



Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness

Interpretation Master Plan

Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness Interpretation Master Plan
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Cover image: San Jacinto Peak from the north side.
Photo by James Absher.

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"Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life."

John Muir

San Jacinto State Wilderness



Location



Regional location in Riverside County. (Map by Eureka Cartography, Berkeley, CA. © California State Parks.)

Executive Summary

The 2002 Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan identifies one unifying theme, with two primary and two secondary interpretive themes for the park. This **Interpretation Master Plan (IMP)** provides directions for and improvements to interpretive services in the park.

The **IMP project team** worked in conjunction with the Long Valley Management Plan team, conducted stakeholder meetings, consulted with subject-matter experts, and did research to collect information needed to prepare this master plan.

The **foundation** of the IMP is a detailed summary of the park's natural, cultural, aesthetic, and recreational resources with its newly developed interpretive mission and vision statements. The IMP also evaluates current staffing, facilities and interpretive opportunities. A visitor analysis includes a profile of who visits and an assessment of visitor expectations, interests, and preferences.

This plan identified seven broad interpretive program improvement goals, along with general guidelines for directing the improvement effort. In addition, specific objectives and strategies for accomplishing the goals were developed. Together, these four elements—Goals, Objectives, Guidelines and Strategies—provide the road map that is intended to guide the overall effort to improve interpretation in Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness over the next decade and beyond.

The final major element of this IMP is an **Interpretation Action Plan** that presents specific tasks to guide park staff in both daily and multi-year interpretive program improvements. The Action Plan will be updated on a regular basis in order to align with changing conditions and trends.

Together, these steps integrate management's interpretive goals and the interests of park visitors to establish the future direction of interpretive programs in Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

Acknowledgements

During the preparation of the interpretation master plan, inspiration and encouragement, information and expertise were provided to bring it to fruition. We wish to acknowledge the following individuals for their guidance in this process:

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- James Absher, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Riverside, CA
- Nancy Mendez, Regional Interpretive Specialist, Southern Service Center, California State Parks, San Diego, CA



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
1 Introduction	1
Park History.....	2
Declaration of Purpose.....	3
Plan Purpose.....	3
Planning Process	3
2 Park Resources	5
Interpretive Significance	5
Natural Resources	6
Cultural and Historic Resources	9
Recreational Resources	15
Aesthetic Resources	16
Opportunities for Interpretation	16
3 Interpretive Direction	18
California State Parks Mission.....	18
California State Parks Interpretive Mission	18
California State Parks Education Mission	18
Mission of Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness.....	18
Mission of Interpretation—Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness.....	19
Vision for Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness	19
Vision for Interpretation—Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness	19
Interpretative Goals and Guidelines	19
Interpretive Themes.....	22
Interpretive Periods	23
Scope of Collections.....	24
Education Content	24
4 Current Interpretation	25
Existing Interpretation Planning Documents.....	25
Interpretive Facilities	27

Interpretive Collections.....	31
Personal Interpretation	33
Interpretive Media	35
Non-DPR Programs	35
Other Programs	35
Staffing.....	36
Revenue	37
Park Research and Resources	38
Other Area Interpretive Providers.....	39
Public Awareness & Community Involvement	39
Partners & Supporters.....	40
Education	40
5 Present Conditions	42
Visitors	42
Visitor Experiences and Expectations.....	45
Circulation & Visitor Orientation	46
Partners & Supporters.....	48
Interpretive Considerations	48
6 Recommendations	50
Goals, Objective and Strategies	50
Phasing & Priorities.....	55
7 References.....	56
8 Appendices.....	58
A. Nearby Interpretation Providers	58
B. General Plan Interpretation & Education Goals and Objectives in Sections other than “Interpretation”	64
C. Visitor Profile Tables	68
D. Education Content Standards Applicable to Personal and Non-personal Programs in the Park.....	72
E. Photograph Credits.....	82

1 Introduction

San Jacinto Peak rises over 10,800 feet above the desert floor—the highest point in California State Parks. On a clear winter day, you can gaze across the valleys of southern California to the Pacific Ocean—a blue sliver on the western horizon. Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness (MSJSPW) are units of California State Parks (CSP), preserving and protecting one the oldest and largest wilderness areas within the CSP system. Treated here as one unit, their approximately 13,900 acres, of which nearly 10,000 acres are designated Mount San Jacinto State Wilderness, lie within the San Jacinto Mountain Range.¹

The park is characterized by steep, rocky hillsides reminiscent of the High Sierra, rugged mountains with wet valleys and meadows, and snow-capped peaks. Unfolding views of the desert floor below and mountain ranges beyond the park add to its spectacular vistas. The northern escarpment is one of the steepest in the United States, plunging dramatically nearly two miles from San Jacinto Peak into San Geronimo Pass below. The San Jacinto Range flora and fauna are part of California’s amazing species diversity of the California Floristic Province. The San Jacinto Mountains lie at the southern end of this province.²

Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness is located in western Riverside County, within an hour’s drive of many of the county’s larger cities and a two-hour drive to the densely populated counties of Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego. State Highway 243 runs along the western side of the park and allows automobile access to the park’s two developed campgrounds. On the northeastern corner of the park, the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway (PSAT) provides easy access to the park and wilderness. The Tramway is operated by the Winter Park Authority (WPA), a legislatively created body separate and autonomous from California State Parks.³

In October 2000, federal legislation established the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (SR-SJMNM). The boundary of the monument crosses through the eastern portion of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. The legislation does not establish any new authority by the Federal Government over State-owned land. California State Parks is supportive of working cooperatively with the Federal agencies to fulfill the park’s highest potential.⁴

¹ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation. p. 1.

² Bakker, Elna. 1996. “Nature’s Handiwork.” In *The San Jacintos, the Mountain Country from Banning to Borrego Valley*. J. W. Robinson and B. D. Risher. Arcadia, CA: Big Santa Ana Historical Society. p. 12.

³ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation. p. 1.

⁴ Ibid. p.1.

Park History

According a wilderness collaborative,

“The long-term values of wilderness to our society and the world will be naturalness and wildness, and protection from human influence. A better understanding of these values will help keep human influence to a minimum while still providing opportunities for visitors to enjoy and experience the wilderness.”⁵

Efforts to preserve and protect various portions of the San Jacinto Mountains began as early as 1897 when President Grover Cleveland established the San Jacinto Forest Reserve (737,280 acres). In 1929 the firm of Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr. was chosen by the California State Park Commission to survey the San Jacinto Mountain Range. Olmsted stressed to the commission that “the entire area still in a wilderness condition, above the region now occupied by resorts, should be publicly controlled as a wilderness park.”⁶ The concept of wilderness preservation became the impetus for Mount San Jacinto State Park. Through the efforts of city and county officials, citizens, organizations and government officials, the California State Park Commission received title to 12,678 acres of wilderness in February 1933. Between 1934 and 1936, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) helped develop part of the newly acquired land into a public park. On June 19, 1937, Mount San Jacinto State Park was dedicated to the people of California.

Additional land acquisitions and trail development continued into the 1940s and 1950s. This included the proposal, design and development of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. This controversial project was completed in 1963 and provided quick access to the park’s high country from Palm Springs, over 8000 feet below.

At the same time, sentiment was growing toward preserving natural areas, particularly wilderness. In keeping with this growing sentiment, the State Park Commission changed the name of MSJSP to Mount San Jacinto Wilderness State Park in 1963. It was the first unit in the State Park System to be so designated. Following the model of the 1964 federal Wilderness Act, California adopted its own Wilderness Act in 1974. “Today, as one of the oldest and the largest wilderness areas within the California State Park system, the primary reason for acquiring the parkland for Mount San Jacinto was and will continue to be its wilderness characteristics.”⁷ This concept played a significant historical role in the development of the state wilderness model of the twentieth century.⁸

⁵ www.wilderness.net: A collaborative partnership between the College of Forestry and Conservation's Wilderness Institute at The University of Montana, the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute.

⁶ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 2.

⁷ Ibid. p. 2.

⁸ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Prospectus.

Declaration of Purpose

The Declaration of Purpose defines the purpose of the Park, and is required by the Public Resource Code, Section 5002.2. The original Declaration of Purpose was approved by the State Park Commission in 1966. A new declaration was implemented with the approval of the General Plan, 2002:⁹

The purpose of Mount San Jacinto State Park is to preserve and protect for the public enjoyment and inspiration, the scenic grandeur of the granite peaks, pristine forest and mountain meadows of the San Jacinto Mountain range. The sheer escarpment soaring up to one of the highest peaks in Southern California, the panoramic desert views, the wilderness and its opportunity for solitude, will remain available for future generations.

California State Parks will preserve, protect and interpret the Park's natural and cultural resources making these features available to the public for their educational, scientific, and recreational benefits. Also, it will establish interpretive programs for visitors that instill an appreciation for the Park's special features and maintain cooperative partnerships with adjoining entities to foster mutual conservation and natural resource management goals.

Plan Purpose

This Interpretation Master Plan presents a blueprint for future interpretation in Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. It builds on the goals of the 2002 General Plan and is guided by the Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Plan (2002). The Interpretation Master Plan provides objectives and strategies for development and delivery of future interpretation projects, programs and services.

The Long Valley Management Plan (LVMP) is being developed concurrently with the Interpretation Master Plan. The LVMP may provide additional guidelines for implementation of interpretation and education programs and facilities.

State Park staff and volunteers provide various interpretive programs year round, throughout the park. However, there is a need for more coordinated and encompassing approach and potential funds for upgrading and enhancing programs and facilities.

⁹ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 37.

Planning Process

The Interpretation Master Plan was the culmination of many months of work by many people with an extensive range of expertise:

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Mount San Jacinto State Park Staff and Volunteers

Carolyn Schimandle, State Park Interpreter III, Interpretation & Education Division

Mt. San Jacinto Natural History Association

Palm Springs Aerial Tramway

Additional input was solicited from many sources: State Park staff and volunteers, California State Parks documents, publications relating to local history, community meetings, a project specific website, and both formal and informal visitor surveys.

2 Park Resources

The San Jacinto Mountains are the northern end of the Peninsular Ranges, extending 900 miles from Baja California to San Jacinto Peak. At an elevation of 10,834', San Jacinto Peak is the highest peak in the California State Park system and the second highest peak in southern California. Mount San Jacinto State Park (MSJSP) straddles the mountain range extending about 60 miles north to south, with elevations from 3200' on the eastern desert side up and over a ridgeline at 9700' and down into Idyllwild at 5500' on the west. The western slopes gently descended into the San Jacinto Valley while the steep eastern face climbs 8,000 out of the desert. This incredible variation in elevations provides for a wide variety of plant communities and associated wildlife habitats.

Interpretive Significance

Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness (MSJSPW) were created to protect unspoiled wilderness in the San Jacinto Mountain Range. For nearly 30 years after the park was established, entry into this quiet refuge was by foot or on horseback, resulting in relatively light use of the park's backcountry. In September 1963, the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway (PSAT) opened to the public. The tram provided easy access to the park, and the number of wilderness users increased dramatically. Today, with a majority of the park classified as State Wilderness, the wilderness experience is a significant and defining feature of MSJSPW. Each visitor experiences the wilderness in his own way—quietude, physical challenges, associated recreational activities, or just “the place.” It is this “sense of place” and the spirit of Wilderness that is embodied in the overlying theme and sub-themes detailed in the park's General Plan.

Interpretation introduces visitors to wilderness. Through sensory experiences it can take them beyond the world with which they are familiar: fragile ecosystems such as high-elevation meadows, cool-water springs and streams found in this relatively dry environment, steep rugged hillsides with pockets of colorful wildflowers, and peaks and ridges with unending vistas. Interpretation describes critical habitats and endangered, threatened or rare plant and animal species (e.g. southern rubber boa, bluecurls, phlox, spotted owl) associated with them. It shows the importance of the wilderness as a wildlife corridor linking the San Jacinto Mountains to surrounding federal wilderness and nearby mountain ranges and deserts. Through interpretation, visitors can know and understand, appreciate and embrace wilderness.

In addition to high-elevation wilderness, the park has a high level of visitor use at mid-elevation areas. Interpretation in these areas brings to life the stories of the mountain's past—the Cahuilla of pre-historic to present times, the loggers, pioneer settlers, ranchers and explorers. Even though more intensely used, the mountain range retained many of its aesthetic qualities—views of wilderness above and the desert below, surrounding mountains on the distant horizons, and the clean, refreshing mountain air.

Interpretation relating human uses of the natural resources and activities within this area convey important messages and link together all corners of the park and wilderness. The stories of Mount San Jacinto are scattered throughout the park and Wilderness yet interconnected over generations. Some themes are crucial and should be presented at each location, others presented in specific zones.

Natural Resources

Physical Features

The San Jacinto Mountains' geographic location is a significant element and determinant of Mount San Jacinto natural history. The geographic distribution of plants and animals creates an unusual diversity and assemblage of plant and animal species not found together in the surrounding areas. Species of the Southern Sierra, Peninsular Ranges, and nearby desert meet in the San Jacinto Mountains.

The geology that created this high-elevation island is also an important part of the Mount San Jacinto story. The mountains show evidence of tens of millions of years of geologic activity—plate tectonics and subduction of the ocean crusts, erosion of rock and earth leaving sediment deposits, granitic intrusion from volcanic activity, and the uplift and faulting due to earthquake action. The active San Andreas and San Jacinto Faults created the steep, high north and eastern escarpment, including San Jacinto Peak.¹⁰ These faults are still very active today.

The bulk of the Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness is granitic rock. This rock outcrop within the park is part of a larger formation, the California Batholith, which was formed 120-90 million years ago in the mid-Cretaceous Period. The soils within the park are formed from weathered granite, which results in their permeability that varies from rapid to very rapid and can create erosion problems.¹¹

A number of wetlands are sustained in the park. These “islands within the island” are limited habitats, relatively uncommon and easily disturbed. They are found at different elevations but are within the same 4,000-acre watershed, and primarily fed by melting snowpack. Each area has distinct characteristics and associated flora and fauna.

Major springs include Deer Springs, Wellman's Cienega, Strawberry Cienega, and a spring flowing into Round Valley. Montane meadows are in Round Valley, Tamarack Valley, Little Round Valley, and Long Valley. Seasonal streams flow through Long Valley, Round Valley and Tamarack Valley meadows. Water runoff flows into Snow Creek, Fall Creek, Chino Creek and Tamarack Creek drainages



Seasonal stream in Long Valley

¹⁰ Bakker, Elna. 1996. “Nature’s Handiwork.” In *The San Jacintos, the Mountain Country from Banning to Borrego Springs*. J. W. Robinson and B. D. Risher. Arcadia, CA: Big Santa Ana Historical Society.

¹¹ Ibid.

on the north and east side and into the North Fork of the San Jacinto River, Fuller Mill Creek, and Strawberry Creek on the west side.

Biological Features

Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness is one of only a few state parks with a large expanse of wilderness—“wild places where one can retreat from civilization, reconnect with the Earth, and find healing, meaning and significance.”¹² Almost the entire wilderness was left untouched by loggers, miners, cattle and sheep herders, and early recreationists—leaving its native flora and fauna intact.

The unique floristic composition that characterizes Mount San Jacinto State Park (MSJSP) is tied to the mountain’s geological location. Steep north and eastern escarpments create a vertical habitat zonation for over six vegetative communities. There are four important, fragile habitats: montane meadow, riparian, montane vernal lake, and cliffs. The park provides habitat for eight sensitive plant species, including San Jacinto Mountain daisy, lemon lily, and Hidden Lake bluecurls.¹³



Hidden Lake bluecurls

Diversity is the keyword when speaking about MSJSPW. In addition to location-created diversity, species diversity comes from the wide range of habitat types—at least nine and probably ten. Habitats range from the dry cliff faces of the eastern escarpment to grasslands, high montane meadows, and forests dominated by a variety of tree species. These habitats can support a variety of animal species, including 121 birds, 52 mammals, 22 reptiles, and 7 amphibians. Three listed vertebrate species are known to occur in the park: Southern rubber boa (State threatened), Peninsular bighorn sheep (Federally endangered), and Mountain yellow-legged frog (Federally endangered). To date, 147 vertebrate species have been confirmed to be present in the park or use its resources sometime during the year.¹⁴

The range in elevations supports a variety of plant associations. On the western side of the range, mixed oak woodland species dominate: manzanita, incense cedar, oak, ceanothus, chinquapin, and Jeffrey, Coulter, and Ponderosa pines. In the higher elevations, oak woodland gives way to montane species including lodgepole and sugar pines, white fir, and wax currant. Montane meadows are lush with grasses and wildflowers, including yarrow, Indian paintbrush, and ranger’s buttons. In addition, flowers of the forest floor include lupine, wallflower, meadow rue, phacelia, penstemon, and mariposa lily. The northern end of the range has elevation over 10,000 feet, sub-alpine habitat for limber pine, chinquapin and wildflowers.

¹² www.wilderness.net/index.

¹³ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 11.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 19.



Montane meadow

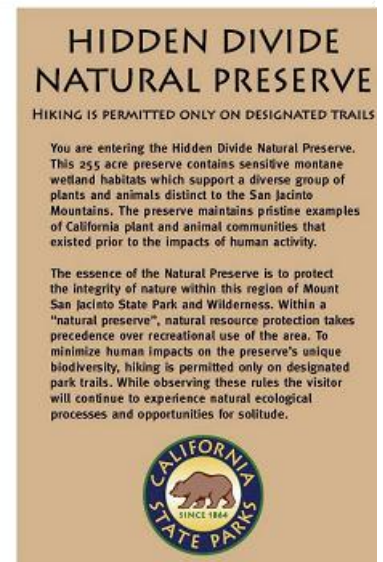
Two habitats are considered significant—the montane vernal lake and the montane meadow. They are important wetlands, areas particularly vulnerable to human impacts. People are naturally drawn to meadows and pools or lakes—they are scenic and serene. Hidden Lake, a vernal lake, supports a unique assemblage of plants, including the endemic and rare Hidden Lake bluecurls. MSJSP also has several meadow areas characterized by perennial wetland sedges, herbs, and wildflowers. They have a short growing season and are very susceptible to damage by human activity.¹⁵

Hidden Divide Natural Preserve

Visitors currently have limited access to Hidden Divide Natural Preserve via the Willow Creek Trail. Two trailside panels at the boundaries of the Preserve notify hikers they are entering the Preserve, what makes the area different from the rest of the Park, and why they need to stay on the trails within Preserve boundaries.

