



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
California State Parks
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy



GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area • California

General Management Plan

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area **~ California ~**

March 5, 2003

United States Department of the Interior – National Park Service
California State Parks
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy



Summary



The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area is a cooperative effort by the National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, as well as private landowners and city and county governments.



SUMMARY

The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (national recreation area or NRA) is one of the world's largest urban recreation areas. The Mediterranean-type ecosystem of this open space preserve northwest of Los Angeles offers visitors a multitude of natural, cultural, and recreational experiences. Its more than 150,000 acres of mountains, valleys, and coastline are surrounded by a megalopolis of 17 million people, yet 90 percent of the land is free of development.

The national recreation area is home to significant archeological and cultural sites and provides a haven for more than 450 animal species. More than 20 federal or state-listed threatened or endangered plants and animals find protection here. Another 46 animal and 11 plant species are federal or state species of concern. At least 1,000 archeological sites are within the NRA boundaries. Three structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and more than 73 archeological/historic sites are potentially eligible for listing on this register.

The U.S. Congress created the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in 1978 and granted the National Park Service the authority to promote a level of shared management for the park. The National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy jointly administer the public parklands within the national recreation area, and are referred to as the administering agencies in this document.

When the national recreation area was established in 1978, the state of California was the largest public landowner, with more than 28,000 acres of land in four major parks. Federal land acquisition began in 1980 with an authorization of \$155 million.

The area's first *General Management Plan* (GMP) was completed in 1982. In the last few years these administering agencies have joined together to assess the 1982 management plan and review the mission and purpose of the national recreation area. Although many of the issues and goals for the national recreation area remain the same, the magnitude of

View of
Santa Monica
Mountains
(NPS photo).



use has changed dramatically and environmental impacts had to be examined. This was done in the *Draft* (NPS 2000) and *Final* (NPS 2002) *General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statements*. The “Record of Decision” on the *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* was signed on March 5, 2003, and is on file at the NRA headquarters. The preferred alternative was selected as the approved plan.

This document presents the approved general management plan for managing the national recreation area during the next 15 to 20 years. As detailed in the *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement*, this plan was developed with a comprehensive public involvement process.



View of Sycamore Canyon (NPS photo).

This management plan presents conceptual visions for the national recreation area in several levels of management areas: low intensity areas, moderate intensity areas, and high intensity areas. The management areas of community landscapes and scenic corridors are also addressed. These five management areas outline the existing and desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that should be achieved and maintained over time in specific areas under the approved plan. Although this plan designates management areas that differ from land uses planned for areas within the

national recreation area in local general plans and coastal programs, the general management plan has no authority over local land use decisions.

The development of specific facilities is also discussed at a conceptual level. It is not known at this time whether improvements such as modifications to historic structures or other buildings, site plans for new facilities, location and layout of parking improvements, etc., will occur. Many of the future actions, such as facility development, will require additional environmental analysis before implementation. Many items will also require additional compliance with federal biological and cultural resources laws and regulations.

The approved plan best meets the goals and objectives of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. It designates about 80 percent of the total acreage for preservation, 15 percent as moderate intensity use areas, and 5 percent as high intensity use areas. All new facilities will be developed within the high intensity use areas and focused in already disturbed, nonsensitive areas.



Visitors enjoying Pumpkin Festival at Paramount Ranch (NPS photo).





OVERVIEW OF WHY SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA IS EXCEPTIONAL

A NUMBER OF FACTORS set Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area apart. For one, it is the nation's largest urban recreation area. Comprising more than 150,000 acres, it is over twice the size of the second largest national recreation area, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Santa Monica Mountains is distinguished from many other national parks/recreation areas in that it is a single expanse of land rather than a series of pocket parks. This is important because large blocks of land sustain the habitat or living space required by native wild plants and animals. The area is also the National Park Service's best mainland example of the Mediterranean Biome (land type), one of the smallest biomes found on the face of the earth, with only 18 percent left undisturbed. An endangered collection of plants and animals is found here.

Another distinguishing factor is that the city of Los Angeles is possibly the only city in the world divided by a mountain range or national recreation area and one of a few cities that has a national recreation area so readily accessible to so many people - 17 million.

The significance of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area has been frequently overlooked or misunderstood but that needs to change. The purpose of this general management plan is to plot a course into the future—one that ensures that the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area is preserved for all people, for all time.



