Park roads and other paved surfaces. Paved areas within 500 feet of water bodies will be the priority in terms of areas to be addressed.*

- Added Guideline NR-7.3 (Staff-Directed Change):

*Work with local planning agencies to minimize the impacts to the watershed from development.*

- Added Guideline NR-7.4 (Staff-Directed Change):

*Work with local planning agencies to minimize the impacts to the watershed from development.*

### **3.3.2 Cultural Resources**

- The following nine guidelines were added under Goal CR-1 (Staff-Directed Change):

**CR-1.2:** *Improve and maintain the inventory of cultural resource records, cultural location and survey maps, and GPS/GIS database for cultural resources within the Park. Data should be available to the appropriate cultural specialists within the Department.*

**CR-1.3:** *Inventory, analyze, and provide reports for existing archaeological collections from within the Park to assist park staff in evaluating the significance of various archaeological sites.*

**CR-1.4:** *Develop and maintain an archive of historic documents, journals, books, maps, and photographs pertinent to the Park.*

**CR-1.5:** *Conduct oral history interviews with individuals important in the history of the Park, including past owners or the land, park staff, park rangers, and film production employees.*

**CR-1.6:** *Establish a protocol for conducting periodic examinations and assessments of known archaeological sites and historic buildings within the Park and for assessing the effects of visitor use and natural erosion upon archaeological sites.*

**CR-1.7:** *Identify and implement measures to protect archaeological sites and historic buildings during natural disasters, such as wildfires, floods, and earthquakes.*

**CR-1.8:** *Provide the locations of archaeological sites and other historic properties to park rangers and maintenance staff and augment this information with cultural resource training to assist field staff in monitoring the conditions of archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, and historic buildings throughout the Park.*

**CR-1.9:** *Evaluate the potential effects of work by outside agencies upon the cultural and natural resources of the Park.*

**CR-1.10:** *Establish standards for the treatment of fragile cultural remains, such as aboriginal rock art.*

- The following four guidelines were added under Goal CR-2 (Staff-Directed Change):

**CR-2.2:** *Determine the geological, stratigraphical, and geographical distribution of fossil localities and potential fossiliferous sedimentary deposits within the Park.*

**CR-2.3:** Support efforts to develop cyclic surveys of paleontological resources within the Park. Promote cooperative studies and management partnerships with local universities and museums to conduct scientific paleontological field research.

**CR-2.4:** Develop criteria that identify paleontological resources appropriate for public interpretation. Implement recommendations for interpretation, where feasible.

**CR-2.5:** Create an inventory of existing fossil collections that originated from the Park.

- Goal CR-3 and Guideline CR-3.1 were revised for clarity and Guideline CR-3.2 was added (Staff-Directed Change):

**Goal CR-3:** Protect, rehabilitate, and restore the significant historic resources in the Park.

**CR-3.1:** Restore and rehabilitate historic structures to improve the understanding of and appreciation for these resources. Determine feasible adaptive reuse strategies for historic structures, including the Hunt House and Hunter House emphasizing enhancing interpretation.

**CR-3.2:** Comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, the State Historic Building Code, and the resource management policies of the Department when maintaining, preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, and reconstructing historic buildings, structures, and landscape features.

- Goals CR-4 and Guideline CR-4.1 were revised for clarity (Staff-Directed Change):

**Goal CR-4:** Preserve significant cultural landscapes and landscape features and elements to assist interpretive education and enhance preservation efforts for cultural heritage.

**CR-4.1:** Work to identify and maintain significant cultural landscapes and landscape features in the Cultural/Historic Zone without adversely impacting significant natural resources. To this end, operations specialists, ecologists,

*and cultural specialists shall work cooperatively when developing new facilities and programs in the Cultural/Historic Zone.*

### **3.3.3 RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- Revised Guideline REC-1.4 to read (re: Response 12-1):

*Provide bilingual signage that clearly marks the trails and reinforces rules and policies of trail usage.*

- Revised Guideline REC-1.5 to read (re: Response 12-1):

*Provide bilingual interpretive signage of other bilingual interpretive media that enhance the visitor's understanding and appreciation of the resources along the trails.*

### **3.3.4 SCENIC RESOURCES AND AESTHETICS**

- Guidelines SR-1.1 through SR-1.3 have been revised and SR-1.4 was added (re: Response 8-7):