The distinctive characteristics of the San Jacinto Mountain Range and its great species diversity have made it a natural choice for important biological and geological studies, some of which have occurred at least partially within the park boundaries. S. B. Parish, a botanist from San Bernardino, was probably the first individual to study the flora in and around Tahquitz Valley during the summers of 1879 and 1881. John Leiberg followed in 1898, studying the trees of the newly created San Jacinto Forest Reserve. A thorough study of plant life was done by Harvey Monroe Hall, a University of California botanist. Hall divided the range into the life zone categories just devised by C. Hart Merriam and found plant communities from desert to sub-alpine. In 1908, Joseph Grinnell and H. S. Swarth, University of California zoologists, conducted studies of the birds and mammals. The vernal lake area was studied in 1999 by Dr. Ellen Bauder, San Diego State University.

Most recently (2009), the San Diego Natural History Museum is repeating Grinnell's 1908 survey of the San Jacinto Mountains. The Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden is currently monitoring the Hidden Lake bluecurls and their habitat.



¹⁵ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 13.



Montane vernal pool, spring and late summer

Cultural and Historic Resources

Information regarding the ethnographic setting and history of Mount San Jacinto's cultural resources is from *Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Resources Inventory*, November 2000 (updated August 2001)¹⁶ and *Revised Scope of Collections Statement for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness*, November 2001.¹⁷

Overview

Centuries before the arrival of European explorers, southern California was home to indigenous people. The time of arrival in the San Jacinto Mountains is uncertain, and few remains of their cultural history exist. Evidence suggests that Southern California's earliest inhabitants migrated into the areas surrounding the San Jacinto Mountains over 8,000 years ago. They have been classified as hunters with an artifact assemblage that included projectile points, choppers, hammers, and flake scrapers. There was a scarcity of groundstone and seed processing tools.

About 5,000 years ago periods of increased rainfall in the deserts and increases in population led to a more diversified subsistence strategy—hunting, fishing, and gathering. This diversification indicates the beginning of specialized and selective use of their environments, particularly plant resources.

¹⁶ California State Parks. 2000. *Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Resources Inventory*. Updated August 2001. (Prepared by Alexander Bevil and Marla Mealey.)

¹⁷ California State Parks. 2001. *Revised Scope of Collections Statement for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness*. Colorado Desert District: California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 6. (Prepared by M. M. Mealey.)

It wasn't until the late 1700s that the native peoples of southern California had contact with Europeans, initially the Spanish and soon Mexicans. They were the first of many groups of Europeans and Americans flowing into this western territory, discovering its rich natural resources—each group leaving an imprint on the land. Many early people and later park supporters will long be remembered, as their names are sprinkled about the mountains—Tahquitz Valley, Fuller Ridge, Thomas Mountain, Jean Peak, Newton Drury Peak, Law's Camp, Camp Emerson, Ernie Maxwell Scenic Trail, Saunders Meadow and Wellman's Cienega are just a few.

The following is a summation of the various historical periods that swept through Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. The information is meant to provide background historical information in order to place whatever historical and cultural resources remaining from these periods in their proper historic perspective.

Ethnographic Setting

Mount San Jacinto State Park lies within the ethnographic territory of the Cahuilla Indians, whose ancestors entered the southern California region about 3,000 years ago. Ethnographers and linguists divided the Cahuilla into three groups: Mountain Cahuilla, Desert Cahuilla, and Western (Pass) Cahuilla. At one time, their range covered much of Riverside County and parts of San Bernardino, San Diego, Orange and Imperial counties. This area includes topographically and environmentally varied terrain, ranging from arid desert sinks 276 feet below sea level (today's bottom of the Salton Sea) through chaparral hillsides and mountain forests to the towering San Jacinto Peak, standing 10,834 feet above sea level. Today the Cahuilla primarily inhabit the San Geronio Pass region, the Coachella Valley and lower elevations of the San Jacinto Mountains.

The Cahuilla lived in permanent villages but traveled their territory, taking advantage of various resources. They were hunters and gatherers and later practiced limited agricultural techniques. Some areas were burned as a plant food management tool; in other areas trees were pruned, irrigated, or left fallow.

Trade was also an important way of obtaining both raw materials such as obsidian shells and plants and crafted goods—necklaces, baskets and tools. The Cocopa-Maricopa Trail, a major east-west trade route, bisected Cahuilla territory and allowed trade with neighboring tribes—Serrano, Kumeyaay, and Luiseño, as well as tribes as far west as Catalina Island and east to the Gila River.

Native California Indian sites are located throughout the park, primarily in the lower western elevations near Idyllwild. Forty two prehistoric and historic sites and isolated finds have been recorded within park boundaries. However, only about 5 percent of the park has been surveyed. Ethnographic accounts seem to indicate the Cahuilla mainly used the higher elevations for hunting; the presence of grinding implements suggests some food processing took place. Other places in the mountains are considered sacred—including certain peaks, springs, rock outcroppings, and natural formations.



Visitors are most likely to encounter bedrock mortars and rock shelters previously used by Cahuilla. A bedrock mortar is located in the Idyllwild campground, with an interpretive panel nearby. Detailed information about the sites is available in the Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Resources Inventory.

Bedrock mortar, Idyllwild campground

Pre-park History

Spanish - Mexican Influence (1770-1848)

It is possible that what is now known as San Jacinto Peak was first observed by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542. Cabrillo, a Portuguese sea pilot, anchored at Santa Catalina Island. On a clear day, the peak is visible from that distance.

Spanish exploration of southern California began about 1770, both military and missionary. Captain Pedro Fages (1772), traveled east from San Diego looking for military deserters. His route probably crossed the coastal ranges and into the desert, then north into the divide between the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto ranges. Later, Captain Juan Bautista de Anza (1774 and 1775-76), traveled west from Yuma (Arizona) in search of sites for establishment of new missions. He described the area of the San Jacinto Mountains as possessing “. . . snow-covered mountains with pines, oaks, and other trees, which grow in cold countries.”¹⁸ However, it wasn't until 1821 that the grand, snow-covered mountains were associated with the name *San Jacinto* (Saint Hyacinth), after the nearby Rancho San Jacinto. Spanish missionaries noted the “not too far” timber, but there is no historical evidence to suggest that either the Spanish or the later Mexican ranchers paid any great attention to this resource.

Pioneers & Settlers (1840-1930)

While the Spanish were the first to travel through the San Jacinto Range, pioneers and early ranchers were the first non-Indians to settle the area. In 1861 the first pioneer family settled permanently in the higher elevations of the mountains (now Garner Valley). They followed Indian trails into land not yet surveyed by the government. This was still Cahuilla territory, but other settlers soon followed. Many of the early settlers had families. They made their livelihood raising cattle, sheep, horses, and produce. Honey was considered a “cash crop.”

¹⁸ Robinson, J. W. and B. D. Risher. Second edition 1996. *The San Jacintos, the Mountain Country from Banning to Borrego Valley*. Arcadia, CA: Big Santa Ana Historical Society, p. 33.

Railroads & Mapmakers (1850-1901)

It wasn't until after the United States annexed California that a concerted effort was made to explore and map the San Jacinto Mountains. The rapid influx of immigrants and settlers to California, partly due to the 1848-1849 gold rush in northern California, spurred the U. S. government to initiate a series of land surveys throughout the region. Between 1849 and 1901, numerous topographical surveys were conducted to find possible railroad routes through the San Jacintos and neighboring mountains. In 1897 and 1898, U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) crews traveled throughout the San Jacinto Mountains, extensively surveying and mapping every valley, stream and creek. It was during this time that most of the geographical features were named: San Jacinto, Tahquitz and Jean Peaks, and Marion Mountain.

Livestock & Lumber (1861-1930)

By 1870 most of the Indian population had been moved to reservations, though they usually returned in autumn to harvest acorns and seeds. The San Jacinto Mountains were now opened to logging and cattle-raising.



Lumber mill, Idyllwild

In 1875 an excessively steep road was built from the San Geronio Pass area to present-day Lake Fulmor, where the first sawmill was built. This began the removal of virgin stands of sugar, ponderosa, and Jeffrey pine. Other mills soon followed as did a second road, less treacherous, from the mills to San Jacinto Valley. Much of the timber was used for railroad ties for the emerging railroads, and soon houses and boxes for the new citrus industry growing in the valleys below.

Health Seekers & Tourism (1877-1930)

As the whine of sawmills faded, the merriment and laughter of tourists and fun-seekers filled the mountain valleys. Resorts and camps rose on the site of some of the stilled sawmills. An enterprising doctor and his partners started a tuberculosis sanitarium, but finding that it was not attracting many patients, they converted it to a resort hotel.

More and more people from the valleys below bought land in the San Jacinto Mountains, many staying to become permanent residents. Soon, a post office, newspaper, and groceries were built. Initially called Rayneta, the village of Idyllwild was mapped and continued to grow—family, scout, and youth camps, tourist resorts, and arts in the mountains.

Park History

A Wilderness Park is Created (1918-1937)

As early as 1897, portions of the San Jacinto Mountains were under some state of protection. That year President Cleveland signed a proclamation creating the reserves

recommended by the National Forest Commission in the course of its Western travels. In 1908, San Jacinto forest supervisor Harold Marshall forwarded to Washington a proposal for a “Tahquitz Peak and Palm Canyon National Monument,” an attempt to give the area greater protection. Through the early years of trying to protect the high country wilderness of the San Jacinto Mountains, proposals varied from establishing areas for deer habitat (for hunting) to protecting the California fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*) in Palm and Andreas Canyons, even creating a national park. But the proposals all collapsed for various reasons.

By 1918, there was a serious call for preserving the mountain wilderness in fear that it would continue to be logged and developed. In the 1920s, the Forest Service had several enlightened spokesmen preaching the value of wilderness preservation, among them Aldo Leopold. Leopold proclaimed that preservation of undeveloped national forests was as much an asset as was the timber, water, forage and minerals of the forests. Another forester, Robert Marshall, stated

“For me, and for thousands with similar inclination, the most important passion in life is the overpowering desire to escape periodically from the clutches of a mechanistic civilization. To us the enjoyment of solitude, complete independence, and the beauty of undefiled panorama is absolutely essential to happiness.”¹⁹

In 1927 a Forest Service game refuge was established in the San Jacinto Mountains, and there continued to be Forest Service interest in further protecting the mountain range.

Impact of the CCC (1933-1937)

Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness was acquired in February 1933, during the height of the Great Depression. It is one of the oldest and largest recreational areas administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Dedicated on June 19, 1937, the nearly 14,000-acre park is the result of the cooperative efforts of the DPR, the Federal government, and local officials.

Designed by National Park Service (NPS) specialists, and constructed by hard-working Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crews, such park improvements as trails, bridges, campgrounds, wilderness shelters, and administration buildings made it possible for the DPR to develop, preserve, and administer one of the state’s most dramatic wilderness areas. Many of these Depression-era facilities, as well as traces of the sites of former CCC camps, survive to this day, serving as historic links to a facility development program that not only improved the park’s accessibility, but more importantly provided jobs and hope throughout California and the United States during one of the greatest economic crises in the nation’s history. Like those found in other state, local, and national parks, these resources have been recognized through

¹⁹ Marshall, Robert. 1986. IN J. M. Glover, *A Wilderness Original: The Life of Bob Marshall*. Seattle.

DPR thematic studies as historically significant and potentially eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

While the Depression-era resources are of primary historical significance, other buildings and structures also represent the park's continued development and improvement in response to the demands placed by increased use after World War II. In addition, the park contains historical sites and artifacts linked to a period of time when the area was exploited by pioneer lumbering operations and health seekers. The latter would be the catalysts for bringing about the eventual creation of the Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness area.

A Tram Comes into the Wilderness

The tramway is now (2010) 47 years old, nearing its 50-year anniversary—the watershed year to become eligible to be listed on the National Historic Register as a historic structure. In 1980, the Tramway was designated a historical civil engineering landmark by the San Bernardino/Riverside branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers. Its exceptional engineering and the long, sometimes contentious history of its approval and construction make it a significant cultural resource element for interpretation.

Development of a tramway into the high regions of the San Jacinto Mountains was first envisioned in the late 1930s. In 1945, the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority (WPA) was established by special legislation. Chapter 1040 of the Statutes of 1945 provided for the constructing, operating, and maintaining of a system of transportation that would allow public access to the park. The statute also allowed for the improvement and operation of the recreational facilities within the WPA's jurisdiction, which includes, but is not limited to, the land they control under an operating agreement with California State Parks.²⁰ The PSAT opened to the public in September 1963.



PSAT Valley Station

The most recent operating agreement was entered into between the WPA and CSP in November 1996. This agreement covers issues such as operations, rates, tolls and charges, rent to CSP, construction and interpretation. It also stipulates that no additional permanent development can occur within the Mount San Jacinto State Park until a General Plan is developed for the park. (The General Plan was adopted in April 2002.)²¹

²⁰ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 29.

²¹ California State Parks. 1996. Operating Agreement for Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority, County of Riverside.

Today, the tramway provides easy access for hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, providing many people an opportunity to experience one of California's few State Wilderness areas. However, the increasing number of visitors should be weighed against the use of resources and the quality of the wilderness experience.

Recreational Resources

Mount San Jacinto State Park is known for its majestic views and wilderness experience. The park's high elevations, especially San Jacinto Peak, and "island" geography provide a variety of memorable vistas to both east and west. The eastern escarpment of the San Jacinto Range drops precipitously 8,000 feet to the Coachella Valley below. Visitors to the tramway Mountain Station, Grubbs Viewpoint, and the Desert View Trail experience breathtaking panoramas of Palm Springs and the rest of the Valley, northeast into Joshua Tree National Park and southeast beyond the Salton Sea. On many days, one can see into Mexico.

Though not as spectacular, views from the western slopes of the San Jacinto Mountains are still impressive. Looking east from Idyllwild one sees the rugged peaks of the high country, and on a clear day the Pacific Ocean sparkles on the western horizon.

It is the wilderness experience that draws many hikers and campers into the park. Even those who may not actually be *in* the wilderness may experience this dramatic landscape. Whether sitting on a patio bench overlooking the wilderness area or hiking a wilderness trail, the beauty attracts visitors into its grandeur.

Additional access points include trailheads located on adjacent properties, primarily those operated by the US Forest Service and Riverside County. These trails connect to trails within MSJSPW, creating a regional trail system. The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) traverses the park, as part of its 2,650 mile span from Mexico to Canada.

In the Wilderness

Simply designating an area as wilderness does not assure its preservation. Increasing use of the wilderness by both day hikers and overnight campers has led to the need for its "management." In order to maintain as much of the wilderness character as originally protected, the area has a wilderness permit system limiting the number of overnight campers and designated camping areas. With year-round park operations, the wilderness is always open. An ever-increasing variety of recreational activities are pursued within its boundaries—snow camping, snowshoeing, snowboarding, bouldering, and rock climbing, for example.

Wilderness provides opportunities for solitude, quietude and escape from everyday stress. Southern California residents travel hours to reach this special place. Sounds of

unfamiliar birdcalls, scents of “fresh mountain air,” and cool breezes drifting down the slopes immerse visitors in a rare wilderness setting.

Outside the Wilderness

Even though 90% of the park is designated State Wilderness, the remaining 10% provides numerous recreational opportunities. In the lower elevations around Idyllwild are two drive-in campgrounds, each providing different experiences.

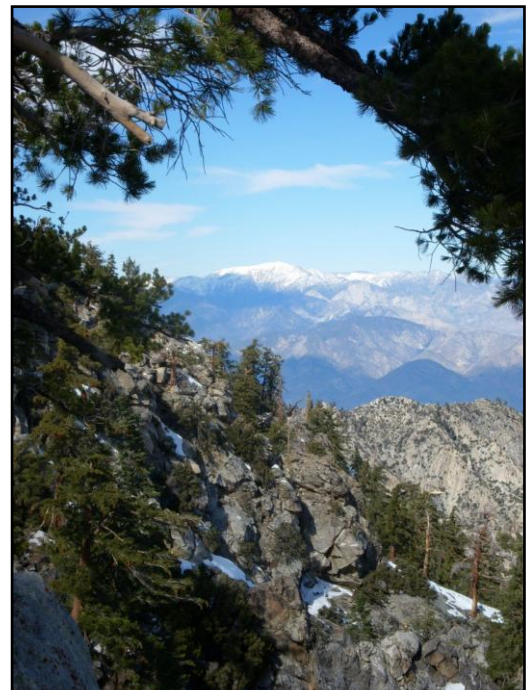
The Stone Creek Campground is more remote, quieter, and backs up to national forest. An interpretive, universally accessible trail loops through the back corner of the campground. There is also trail access into the national forest and state wildernesses. The campground in Idyllwild is smaller, adjacent to the ranger station, and closer to town. Skirting the edge of the campground is a ¼ mile self-guided nature trail. Just outside the park, many trailheads lead into the wilderness areas.

Aesthetic Resources

Mount San Jacinto State Park is known for its spectacular views. The park high points, especially San Jacinto Peak, offer a variety of memorable vistas in all directions. Visitors to the park and wilderness enjoy many aesthetic qualities inherent in the park’s natural environment. These include the expanse of wilderness, sounds of nature, scenic views and opportunities to experience these qualities with almost no human company.

As pointed out in the park’s General Plan

“If a single element stands out, it is the opportunity for solitude. Once you become aware of your presence within the wilderness and recognize the elements that make up the whole, the natural quiet inherent to the wilderness becomes apparent.”²²



San Bernardino Mountains from a Desert View Trail overlook.

With the park in close proximity to highly populated areas, the opportunity to experience wilderness becomes a greatly valued one.

Opportunities for Interpretation

The San Jacinto Mountains and the desert regions of the Coachella Valley are convenient to large populations of Southern California residents, and a major tourist

²² California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation. p, 25.

destination (especially Palm Springs). They are beautifully inviting opposites—home to significant desert and mountain natural and cultural features. For all these reasons, interpretive opportunities abound in the area around Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

When designing programs and facilities for the park, it is important to consider whether other nearby interpretation providers are potential interpretation partners, or if the new program/facility is duplicating interpretive services readily available. Partnerships can be based on reinforcing exploration of common topics or celebrating the diversity of cultural and natural history found in the area.