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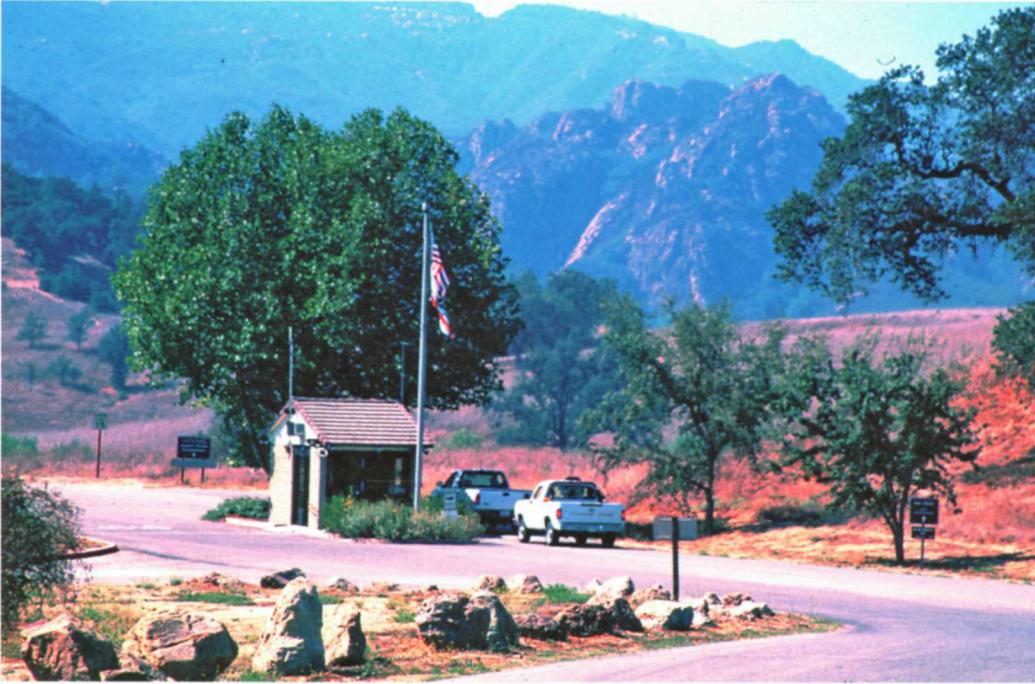
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Purpose and Need



Fifteen years of extraordinary population growth, a greater knowledge of the area's resources, and evolving land use patterns created a need for this new general management plan to protect the resources of the national recreation area.





INTRODUCTION

This plan provides a framework for the collective management of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (national recreation area or NRA). Three agencies serve as the recreation area's principal administrators: the National Park Service (NPS), California State Parks (CSP), and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC). The alternatives considered and the impacts of implementing this plan are detailed in the *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* (NPS 2002).

The administration of the national recreation area is an experiment in cooperative management. In 1978, Congress directed the National Park Service to serve as the lead coordinating agency for the cooperative administration of this complex national recreation area. This cooperative effort was formalized in a 2000 agreement signed by the National Park Service, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 directed the National Park Service to prepare and revise general management plans for the preservation and use of each unit of the national park system. The act stipulated that a plan should be prepared every 15 to 20 years. The last general management plan for the national recreation area was released in 1982. Twenty years of additional population growth, a greater knowledge of the area's resources, and evolving land use patterns have created a need for a new general management plan to protect the NRA's resources while addressing new obstacles and opportunities. The difficulty of managing the recreation area's special resources within an urban setting, especially considering the diversity of its sites and uses, magnified the need for a new vision for the future. It is crucial to anticipate more visitation by the region's disproportionately large and diverse population, and to consider different types of recreational uses.

This general management plan, therefore, embodies a commitment to the people of Los Angeles and the Nation that a coordinated system of management has been redefined and updated to continue

View of Malibu
Canyon Road
(NPS photo).





Ridgeline development in the Santa Monica Mountains (NPS photo).

the preservation and promotion of the unique variety of land uses in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. This general management plan fulfills congressional intent for national recreation area that:

"The Secretary of the Interior shall manage the recreation area in a manner which will preserve and enhance its scenic, natural and historic setting and its public health value as an air shed for the Southern California metropolitan area while providing for the recreational and educational needs of the visiting public."

This plan will achieve these intents. The planning process followed the required federal oversight, National Environmental

Policy Act (NEPA) review, and public participation processes to determine the appropriate actions.