**SR-1.1:** *Incompatible structures in natural areas may include abandoned buildings, storage tanks, maintenance facilities, and other structures. All buildings and structures must be evaluated by a Department cultural specialist for potential eligibility to the National and California Registers. No decision to demolish can be made until this evaluation process has been completed. If the subject building or structure is found eligible to the National Register or, a contributing element of a National Register District, the Department must consult with the State Office of Historic Preservation prior to proceeding with the proposed demolition.*

**SR-1.2:** *If structures are removed, return sites to their natural condition through the use of appropriate native vegetation. Conceal structures from public view, including vegetative screening, use of natural paint colors, and camouflaging. Where feasible, relocate utility lines away from natural areas or place underground. Within visual proximity to significant cultural sites and facilities, remove or conceal existing incompatible structures.*

**SR-1.3:** *Shield light sources to reduce light pollution that can degrade night-time views. Utilize full cutoff luminaries, low reflectance surfaces, low-angle spotlights, and other appropriate measures to reduce light pollution where feasible.*

**SR-1.4:** *Provide input and visual mitigation measures to local jurisdictions and other state and federal agencies regarding visual impacts of private and public developments and improvements that are visible from the Park. Input will be provided by the Department through normal environmental review processes.*

- The following sentence was added to the end of Guideline SR-2.2 (re: Response 8-7):

*Input will be provided by the Department through normal environmental review processes.*

### **3.3.5 FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

- Added Guideline FAC-3.2 (Staff-Directed Change):

*California State Parks cultural and natural resource specialists shall examine the areas of the Park most frequently used for movie and television show production work. The current conditions of the cultural and natural resources at these locations will be assessed, and then rehabilitation and protective treatments will be implemented, as needed.*

- Added Guideline FAC-4.2 (re: Response 12-4 and Staff-Directed Change):

Coordinate with utility companies with easements within the Park to ensure that utility lines are relocated away from sensitive areas, where feasible.

### **3.3.6 CIRCULATION, TRAILS, AND ACCESS**

- Added “bilingual” to Guideline CTA-1.2 (Staff-Directed Change).

- Revised Guideline CTA-1.2 to read (re: Response 12-1):

*Indicate trailhead and Park entries through the use of consistent bilingual signage, developed in accordance with the Park and regional guidelines, including SMMNRA standards.*

- Guideline CTA-1.10 was added (Staff-Directed Change):

*Develop backcountry camping opportunities along the Backbone trail corridor. The camping areas shall support primitive camping only and camping shall be restricted to designated sites.*

- Added Goal CTA-2 (re: Response 3-7 and 3-8):

*Establish a trail management system for the Park that provides safe access, adequate recreational opportunities, and promotes responsible trail use for mountain bikers, hikers, and equestrians.*

- Added Guideline CTA-2.1 (re: Response 3-7 and 3-8):

*Encourage the establishment of a contiguous trail system that connects the Park to Topanga State Park on the east and other NPS lands to the west.*

- Added Guideline CTA-2.2 (re: Response 3-7 and 3-8):

*Coordinate with NPS and other participating agencies to prepare and implement an interagency trail management plan for the SMMNRA, including the Park.*

### **3.3.7 PARK-WIDE INTERPRETATION**

- Added the following sentence to the end of Guideline INT-1.4 (re: Response 14-15; Response 14-19):

*Incorporate Leave No Trace ethics into interpretive programs and signage.*

- Added “bilingual” to Guideline INT-1.6 (Staff-Directed Change).
- The Unifying Theme and subsequent Primary and Secondary Themes were revised (Staff-Directed Change):

***Unifying Theme:*** *The natural and cultural heritage of Malibu Creek State Park is a dynamic interaction of people, place, and values.*

***Primary Themes:***

- *The Park is a sanctuary of diverse natural communities that contain sensitive native plant and wildlife species, which have great value ecologically, scientifically, aesthetically, and recreationally.*
- *The Park is an opportunity to explore how people can live and work responsibly in the complex and dynamic Mediterranean environment of the Malibu Creek watershed.*
- *The prehistoric and historic material culture, buildings, tools, and other artifacts, in the Park reveal the changes in the way of life that have affected the people of Las Virgenes Valley.*
- *Located near Los Angeles, the second largest urban area in the nation, the Park's relatively undisturbed open space provides opportunities for solitude, exploration, inspiration, and renewal that can fulfill the human need for self-discovery through personal connection with the land.*

**Secondary Themes:**

- *The rare and important valley oak woodland community has flourished in the Park, while its overall range in Southern California has diminished.*
- *Sustainable resource management includes strategies that balance preservation, conservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of the natural and cultural resources in the Park with visitor use and enjoyment.*