Examples include the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians' museum in Palm Springs, which interprets the Agua Caliente and other Cahuilla people, past and present.

Across the street from the MSJSP Idyllwild Ranger Station is the US Forest Service San Jacinto District Ranger Station. Trained Forest Service volunteers also lead group interpretive walks in the wilderness.

The Idyllwild Nature Center, operated by Riverside County, provides field study trips, environmental education programs and guided tours to organized groups, including school groups.

More nearby interpretation providers, their existing relationship with MSJSPW (if any), and a brief summary of their interpretation topics and notable interpretive program features (as of November 2008) are listed in Appendix A.

3 Interpretive Direction

Wilderness epitomizes Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness (MSJSPW)--its rugged mountains and lush green valleys without roads or other human intrusions, “where sights and sounds disappear . . . (and) forces of nature dominate.”²³

Wilderness areas are rare in California State Parks; MSJSPW preserves and protects these resources for future generations. MSJSPW played a significant role in the development of the State Wilderness system.

California State Parks Mission

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

California State Parks Interpretive Mission

Interpretation is a special form of communication that helps people understand, appreciate, and emotionally connect with the rich natural and cultural heritage preserved in parks. It is the mission of interpretation in California State Parks to convey messages that initially will help visitors value their experience, and that ultimately will foster a conservation ethic and promote a dedicated park constituency.

California State Parks Education Mission

The most powerful forms of education are meaningful, involve the student, promote critical thinking, and appeal to different learning styles. Our mission is to provide educational experiences both in California State Parks and in the classroom, assisting educators with curriculum needs and offering activities that enable students to investigate, research, and participate in interactive learning.

Mission of Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness

The mission of Mount San Jacinto State Park is to provide safe, quality recreational, interpretive, and educational experiences while maintaining a wilderness environment and preserving resources for future generations.²⁴

²³ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 2.

²⁴ California State Parks 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Mission of Interpretation Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness

There was not an existing *Mission of Interpretation* for MSJSPW. The following establishes such a mission:

The mission of interpretation at Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness is to convey the importance of park resources—particularly the value of the wilderness—and to assist in the protection and preservation of the park’s cultural, historic and natural features. Interpretive facilities and resources will provide visitor opportunities to explore and understand the natural settings and processes with their associated plant and animal communities.

Vision for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness

The vision for Mount San Jacinto State Park is:

- to preserve this highest point in the California State Parks System—the scenic grandeur of its granite peaks, sheer escarpment, pristine valleys and mountain meadows—as an object for reverence and inspiration;
- to maintain the tranquility of the mountain wilderness setting or the nourishment of native species and the enjoyment of park visitors; and
- to act as a leader in developing and nurturing partnerships with other land management and recreational agencies to ensure the accomplishment of common goals while maintaining the highest standards of resource protection and exceptional dedication to public needs.²⁵

Vision for Interpretation Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness

There was not an existing *Vision for Interpretation* for MSJSPW. The following establishes such a vision:

Mount San Jacinto State Park interpretation enhances visitors’ wilderness and recreation experiences and assists in preserving the park resources by providing a deeper understanding and appreciation of the park’s natural and cultural history, the significance and meaning of wilderness, a wilderness ethic, and the importance of wilderness safety.

Interpretive Goals and Guidelines

This section defines broad interpretation Goals and Guidelines, presents the park’s interpretive Themes and Periods, and introduces the park’s Scope of Collections Statement. Taken together, these elements provide the foundation on which the park’s interpretation program will be built.

²⁵ California State Parks 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 7.

The Interpretation Section of the park's General Plan includes only one goal (Goal 1, below). Additional goals and guidelines were developed with input from team members, using the General Plan's stated themes, and a condensation of goals and guidelines stated in sections other than interpretation.

The Goals are broad, overall conditions this plan is directed to achieve. The Guidelines are general directions or restrictions that should be kept in mind when accomplishing the Goals.

Goal 1 Expand visitors' awareness, understanding and appreciation of the unique qualities of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness that define its Spirit of Place.

Guidelines:

- Create spaces within the park and wilderness that allow for quiet reflection.
- Provide opportunities for self-guiding interpretation.
- Create interpretive bridges between past and present park environments.

Goal 2 Provide interpretation that enhances visitors' understanding of the park's significant natural, cultural, and historic resources.

Guidelines:

- Preserve and interpret the natural ecosystem processes.
- Interpret ecologically sensitive areas and explain why they are protected.
- Highlight the culture of the Cahuilla.
- Interpret cultural landscapes, conveying their historical significance in the park's development.
- Preserve and interpret personal stories and experiences of people connected to the region's history.
- Minimize modern intrusions that take away from the interpretive experiences of the park.

Goal 3 Provide opportunities for visitors to make meaningful connections to Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

Guidelines:

- Convey to visitors the concept of wilderness through interpretive services.
- Encourage visitor to enjoy, explore and be inspired by wilderness.
- Provide wilderness safety and etiquette information to visitors.
- Protect the quality of the wilderness experience.

Goal 4 Inspire visitors to practice stewardship of the resources in Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

Guidelines:

- Use interpretive services to encourage visitors to respect and protect park resources.

- Provide opportunities for visitors to learn how to enjoy the park with minimum impact to its resources.
- Encourage public participation in park programs.
- Provide information about unique and sensitive natural and cultural resources and why protection is needed.

Goal 5 Provide interpretive programs that encourage participation by diverse audiences and are accessible to all visitors.

Guidelines:

- Provide interpretive programs that appeal to a wide range of visitor interests.
- Encourage cultural organizations to develop interpretive exhibits and programs, emphasizing contributions of various ethnic and cultural groups.
- Create programs in a variety of formats, ensuring access to all visitors.
- Develop staff/volunteer training programs that support “All Visitors Welcome.”
- Identify barriers to interpretive service and develop a process for their removal.
- Continue to monitor audience diversity and respond to changing area demographics.

Goal 6 Present and future facilities will support the delivery of interpretive services.

Guidelines:

- Provide space for educational and interpretive programs.
- Provide storage space for interpretive supplies, materials and objects.
- Ensure that all future facilities maintain the integrity of the park’s sense of place.
- Improve facilities to ensure programs are accessible to all visitors.
- Create or improve facilities enabling a variety of interpretive programs and services.
- Whenever practical, use permanent and seasonal staff and volunteer docents to deliver interpretive programs.

Goal 7 Provide high-quality interpretive services that are continually evaluated and improved.

Guidelines:

- Monitor and evaluate interpretive services and facilities.
- Update and improve interpretive services.
- Provide training for staff and volunteers who provide interpretive services.
- Document, protect and preserve interpretive/museum collections.

Interpretive Themes

While interpretation connects visitors to the park, themes guide the interpretation of the park's significant natural, cultural and recreational resources by defining a point of view. Below are the themes for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness as designated in the General Plan.²⁶ Supporting Theme 1B, as stated, implies the wilderness really isn't dangerous, even though, under certain conditions and for some individual it may be. A preferred revision of this theme is "Wilderness can be dangerous, but precautions and preparedness mitigate potential danger."

Unifying Theme: Mount San Jacinto State Park is unique because of its wilderness designation—an area "where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Primary Theme 1: Because Mount San Jacinto State Park is a wilderness, people need to treat it with respect.

Supporting Theme 1A: Many characteristics make it Wilderness.

Supporting Theme 1B: Wilderness can be dangerous, but it doesn't have to be.

Supporting Theme 1C: Practicing wilderness etiquette preserves the experience for everyone.

Supporting Theme 1D: Wilderness Recreation offers many unique opportunities.

Primary Theme 2: Mount San Jacinto State Park Wilderness protects many unique and fragile habitats.

Supporting Theme 2A: The high mountain wilderness of Mount San Jacinto State Park shelters some very special plants.

Topic 2A1: Subalpine Forests (fire ecology)

Topic 2A2: Montane Meadows (hydrology—nature's plumbing)

Topic 2A3: Life on the Edge (at timberline)

Topic 2A4: Riparian / Wetland Areas (most threatened)

Topic 2A5: Chaparral (fire ecology)

Topic 2A6: The threat of exotic weeds

Supporting Theme 2B: Mount San Jacinto provides critical habitat for some fascinating wildlife.

Topic 2B1: The diversity of wildlife

Topic 2B2: Human / Wildlife interaction (feeding, habituation)

Topic 2B3: Linking - Biocorridors

Topic 2B4: Microhabitats (Cliffs, vernal pools, etc.)

Supporting Theme 2C: Mount San Jacinto is unique because of its "Island Biogeography."

²⁶ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 50.

Supporting Theme 1E or 2D : Mount San Jacinto State Wilderness, the first California state wilderness, was created because of the hard work of some far-sighted people.

Secondary Theme 1: Mount San Jacinto State Park lands show the marks of past people and their cultures. In some areas a cultural landscape shows the interrelationship between natural and cultural features.

Supporting Theme 1A: The prehistoric Cahuilla people used these mountains for hunting and gathering as well as for sacred purposes.

Supporting Theme 1B: Historic logging partially shaped this landscape.

Supporting Theme 1C: Cattlemen and sheepherders also left their mark.

Supporting Theme 1D: The CCC developed the Park we use today.

Supporting Theme 1E: A tramway comes into the wilderness.

Secondary Theme 2: Mount San Jacinto and the surrounding Peninsular Ranges were shaped by powerful geological processes.

Interpretive Periods

Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness has a long and varied history. The General Plan does not list specific periods for interpretation; however, it does discuss the historic and cultural landscapes of the region.

The following is a list of historical periods representing the sweep of history that passed through the area that is now Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. The information is meant to provide a historic timeframe in order to place whatever historical and cultural resources remaining from these periods in their proper historic perspective. Based on the cultural history themes in Section 3, the primary interpretive periods of this Interpretation Master Plan (IMP) cover the efforts to preserve the wilderness through the establishment and dedication of the region as a State Wilderness Park.

Pre-history - Ethnography (prior to 1770)

Spanish - Mexican Influence (1770-1848)

Early Americans (1840-1930)

Pioneers and Settlers (1840-1930)

Railroad & Mapmakers (1850-1901)

Livestock & Lumber (1867-1930)

Health Seekers & Tourism (1877-1930)

Park History (1919-1963)

A Wilderness Park is Created (1919-1937)

Impact of the CCC (1933-1937)

A Tram Comes into the Wilderness (1945-1963)

Scope of Collections

A Scope of Collections Statement was prepared for Mount San Jacinto State Park in 1998 and updated in 2001. The following summarizes the management objectives and guidelines for collections:²⁷

Natural and cultural collections at Mount San Jacinto State Park should have specific associations to the natural or cultural history of the Park, intrinsic educational or scientific value, and/or provide support for interpretive themes and programs. Geological and paleontological materials, natural history specimens of Park flora and fauna, archaeological materials, and historical objects such as furnishing, architectural elements, equipment, or personal items associated with Mount San Jacinto State Park or important people or organizations connected with the Park, are all potential collection items. Historical collections may include items of the pre-Park logging and ranching eras, Civilian Conservation Corps era, early recreation era, and wilderness development era.

Education Content

Mount San Jacinto State Park is an ideal location for education programs aligned with California State Curriculum Framework and Content Standards for Science and History-Social Science. The general Life Science program topics include habitats, food web and food chains, natural cycles, ecosystems, and adaptations. They include content appropriate for grades K, 1-4, 6, and 9-12. Earth Science topics include cycles, landforms, and geology appropriate for grades 5-7 and 9-12.

Additional topics for all grades include the concept of wilderness, stewardship of parks and natural resources, and “mountain medicine.”

Although there are no programs developed for history and social studies, programs could include comparing ways people lived in earlier days and how their lives would be today, local geography and use of maps, history and culture of California Indians, and use of natural resources. These topics include standards from kindergarten through grade 5.

²⁷ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 51.

4 Current Interpretation

Existing Interpretation Planning Documents

California State Parks has developed many park planning documents for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness during its nearly 75-year history. The most recently completed is the *Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan, 2002*.²⁸ It provides the base upon which this interpretation master plan is developed. Included in this chapter is a brief annotation of other documents available for planning interpretive programs and an overview of current park interpretation.

General Plan, 2002

According to the General Plan, the goal of interpretation is to “Expand the visitor’s awareness, understanding and appreciation of the Park’s significant natural, cultural, and aesthetic resources.” The unifying theme for this interpretation is

“Mount San Jacinto State Park is unique because of its wilderness designation—an area “where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”²⁹

Many of the guidelines calling for interpretation—especially to achieve management goals—are in other sections of the plan. This interpretation management plan prioritizes those guidelines and fits them into the framework developed by the general plan interpretation section. See Appendix B for a listing of the interpretation guidelines in the general plan outside of the interpretation sections.

Additional Planning Documents

Additional documents provide information and guidance with development of the interpretation master plan.

- ***Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Plan, 2002***. This brief document was developed along with the General Plan. It articulates the park’s purpose, significance and themes. It brings together management considerations and a detailed visitor profile. An analysis of interpretive opportunities is organized by general zones. Interpretive planning matrices consider the relationship of particular themes to particular zones and the interpretive media best suited to communicate the story. [There is an identical document titled “Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Prospectus, 2002.” For this Interpretation Master Plan, the Interpretive Plan is cited.]
- ***Mount San Jacinto State Park Area Management Plan, 1982***. This document describes the location and resources of the park. It also looks at

²⁸ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. San Diego, CA: Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 50.

management issues such as fire prevention/control, erosion, wildlife, historical resource preservation, archaeological site protection, trespass, insect and plant disease control, vector control, human erosion, snow operations, interpretation, visitor use patterns, etc. It includes duty statements for park personnel.

- ***Mount San Jacinto State Wilderness Management Plan, 1984.*** This plan defines the management objectives for the area and the methods for achieving them. Included are specific programs for operation and administration, visitor management, enhancement of the visitor experience, resource management and facility maintenance.
- ***Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Resources Inventory, 2000.*** Updated 2001. Prepared by Alexander Bevil and Marla Mealey. This document looks at cultural settings and historic periods associated with MSJSPW. It describes archaeological sites and artifacts and includes historical research, especially related to CCC work in the park.
- ***Revised Scope of Collections Statement for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness, 2001.*** Prepared by Marla Mealey. This is an updated scope of collections statement based on the *Mount San Jacinto State Park (616) and Wilderness (619) Scope of Collections Statement of 1998*. It includes a prehistoric, ethnographic and historic overview of the park. Also addressed are plant and animal life, a summary of historic objects and an inventory of existing artifacts.
- ***Unit History, Mount San Jacinto Wilderness State Park, 1968.*** This very interesting document was compiled by State Park staff. It includes brief histories of Cahuilla presence, arrival of Spanish and Mexican settlers, activities of early pioneers and entrepreneurs, establishment of the park, CCC development, and several addendums (last one is 1972). An Interpretive Prospectus is included at the end of the document.

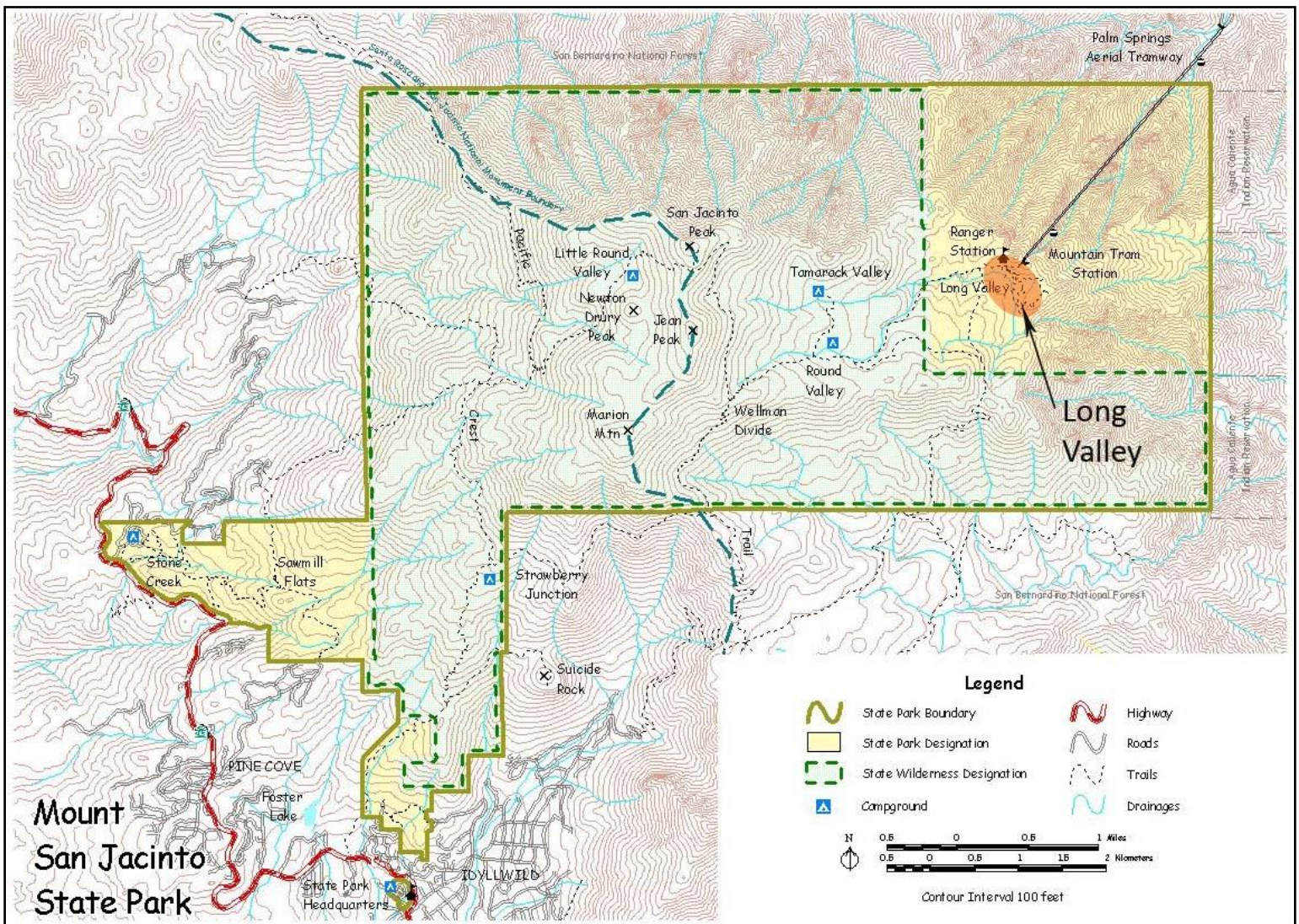
The multiple agencies that manage the Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument developed two additional documents which include some interpretation planning for parts of MSJSPW:

- Bureau of Land Management/U.S.D.A. Forest Service. Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Final Management Plan, 2004.
- Bureau of Land Management/U.S.D.A. Forest Service. Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Interpretation Plan. 2004.