All reasonable efforts were made in this plan to make NRA facilities, programs, and services accessible to and usable by all people, including those with disabilities. To achieve this, the National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy will continue to develop strategies to ensure the continued preservation and enhancement of the national recreation area's scenic, natural, and historic setting. The strategies will ensure that all new and rehabilitated buildings, facilities, and programs, including those offered by concessioners and interpreters, will be designed and implemented in conformance with applicable rules, regulations, and standards.



THE PLANNING PROCESS

General management planning provided an opportunity to create a new vision and to define the national recreation area's role in relation to its national, historic, and communal settings. Public meetings were held in different areas of the NRA to allow for maximum input from as many users as possible. The planning process was designed to provide decision-makers with adequate information about resources, impacts, and costs. Analyzing the national recreation area in relation to its surrounding natural, historic, and communal setting, as well as future challenges, helped NRA managers and staff understand how the national recreation area can interrelate with neighbors and others in systems that are ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable. Decisions made in this context are more likely to be successful over time and promote more efficient use of public funds.

The planning process began by defining the mission statement and purpose of the national recreation area, including broad goals to fulfill that mission, and descriptions of resource conditions, visitor uses, and management actions to best achieve those goals. Then the treatment and use of NRA resources was considered, based on scientific, technical, and scholarly analyses that employ current research as well as applied and accepted professional practices in park management.

Management alternatives were generated based on the goals and the analyses. The alternatives were then scrutinized for their consistency with the national recreation area's purpose and mission, their impact on NRA resources, the quality of the visitor experience, the short- and long-term costs, and the environmental consequences that extend beyond NRA boundaries.

Throughout the planning process, public

input was requested at critical stages to ensure that the public's interests in the national recreation area as part of their national heritage, cultural traditions, and community surroundings were fully understood and considered. The planning effort began in 1997. A meeting was held with more than 70 public agencies associated with land management within the NRA boundary to discuss the issues and future of the national recreation area. Then the public was formally notified of the planning effort and introduced to the planning process through a newsletter. Two additional newsletters and two series of five public meetings were conducted in preparation of the *Draft and Final General Management Plans / Environmental Impact Statements*.

This general management plan defines why a national recreation area was established and what resource conditions and visitor experiences should be achieved and maintained over time to conserve that original purpose. The plan considers various approaches to visitor use, management, and development, some of which may represent competing interests for the same resource base. Ultimately, the general management plan defines a series of desired outcomes or conditions. The plan covers a broad area and a wide range of resources, programs, and concerns, and must, therefore, function at a general level. Because planning is an ongoing and continuous process, the management plan must be seen as a dynamic document. A number of plans already completed will remain in effect, and this plan reflects those still deemed to be useful.

The more specific actions required to attain the goals and outcomes defined in the general management plan are accomplished through implementation plans. These plans apply to specific program areas, projects, or operational and development strategies for specific areas of the national recreation area.



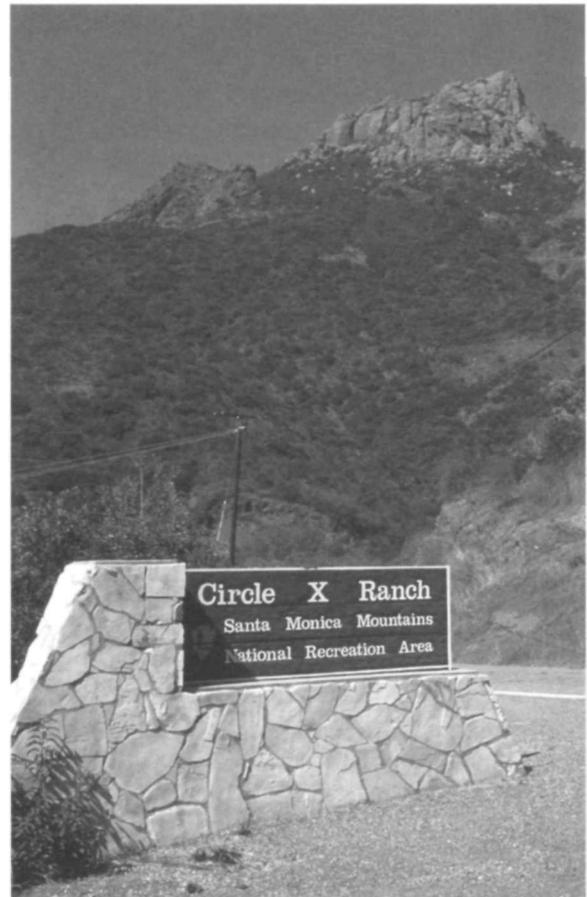
Future implementation plans will use the goals and conditions defined in the approved general management plan as their starting point. Implementation plans for future actions with potential to affect the environment will require formal analysis of alternatives in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Although the National Park Service “oversees” the national recreation area, it currently has direct responsibility for only about 15 percent of the land within the boundary. The National Park Service is a partner, sharing stewardship with the public, other agencies, and private landowners. The National Park Service provides for operation, maintenance, resource management, and resource and visitor protection on all NPS lands. The legislation establishing the 150,000-acre national recreation area emphasizes cooperative relationships. Thus, the National Park Service has a less direct but very clear duty to support activities on non-NPS lands consistent with the purposes of the national recreation area.