**3.3.9 RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL LANDOWNERS AND ACQUISITIONS**

- Revised Goal REG-3 (re: Response 12-65) to read:

*Expand the Park to protect critical natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources of local, regional, and state importance.*

- Revised the second sentence of Guideline REG-3.1 to read (re: Response 12-65):

*Evaluate and pursue land acquisitions from willing sellers that would increase access to recreational lands and important cultural resources, offer connections to wildlife habitat, provide natural resource linkages, and protect scenic resources to help achieve resources management objectives.*

- Added Guideline REG-3.2 (Staff-Directed Change):

*Acquisition efforts should be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the LPP and that maximize watershed benefits and provide buffers between the Park and surrounding development.*

#### **3.4.1 TAPIA PARK**

- Changed “enhance” to “preserve” in Goal TAP-1 (Staff-Directed Change).
- Changed “enhancement” to “rehabilitation” in Guideline TAP-3.2 (Staff-Directed Change).

#### **3.4.2 MAIN PARK ENTRANCE AREA**

- Added the following sentence to the end of Guideline MPE-2.4 (re: Response 12-74):

*Use native plants and shrubs that are easily maintained.*

#### **3.4.3 WHITE OAK FARM AND SEPULVEDA ADOBE**

- Added Guideline WSA-1.3 (re: Response 12-28):

*Limit the development of new facilities within the Cultural/Historic Preserve to the north of White Oak Farm between Las Virgenes Road and the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve. Encourage interpretive facilities and programs that focus on early human inhabitants in the region and their connection to the areas abundant natural resources. Encourage enhancement and restoration of the riparian habitats along Las Virgenes Creek and the Valley Oak Woodland communities adjacent to the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve.*

#### **3.4.4 CRAGS ROAD CORRIDOR**

- Added the following sentence to the end of Guideline CRC-1.3 (re: Response 12-78):

*Consider the potential of flooding when designing such access.*

#### **3.4.5 REAGAN RANCH**

- Revised Guideline RR-2.1 to read (re: Response 6-2 and Staff-Directed Change):



*Develop an equestrian group camp facility at Reagan Ranch. Initially accommodate approximately 15 sites with a two-horse capacity per site at the equestrian camp. Future expansion of the equestrian camp will not exceed a capacity of 40 sites with a two-horse maximum capacity per site. Staging for special events (including temporary stables) is subject to Department review and special event permit procedures. Components of the campground could include corrals, rounds pen, multi-use area, and other related equestrian facilities.*

- Revised Guideline RR-2.2 to read (re: Response 6-3):

*Provide dumping bin facilities at Reagan Ranch equestrian camp and encourage patrons to clean up after use of area. Incorporate pollution prevention measures, such as bioswales and catchment basins, into the design of the equestrian campground to eliminate water quality impacts resulting from the equestrian uses.*

- Revised Guideline RR-4.2 to read (re: Staff-Directed Change):

*Consider installation of a self-pay kiosk at Reagan Ranch to collect Park entrance fees. Control public vehicle access to the former ranch area.*

### **3.4.6 RINDGE DAM**

- Inserted a new section on Rindge Dam, including a goal and three guidelines (Staff-Directed Change):

*The Rindge Dam is located on Malibu Creek, two miles north of Malibu Lagoon. Constructed in the mid 1920s, Rindge Dam is an important vestige of early California settlement and agrarian heritage in the Santa Monica Mountains. No longer functioning as an effective water retention basin, removal of the dam is being considered, primarily to extend the migration route of the steelhead trout.*

**Goal RD-1:** *Consider natural, aesthetic, and historic aspects of the dam and its surroundings in future management of Malibu Creek.*

**Guidelines:**

- **RD-1.1:** *Coordinate with USACE to evaluate the feasibility of removing Rindge Dam.*
- **RD-1.2:** *Conduct comprehensive research and recordation of the historic structure prior to any modification or removal.*
- **RD-1.3:** *Evaluate opportunities to include the history of the Ridge Dam in exhibits focusing on early agriculture in the region.*

### **3.5 ISSUE RESOLUTION**

- Added filming to the bottom of the list (re: Response 12-91):

*Evaluate commercial filming impacts on the resources and visitor experience and balance appropriately.*

- Added “Interpretive Master Plan” to the end of the list.