Interpretive Facilities

Mount San Jacinto State Park facilities are located in two primary areas, around the Idyllwild Zone and in and around the Long Valley Zone. Two other zones include the Gateway Zone, which covers the Palm Springs Visitor Center, Tramway Road and PSAT Valley Station, and the Wilderness Zone.

Map adapted from Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan.



Gateway Zone

Palm Springs Visitor Center

This facility is located at the intersection of Tramway Road and Highway 111. It provides visitors information about activities, events, and venues throughout the Coachella Valley. The state park brochure is available to visitors who stop here.

Tramway Road

Looking up Tramway Road, travelers are treated to the grand vistas of the high country of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. This is the “Gateway to Mount San Jacinto.” However, there is no information, interpretive or otherwise, about the park or available activities.



San Jacinto Mountains from Tramway Road

PSAT Valley Station

Several large panels are located in the lobby of the PSAT Valley Station. They discuss Native California Indian history in the area, mountain and range geography, and natural history.

A CD narrative is played during the tram ride from the valley to the mountain station. It briefly mentions the state park and natural history. However, some of the information needs to be updated.

Long Valley Zone

Palm Springs Aerial Tramway Mountain Station (PSAT)

The Mountain Station features large expanses of glass and outside decks on almost every side and level, allowing visitors to take in the contrasting views of conifer-covered mountains and dry desert landscape. Even within the station, visitors can experience the grandeur and sensing the wilderness experience of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

State Park Visitor Center

The state park visitor center is located on the lower level of the Mountain Station. Currently, the visitor center is divided into an interpretive sales/information area and “interpretive” displays. It is staffed by volunteers and open year round, hours varying seasonally.



Visitor Center under renovation

The interpretive display area is not immediately visible; it is behind the stairway but on the way to the movie room. Current displays consist mainly of mounted animals in cases. The specimens are representative of the park’s smaller wildlife. Each has an identifying label with brief natural history information. Most of the animals are in good condition, but a few are in need of conservation or replacement.

In 2010, MSJSPW received \$185,000 in funding from Proposition 84, “The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River & Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006.” The funds are for the development of an Interpretation Center in this area and upgrade of the adjacent theater facility. New interpretive exhibits around the exterior of the mountain station are also included in this project.

Visitors can view a short film about the CCC role in park development. Much of the film uses original 1930s footage. Optional subtitles are viewer-enabled and a large-print script is available from the visitor center staff.

Grubbs Viewpoint

Located on a rock outcrop outside the Mountain Station, this area offers a spectacular 360 degree view—contrasting the desert to the east and mountain forests to the west. Attached to the railing are small black and white interpretive signs.

Long Valley

A long, steep paved walkway descends from the Mountain Station into Long Valley. There are two hiking trails in Long Valley, the interpretive Long Valley Discovery Trail (AKA the Nature Trail) and the Desert View Trail.

The PSAT built several structures in Long Valley when the tram was completed in 1963: a ranger station, Winter Adventure Center, stables and corrals. The stables and corrals are no longer in use and are falling down.

In winter, the PSAT operates a snowshoe and cross-country ski rental concession out of the Winter Adventure Center, a building near the middle of the valley. Snow play and sledding are very popular winter activities in Long Valley. The facility is in poor condition and rodent-infested.

Long Valley Ranger Station (LVRS)

LVRS is a primary contact point between park staff and wilderness hikers and campers. Visitors can buy park maps, pick up free pamphlets about park natural history, and obtain backcountry permits at the ranger station information counter. Wilderness safety interpretive information is posted on a bulletin board. A very popular counter-top display is a small three-dimensional relief map of the park.

Amphitheatre

Located near the ranger station is a small amphitheater which is frequently used for school programs and occasional public programs. The amphitheater has backed benches and is wired for electricity. There is no screen or stand for electronic equipment.

Long Valley Discovery Trail

The nearly flat, 2/3 mile interpretive trail loops around the meadow in the center of the valley. The primary topic is plant and animal adaptations to seasonal changes of

the San Jacinto Mountains. The panels are engagingly written, well-designed, attractive, and made of durable material.

Desert View Trail

The 1 ½ mile long, self-guiding DVT wanders the eastern ridgeline of Long Valley providing spectacular views into the Coachella Valley some 8,000 feet below. Toro Peak, in the Santa Rosa Mountains, is visible to the south.

Interpretive Panels

A new structure at the bottom of the walkway from the tram station to Long Valley provides visitors a map panel, wilderness safety panel, and a box in which park staff post special notices, upcoming events, etc.

Idyllwild Zone

The Idyllwild Zone consists of the Park Office/Headquarters in the town of Idyllwild, the Idyllwild campground and nature trail, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) structures and infrastructure, Stone Creek campground and the Panorama Point Trail.

Park Office

A small prefabricated building serves as the park headquarters/ranger station, park office and visitor contact station. A few interpretive/natural history publications and apparel are available for sale inside. Interpretive displays include the Ten Essentials and natural history objects.

Campfire Center

The campfire center is located within the Idyllwild campground and was upgraded in the early 2000s. New backed benches were installed, and sites for wheelchairs were created. There is a large screen with locking doors, a small equipment stand with power and a concrete campfire circle. The visitor capacity is about 60. Water is also available.

Log-hauling Wagon and Shelter

A circa 1910 log-hauling wagon is located under a shelter near the entrance to the Idyllwild campground. This is an important historic artifact for interpreting the timber-harvesting history of the park and surrounding communities. The shelter was built in the fall of 2005 to protect the wagon from further weathering. There is a pictorial interpretive display behind the wagon. In progress is a plan for relocating and renewing the interpretive information display box and making it more accessible.

Idyllwild Nature Trail

The CCC-built campground periphery trail is a ¼ mile, self-guiding nature trail. Visitors may pick up a trail guide at the park office and explore the area at their own pace. The location of the trail inhibits making it accessible.

Interpretive Panels

There are several interpretive panels in the Idyllwild Zone area. One tells the story of the CCC work in California State Parks, and near the log wagon is a commemorative

plaque dedicated to the CCC. The district is in the process of nominating the Idyllwild Zone to the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district for its many CCC-era features.

Wildland fires are of great concern in the mountain communities. Three panels discussing this issue are: *Prescribed Burn*, *Benefits of Fire*, and *Preparing for the Inevitable*.

Other panels found throughout the park include: *Snakes, Don't Feed the Wildlife*, *Birds of Prey*, *The Autumn Harvest* (about Native California Indian acorn harvesting), and *Woodpeckers*.

Stone Creek Campfire Center

The Stone Creek campfire center, located near the camphost site, also underwent renovations. It has backed benches, a small podium with power, and a screen with locking doors. A water spigot with a hose is nearby. The amphitheater capacity is about 60. This is an accessible facility.

Panorama Point Interpretive Trail

The Panorama Point Interpretive Trail is a graded, surfaced trail winding for a mile through a manzanita-mixed conifer forest. It is accessible for wheelchairs and walkers, and benches provide resting places. From the main loop a spur trail leads to a panoramic overlook. The trail features five large easy-to-read interpretive panels that incorporate many tactile elements. Visitors can check out an mp3 player with a pre-recorded audio trail tour plus descriptive narration of the trail, warnings, and guided directions. The equipment is available at the ranger station.

Sawmill Flats

Just a mile east of Stone Creek Campground lays the remnants of an old lumber mill site. From the campground the trail travels through oak woodland to an open flat revealing house pads, household goods, pieces of abandoned logging equipment and the stone walls that once housed the Dolbeer “donkey” engine of Scherman’s Mill. These are all remains of the once powerful logging industry in these mountains.

Wilderness Zone

Almost 10,000 acres are included in San Jacinto State Wilderness. The primary uses of the area are hiking and camping. The only facility used for interpretation is a small campfire circle located between the ranger cabin and the meadow.

Interpretive Collections

According to the Scope of Collections Statement, “Natural and cultural collections at Mount San Jacinto State Park should have specific associations to the natural and

cultural history of the park, intrinsic educational or scientific value, and/or provide support for interpretive themes and programs. “³⁰

As stated in the MSJ General Plan, “California State Parks acquires and maintains collections for several reasons, including . . . documentation of the people, events, and cultural or natural features that are central to the Park’s purpose . . . and support of interpretive programs.”³¹

Cultural Resources

Historic, prehistoric and documentary collections include:

- A circa 1910 log-hauling wagon with associated photographs and objects on display in the Idyllwild parking lot.
- Bottles, cans, and household-type items excavated from the Idyllwild Sanitarium dumpsite in Idyllwild Campground.
- A boiler and Fresno scraper, possibly associated with the CCC activity in Round Valley.
- Historic and prehistoric artifacts collected from throughout the park, including a bayonet, set of manacles, and musket ball; mid-twentieth century camping items; early park artifacts, including signs and equipment from the first telephone system; and prehistoric grinding tools.
- Document files containing historic photographs, news media, historic park documents, and miscellaneous park memorabilia. Included are copies of CCC-era park photographs held in the State Parks photo archives in Sacramento.

The CCC-built structures and trails throughout the park, while not “collections,” constitute significant cultural resources for interpretive purposes. They tell the story of the development of a new park during a time of hope and a new beginning. The archaeological site located within the Idyllwild campground similarly provides an opportunity to interpret the long and continuing Native American presence on the mountain.



*CCC stone steps (left),
entry pillars and
warden’s house (right)
Idyllwild*



³⁰ California State Parks. 2001. Revised Scope of Collections Statement for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. Colorado Desert District: California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 6. (Prepared by M. M. Mealey.)

³¹ California State Parks. 2002. Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. Southern Service Center, California Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 51.

Park collections have not yet been systematically accessioned or cataloged. The lack of an appropriate curation facility has resulted in the dispersal of items to garages, sheds, and offices throughout the park and district. Staff is currently in the process of inventorying these collections and developing an interim archival storage solution at the Inland Empire District headquarters until a more permanent facility can be established in the park.

Natural Resources

The State Park interpretive exhibit at Mountain Station has a number of mounted animal specimens on display. These include primarily local birds, with a more limited collection of native mammals and reptiles.

The Idyllwild visitor contact station similarly displays animal mounts, as well as hands-on objects for park and community interpretive programs. They include animal pelts, plaster track casts, replica skulls, and other interpretive tools.

A park herbarium is currently located with the District Ecologist at the Inland Empire District. It has recently (2009) been inventoried and the collection has been put in order by plant family.

Personal Interpretation

Gateway Zone

Currently, there isn't any personal interpretation in the Gateway Zone.

Long Valley Zone

Guided Nature Walks

Guided nature walks are conducted mid-May through mid-October, depending upon volunteer/staff availability. Typically, morning and afternoon nature walks are offered.

Junior Ranger Programs

Because of the short time visitors spend in Long Valley Zone, no personal Junior Ranger Programs are provided. Instead, two highly successful self-guiding Junior Ranger activity guides were developed, one for Long Valley and another for the Mountain Station museum. Self-guiding programs accommodate the "mobile" nature and limited time of Long Valley Zone visitors.

Family Days

Family Days are offered one Saturday each month during summertime. The programs have been provided since the mid-1990s. Activity tables are set up in Long Valley and are available for four hours. A nature walk is often available. Family Day programs are very popular, attracting over 100 participants. They are somewhat labor-intensive,



Family Day in Long Valley

taking an hour each for set-up and take-down. Each program requires at least five volunteers.

School Programs

Park staff provides curriculum-based natural history school programs, by reservation. State Park volunteer docents sometimes assist. The groups arrange with the PSAT for a discounted tram fare. Over the last ten years, groups from kindergarten through college have participated. In the first nine months of 2008 there were 16 school programs for grades K-12, with a total of 1100 participants.

Many school districts in the area have year-round schedules, and private and home schools are also frequent program participants. Thus, programs are offered year-round. The busiest season for school visits is May through mid-June, when programs are given nearly every day. January and February are also busy; teachers combine education opportunity with snow play.

Most programs are conducted in Long Valley from approximately April through mid-October, depending on weather and ground conditions. During the winter, programs are given inside the Mountain Station. However, there is no dedicated space for school programs, and at times display cases in the lower level visitor center must be moved to accommodate the students. Since the wintertime school programs are also a snow play opportunity for children, a view of the snow often detracts from their focus on the educational content.

The state park also offers offsite school programs, but these are given much less frequently. This is most likely due to lack of publicity.

Program topics include habitats, food web and food chains, energy flow and ecosystems, the concept of wilderness, stewardship of parks and natural resources, “mountain medicine,” and geology.

Idyllwild Zone

Campfire Programs

Park staff and guests provide campfire programs on Saturdays during the busy summer season, Memorial Day through Labor Day. Program attendance varies from about ten to fifty, with occasional higher attendance.

Campfire programs are offered at Stone Creek, depending upon staff availability. In previous years, rangers and seasonal staff provided programs Saturday evenings in summer.



Saturday night campfire program

Junior Ranger Programs

Children ages seven through twelve participate in Junior Ranger programs during the summertime. Programs are offered on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings. Attendance has fluctuated over the years from as few as two to as many as 25 participants.

Junior Ranger programs are offered at Stone Creek, depending upon staff availability. In previous years, rangers and seasonal staff provided programs Saturday afternoon in summer.

School Programs

The park recently began two new, very successful offsite programs. The “Cahuilla Project” supports third-grade history/social science content standards. A program based on the California Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights debuted in Spring 2009. This program’s goal is to connect children to the park and the outdoors. Both programs are initially being presented to two 3rd-4th grade classes at Idyllwild Elementary School. Continuation of these programs depends upon staffing.

Wilderness Zone

Round Valley

The Round Valley campground is the closest wilderness camping area from Long Valley, with a good variety of pleasant campsites. Park staff offer campfire programs at Round Valley on summer Saturday evenings, Memorial Day through Labor Day. In keeping with the Wilderness designation, there is no developed campfire center. Instead, the programs are given in a small, boulder-encircled amphitheatre across from the ranger station. Attendance is extremely variable, sometimes because of weather. Attendance reports estimate from five to sixty people per program.

There are, however, historic facilities remaining within the wilderness—the CCC peak shelter, CCC ranger cabin in Round Valley and a 1950s-era storage shed located behind the cabin. These structures offer potential for interpretation of the CCC role in making the newly created park and wilderness accessible to visitors.

Interpretive Media

The park and the cooperating association publish free brochures and flyers about park natural resources, way-finding information, and recreation activities. Visitors can pick up brochures and flyers in the Idyllwild and Long Valley Ranger Stations, and the State Park Visitor Center (Mountain Station). Items available include:

- **Brochures/Informational Handouts**
 - Free state park brochure with map
 - Conifers of Long Valley
 - Wilderness Trails
 - Hidden Divide Natural Preserve
 - Self-guiding Junior Ranger activity guides (site-specific)
 - Birds of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness

Wilderness Hikes with point-to-point mileage chart
Wilderness Safety/10 Essentials
State Parks informational map-inserts

- **Maps**
MSJ State Park Natural History Association publication
Topographic map of MSJ
Idyllwild campground map
Short Hikes in Long Valley
- **Panels**
Wilderness Safety (trailhead panels in Idyllwild Zone and Long Valley)
State-wide panels appropriate for the area
Custom stone panels designed for the Long Valley Discovery Trail
- **Audio-Video/Websites**
State Park video
PSAT video
CCC video in State Park visitor center
Narrative of Panorama Point Trial
Mount San Jacinto SP website www.parks.ca.gov
MSJSP Natural History Association website www.msjnha.org
Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains National Monument www.blm.gov/ca

Interpretive Special Events

Park staff and volunteers participate in several community events: Earth Day at the Living Desert Museum and other venues, Earth Fair in Idyllwild, Desert Festival in Palm Desert, a Wildflower Festival, and the 4th of July and Christmas parades in Idyllwild.

Non-DPR Programs

The San Jacinto Mountains rise about the valley floors, creating an impressive mountain mass. It is no wonder that the park and its resources are used by educational institutions from all over southern California as well as other states. Many schools, particularly private schools and colleges/universities, bring students to MSJ and conduct their own field studies programs. Some colleges use the Wilderness to teach about recreational uses of wilderness, backpacking and wilderness survival skills.

Other Programs

Community groups and religious organizations find inspiration and purpose while visiting the San Jacinto Mountains, using the tranquil setting as the “host” for their programs. The mountain scenery is often a backdrop for wedding events both in the PSAT Mountain Station and in the park setting.

In addition, the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit (RMRU) and Palm Springs Mounted Posse use the Wilderness to teach search-and rescue techniques to their members. Guide dog pups are also brought into the park for training.

Staffing

Interpretation Staff

One Park Interpreter I PI, stationed in Long Valley, is in charge of the park interpretation. This is the only paid permanent interpretation position. Park Aides give many of the summertime programs. The lead interpreter trains the park aides and volunteers. A seasonal employee is hired, as funding permits, to conduct interpretive programs in Idyllwild. Historically, rangers provided some programs, but staffing levels determine ability to continue this service.

Considering the size and nature of MSJSPW and the number of visitors, this is very limited staffing. The permanent staff is assisted by seasonal park aides, numbers varying with the season and park funding.

Park Interpretive Volunteer Programs

Volunteers work in the visitor center daily throughout the year, provide guided nature walks in Long Valley, conduct roving interpretation, assist in the ranger station, give campfire and Junior Ranger programs, and act as school program docents.

All volunteers are initially trained to work in the Visitor Center. Volunteers who want to give interpretive programs receive additional training. All volunteers are expected to put in eight hours per month.

The state park interpreter coordinates and provides training programs for the Visitor Services volunteers.