Although this general management plan represents the framework for management and future implementation plans and the ultimate vision of the National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the actions called for in this plan will be accomplished over time. Budget restrictions, requirements for additional data, legal compliance and/or competing NRA priorities prevent immediate implementation of many actions. Major or costly actions could be implemented over 10 or more years.

The National Park Service, California State Parks, and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy have limited authority over privately held lands, but will attempt to guide the decisions of other public agencies toward consistency with the plan whenever possible. The basic strategies to implement the general management plan are outlined below.



Circle X Ranch entrance (NPS photo).

- NPS-Owned Lands

The National Park Service will implement actions set forth in the approved management plan on NPS-owned lands as funding becomes available for land acquisition and improvements.

Improvements to specific facilities on NPS-owned lands, and/or acquisition of additional lands, will be completed according to specific implementation plans.

Over time, some of these plans may be revised. A number of specific plans already exist. They will be revised for consistency with the approved general management plan as necessary. When possible, future implementation plans will be jointly developed with other agencies to reflect the cooperative interests and management of the national recreation area. A trail management plan for the three agencies of the Santa Monica Mountains will be among the first plans developed.

- California State Parks

The California State Parks intends to use this general management plan in relation to its own general planning process in the following ways:

The plan will be used as an advisory document to keep a general consistency between the approved general management plan and state park general plans. It will not replace state park general plans. Individual state park general plans will continue to be viable and the primary vehicles for the long-range planning for individual state park units in the Santa Monica Mountains, as specified in the *Public Resources Code*. The goals and concepts set forth in this approved general management plan will be used to plan and manage areas on behalf of the state park units included in the national recreation area.

- Opportunities for Interagency Cooperative Relationships

The enabling legislation for the national recreation area envisioned a cooperative effort between the state, local governments, and the National Park Service. About 70 governmental agencies have some type of jurisdiction within the NRA boundary. Cooperative relationships in the Santa Monica Mountains are both beneficial and a simple necessity. No single agency or governmental body currently controls or ever will control the land base. Individually, the lands owned and managed by the separate agencies are too small, too interdependent, and too vulnerable to sustain their biological integrity and absorb the impacts of natural processes, such as fires and landslides, or unnatural processes, such as development.

Opportunities for cooperation are frequent and are not limited to the National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Los Angeles County Beaches and Harbors, for example, probably serves more recreation area visitors on coastal beaches than do the other NRA agencies combined. Mugu Lagoon, administered by the U.S. Navy, supports one of the national recreation area's most sensitive and endangered biological resources.



Zuma Canyon (NPS photo).



The National Recreation Area



No other urban national park features such a diversity of natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources within such a densely populated area.



DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

The Congress of the United States, finding that "there are significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific, natural, archeological, and public health benefits provided by the Santa Monica Mountains and adjacent coastline area," established the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in 1978. It did so to "preserve its scenic, natural, and historic setting and its public health value as an air shed for the Southern California metropolitan area while providing for the recreational and educational need of the visiting public." A core tenet of the 1978 legislation is partnership among federal and state park agencies, as well as local governments and private landowners.