### **4.2.3 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED**

- Revised the first two sentences of the second paragraph to read (re: Response 3-5 and 6-4):

*Some issues addressed in the General Plan cannot be entirely resolved through this planning process. As described in Section 3.5, eight major issues were identified that cannot be fully resolved due to shortfalls in current funding and staffing levels.*

### **4.5.1 LAND USE AND PLANNING**

The following sentences were added in the middle of the paragraph after the fourth sentence:

*Under the CCA, the County of Los Angeles Malibu LCP/LUP protects coastal sage scrub, one of the significant sensitive natural resources within the Park. In accordance with the County of Los Angeles Malibu LCP/LUP, the General Plan protects significant areas of coastal sage scrub habitat through the Core Habitat management zone.*

### **4.6.1 AESTHETICS**

#### **Significance**

- Guidelines SR-1.3, SR-1.4 were added to the Significance section.

### 4.6.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

#### Impact Analysis

- FAC-3 and WSA-1 were added as goals that would reduce the potential impacts.
- The following sentence was added to the end of the second paragraph:

*Guidelines NR-2.4 and NR-2.5 require enhancement, conservation, and recovery plans for the Park's most sensitive plant communities and species.*

- The following was added to the end of the fifth paragraph:

*Similarly, guidelines are provided to ensure that important natural resources in the Cultural/Historic Zone north of White Oak Farm are protected and enhanced. Guideline WSA-1.3 would encourage restoration of riparian habitat along Las Virgenes Creek and Valley Oak Woodland communities adjacent to the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve.*

- The last two sentences of the sixth paragraph were revised to read:

*Also, measures are provided under Goal FAC-3 to assess and mitigate the impacts of filming activities in the Park. Education of Park visitors and careful Park development, combined with research and management efforts, would protect and enhance the biological resources in the Park and would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.*

#### Significance

- Goals NR-6, NR-7, and FAC-3 were added as goals that would reduce potential impacts.

### 4.6.4 Cultural Resources

#### Impact Analysis

- Goals SR-1 and RD-1 were added to the list of goals that would reduce potential impacts.
- The second sentence of the second paragraph was revised to read:

*Potential impacts to significant cultural landscapes and landscape features from development in this zone would be reduced through Guideline CR-4.1.*

- The second half of the third paragraph was revised to read:

*A number of additional guidelines are provided under Goal CR-1 to identify, protect, and interpret the archaeological resources within the Park. Guidelines CR-2.1 and CR-3.1 specifically require the management, protection, and restoration of paleontological and historic resources. These guidelines require an inventory, monitoring, and education use about paleontological resources, and restoration, rehabilitation, and potential adaptive reuse of historic resources. Guidelines SR-1.1 and SR-1.2 would ensure that measures to protect and improve scenic resources within the Park would not negatively impact cultural and historic resources.*

- The second sentence of the sixth paragraph was revised to read:

Goals WSA-1, RR-3, and RD-1 provide guidelines specific to White Oak Farm, Sepulveda Adobe, Reagan Ranch, and Rindge Dam.

### **Significance**

- SR-1 was added to the list of goals that would reduce the potential impacts.

### **4.6.7 Hydrology and Water Quality**

#### **Impact Analysis**

- The third sentence of the third paragraph was revised to read:

*Guideline NR-7.3 promotes watershed management principles for the Park and encourages coordination with local planning agencies to provide regional watershed protection.*

- Guideline NR-7.3 was changed to NR-7.2
- The last paragraph in the section was revised to read (re: Response 12-97):

*The streambeds of Malibu Creek and Las Virgenes Creek are designated as 100-year flood zone. While the flood zones are primarily limited to the banks of the creeks, severe flooding is known to have occurred in Malibu Creek State Park. Goal NR-7 and associated guidelines ensure that no structural engineering measures occur within the creeks, unless required for safety purposes. Implementation of the General Plan would not locate structures in a*

*100-year flood zone and would not result in hazards from flooding; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.*

## **CHAPTER 6 – REPORT CONTRIBUTORS**

- Jim Newland’s title was changed from “Archaeologist” to “Historian.”
- Lindsay Templeton’s title was revised to “Supervising State Park Ranger.”

## **CHAPTER 7 – REFERENCES (STAFF RECOMMENDATION)**

- Added references:

American Rivers

2003 *Rindge Dam (Malibu Dam), Malibu Creek, California*  
<http://www.amrivers.org/damremovaltoolkit/currenteffortsmalibu.htm>

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1959 *The Health Seekers of Southern California 1870-1900*. Huntington Library, San Marino.