Other Park Volunteers

The ranger staff supervises volunteer trail patrollers for the State Wilderness. Patroller duties include: pro-active foot patrol of trails, campgrounds and cross country routes in all weather conditions; response to visitor questions regarding Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness; report safety concerns or hazards; and report illegal activities. Patrollers may be asked to provide first aid and assist in searches. Wilderness volunteers maintain Basic First Aid, CPR Certifications, and additional medical training as mandated.

Revenue

The park's non-profit partner, Mt. San Jacinto Natural History Association (MSJNHA), operates two visitor centers/sales areas within the park. All monies generated from the sale of these items (e.g. apparel, postcards, publications, educational interpretive items, and firewood) benefit the park-wide interpretive efforts. On a much smaller scale, donations are also accepted for park specific programs. To date, funding has been made available for program supplies, staffing, interpretive signs,

community events and volunteer program enhancement. Without the support and funding from MSJNHA, the park's interpretive efforts would be severely impacted.

Park Research and Resources

The following are park research documents and sites where park-related information is available:

California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Operating Agreement for Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority, County of Riverside. 1996.

Visitor Survey, Mount San Jacinto State Parks and Wilderness. 2009-2010.

Mount San Jacinto State Park General Plan. 2002. Southern Service Sector, San Diego.

Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Plan. 2002. Sacramento.

Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Plan. 2002. Sacramento [This is a document identical to the Interpretive Plan, except title page.]

Revised Scope of Collections Statement for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. Colorado Desert District. 2001 Prepared by M. M. Mealey.

Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Resources Inventory. 2002, updated August 2001. Prepared by Alexander Bevil and Marla Mealey, Southern Service Center, San Diego.

Mount San Jacinto State Park CCC Building Inventory list. 1991.

Mount San Jacinto State Wilderness Management Plan. 1984. Sacramento.

Mt. San Jacinto Area, Area Management Plan. 1982-83.

Unit History, Mount San Jacinto Wilderness State Park. 1968. Prepared by Park Staff.

Mount San Jacinto State Park Interpretive Prospectus. Date unknown. IN Unit History, Mount San Jacinto Wilderness State Park. Feb. 1968.

Wassenberg, K. E. 2009. *Mount San Jacinto State Park Visitor Attributes, Preferences and Perceptions*. MS Thesis, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Other Area Interpretive Providers

Nearby State Parks Interpretation

For purposes of this plan, "nearby" state parks are those within approximately seventy-five mile radius of the park boundaries. This encompasses some parks in the Inland Empire District and north-central Colorado Desert District. Parks in this area have a wide array of primary interpretive themes, but the State Park identity and mission connect them all in a way that goes beyond themes. (See Appendix A for their interpretive topics and programs.)

Cuyamaca Rancho State Park
Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
Lake Perris State Recreation Area and Regional Indian Museum
Salton Sea State Recreation Area
California Citrus State Historic Park

Additional Area Interpretation

Many federal, state and local organizations provide interpretive services within the region. Some of them include those mentioned below. The tramway is discussed in detail throughout this plan, so it is not included in this section. (See Appendix A for their interpretive topics and programs.)

Agua Caliente Cultural Museum
Big Morongo Canyon Preserve
Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum
USDA Forest Service Interpretation near Idyllwild
 Cahuilla Tewanet
 Lake Fulmor Recreation Area
 Indian Vista Overlook
Idyllwild Area Historical Society Museum
Idyllwild Nature Center/Idyllwild County Park
Indian Canyons
Joshua Tree National Park and the Desert Institute
The Living Desert
Malki Museum
Palm Springs Visitors Center (PSVC)
Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Visitor Center
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Tahquitz Canyon and Tahquitz Canyon Visitor Center

Public Awareness & Community Involvement

The San Jacinto Mountains are seen from miles around. However, not all visitors are aware they are in a state park until they walk out the back door of the PSAT Mountain Station. Public support from the Coachella Valley is generally limited to state park volunteers and a few valley residents. The community of Idyllwild, on the east side, is much more involved with the park and its programs.

The State Park brochure is available to the public at the Visitors' Centers of Palm Springs, the Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, and the Idyllwild Forest Service Ranger Station. MSJSPW information is also available via the Parks website.

Partners & Supporters

Cooperating Association

The Mt. San Jacinto Natural History Association (NHA) was established in May 1979, to assist MSJSPW with promoting and improving the educational and interpretive opportunities of park visitors. The NHA provided funds to supplement the State's Volunteer Enhancement Funds and interpretive facilities.

The NHA is a Cooperating Association with the California State Parks, and the California State Parks *Cooperating Associations Handbook* provides a guideline for the relationship between the State Park and the NHA.

Other Important Partners

A number of significant partners support MSJSPW and its interpretive services. Since the property was first acquired, State Parks has worked closely with the USDA Forest Service, whose wilderness almost completely surrounds the state park. In 1945 the Winter Park Authority was created by the California State Legislature for the purpose of constructing the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and the Mountain Station, both located in the park. The Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, created in 2001, encompasses part of MSJSPW. These entities as well as The Living Desert, the Pacific Crest Trail Association, and numerous scout troops all have excellent working relationships with the park.

Education

Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness provides educational programs for school student of all ages, from pre-school through college. Although an occasional group comes from out of state, and some from Los Angeles County, most students are from Coachella Valley schools.

MSJSPW is so different from the surrounding desert environment with which most of the students are familiar. A trip into the mountain environment provides endless possibilities for educational programs. Some programs are seasonal, such as "Animal Adaptations to Winter;" others are more safety conscious—"Wilderness Survival." All programs follow the Science Content Standards developed by the California Department of Education from the physical, life and earth sciences. Concentration is aimed at 3rd-and 4th-grade levels discussing plant and animal adaptations, concepts of ecology (food chains, food webs, ecosystems); weathering, erosion, and the rock cycle.

When possible, all school groups are welcomed to the park by staff. Groups are greeted with an orientation to park services, overview of natural resources, rules, and regulations. Emphasis is placed on stewardship to public lands, connections, and interdependence.

When programs are requested, schools groups are presented with an interactive, curriculum-based, hands-on education program, utilizing park resources and interpretive tools to demonstrate and illustrate concepts taught in the classroom.

The College of the Desert (the local community college in Palm Desert) frequently uses MSJSPW as an outdoor learning facility. Instructors use the park for instruction about mountain ecology, geology, wildlife habitat, resource management, etc.

At this time, the technological capability of the state park cannot meet the requirements needed for a PORTS program (Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students).

5 Present Conditions

Visitors

Over 20 million people (over 50% of California’s population) live within a 100 mile driving distance (about 2 hours) from the San Jacinto Mountains.³² This includes Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. The projected 2020 population for California is 45 million people, of which 24 million will reside in the five southern California counties.³³ Imperial County was not included in the demographic overview because it is not considered part of the sphere of visitation. Currently, about 435,000 people per year visit Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

This section looks at present and future park visitors—who they are, their present park experiences, and how future experiences can be improved. (See Appendix C for data tables.)

Visitor Analysis

Surveys

Three sources of information about visitor use were used for this plan. In 2009/2010 visitor surveys were conducted in the Idyllwild (Idyllwild and Stone Creek campgrounds) and Long Valley (Mountain Station, Long Valley and Wilderness) Zones.³⁴ Since most visitors enter via the PSAT, the survey focused on visitors here rather than other areas of the park. Visitors were randomly sampled over a period of eight months. Surveys addressed visitor demographics, reasons for their visit, activities in which they participated, and interpretive services they used. Visitors were also asked which additional activities and services they would like which are not currently offered.

Second, a California State Parks-funded survey of visitors in Long Valley and the State Wilderness area was conducted during four randomly selected weekends in July, August and September 2008. None of the days occurred during a holiday weekend. The survey data was subsequently used for a Master of Science thesis.³⁵ This survey looked at visitor attributes and preferences, perceptions of park conditions, and their overall experience.

³² State of California, Department of Finance, Population Projections for California and its Counties, 2000-2050. Sacramento, CA. July 2007.

³³ State of California, Department of Finance, California County Race/Ethnicity Population Estimates and Components of Change by Year, July 2000-2007. Sacramento, CA. April 2009.

³⁴ California State Parks. 2009-2010. Visitor Survey, Mount San Jacinto State Parks and Wilderness.

³⁵ Wassenberg, K. E. 2009. *Mount San Jacinto State Park Visitor Attributes, Preferences and Perceptions*. MS Thesis, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Third, an outside agency contracted by the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway (PSAT) conducted visitor surveys in winter (February) and summer (August) 2009.³⁶ Much of this survey deals with PSAT services and operations in addition to some demographics and use patterns. A few questions are related to the state park. The data from these surveys are presented here.

The questions on these three surveys vary enough that direct data comparisons cannot be made. However, together they provide an overall picture of visitors traveling into Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness and their experiences. Percentages represent averages of the three surveys, unless otherwise indicated.

It should be noted that while efforts were made to assure a representative sample for survey purposes, none of the surveys included school group participants. In general, school group participants include an important group often underserved. In as much as it is also an important goal of California State Parks to reach out to a more diverse audience, MSJSPW interpretation should be designed to reach a broader audience than described below.

Visitor Profile

All three surveys indicate visitors to MSJSPW are primarily from southern California (58%). About 16% are from elsewhere in California, 15% from other states and 12% are international visitors.

According to the PSAT survey, 28.5% of visitors are from the Coachella Valley (desert communities including Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Palm Desert, Indio, Desert Hot Springs, and Indian Wells). About 36.5% are repeat visitors.³⁷ The park survey data indicates 37% of respondents previously visited the park, but 68% said they knew the tramway took them into the state park.³⁸

It is interesting to note that in some categories, the PSAT data varied quite remarkably from winter to summer months. During the winter months, almost 66% of visitors were from California; of those 56% were from the five-county region. During the summer, visitors from outside the United States rose to almost 17%, while 60% were from southern California. The use of MSJSPW by southern Californians remains about the same seasonally.³⁹

Of the current state population, 42.3% consider themselves White and 36.6% Hispanic. The remaining 21% fall into categories of Asian, Pacific Islander, Black, American

³⁶ Morey Group. 2009. *Palm Springs Aerial Tramway Visitor Survey Report*.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ California State Parks. 2009-2010. *Visitor Survey, Mount San Jacinto State Parks and Wilderness*.

³⁹ Morey Group. 2009. *Palm Springs Aerial Tramway Visitor Survey Report*.

Indian and Multi-cultural.⁴⁰ However, survey data indicate park visitors are 75% white/Caucasian (race/ethnicity was not asked in the Mount San Jacinto survey). This is considerably higher than the five-county area of influence⁴¹ and California overall⁴² (39.5% and 43.5%).

According to U.S. census data, median income in these five counties is \$57,890, and California median income is \$61,017.⁴³ Just over 50% of surveyed park visitors reported incomes over \$75,000.

Visitors to the Idyllwild Zone are generally families with children—most camping for the weekend in the Idyllwild or Stone Creek campgrounds. There are occasional picnickers and winter day-use snow play visitors. Only 30% of Long Valley visitors are family groups with children, whose average length of stay is 3.5 hours.

Campers

Mount San Jacinto offers several types of camping opportunities: backcountry camping in the State Wilderness; drive-in camping with limited amenities; drive-in camping with amenities close to the mountain community of Idyllwild. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service provides both wilderness and drive-in camping facilities in the forest adjacent to the state park and wilderness.

Although campers make up only 7% of park visitors⁴⁴, they want to relax and visit with family and friends just as much as day users. Some campers overnight to acclimate before they climb San Jacinto Peak or other high-elevation locations. Round Valley is the largest and most frequently used backcountry camp. It is only 2.2 miles from the Long Valley Ranger Station and is a moderately easy 700-foot elevation gain.

In spring, Pacific Crest Trail hikers often stay in the Idyllwild campground, taking advantage of hot showers and nearby food stores for supplies.

School Groups

Programs in which school groups participate are designed to complement the California Department of Education curriculum standards, kindergarten through grade 12. However, there has been a considerable decrease in school-group visits to the

⁴⁰ U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, Census Report, updated 22 April 2010.

⁴¹ State of California, Department of Finance, California County Race/Ethnicity Population Estimates & Components of Change by Year, July 1, 2000 - 2007. Sacramento, CA April 2009.

⁴² State of California, Department of Finance, *California Current Population Survey Report: March 2007*. Sacramento, CA. January 2009.

⁴³ U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, Census Report, updated 22 April 2010.

⁴⁴ California State Parks. 2009/2010. Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Visitor Survey.

state park. This is probably due to financial constraints associated with field programs. School curriculum mandates allow little time for offsite activities.

According to California Department of Education data, the five southern California counties (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego) have 56% of the state's 2008-09 student enrollment.⁴⁵

However, public school enrollment for the entire area is expected to decrease slightly in the ten years for which projections are available (see Table 8, Appendix E). It is certainly worth noting that while the other area counties are projected to have losses or small increases, Riverside County's projection shows a dramatic increase with over 150,000 new students.⁴⁶

As indicated above, there is considerable disparity between the racial/ethnic representation in southern California's general population and state park visitors. Why certain populations are underrepresented should be addressed; we must find their reasons for not visiting the state park.

Visitor Experiences and Expectations

The experiences and expectations of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness visitors have not been fully addressed. These should be part of any future visitor analyses. The 2009/2010 State Park survey did ask "Overall, how well were your information needs met here?" Eighty-eight percent of visitors indicated their needs were met, and fewer than 5% were "leaving with unanswered questions."⁴⁷ However, this pertains to "information needs" only; it does not evaluate their overall experience.

According to Wassenberg,⁴⁸ wilderness users find that park conditions safe and ranger patrols are adequate. However, they indicate there were too many people in the Mountain Station, and they had too many encounters with large groups on trails. Both wilderness and Long Valley visitors noted worn trails, side trails, erosion of trails, and tree-root exposure.

Long Valley Zone visitors indicated they climbed to Grubbs Viewpoint (19.8%), stopped at the park visitor center (43%), watched the park video (22.6%), and looked at park exhibits (38.7%). However, there were indications that more services were desired. Night hikes and guided nature walks were most often mentioned (28.3%

⁴⁵ California Department of Education, Dataquest. Student enrollment, 2008-2009. www.cde.ca.gov.

⁴⁶ State of California, Department of Finance, *California Public K-12 Graded Enrollment and High School Graduate Projections by County, 2009 Series*. Sacramento, CA, October 2009.

⁴⁷ California State Parks. 2009/2010. Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Visitor Survey.

⁴⁸ Wassenberg, K. E. 2009. *Mount San Jacinto State Park Visitor Attributes, Preferences and Perceptions*. MS Thesis, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

each), followed by self-guided walks (26.9%), tree identification (23.7%) and dioramas (21.5%). Other interpretive services mentioned included park brochures, naturalist’s talks and park exhibits.⁴⁹

Many recreational opportunities are also available in Long Valley—short hikes, picnicking, snow play in winter, birding, and relaxing. Contrary to a long-held belief that only 10% of visitors travel beyond the Mountain Station, about 70% of those surveyed indicated they hiked the Long Valley Discovery Trail, the Desert View Trail, or the Wilderness trails. About 30% said they participated in a guided nature walk. Therefore, types of use are more diverse than previously thought.

Seventy percent of visitors stay only 4 hours or less.⁵⁰ Due to this short visitation time in the Long Valley Zone, Junior Ranger programs had very few participants, when offered. However, there is great interest in the new park-specific, self-guided Junior Ranger activities guide and Family Days.

Idyllwild Zone visitors are primarily campers in Idyllwild and Stone Creek campgrounds with occasional picnickers and winter day-use snow play visitors. Information and interpretive exhibits are available in the ranger station, and there are self-guiding interpretive trails in Idyllwild and Stone Creek campgrounds. Junior Ranger and campfire programs are offered during the summer months. Participation in the Junior Ranger programs seems to be decreasing. Campfire audience numbers vary greatly from a dozen to 50 or more.

Circulation & Visitor Orientation

An overwhelming majority of park visitors (over 90%) enter from the east via the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway (PSAT).

The gateway to Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness is via the 4.5 mile Tramway Road. This is an ideal location for introducing visitors to MSJSPW, activities they can experience in the park, current weather conditions and safety information.

The Tramway Road ends at the PSAT parking lots and Valley Station. There is little park presence in the PSAT Valley Station, where park visitors board the tram cars for their ride up steep, rugged Chino Canyon into Mount San Jacinto State Park. Even though visitors indicated they knew the tram took them into the state park, these same visitors are often



Palm Springs Aerial Tramway

⁴⁹ California State Parks. 2009/2010. Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Visitor Survey.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

completely unprepared for the conditions present 6,000 feet higher in elevation. There is little to no information in the Valley Station advising visitors of the mountain conditions and how to be prepared for them. Nor is there any indication of the interpretive, educational or recreational opportunities within the park and wilderness.

The PSAT lobby and waiting rooms are suitable locations to inform park visitors about what to expect once they depart the tramcar at the Mountain Station. Descriptive and visual information can be provided about the physical environment, natural history programs, camping and hiking experiences, and self-guiding opportunities in MSJSPW.

Wilderness visitors entering the park via the PSAT go through Long Valley, stopping at the ranger station to obtain a wilderness permit. Campers are supposed to register at the ranger station before heading for the wilderness camping facilities.

Idyllwild is another starting point for individuals traveling into the wilderness. Hikers and campers obtain their wilderness permits at the State Park Ranger Station or the nearby Forest Service Ranger Station. Due to longer distances and more difficult trails, peak hikers and overnight campers enter via the PSAT.

The Pacific Crest Trail passes through western portions of the park. Backpackers often stay in the Idyllwild campground for a night or two, shower or resupply food in town.

Visitors staying in either of the park's drive-in campgrounds check in at the State Park Ranger Station. Those staying in Stone Creek campground then travel 6.5 miles north on Highway 243 to enter the facility.

Boy Scouts often use west side (Idyllwild) access trails, peak climb and overnight in Round Valley as part of their merit badge requirements. They loop back to their entry point via different routes.

An increasing number of hikers enter MSJSW via an unsigned, unofficial cross country route from Palm Springs and a second route via Snow Creek off State Highway 111. Both are extremely difficult and dangerous routes, even to experienced hikers. Many individuals must be rescued, endangering the park staff and volunteers who are often the first responders. Although total use numbers are low, some information needs regarding the difficulties encountered on these routes seem evident.