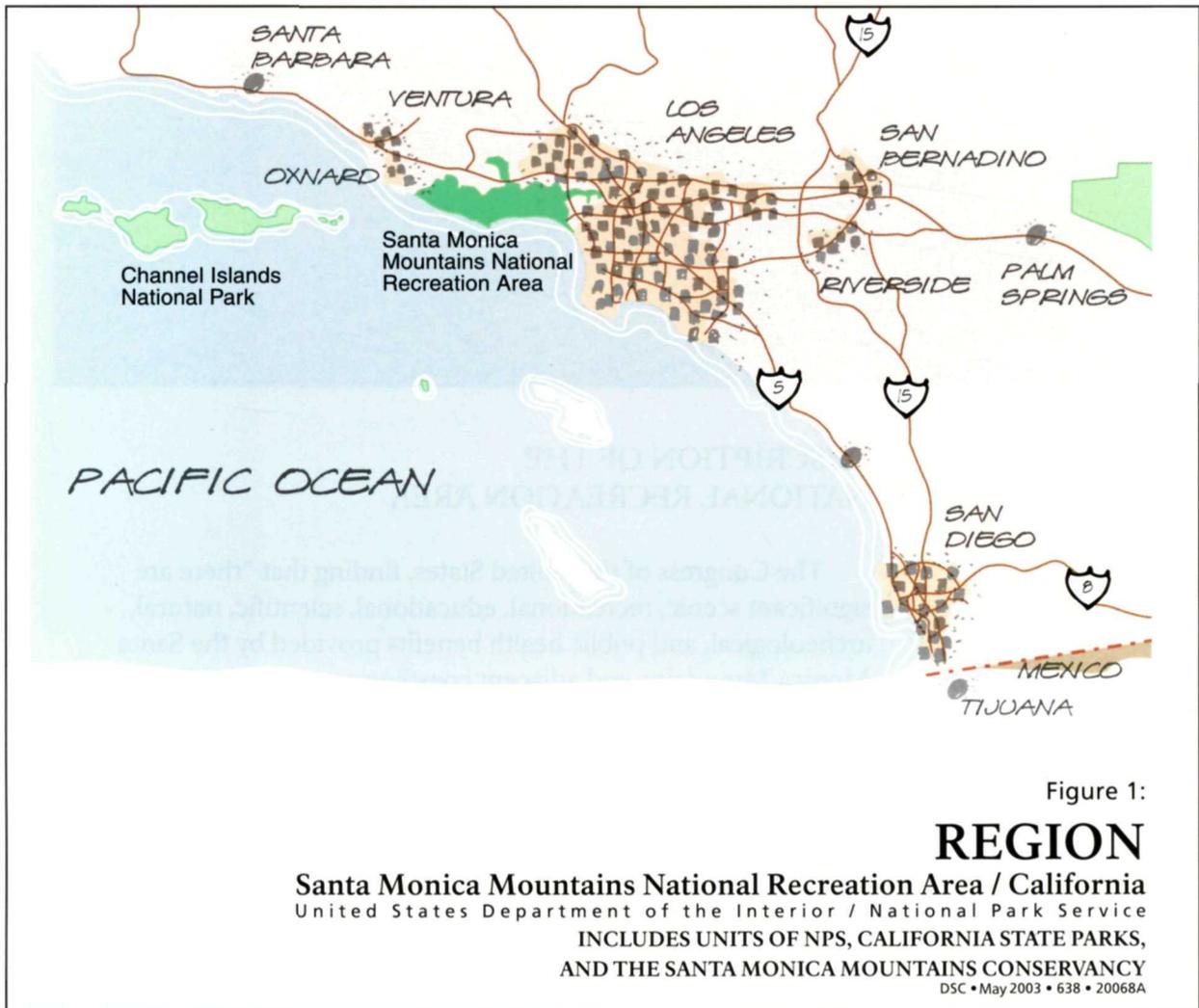
Regional Location and Boundaries

The national recreation area has rather complex boundaries compared to other national park system units. The legislated NRA boundary generally covers the Santa Monica Mountain range in southern California (see Figure 1). It totals 153,075 acres and encompasses 74,152 acres of protected parkland. About ninety percent of the total area within the NRA boundaries is not developed.

The recreation area extends about 46 miles (from the Hollywood Bowl west to Point Mugu) and averages 7 miles in width (see Figure 2). To the north, the recreation area is bordered by Simi Valley, the San Fernando Valley, and many communities along Highway 101. These include Calabasas, Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village, and Agoura Hills. The Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) crosses the southern part of the recreation area, which includes Topanga, Malibu, and Pacific Palisades. In the east the recreation area begins just north of Hollywood with small, undeveloped canyons. A little farther west, in Topanga State Park, the mountains reach a width of 8 miles across,

Few national parks feature such a diverse assemblage of natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources within easy access of more than 17 million people (NPS photo).