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1979 *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945*. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Bingham, Jeffery C.

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## CHAPTER 8 – ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

COSCA                      Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency

MRCA                      *Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority*

Rangers                    Department Peace Officers/State Park Rangers

## CHAPTER 9 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Inserted the following items in the glossary (re: Response 3-10):

**Preservation (cultural resources):** the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project (Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties [1995], NPS).

**Recreation, Active:** activities that generally involve running, throwing, or other forms of sport or exercise that may include use of specialized equipment. Examples of active park uses include bicycling, horseback riding, and rock climbing. State Parks generally restrict active park uses to designated areas or may prohibit or restrict some active uses due to the potential for conflict with park users who seek passive uses or more restful activities to more fully enjoy a park's natural features.

**Recreation, Passive:** activities that generally involve leisurely ways to enjoy the outdoor environment such as walking on nature trails, picnicking, fishing, and bird watching.

**Rehabilitation (cultural resources):** the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historic, cultural, or architectural values (Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties [1995], NPS).

**Restoration (cultural resources):** the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading a of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project (Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties [1995], NPS).

**Scope of Collections:** the type of collected materials maintained.

## **APPENDIX C – PUBLIC MEETING NO. 2 PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Appendix C was added (re: Response 6-1):

### **APPENDIX C PARK PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD NO.2 PUBLIC COMMENT ON DRAFT ALTERNATIVES JULY 23, 2003 – AUGUST 25, 2003**

On July 23, 2003, at the second public meeting for Malibu Creek State Park General Plan Update and EIR, Malibu Creek State Park stakeholders

commented on the three draft alternatives: Alternative A, *Preserve Existing Resource Values and Improve Visitor Experience*; Alternative B, *Create a New Natural Preserve through Malibu Canyon in the Southern Park Area*; and Alternative C, *Expand Existing Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve to include Las Virgenes Creek*. Twenty-eight people attended the meeting and many gave verbal or written comments. Furthermore, the comment period extended from July 23, 2003 to August 25, 2003 for stakeholders who were unable to attend the meeting or had additional comments after the meeting to write comment letters. All the comments received are compiled in the tables

### **ALTERNATIVE A**

The stakeholders who preferred Alternative A were concerned that adding new preserves would limit recreational opportunities within the Park. Furthermore, they felt that Malibu Creek State Park is an urban park; therefore, as demand for recreation increases in the region, the Park should be able to absorb the demand without degrading visitor experience. Other suggestions for park improvement or general comments are listed below in Table C-1.

**Table C-1. Alternative A Key Suggestions**

Issue Area	Comment
Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire land at fair market value compensation.</li> </ul>
Camping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add trail camps for equestrians along the Backbone Trail System (as in the SMARTT process).</li> </ul>
Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve vehicular access to park because the present one is dangerous.</li> <li>• Consider creating a separate exit along Las Virgenes Road.</li> </ul>
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep buffer zones between the Park and private property.</li> </ul>
Facilities/Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renovate White Oak Farm.</li> <li>• Implement a small farm at White Oak Farm. Farm animal education is very important for city kids and is part of the history.</li> </ul>
Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildfire suppression is very important.</li> </ul>
Filming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It should not be free to film in the Park.</li> </ul>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the road access to White Oak Farm.</li> <li>• Repair Arizona crossing.</li> </ul>
Interpretive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More representation of original Native Americans.</li> <li>• Interpretation of Spanish Colonial history in park.</li> <li>• Interpretation of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in park.</li> <li>• More emphasis on the Chumash and Anza Expedition.</li> <li>• Create self-guided tours.</li> <li>• Create an educational center for kids.</li> </ul>
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not eradicate all exotic plant species, especially those that provide shade.</li> </ul>
Preserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Preserves are too restrictive to people.</li> </ul>
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add equestrian, hiking, and biking trails.</li> <li>• Need a trail from White Oak Farm to Malibu Lagoon.</li> <li>• Improve the trail access from the Grasslands trail to Las Virgenes trail.</li> <li>• Need a trail along Malibu Creek from Tapia to Pacific Coast Highway.</li> <li>• Develop trails for equestrian use.</li> <li>• Create a trail system for hikers and equestrians.</li> <li>• It is good that trails can be built in the natural preserves.</li> </ul>

Issue Area	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more mountain biking trails.</li> <li>• Need trails to be safe for older hikers and kids.</li> <li>• Trails are too crowded.</li> <li>• New trails are needed.</li> <li>• Use decomposed granite for trails.</li> </ul>

**ALTERNATIVE B**

No stakeholders preferred Alternative B nor did any comment on this alternative.