Regardless of entry location, duration of stay or particular activities in which visitors participated, overall their primary reasons for visiting the park are relaxation, spending time with family and friends and enjoying the views.⁵¹

⁵¹ California State Parks. 2009/2010. Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness Visitor Survey.

Partners & Supporters

Local hiking clubs, conservation organizations, scouts and the local school districts, and nearby community residents are all potential partners. Hiking clubs and scout organizations frequently sponsor both one-day and overnight outings into the park. Conservation organizations are interested in the preservation and protection of the natural and cultural resources. Schools are most interested in teacher/educator workshops followed by in-classroom and in-field visits. Topics of interest include forest ecology, wilderness curriculum, and the “Leave No Trace Program.”⁵² Local communities are interested in promoting the park as a local resource and for its tourism potential.

Interpretive Considerations

Natural Environments

The Mission of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in part, requires protection and preservation of park resources while balancing visitor usage. There are three distinct park unit and subunit classifications within San Jacinto Sector: State Park, State Wilderness and State Natural Preserve. Each has its own qualities, offering visitors different experiences. Fragile natural resources in the State Natural Preserve in particular require protection while at the same time visitors are allowed at least some access and chance to appreciate these resources.

Cultural Resources

Historic sites and resources associated with various periods of mountain history include: Sawmill Flats logging camp; log-hauling wagon in Idyllwild; CCC structures and trails in the wilderness; remains of other historic periods; and remnants of numerous elements in the Idyllwild Zone. Many of the 1930s-era improvements, particularly in the Idyllwild Zone, define the zones character and suggest its listing as a National and/or State Historic District. These historic resources also need protection balanced with visitor use.

Various objects have been discovered over the past 75 years, with many of their associations unknown. However, natural and cultural collections that have known associations with Mount San Jacinto State Park can provide intrinsic educational or scientific value and/or provide support for interpretive themes and programs.

Barriers

Considerable effort is made to make interpretive exhibits, programs and facilities in both the Idyllwild and Long Valley Zones accessible to as many visitors as feasible. These include the Idyllwild ranger station, campsites, picnic areas, showers and restrooms, amphitheaters, and interpretive trails.

⁵² The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. www.lnt.org.

Much of Mount San Jacinto is Wilderness and by its physical character is not accessible to all park visitors. However, the essence of wilderness can be conveyed through various interpretive media.

The walk down into Long Valley from the PSAT Mountain Station (which falls within the State Park) can be a barrier to some visitors. However, all visitors—regardless of their abilities—must receive the same opportunities to access interpretive services available in any area of the park. During planning, development and design stages of interpretive services and facilities, multiple formats of interpretive media and access must be included. California State Parks’ policy is that all interpretive services provided to visitors meet accessibility requirements as specified in the current version of *California State Parks Accessibility Guidelines*.⁵³

Many of the Long Valley/PSAT Zone interpretive services are conducted in and around the PSAT Mountain Station. This area is managed by the Winter Park Authority, so the park has limited access and ability to make structural/design changes to the facility. One elevator provides access to all levels of the building as well as the upper and lower outside patios. Mountain Station limitations include:

- The park Visitor Center is so small that a wheelchair user can enter, but cannot turn around without assistance.
- Interpretive exhibits are scattered throughout the floor space, making the path of travel difficult for a wheelchair user or individuals with other walking aids.
- Access to the theater, which shows tram and park videos, is awkward and a tight entry for wheelchair users.
- Grubbs Viewpoint is inaccessible to wheelchair users and individuals who cannot climb steep stairs. The uneven surface of the viewpoint area makes it difficult for some individuals to access the small interpretive panels, which must be read from close-up.
- The west patio has many tables and chairs, making wheelchair access difficult.

The most popular way to access the facilities in and around Long Valley is via the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. There is a fee for riding the tram, which is managed by the Winter Park Authority. The cost may be prohibitive to some potential park visitors, including students attending State Park-provided educational programs.

Public Safety

The peace officer staff for Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness consists of one Supervising Ranger, three Rangers and one Superintendent II. The Supervising Ranger and two Rangers are assigned to the Long Valley Ranger Station, which includes responsibility for the wilderness. The third Ranger is assigned to the Idyllwild Ranger Station. The Sector Superintendent has oversight responsibility for all three locations. The ranger staff have jurisdiction and are the first responders for public-safety related incidents throughout the state park and state wilderness. Due to the

⁵³ California State Parks. 2009. *Accessibility Guidelines*. Accessibility Section, Sacramento, CA.

remoteness and the absence of a 24-hour peace officer presence, allied agency response is necessary for search and rescue efforts throughout the year. Interpretive efforts in the form of daily public contacts, general safety information, and regulations can and do help alleviate public safety events/disasters.

The continual increase in visitation creates an increase in public safety concerns. Wilderness safety and preparedness information should be provided before the visitors' departure from the PSAT Valley Station. This can be in the form of a radio broadcast available once on the Tramway Road, podcasts and/or information that can be downloaded from the park website, etc.

Park Security

During daily hours of operation, both the LVRS and Sector office are staffed by a ranger, visitor service park aide, or maintenance staff. In addition to paid staff, there are state park volunteers and camp hosts. Volunteer patrollers, visitor center volunteers, and camp hosts are trained to recognize security concerns and report them to the park staff.

Historically there have not been significant security concerns related to park interpretive resources. There is, however, increasing vandalism in the form of graffiti or similar defacing of signs/displays. These incidents tend to take place in the more remote, less populated areas of the park and trails. Currently there is one vacant ranger position at the LVRS that may affect the ability of park staff to be proactive about vandalism. Security in and around the PSAT Mountain Station is monitored by PSAT staff. They do, however, report incidents to DPR staff as the Mountain Station is located on DPR lands.

Environmental Issues

The climate throughout MSJSPW is certainly one of the driving forces behind the high numbers of visitors. It is also something to consider regarding design, message and maintenance of open-air displays. All exterior exhibits must be able to withstand warm, dry summers followed by harsh, cold winters. The constant freeze/thaw phenomena as well as the hot summer sun are more pronounced in the Long Valley/wilderness areas than in Idyllwild. Considerations for both are important in developing long-lasting exhibits and displays.

Formal interpretive programs are presented to school groups and organizations throughout the year, regardless of current weather conditions. An indoor area that is accessible year-round is an important consideration when planning facilities.

Maintenance

Currently only one full time Maintenance Worker I is assigned to the sector. Seasonal staff in Long Valley and Idyllwild is used for a majority of sign repairs/installation. They also service the amphitheaters and nature trails in both the Idyllwild and Long Valley Zones. The exhibit room in the Mountain Station (LVZ) is primarily maintained by the Park Interpreter. The visitor center in the Mountain Station is staffed by

volunteers. The smaller visitor services/sales area in Idyllwild is maintained by the Office Assistant and Maintenance Worker I. Careful consideration should be given to the design, number, and location of interpretive panels related to ongoing maintenance.

Use of Facilities and Equipment

The current intent of the facilities is for interpretation and education of the natural and cultural resources of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness. Future facilities may provide opportunities for use by groups for special programs and events.

6 Recommendations

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

In Section 3 seven broad interpretive program improvement Goals were identified, along with general Guidelines for directing the improvement effort. In this section specific Objectives and Strategies for accomplishing the Goals are presented. Together, these four elements—Guidelines, Goals, Objectives and Strategies—provide the road map to guide the overall effort to improve interpretation at Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness over the next decade and beyond.

Goal 1 Expand visitors’ awareness, understanding and appreciation of the unique qualities of Mount San Jacinto State Park Wilderness that define its Spirit of Place.

Objective 1: Introduce visitors to a place called “wilderness” through interpretation.

Strategies:

1. Design and develop interpretive exhibits that introduce visitors to the park and wilderness.
2. Offer guided and self-guided interpretation in the wilderness.
3. Provide spaces within the park and wilderness that allow visitors a place for quiet reflection.

Goal 2 Provide interpretation that enhances visitors’ understanding of the park’s significant natural, cultural, and historic resources.

Objective 1: Convey the ecological significance of natural resources and ecosystem process in the park.

Strategies:

1. Provide personal and non-personal interpretive services explaining why certain areas of the park and wilderness are protected.
2. Interpret topics not currently being interpreted.

Objective 2: Explain why the San Jacinto Mountains are culturally significant to the Cahuilla.

Strategies:

1. In accordance with DPR Department Notice 2007.05, consult with Cahuilla for interpretation of their historical associations with the San Jacinto Mountains.
2. Develop interpretive programs and exhibits about the cultural history of the area.

Objective 3: Interpret historical people and events that helped shape the park and mountain region—create bridges between past and present park environments.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate current park programs and services to determine which stories related to park history are not being told.
2. Design and install exhibits that tell the stories of people and events important to the history of MSJSPW.
3. Provide personal and non-personal interpretive services.

4. Tell park stories using collections and other interpretive objects in compliance with Department policies.

Goal 3 Provide opportunities for visitors to make meaningful connections to Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

Objective 1: Encourage visitors to explore, enjoy and be inspired by their park and wilderness experiences.

Strategies:

1. Provide visitors with park and wilderness safety information.
2. Provide visitors with accurate information about park and wilderness conditions.
3. Develop opportunities for self-guided experiences.
4. Develop and present interpretive programs showing recreation opportunities available in the park and wilderness.

Objective 2: Create interpretive exhibits and programs that engage the senses.

Strategies:

1. Develop interactive exhibits.
2. Provide traditional programs to promote a friendly, engaging atmosphere.
3. Use interpretive objectives in programs to demonstrate/illustrate the park's significant stories.

Goal 4 Inspire people to practice stewardship of the resources in Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

Objective 1: Encourage visitors to experience and enjoy the park and wilderness with minimum impacts to the resources.

Strategies:

1. Develop guidelines for visitors regarding minimum impact hiking and camping, such as staying on trails, camping only in designated areas, etc.
2. Conduct Litter Getter programs for young park visitors.
3. Include stewardship and resource protection messages in park programs, exhibits, and other media.

Objective 2: Protect the quality of the wilderness experience.

Strategies:

1. Through interpretation, provide visitors information about wilderness etiquette.
2. Use interpretive means to minimize intrusions which detract from the wilderness experience.

Goal 5 Provide interpretive programs that encourage participation by diverse audiences and will be accessible to all visitors.

Objective 1: Ensure interpretive facilities, programs and exhibits are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate accessibility of facilities, programs, and exhibits using the current California State Parks *Accessibility Guidelines*.
2. Provide interpretive materials and programs accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Objective 2: Provide interpretation in a variety of formats designed for diverse audiences.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate programs to determine how accessible they are for diverse audiences.
2. Develop programs using *All Visitors Welcome* as a guide.

Objective 3: Improve educational opportunities for schools and community groups.

Strategies:

1. Collaborate with educators to develop educational programs related to Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

Goal 6 Present and future facilities will support the delivery of interpretive services.

Objective 1: Improve space utilization in the Long Valley and Idyllwild Zones.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate visitor access to areas where interpretive programs and services are offered.
2. Provide space for educational and interpretive programs.
3. Provide office space for park interpretive staff.
4. Provide adequate storage space in the Mountain Station for interpretation and education materials and supplies.

Goal 7 Provide high quality interpretive services that are continually evaluated and improved.

Objective 1: Improve the park's interpretive services.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate current interpretive programs, exhibits, and media.
2. Recruit volunteers for assisting with interpretive programs and services.
3. Provide regular training and evaluation of staff and volunteers delivering interpretive programs.

Objective 2: Provide volunteers and staff with resource materials for developing interpretive programs, exhibits and publications.

Strategies:

1. Maintain an up-to-date, well organized reference library for the Long Valley and Idyllwild zones.
2. Improve the park's collections management program.

Phasing / Priorities

Previous sections have described the *interpretive significance* of MSJSPW with an emphasis on identifying the park's classifications, resources, and visitor demographics and use patterns. The IMP planning team, using the above criteria as long-term guidelines, has suggested the following Phasing or Priority that should be given when considering park-wide interpretive improvements. This brief, general phasing outline considers Resource Protection, Visitation Trends, and Feasibility. Following this section is the Interpretation Action Plan that identifies and prioritizes specific tasks that will help accomplish the individual Goals, Objectives and Strategies.

PHASE 1: 1 - 3 years

- (a) Design, develop, and upgrade interpretive exhibits in and around the PSAT Mountain Station.
- (b) Design, develop, and install panels about wilderness ethics, ecological processes, safety, resource protection, and cultural resources.
- (c) Provide/improve personal interpretive programs.
- (d) Recruit/train staff and volunteers in providing high-quality, relevant interpretive programs.
- (e) Design, develop, and upgrade the log-hauling wagon display in Idyllwild.

PHASE 2: 2 - 4 years

- (a) Expand the interpretive message outside traditional park boundaries: gateway zones, web sites, community partnerships, etc.
- (b) Improve/expand self-guided programs in both Long Valley and Idyllwild zones.
- (c) Monitor visitor use, expectations and preferences to assure high quality visitor experiences.
- (d) Expand minimum-impact message throughout the Park.
- (e) Develop off-site educational programs.
- (f) Develop community partnerships.

PHASE 3: 4 - 6 years

- (a) Design, develop, and construct interpretive center facilities in Long Valley zone.
- (b) Upgrade, replace, and improve interpretive facilities in Idyllwild zone: campfire center upgrade, visitor contact station, self-guiding interpretive trail.

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8 Appendices

Appendix A

Nearby Interpretation Providers

State Parks: Interpretive Topics and Programs

For the purpose of this plan, “nearby” state parks are those within an approximately seventy-five mile radius of the park boundaries, and some important interpretation parks in Orange County. This encompasses some parks in the Inland Empire District and north-central Colorado Desert District. Parks in this area have a wide array of primary interpretive themes, but the State Park identity and mission connect them all in a way that goes beyond themes. Information about the parks is available on the California State Parks website www.parks.ca.gov.

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

Anza-Borrego is Mount San Jacinto’s desert twin and has much in common with Mount San Jacinto: the Pacific Crest trail, Peninsular bighorn sheep, and significant Civilian Conservation Corps cultural resources. Primary Anza-Borrego interpretive topics are the area geology, effects of climate changes on plant and animal populations and ranges, effects of water on the landscape, and the Kumeyaay and Cahuilla people. The aesthetic experience of wilderness is another shared feature that can be interpreted, though it is not mentioned in the Anza-Borrego general plan themes. Anza-Borrego’s PORTS program makes use of a satellite-dish equipped vehicle for geology and fossil programs from remote areas of the park.

California Citrus State Historic Park

Although very different from the wilderness environment of Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness, CCSHP is only 60 miles to the east of Palm Springs and about 50 miles from Idyllwild. CCSHP explores the history of California’s citrus industry, particularly that of oranges. The visitor center looks at industry’s workforce, primarily Chinese, whose considerable horticultural skills and knowledge made citriculture extremely successful. The park provides public tours of the citrus groves, numerous school programs, and special events.

Chino Hills State Park

Just to the west of California Citrus SHP lies Chino Hills State Park, in the hills of Santa Ana Canyon, also part of the Peninsular Ranges. This critical wildland area is rich in biological diversity. A new Discovery Center is due to open in 2012; its primary topics of interpretation are biological diversity, biological corridors and living on the edge of wildlands. In the center of the park lies the Rolling M Ranch, an area interpreting the ranching and farming history of Chino Hills. Many visitors discover Chino Hills via bicycle and hiking trails, as well as park-provided school programs and special events.

Cuyamaca Rancho State Park

Cuyamaca Rancho State Park is situated between 4,000 feet and 6,500 feet in elevation, and like MSJSPW, the lies in the Peninsular Ranges. The oak-conifer forests are similar to those of Mount San Jacinto, as are some of the plant and animal species. With seasonal streams and over 100 miles of hiking trails, Cuyamaca's recreational opportunities and pursuits are much like MSJSPW. Topics interpreted include the areas history, landscapes and wildlife. Since the wildfire of 2003, interpretation also includes the effects of wildfires on natural environments and reforestation.

Lake Perris State Recreation Area and Regional Indian Museum

Mount San Jacinto is visible from Lake Perris (and vice versa), and the Regional Indian Museum and archaeology at Lake Perris also connect it to the mountain. Current interpretation topics are local Native California Indians, area geology, wildlife and other natural history, water resources, boating and water safety, and quagga mussels. Lake Perris rangers have developed and implemented an interpretive geocache program, an intriguing use of a recreational activity that is increasing in popularity.

Salton Sea State Recreation Area

The park interpretive prospectus lists geologic history, historic formation of the Sea, biology of the Sea, cultural history of the Salton Basin, and natural history of the lower Colorado Desert as the interpretive topics. (Salton Sea SRA does not have a general plan.) The Salton Sea Authority website page "About the Sea" (<http://www.salttonsea.ca.gov/thesea.htm>) gives information about geography, history (including prehistory) wildlife, and the sea's ecological challenges and possible solutions. The University of Redlands is developing a web-based educational program for grades 4-12 in the Imperial and Coachella Valleys. Initial unit topics are mapping, water, ecosystems, wildlife, and air quality.

The Salton Sea is visible from the PSAT tramcar and Grubbs Viewpoint. It falls within the geologic story of the San Jacinto Mountains—the San Andreas Fault passes through the Salton Sea basin before it splinters into many smaller fault lines. It is also part of the desert Cahuilla story.

Additional Area Interpretation

There are many federal and state local organizations providing interpretive services within the region. Some of them include those mentioned below. The tramway is discussed in detail throughout this plan, so it is not included in this section.

Agua Caliente Cultural Museum

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians operates this small museum located in Palm Springs. The museum interprets the Agua Caliente and other Cahuilla people, past and present. The band is currently raising funds and planning for a larger facility. The museum offers special events, films, exhibitions, public and educational programs (including many hands-on traditional skills programs), and school tours. It also houses a research library. One guided school group program includes a walking exploration in Andreas Canyon (see Indian Canyons, below), including a reconstructed traditional Cahuilla village. This program focuses on how the Cahuilla used natural resources.