Regional location of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

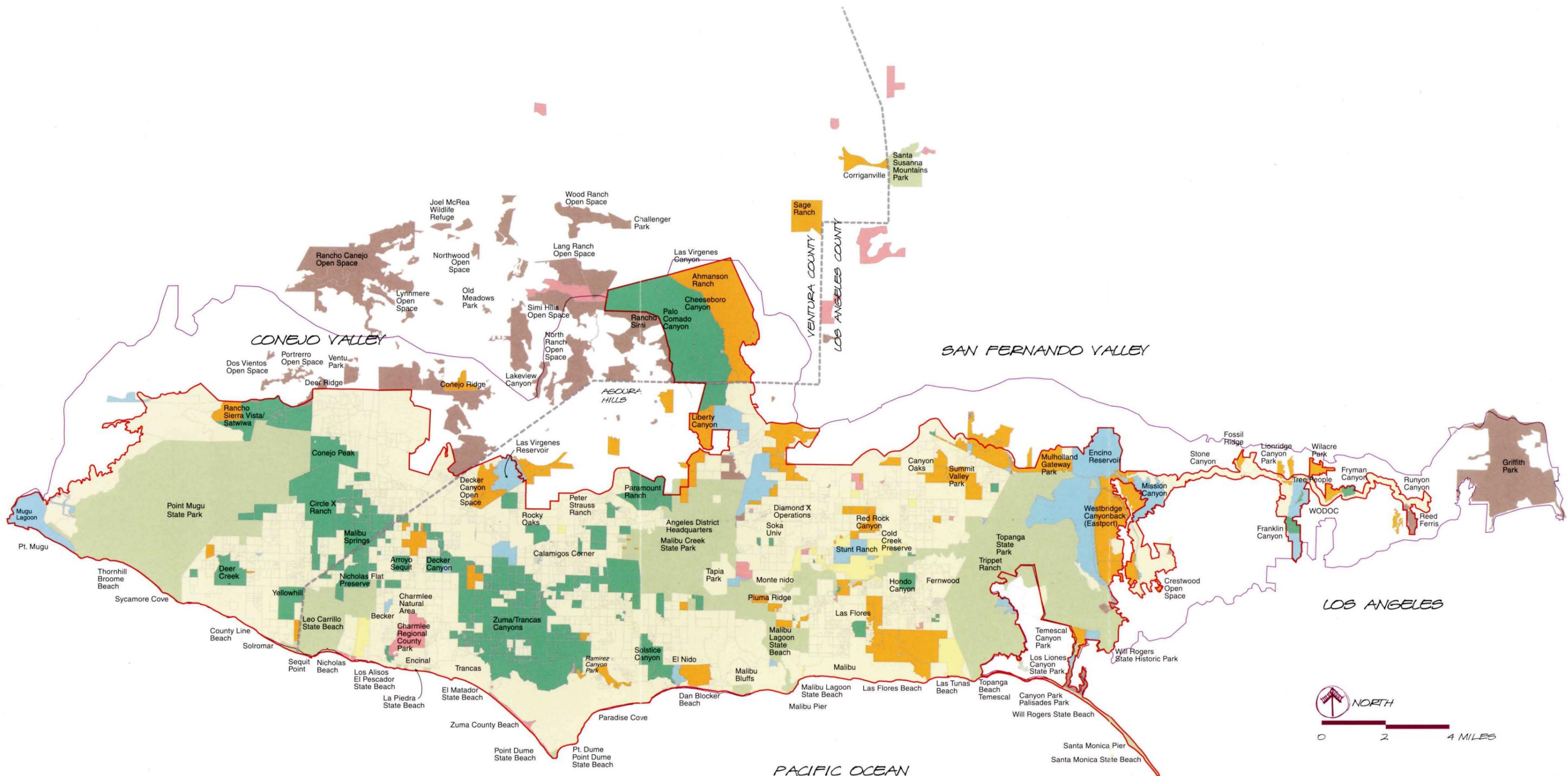
most of which is within the city limits of Los Angeles. The further west one travels, the wilder and less developed the mountains become, ending at Point Mugu State Park, which includes the recreation area's only designated wilderness (designated by the state).