**ALTERNATIVE C**

The stakeholders who preferred alternative C thought that this alternative offered the best way to protect the natural resources of the Park and enhance trail experience. Furthermore, they also believe that Malibu Creek State Park is an urban park; therefore, as much land as possible should be preserved from development, thereby, enhancing visitor experience of the natural environment. Other suggestions for park improvement or general comments are listed below in Table C-2.

**Table C-2. Alternative C Key Suggestions**

Issue Area	Comment
Interpretive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create youth programs for at-risk kids.</li> </ul>
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve and protect riparian plant communities, native grasslands.</li> <li>• Preserve and protect steelhead habitat.</li> </ul>
Preserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People can access the preserves on foot or by horse.</li> <li>• Create bicycle access into preserves by designating bike corridors or by routing bike trails around the preserves.</li> <li>• Add a network of trails in the natural preserves to garner support for alternative C.</li> <li>• Liberty Canyon needs to be preserved.</li> <li>• Put the preserve in before restoring habitat.</li> </ul>
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not allow mountain biking in the newly established natural preserves.</li> <li>• Allow bicycles to access the preserves on trail corridors or by routing around preserves.</li> <li>• Create a network of trails through the natural preserves.</li> </ul>

Issue Area	Comment
Viewshed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve and protect the pristine views to the east of Malibu Canyon Road.</li> </ul>
Water/Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative C gives us the greatest option for improving the water quality of Malibu Creek and Las Virgenes Creek.</li> </ul>

**COMMENTS FROM STAKEHOLDERS WITHOUT A PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Numerous stakeholders did not select a preferred alternative; however, they had numerous opinions and comments. They want the Park to remain as wild as possible in an increasingly urban area. They also believe it is important to think long term about how to maximize habitat and recreation within the Park. Other suggestions are listed in Table C-3.

**Table C-3. Key Suggestions for park improvement**

Issue Area	Comment
Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malibu Lakeside Homeowners Association would like to help the Park acquire more land through deed transfer credits.</li> </ul>
Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The backdoor entrance into the Park is an issue due to the parking problem and loss of revenue for the State Park.</li> </ul>
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European sites are being protected, but not Indian.</li> <li>• The group camp is built on an Indian site in violation of Coastal Commission.</li> <li>• Preserve Native American sites.</li> <li>• High use area at entrance station is key archaeological site.</li> </ul>
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No new facilities.</li> <li>• Park should not pay the burden of encroaching development.</li> </ul>
Fire Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildfire suppression is critical. Management plan for a fire break between the Park and Malibu Lake community.</li> </ul>
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not widen the entrance station.</li> <li>• The equestrian group camp seems to be placed where it will drain into Udell Gorge and the Udell Natural Preserve. Use BMPs to prevent drainage into the meadow wetland and Udell Gorge.</li> </ul>
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valley Oak savannah habitat is critical and must be preserved.</li> <li>• Develop a natural resource restoration plan, primarily for the non-native grasslands, to replace thistles, mustards, and riggut with native grasses and forbes. This will increase habitat value.</li> </ul>



Issue Area	Comment
Planning/General Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood relations are important.</li> </ul>
Preserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural preserves are important.</li> <li>• Las Virgenes Creek preserve expansion should only go to the creek, not east of the creek.</li> <li>• Complete the Liberty Canyon Preserve by adding the northwest corner.</li> <li>• Malibu Canyon Preserve should protect steelhead habitat.</li> <li>• Define the boundaries of Malibu Canyon Preserve at the ridgelines.</li> <li>• Factor in State owned properties when defining natural preserves.</li> <li>• Mountain bikes should not be allowed in preserves unless there is a designated corridor.</li> <li>• Extend the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve immediately and then start on the restoration plan.</li> <li>• Extend the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve south to Mulholland Highway incorporating the diverse riparian corridor made up of <i>Quercus lobata</i>, <i>Salix</i> spp., <i>Anemopsis californica</i> (yerba mansa), etc.</li> </ul>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train all maintenance and trail workers in resource management.</li> </ul>
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need an assortment of trails: multiuse, hiker/equestrian only, and mountain biking only.</li> <li>• Mountain bikers cannot rider the Stump Piuma segment of the trail going into the Park.</li> <li>• Add a trail from Tapia to Serra Retreat.</li> <li>• Allow for trails in Malibu Canyon Preserve.</li> </ul>

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