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

This preserve, operated by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), is located north of Palm Springs and west of Joshua Trees National Park. The Big Morongo Fault running through the canyon creates wetlands that support lush vegetation, in sharp contrast to the surrounding desert scrub. The plants, including tall trees, attract and shelter birds and other wildlife. Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is an internationally renowned birding spot, and some Mount San Jacinto birds winter here. Knowledgeable docents from the preserve's volunteer group regularly lead bird walks, other public tours and hikes, and field studies for students of all ages. Preserve displays interpret desert and wetland ecosystems. There is a small education center. The BLM provides an on-site host. Some past and present Mount San Jacinto SP volunteers volunteer here also.

Coachella Valley Preserve

The Coachella Valley Preserve is made up of three separate preserve units, all of which are desert sand dune ecosystems. It was created to protect the federally threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. The preserve visitor center is a rustic building left from the 1930s guest ranch days of Thousand Palms Canyon, where it is located. Preserve volunteers greet visitors and lead hikes. Some Mount San Jacinto volunteers also volunteer at the Coachella Valley Preserve. A private company offers covered wagon tours of the preserve, with historical narrative.

Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum

Gilman Ranch is a Riverside County park in Banning. Topics interpreted at "The Gilman Historic(al) Ranch and Wagon Museum" (the park web page uses both versions of the name) are the Cahuilla Indians, the exploration and settlement of southern California and the San Geronio Pass, the Butterfield Overland Stage Route, and James Marshall Gilman's homestead. Three school programs are offered for 3rd and 4th grades. Topics are the Cahuilla Indians, Victorian times, and California gold rush in the San Geronio Pass area. The park also offers an "Archaeological Field School" program for school groups.

USDA Forest Service Interpretation near Idyllwild

Adjacent to Mount San Jacinto State Park & State Wilderness, the USDA Forest Service manages about 29,000 acres of federal wilderness within the San Bernardino National Forest. Across the street from the MSJSP Idyllwild Ranger Station is the FS San Jacinto District Ranger Station, which contains a small visitor center and sales area. Volunteers and staff issue Forest Service wilderness permits and answer questions. Trained volunteers also lead group interpretive walks in the wilderness.

Cahuilla Tewanet, southeast of Idyllwild on the Palms-to-Pines Highways (State Route 74), is a universally accessible 1/4-mile paved interpretive trail/overlook. Its topic is early Cahuilla life ways. There is a deck viewpoint, picnic tables, and bird and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Lake Fulmor Recreation Area is just north of Indian Vista. Interpretive panels at the lake give information on lake ecology and what fish eat. The panels are set in attractive fish-shaped metal frames.

The Indian Vista Overlook, 9.5 miles north of Idyllwild, has a great view into the area west of the San Jacinto Mountains. The Forest Service has installed an interpretive sign at the overlook entitled “Assaults on the Ecosystem/‘A Delicate Balance’” that talks about fire, drought and bark beetles.

Idyllwild Area Historical Society Museum

Housed in a 1920s cabin, this local museum’s exhibits interpret the history of Idyllwild and other nearby mountain communities. The historical society collects artifacts connected to a number of topics related to the park, including hiking, rock climbing, camping, logging and sawmills.

Idyllwild Nature Center/Idyllwild County Park

The Idyllwild Nature Center, operated by Riverside County, provides field study trips, environmental education programs and guided tours to organized groups, including school groups. Programs focus on mountain ecology, Cahuilla Indian life ways and the history of the San Jacinto Mountains. During the summer, the nature center offers natural and cultural history programs, campfire programs, a “junior ranger” program, guided nature walks, and children’s craft programs. There is an interpretive trail, and the park contains bedrock mortars and a rock covered with Cahuilla pictographs. The programs are high quality, and the center attracts major speakers for special events. This is probably the greatest “competition” for local audiences with Mount San Jacinto SP interpretation. Its strengths, proximity to the Idyllwild and Stone Creek campgrounds, and the overlap in topics could make it one of MSJSPW’s greatest “partners,” too.

Indian Canyons

Indian Canyons is part of the Agua Caliente Cahuilla Indian reservation. The tribe has developed the area for hiking and equestrian use. Ranger-led hikes are offered, and “conversational cultural lore,” as the Indian Canyons website describes it, is offered at the Palm Canyon Trading Post. There are many cultural resources, including house pits and bedrock mortars. Natural resources include California fan palms, Peninsular bighorn sheep, and Least Bell’s vireos. The rangers are extremely knowledgeable of their culture, as well as area natural history. Interpretation topics include Mount San Jacinto’s spiritual importance in Cahuilla culture.

Joshua Tree National Park and the Desert Institute

Joshua Tree NP is a prominent feature of the landscape visible “across the valley” from the tram, the mountain station, Grubb’s View, and the Desert View Trail viewpoints. In turn, the San Jacinto Range is a prominent landscape feature looking west from Joshua Tree NP. Many Mount San Jacinto visitors and tram riders also visit the national park, making it a major player in local interpretation. Joshua Tree NP and its cooperating association run The Desert Institute, an adult educational field program, already partnered with other institutions in the Palm Springs area. The closest, Joshua Tree Visitor Center, is about 35 miles from the Tramway Valley Station.

The Living Desert

The Living Desert is in Palm Desert. The mission of the Living Desert is “desert conservation through preservation, education and appreciation.” Its 1,200 acres encompass a zoological park and botanical gardens focused solely on both North American and African desert flora and fauna, indoor and outdoor exhibits, and multiple gift shops. They have a huge enclosed area for peninsular bighorn sheep, a federally endangered species that also inhabits the lower elevations of the San Jacinto Mountains. The Living Desert offers (for a fee) group tours, self-guided tours and educational programs.

Malki Museum

The Malki Museum is on the Morongo reservation, between Banning and Cabazon. According to their website, “[t]he Malki Museum is the oldest museum founded by Natives on a reservation in California, and has been the inspiration for several other Indian museums.” It opened in 1965.

The museum is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Southern California Indians’ ways of life, especially the groups around San Geronimo Pass. They hold three main events every year, with demonstrations and lectures. The museum collects and displays items related to the art, lifeways, and history of the Southern California Indians. An ethnobotanical garden is planted with species used by the Cahuilla. A research library and lecture hall are in development. The Malki Museum Press and Ballena Press publish popular and scholarly books and a journal on past and present California Indian cultures.

Palm Springs Aerial Tramway - Valley Station and Mountain Station

The Palm Springs Aerial Tramway introduces the vast majority of visitors to Mount San Jacinto State Park. There is some interpretation of the state park at both the Valley and Mountain Stations. Limited (and not quite accurate) natural history information is also included on the recordings played during the tram rides, though it is questionable how much attention most visitors pay to this recording, given the breathtaking (and virtually heart-stopping) views from the rotating tram car. The Winter Park Authority, which operates the tramway, is an existing interpretation partner.

Palm Springs Visitors Center (PSVC)

The Palm Springs Visitors Center is located at the intersection of Tramway Road and Highway 111. It is housed in the Space-age Modern Tramway Gas Station building, designed by renowned architectural firm Frey and Chambers—the same firm that designed the tramway Valley Station. The Visitors Center provides information about the tramway, park, and numerous other local area attractions. Mount San Jacinto State Park maps are available to visitors, supplied to the center by park personnel. Some of the Mount San Jacinto SP volunteers also volunteer at PSVC.

Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Visitor Center and Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Most of the eastern side of Mount San Jacinto State Park is included in the 280,000 acre Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, established in October, 2000. The

National Monument Visitor Center is located in Palm Desert, southeast of the state park. The BLM is the main agency in charge of the Visitor Center and National Monument. The SR-SJMNM visitor center is small but nice, offers various interpretive programs and hikes, and is close to Santa Rosa Mountain trailheads.

Tahquitz Canyon and Tahquitz Canyon Visitor Center

Located at the mouth of Tahquitz Canyon, just west of Palm Springs, this visitor center is run by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. Here visitors can view a short film about the canyon and view cultural and educational displays. Tahquitz Canyon is home to one of the oldest Cahuilla Indian village sites and contains rock art. Tribal rangers lead interpretive hikes.

Appendix B General Plan Interpretation and Education Goals and Guidelines In Sections other than "Interpretation"

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Cultural Landscapes, p. 40:

Goal: No goal given.

Guideline: California State Parks will provide interpretation for visitors of the park's cultural landscapes that address the interrelationship of the associated natural and cultural features.

Sensitive Plant Species, p. 40:

Guideline (reads more like Goal combined with guideline suggestions): California State Parks will protect sensitive plant species, including those that are legally listed under Federal and State laws as rare, threatened, or endangered, or that are species of concern. In addition, California State Parks will protect those species that meet the legal requirements for listing, but are not listed (i.e., California Native Plant Society List 1B taxa and the Federal candidates for listing), and those considered locally sensitive or endemic to the area. Protection may include, but is not limited to, habitat preservation, seed banking, restoration/enhancement, and visitor education.

Exotic Plant Control, p. 41:

Goal: The San Jacinto Mountains are known to harbor exotic plant taxa, and some have altered the ecological processes characteristic of that region. Exotic plant taxa can be spread by a variety of users and activities such as on the fur of pack, domestic, and native animals known from the region, as well as in their solid waste, if ingested. Measures can be taken to minimize this and can result in a significant reduction in the introduction and spread of exotic species throughout the Park.

Guideline: California State Parks will develop interpretation for park visitors covering how exotics, like cheat grass, have altered the San Jacinto Mountains landscape, ecology, and fire regime.

WILDLIFE, p. 42:

Goal: Perpetuate wildlife assemblages by protecting, restoring, and interpreting the native terrestrial and aquatic animals in Mount San Jacinto State Park.

Guideline: California State Parks will use sound methods of resource management to evaluate the need for individual animal or population regulation. Necessary to the regulation process is the development of specific management plans or programs that incorporate habitat modification and visitor education as the first means of population regulation. For example, California State Parks can prevent the development of "nuisance behavior" by providing wildlife-proof garbage receptacles in campgrounds, and educating visitors about not feeding wildlife, and the proper storage of camp food. Direct regulation will be carried out in accordance with the California State Parks Resource Management Directives. Population regulation

activities will be subject to environmental review, and disturbance to non-target native species and other features will be avoided or minimized.

Sensitive Animal Species, p. 42:

Goal: Protect all sensitive wildlife species occurring in the Park. Sensitive wildlife species include those legally listed under Federal and State law as threatened or endangered, those that are species of concern, and those considered locally sensitive or endemic to the area.

Guideline: California State Parks will place emphasis on the protection of cliff-dwelling animals and the conservation of their habitat. Focused surveys, reliable scientific methodologies, and interagency cooperation will be used to develop an appropriate long-term monitoring program. This data will aid in the development of a management plan that defines requirements of, and threats to, cliff-dwelling species. Regulation, interpretation, and California State Parks visitor cooperative partnerships will manage human activities that threaten the fitness or health of a cliff-dwelling animal.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Prescribed Fire, p. 44:

Goal: No stated goal.

Guideline: California State Parks will communicate their prescribed fire methodology and intention to conduct burns to the public. In addition, fire's role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem will be interpreted for Park visitors.

Wildfire, p. 45:

Goal: No stated goal.

Guideline: California State Parks will take educational and preventative measures with the public to minimize the risk of wildfires originating within the park and wilderness.

BIOCORRIDORS, p. 46:

Goal: Reflective of natural ecosystem dynamics, enhance or maintain the dispersal and movement of native plants and animals through the Park and the region.

Guideline: The ecological significance of biocorridors, with emphasis on Mount San Jacinto State Park and the surrounding region, will be interpreted for park visitors.

CULTURAL RESOURCES, p. 47:

Goal: Identify, protect and interpret the archaeological resources at Mount San Jacinto State Park.

Guideline: Prepare a Cultural Resources Management Plan for the park that includes measures for protection, preservation, and interpretation of cultural resources.

Ethnographic Sites, p. 47:

Goal: Identify, protect, and interpret the ethnographic uses of and resources in Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness.

Guideline: In conjunction with the Cahuilla, develop interpretation and education programs for the park that highlight the culture of the Cahuilla, their continuing presence, and their long-time use of MSJSP and its resources.

Historic Resources (Structures, Sites, and Landscapes), p. 48:

Goal: Protect and interpret the significant historical resources in Mount San Jacinto State Park.

Guideline: Evaluate the need for/appropriateness of interpretive signage for specific historical resources without compromising the wilderness experience.

Historic Logging Landscape—Sawmill Flats/Logging Camp Meadow Area, p. 48:

Goal: Preserve and interpret the regionally unique and significant historical logging sites and features within the Sawmill Flats and Logging Camp Meadow landscape.

Guideline: Further study will be undertaken to better understand these sites and their place in the logging history of the area. A site management plan will be prepared to establish resource protection and operational goals, identify threats (vandalism, trail use, etc.), and to establish an interpretation program for these sites and the surrounding landscape.

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Structures and Features, p. 49:

Goal: Preserve, interpret, and restore CCC sites, structures, and features within the park, while providing for visitor use and California State Parks administrative and/or maintenance use.

Guideline: CCC-constructed buildings and structures may be utilized for appropriate operational and interpretive functions following California State Park policies and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Guideline: Further study will be undertaken to better understand the CCC's contributions to the park and to develop management goals and an interpretive plan for the CCC-era structures and features.

VISITOR USE AND DEVELOPMENT

RECREATIONAL USES

Climbing, p. 55:

Goal: Evaluate and reduce impacts to rock outcrops and cliff-dwelling sensitive species.

Guideline: Develop an educational strategy to provide information on the serious negative impacts to sensitive species in current popular climbing areas.

CONCESSION AND REVENUE GENERATION, p. 58:

Goal: Concession operations within Mount San Jacinto State Park shall provide the visitor service and products that enhance the recreational and/or educational experiences at the Park while being consistent with the Park's purpose and classification.

Guideline: A feasibility study shall be prepared for any proposed concession operation to determine economic viability, as well as contract terms and conditions and the appropriateness of the concession to the recreational and/or educational value to the Mount San Jacinto State Park and its conformation to the Park's purpose and classification.

MANAGEMENT ZONES

(These are not stated as goals or guidelines, but include language that implies goals and guidelines.)

Idyllwild Gateway Zone and Long Valley Zones, p. 60:

Visitor-use facilities that introduce and educate the public regarding resource values and wilderness/recreational opportunities will be provided in Long Valley Gateway Zone. Facilities may include a visitor center, restrooms, and public safety support. The boundaries of this zone are delineated by the ridgeline, which includes the Mountain Station and the perimeter of the existing leach fields within Long Valley.

Long Valley Meadow Zone will provide a natural and interpretive experience that will serve as a buffer, transitioning from Long Valley Gateway Zone into the Backcountry Zone. The boundaries of this zone are delineated by the provision of a buffer zone adjacent to Long Valley Creek and the edges of the ridgeline adjacent to the Desert View Trail.

Visitor experiences within the Idyllwild Gateway Zone, the western portion of the park, will be different from those found in Long Valley Gateway Zone. The Idyllwild Gateway Zone is different in scale and character from the two Long Valley Zones and will support a higher level of developed facilities and a variety of social activities. The two Long Valley Zones are defined by the valley character, with ridgelines encasing the meadow and forest, whereas the Idyllwild Gateway Zone is more open and less confined. The Idyllwild Gateway Zone's topography and close proximity to Highway 243 provide easy public access and opportunities for overnight use such as tent cabins.

Tram Corridor Zone, p. 61:

Similar to the focused intent of the Seasonal-Use Zone, the Tram Corridor is an area designated for maintenance access for the existing tramway system. Existing tramway equipment and utilities in the area can remain but future efforts should be directed toward minimizing or removing their visual and environmental impact. This area is an important viewshed and interpretive corridor for visitors being transported into the park from the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. Its natural characteristics, particularly its diverse botanical communities and geological features, shall be maintained and protected.

Appendix C Visitor Profile Tables

Table 1. Reported Household Incomes, in percent

Income Level	PSAT/FEB	PSAT/AUG
Less than \$20,000	4.5	2.6
\$20,000 - 39,999	8.0	47.6
\$40,000 - 59,999	22.4	39.3
\$60,000 - 74,999	21.3	5.6
\$75,999 - 99,999	12.2	3.4
\$100,000 and above	31.5	1.5

Income Level	MSJ
Less than \$25,000	5.5
\$25,000 - 49,999	4.4
\$50,000 - 74,999	26.4
\$75,000 - 99,999	15.4
\$100,000 - 149,999	22.0
\$150,000 and above	26.4

Income Level	SLO
Less than \$40,000	4.9
\$40,000 - 60,000	13.1
\$60,000 - 80,000	19.1
\$80,000 - 100,000	20.5
Over \$100,000	42.4

Table 2. Household Income, in dollars

County/CA	Median Household Income, 2008
Los Angeles	\$ 55,452
Orange	\$ 58,820
Riverside	\$ 57,590
San Bernardino	\$ 54,768
San Diego	\$ 62,820
California	\$ 61,017

U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts.
Data derived from Population Estimates, Census Report,
updated 22-Apr-2010.

Table 3. Ethnicity, in percent

Race/Ethnicity	PSAT/ February	PSAT/ August	*MSJ	SLO
Caucasian/White	64.1	81.2	---	80.1
Hispanic/Latino	12.6	8.0	---	10.5
African-American/Black	5.0	4.8	---	1.6
Asian	13.6	2.8	---	**5.4
Native American/ Native Hawaiian/ other Pacific Islander	3.0	0	---	0.8
Other/Multi race	1.7	3.2	---	1.6

* Ethnicity not asked in the Mount San Jacinto survey.

**Includes specified Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese

Table 4. Ethnicity/Race in 5-county sphere of influence, in percentages

Race/Ethnicity	Los Angeles	Orange	Riverside	San Bernardino	San Diego	State of CA
White	28.9	46.2	42.3	35.7	50.9	42.3
Hispanic	47.7	33.8	43.9	47.5	30.9	36.6
Black	9.4	2.0	6.7	9.4	5.5	6.7
American Indian/AK Native	1.0	0.9	1.4	1.5	1.0	1.2
Hawaiian/ other Pacific Islander	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4
Asian	13.2	16.2	5.5	5.9	10.3	12.5
Multi-race	1.9	2.2	2.4	2.5	3.1	2.6
Total population, in millions	10.3	3.1	2.1	2.0	3.1	37.7

U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, Census Report, updated 22-Apr-2010.

Total population figures from State of California, Department of Finance, California County Race/Ethnicity Population Estimates & Components of Change by Year, July 1, 2000 - 2007. Sacramento, CA April 2009.