Landownership

The Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Act (enacted in 1978 by the state) mandated that a comprehensive plan be created to lay the framework for what the recreation area should be in terms of size and character. Then, as now, the state of

California was the largest public landowner, with more than 28,000 acres of land in four major state parks. Federal land acquisition began in 1980, with an authorization of \$155 million. At that time the National Park Service targeted about 70,000 acres for future acquisition. When completed, about 100,000 of the national recreation area's 153,075 acres will be federal, state, or local parkland.

Currently, some 79,772 acres of open space lands are held by government and conservation agencies within the national recreation area. Just under half of the national recreation area is in private ownership (70,923 acres). Landownership statistics within the NRA boundary are listed on Table 1.



- NATIONAL PARK SERVICE LAND
- STATE OF CALIFORNIA PARKLAND
- MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY LAND
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY LAND
- LOS ANGELES COUNTY PARKLAND
VENTURA COUNTY PARKLAND
- COSCA
RANCHO SIMI DEPT. PARKS & REC.
CITY OF LOS ANGELES PARKLAND
CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS PARKLAND
CITY OF CALABASAS PARKLAND
- OTHER FEDERAL AND STATE LAND
LOS ANGELES COUNTY LAND
CITY OF LOS ANGELES LAND
MISC. PUBLIC LAND
CALIFORNIA COASTAL CONSERVANCY LAND
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA RESERVE
LAS VIRGENES MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
- MOUNTAINS RESTORATION TRUST
- PRIVATE LAND WITHIN NRA BOUNDARY
- LOS ANGELES / VENTURA COUNTY LINE
- SMMNRA BOUNDARY
- SMMNZ BOUNDARY



Figure 2:

**CURRENT PARK
LANDOWNERSHIP**
 Santa Monica Mountains
 National Recreation Area / California
 United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service
 INCLUDES UNITS OF NPS, CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS,
 AND THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
 DSC • May 2003 • 638 • 20069A

Table 1

LANDOWNERSHIP WITHIN NRA BOUNDARY



Landowner (Geographic Area)	Total Acreages as of 2002
Private Land	70,923
State Dept. of Parks & Recreation	35,059
National Park Service	22,610
Other Los Angeles County Land (non-parkland)	3,286
Mountain Resources Conservation Authority	7,712
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Land	5,079
University of CA Reserve	328
Other City of Los Angeles Land (non-parkland)	1,998
Miscellaneous Public Land	254
COSCA Open Space	0
Other Federal Land	936
Mountain Restoration Trust	1,900
Los Angeles County Parkland	1,074
City of Calabasas Parkland	245
City of Los Angeles Land	437
City of Thousand Oaks Parkland	36
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District	1,198

The 1998 *Land Protection Plan*, which locates significant natural, cultural, and recreational resource parcels, was among the most critical to the formulation of this general management plan. The recreation area uses GIS (geographic information system) software to organize and analyze natural, cultural, and recreational conservation criteria established by scientists and park managers throughout southern California. The GIS software groups the criteria and assigns a relative “score” to each parcel – in essence, a ranking of its parkland resource value and support for reasons for possible acquisition of particular properties. Approval of this general management plan will be reflected in the database used in the land protection process.

All immediate adjustments to the NRA boundary in this management plan are predicated on the assumption of donation, land transfer, or purchase by a nonfederal entity. Recommendations for additional boundary studies do not make this assumption, and the impact of additional acquisition costs would be one of the factors considered in any future study.

The National Park Service and its partners continue to pursue parkland acquisition within the NRA boundaries. This management plan presents a broad-brush approach concerning which areas in the mountains should be considered low, moderate, or high intensity management areas. The *Land Protection Plan* provides a better understanding of resource and





The Santa Monica Mountains are adjacent to 46 miles of scenic California coastline with sandy beaches and rocky tide pools and lagoons (NPS photo).

recreation values at risk and enables the National Park Service to assess alternative approaches to resource protection, such as conservation easements, land exchanges, and habitat conservation plans.

National Recreation Area Resources

The planning process for this management plan focused on understanding and preserving the human relationships with the recreation area's natural and cultural resources. The following resource descriptions provide an idea of the values that would be at stake if a sustainable plan were not in place. A more extensive description is contained in the *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement*.

The mountains and beaches of the recreation area form a dramatic contrast to the urban sprawl of the San Fernando Valley and the Los Angeles Basin. The east-west trending mountain range is geologically complex and characterized by steep, rugged slopes and canyons. Elevations range from sea



Coastal strand (NPS photo).