Table 5. LEVELS OF EDUCATION, in percent

Education Level	*PSAT/FEB	*PSAT/AUG	SLO	**MSJ
Some high school	3.4	0.4	1.0	---
High school graduate	6.4	9.1	12.0	---
Some college/AA degree	28.5	20.2	49.7	---
College graduate	39.3	65.4		---
Post-graduate degree	22.5	4.9	37.3	---

*Questioned asked of respondents 25 years or older.

**Question not asked in Mount San Jacinto survey.

Table 6. Area of Residence, in percent

	PSAT	SLO	MSJ
Southern CA	58.9	67.7	48.4
Other CA	22.7	6.4	17.7
Other US	6.0	16.1	22.6
Outside US	12.4	11.3	11.3

Table 7. Activities in which visitors participated, in percent

Activity	PSAT - Feb	PSAT - Aug	SLO*	MSJ
Hiking DVT	17.2	26.2	95.0	24.5
Hiking LVDT	21.8	53.1		27.4
Hiking Wilderness	19.5	13.7		26.4
Hike in general				55.8

*The SLO study did not distinguish where visitors hiked.

Table 8. Public School Enrollment, number of students, K-12

COUNTY	Total K-12, 2008-09	Total k-12, 2018-19	Change
Los Angeles	1,612,100	1,417,652	-194,448
Orange	498,220	469,027	-29,193
Riverside	429,921	587,102	157181
San Bernardino	427,102	464,019	36,917
San Diego	497,491	505,822	8,331
TOTAL	3,464,840	3,443,622	-21,212

State of CA, Department of Finance, *California Public K-12 Enrollment and High School Graduate Projections by County, 2008 Series*. Sacramento, California, October 2008.

Link: California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, California Public K-12 Enrollment Tables. Excludes CEA, special schools, and ungraded enrollment. October 2009.

Appendix D Education Content Standards Applicable to Personal and Non-personal Programs in the Park⁵⁴

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students expand their observational skills and vocabulary by learning to describe the appearance and behavior of different animals and plants. They have the opportunity to discuss the principles of structure and function at a simple level.

Life Science

2. Different types of plants and animals inhabit the earth. As a basis for understanding this concept:

a. Students know how to observe and describe similarities and differences in the appearance and behavior.

Teachers guide students to learn that all plants and animals need air, food, and water to grow and be healthy. Students also learn that most animals are able to move about from place to place, which helps them find food to eat. Terrestrial plants, on the other hand, are usually rooted in one place and must obtain their nutrients and energy from the surrounding air, soil, water, and sunlight.

b. Students know stories sometimes give plants and animals attributes they do not really have.

Real plants and animals do not talk, wear clothing, or walk like humans. Scientific observation of plants and animals helps students in kindergarten to understand the difference between characteristics of the real world and of fantasy.

c. Students know how to identify major structures of common plants and animals (e.g., stems, leaves, roots, arms, wings, legs).

Students increase the detail of their understanding of plants and animals as they learn about the major structural components of common plants and animals and their functions.

Earth Science

The materials that make up Earth's surface provide resources for human activities. Students learn that human consumption leads to waste that must be disposed of. This understanding will help them appreciate the importance of recycling and conserving Earth's resources.

3. Earth is composed of land, air, and water. As a basis for understanding this concept:

⁵⁴ California State Board of Education. 1998. California State Curriculum Framework and Content Standards for Science and History-Social Science. www.cde.ca.gov.

a. Students know characteristics of mountains, rivers, oceans, valleys, deserts, and local landforms.

Students can explore the variability of landforms by means of tangible experiences (such as making direct observations, hearing stories and seeing pictures, and making models on sand/water tables). They learn to identify the mountains, rivers, oceans, valleys, deserts, and other landforms in photographs or models. This activity will also help improve their vocabulary for describing things.

b. Students know changes in weather occur from day to day and across seasons, affecting Earth and its inhabitants.

Students know that they do not wear the same clothes on a wet, windy day as they do on a hot, sunny day. They now need to extend their concept of the consequences of weather changes beyond their personal lives. Students make weather observations and note how the weather changes over a period of days, weeks, and months. They observe the generic effects of weather and seasons on the land and living organisms.

Grade 1

Students in grade one are ready to focus on the favorable habitats (usually including air and soil), water, and energy supply (sunlight or food) that living organisms need to survive. Students will learn how plants and animals live in different environments and will discuss the relationship between structural form and function.

Life Science

2. Plants and animals meet their needs in different ways. As a basis for understanding this concept:

a. Students know different plants and animals inhabit different kinds of environments and have external features that help them thrive in different kinds of places.

Students learn about the types of organisms that live in different environments and the ways in which they have adapted to their surroundings.

b. Students know both plants and animals need water, animals need food, and plants need light.

Learning what plants and animals need to survive is one of the foundations of ecology. Both plants and animals need water and air. Both also need a source of energy. Plants absorb sunlight, and animals eat food to meet their energy requirements. Plants and animals obtain what they need to survive through the environmental adaptations described above.

c. Students know animals eat plants or other animals for food and may also use plants or even other animals for shelter and nesting.

This standard introduces students to the fact that all living organisms in an environment are interdependent.

d. Students know how to infer what animals eat from the shape of their teeth (e.g., sharp teeth: eats meat; flat teeth: eats plants).

This standard introduces the biological concepts of structural form and function, which are discussed extensively in later grades.

e. Students know the sun warms the land, air, and water.

Radiation from the Sun is ultimately responsible for atmospheric circulation and the weather.

Grade 2

Students learn that plants and animals have life cycles that are typical of their species. Students also begin to develop simple notions of inherited characteristics, variation within a species, and environmentally induced changes.

Life Science

2. Plants and animals have predictable life cycles. As a basis for understanding this concept:

a. Students know that organisms reproduce offspring of their own kind and that the offspring resemble their parents and one another.

At one level the characteristics of a species are generally consistent from generation to generation.

b. Students know the sequential stages of life cycles are different for different animals, such as butterflies, frogs, and mice.

The life cycles of some insects consist of egg, larval, pupal, and adult stages. Many organisms undergo molting processes during the larval stage or the adult stage. This phenomenon is typical of species that have tough external skeletons (e.g., grasshoppers, crabs).

c. Students know many characteristics of an organism are inherited from the parents. Some characteristics are caused or influenced by the environment.

d. Students know there is variation among individuals of one kind within a population.

Offspring may generally look like their parents and each other but may still vary in such aspects as color, size, or behavior. Within a broader population the extent of variation may be greater still.

Earth Science

The focus of earth sciences in grade two is on the composition, processes, and materials of Earth's crust. The term *weathering* is introduced as a process that leads to breaking rocks into smaller pieces. The interaction between the atmosphere and the upper surface of Earth's crust is the major source of weathering. Studying the relationship between weathering and soil formation, students learn that soil has an important effect on the growth and survival of plants. They also learn how soil is formed and about its constituent properties. The concept of *geologic time* and the study of fossils are introduced.

3. Earth is made of materials that have distinct properties and provide resources for human activities. As the basis for understanding this concept:

a. Students know how to compare the physical properties of different kinds of rocks and know that rock is composed of different combinations of minerals. Students should know the physical properties (e.g., hardness, color, and luster) of a few of the most common minerals and be able to compare them. Students can compare rocks that are about the same size (volume) and note that some are heavier than others. They can also compare a few of the most common rocks. Students should conclude that rocks are composed of different combinations of minerals. They should know some simple techniques for making comparisons.

b. Students know smaller rocks come from the breakage and weathering of larger rocks.

Through the process of weathering (interaction between the atmosphere and Earth's surface), large rocks break down into smaller rocks. Rocks and minerals reduced by weathering to a very small size eventually turn into soil.

Weathering may be a physical or chemical process. Physical weathering occurs when big rocks break down from the repeated freezing and thawing of water in cracks or when rocks are wedged apart by root growth. Rocks may also be chemically weathered through reactions with constituents of the atmosphere.

c. Students know that soil is made partly from weathered rock and partly from organic materials and soils differ in their color, texture, capacity to retain water, and ability to support the growth of many kinds of plants.

This standard looks at soil as a whole and calls upon students to examine organic soil constituents in addition to weathered rock. Various combinations of weathered rock and organic material are reflected in soil properties, such as color, texture, capacity to retain water, and fertility. Organic materials, such as rotting, dead leaves and twigs as well as animal remains, add to the results of weathering. Burrowing mammals, such as gophers, and worm activity are responsible for mixing the soil. The types of both weathered material and organic remains that are mixed together and the proportions of the mixed constituents affect the properties of the soil. Dark soils often contain organic material, and red soils often derive from rocks and minerals rich in iron. Soil fertility depends more on the organic material than on the weathered rock contained in the soil. Decaying organic materials act to hold moisture in a sponge-like manner and return nutrients to the soil.

e. Students know rock, water, plants, and soil provide many resources, including food, fuel, and building materials, that humans use.

Resources to meet many human needs, such as food, clothing, fuel, and shelter, originate from rocks, water, plants, and soil. Students should understand the relationship between manufactured materials and the natural resources from which they originate. For example, humans use the same weathered rocks that serve as a source material for soil as a resource for manufacturing building materials. Soil supports plant growth, and plants supply food for humans and for some of the animals that humans eat. Plants also supply fuel and building

materials. Students should be able to name and identify the origin of the resources of some of the things they use as food, clothing, and shelter.

Grade 3

Life Sciences

3. Adaptations in physical structure or behavior may improve an organism's chance for survival. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know plants and animals have structures that serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction.
- b. Students know examples of diverse life forms in different environments, such as oceans, deserts, tundra, forests, grasslands, and wetlands.
- c. Students know living things cause changes in the environment in which they live: some of these changes are detrimental to the organism or other organisms, and some are beneficial.
- d. Students know when the environment changes, some plants and animals survive and reproduce; others die or move to new locations.
- e. Students know that some kinds of organisms that once lived on Earth have completely disappeared and that some of those resembled others that are alive today.

Grade 4

Life Sciences

2. All organisms need energy and matter to live and grow. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know plants are the primary source of matter and energy entering most food chains.
- b. Students know producers and consumers (herbivores, carnivores, omnivores, and decomposers) are related in food chains and food webs and may compete with each other for resources in an ecosystem.
- c. Students know decomposers, including many fungi, insects, and microorganisms, recycle matter from dead plants and animals.

3. Living organisms depend on one another and on their environment for survival. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know ecosystems can be characterized by their living and nonliving components.
- b. Students know that in any particular environment, some kinds of plants and animals survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.

- c. Students know many plants depend on animals for pollination and seed dispersal, and animals depend on plants for food and shelter.
- d. Students know that most microorganisms do not cause disease and that many are beneficial.

4. The properties of rocks and minerals reflect the processes that formed them.

As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know how to differentiate among igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks by referring to their properties and methods of formation (the rock cycle).
- b. Students know how to identify common rock-forming minerals (including quartz, calcite, feldspar, mica, and hornblende) and ore minerals by using a table of diagnostic properties.

5. Waves, wind, water, and ice shape and reshape Earth's land surface. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know some changes in the earth are due to slow processes, such as erosion, and some changes are due to rapid processes, such as landslides, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes.
- b. Students know natural processes, including freezing and thawing and the growth of roots, cause rocks to break down into smaller pieces.
- c. Students know moving water erodes landforms, reshaping the land by taking it away from some places and depositing it as pebbles, sand, silt, and mud in other places (weathering, transport, and deposition).

Grade 5

Life Sciences

2. Plants and animals have structures for respiration, digestion, waste disposal, and transport of materials. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- e. Students know how sugar, water, and minerals are transported in a vascular plant.
- f. Students know plants use carbon dioxide (CO₂) and energy from sunlight to build molecules of sugar and release oxygen.
- g. Students know plant and animal cells break down sugar to obtain energy, a process resulting in carbon dioxide (CO₂) and water (respiration).
- e. Students know how sugar, water, and minerals are transported in a vascular plant.
- f. Students know plants use carbon dioxide (CO₂) and energy from sunlight to build molecules of sugar and release oxygen.
- g. Students know plant and animal cells break down sugar to obtain energy, a process resulting in carbon dioxide (CO₂) and water (respiration).

Earth Sciences

3. Water on Earth moves between the oceans and land through the processes of evaporation and condensation. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know most of Earth's water is present as salt water in the oceans, which cover most of Earth's surface.
- b. Students know when liquid water evaporates, it turns into water vapor in the air and can reappear as a liquid when cooled or as a solid if cooled below the freezing point of water.
- c. Students know water vapor in the air moves from one place to another and can form fog or clouds, which are tiny droplets of water or ice, and can fall to Earth as rain, hail, sleet, or snow.
- d. Students know that the amount of fresh water located in rivers, lakes, underground sources, and glaciers is limited and that its availability can be extended by recycling and decreasing the use of water.
- e. Students know the origin of the water used by their local communities.

4. Energy from the Sun heats Earth unevenly, causing air movements that result in changing weather patterns. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know uneven heating of Earth causes air movements (convection currents).
- b. Students know the influence that the ocean has on the weather and the role that the water cycle plays in weather patterns.
- c. Students know the causes and effects of different types of severe weather.

Grade 6

Earth Science

Plate Tectonics and Earth's Structure

1. Plate tectonics accounts for important features of Earth's surface and major geologic events. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know evidence of plate tectonics is derived from the fit of the continents; the location of earthquakes, volcanoes, and mid-ocean ridges; and the distribution of fossils, rock types, and ancient climatic zones.
- b. Students know Earth is composed of several layers: a cold, brittle lithosphere; a hot, convecting mantle; and a dense, metallic core.
- c. Students know lithospheric plates the size of continents and oceans move at rates of centimeters per year in response to movements in the mantle.
- d. Students know that earthquakes are sudden motions along breaks in the crust called faults and volcanoes and fissures are locations where magma reaches the surface.

- e. Students know major geologic events, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and mountain building, result from plate motions.
- f. Students know how to explain major features of California geology (including mountains, faults, volcanoes) in terms of plate tectonics.

Ecology (Life Sciences)

5. Organisms in ecosystems exchange energy and nutrients among themselves and with the environment. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know energy entering ecosystems as sunlight is transferred by producers into chemical energy through photosynthesis and then from organism to organism through food webs.
- b. Students know matter is transferred over time from one organism to others in the food web and between organisms and the physical environment.
- c. Students know populations of organisms can be categorized by the functions they serve in an ecosystem.
- d. Students know different kinds of organisms may play similar ecological roles in similar biomes.
- e. Students know the number and types of organisms an ecosystem can support depends on the resources available and on abiotic factors, such as quantities of light and water, a range of temperatures, and soil composition.

Grade 7

Evolution

3. Biological evolution accounts for the diversity of species developed through gradual processes over many generations. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know both genetic variation and environmental factors are causes of evolution and diversity of organisms.
- e. Students know that extinction of a species occurs when the environment changes and the adaptive characteristics of a species are insufficient for its survival.

Grade 8

Physical Science

Chemistry of Living Systems (Life Science)

6. Principles of chemistry underlie the functioning of biological systems. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know that carbon, because of its ability to combine in many ways with itself and other elements, has a central role in the chemistry of living organisms.

- b. Students know that living organisms are made of molecules consisting largely of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, and sulfur.

Grades 9 through 12

Physical Science

Heat and Thermodynamics

3. Energy cannot be created nor destroyed, although in many process energy is transferred to the environment as heat. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know heat flow and work are two forms of energy transfer between systems.

Application: Students understand that energy flows through a “food pyramid,” from producers to consumers; some energy is used at each level, some is transferred.

Biology/Life Sciences

Ecology

6. Stability in an ecosystem is a balance between competing effects. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know biodiversity is the sum total of different kinds of organisms and is affected by alterations of habitats.
- b. Students know how to analyze changes in an ecosystem resulting from changes in climate, human activity, introduction of nonnative species, or changes in population size.
- c. Students know how fluctuations in population size in an ecosystem are determined by the relative rates of birth, immigration, emigration, and death.
- d. Students know how water, carbon, and nitrogen cycle between abiotic resources and organic matter in the ecosystem and how oxygen cycles through photosynthesis and respiration.
- e. Students know a vital part of an ecosystem is the stability of its producers and decomposers.
- f. Students know at each link in a food web some energy is stored in newly made structures but much energy is dissipated into the environment as heat. This dissipation may be represented in an energy pyramid.

Earth Sciences

Dynamic Earth Processes

3. Plate tectonics operating over geologic time has changed the patterns of land, sea, and mountains on Earth’s surface. As the basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know features of the ocean floor (magnetic patterns, age, and sea-floor topography) provide evidence of plate tectonics.
- b. Students know the principal structures that form at the three different kinds of plate boundaries.
- c. Students know how to explain the properties of rocks based on the physical and chemical conditions in which they formed, including plate tectonic processes.
- d. Students know why and how earthquakes occur and the scales used to measure their intensity and magnitude.
- e. Students know there are two kinds of volcanoes: one kind with violent eruptions producing steep slopes and the other kind with voluminous lava flows producing gentle slopes.
- f.* Students know the explanation for the location and properties of volcanoes that are due to hot spots and the explanation for those that are due to subduction.

*Indicates standards that all students should have the opportunity to learn.

Appendix E Photograph Credits

James Absher

Cover photo, San Jacinto Peak from north side

Quotation page, Looking southeast over the eastern side of the San Jacinto State Wilderness and beyond.

p. 7, Hidden Lake bluecurls

p. 9, Montane vernal pool

California State Parks

Ellen Absher

p. iii, San Jacinto State Park entry sign, outside of the PSAT Mountain Station

p. 6, Seasonal stream in Long Valley meadow

p. 8, Montane meadow

p. 28, Looking up Chino Canyon - gateway to Mount San Jacinto SP\$W

p. 29, VC renovation

p. 32, CCC stone pillar in Idyllwild

p. 46, Tramcar heading up Chino Canyon

Larrynn Carver

p. 32, CCC stone steps, Idyllwild campground

Rob Howard

p. 14, PSAT Valley Station

Bob Patterson

p.16, Desert View Trail vista

Robert Peek

p. 34, Idyllwild campfire center

Jodi Welchel

p. 11, bedrock mortars in Idyllwild campground

File photo

p. 12, Logging mill, Strawberry Valley (Idyllwild)