Riparian woodland (NPS photo).

level to more than 3,000 feet. The Santa Monica Mountains are adjacent to 46 miles of scenic California coastline, with sandy beaches, rocky tide pools, and lagoons. Long and wide white beaches stretch along much of the coast, occasionally giving way to high bluffs and rocky outcrops jutting seaward.

Natural Resources

There is tremendous ecological diversity within the recreation area. Grassy hills, oak woodlands, valley oak savannas, rocky outcrops, and riparian woodlands give way to chaparral-covered slopes, coastal marshes, and rural residential and agricultural areas. At 1,400 acres, Mugu Lagoon is one of the largest coastal wetlands in California. Malibu Lagoon and Mugu Lagoon are important stopovers for neotropical and other birds migrating along the Pacific flyway. Numerous mammals are found in the mountains, including bobcats, coyotes, mountain lions, mule deer, golden eagle, and badgers. Nearly 400 species of birds and 35 species of reptiles and amphibians are known to occur in the national recreation area. More than 20 federal or state-listed threatened and endangered plant and animal species and four additional state-listed threatened and endangered species find habitat within the Santa Monica Mountains. In addition, 46 federal and state animal and 11 plant “species of concern” also occur. These plant, animal, and habitat types are a part of a diverse and increasingly rare,

complex natural ecosystem that has adapted to the southern California Mediterranean-type climate of wet winters and warm, dry summers.

The global significance of the Mediterranean-type ecosystem is becoming increasingly recognized. This biome is among the smallest and most rare on earth, and each instance of this biome has been affected by intense human occupation. As a result, only 18 percent of this ecosystem remains undisturbed in the world (Hannah et al. 1995).

Fire has been an especially important factor shaping ecosystems of the Santa Monica Mountains. Fire contributes to the control of nutrient cycles and energy pathways. Through much of the past, fire has been a natural process, contributing to the diversity, productivity, and regeneration of ecosystems. The recreation area’s vegetation and wildlife have evolved over millions of years in partial response to naturally occurring fires. These fires, in combination with aboriginal burning during the last 12,000 years, shaped the landscape. However, the current proximity and accessibility of the mountains to millions of people have heavily influenced fire regimes.

Cultural Resources

The Santa Monica Mountains include nationally significant ethnographic, archeological, historic, and scenic sites. More than 1,000 known archeological sites are in the NRA boundary, one of the highest densities of archeological resources found in any mountain range in the world. The 26 known Chumash pictograph sites (including the Saddlerock site), sacred to traditional Native American Indians, are among the most spectacular found anywhere. Nearly every major prehistoric and historic theme associated with human interaction and development of the western United States is represented here. Three historic structures





Petroglyph discovered in the Santa Monica Mountains (NPS photo).

Monica Mountains. Nearly every major prehistoric and historic theme associated with human interaction and development of the western United States is represented within the NRA boundary – from early hunters and gatherers to Native American Indian cultures, the Spanish mission and rancho periods, and the American homestead era. Over time, these Native American cultures developed large villages in the Santa Monica Mountains, extensive maritime and inland trade

in the national recreation area are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. More than 73 archeological/ historic sites in the Santa Monica Mountains are potentially eligible for listing on the national register. This includes Paramount Ranch, which continues to be used by the filming industry.

An estimated 40 percent of the Santa Monica Mountains has been surveyed for archeological sites, and about 70 percent of NPS lands in the national recreation area have been surveyed for archeological sites. California State Parks staff conducts similar studies and inventories on state park properties in the course of preparing or updating general plans, interpretive or educational plans, resource management plans, and comprehensive master plans.

In 2001 the recreation area began an historic resource study of NPS lands. This is a three-year project that will identify and nominate to the national register those structures, sites, and cultural landscapes that appear to meet national register criteria for listing at the local, state, or national level of significance.

Rich and diverse cultural resources have contributed to the “livability” of the Santa

routes, and monetary systems.

Their legacy is recorded through sacred pictographs, records of their extensive astronomical knowledge, and exquisite basketry, stone, and woodcarvings. The Santa Monica Mountains were, and still remain, home to two of the largest Native American Indian groups in California, the Chumash and the Gabrielino/ Tongva.

Beginning in the late 1880s, the mountains were recognized as a resort mecca by recreation and sports clubs as well as nonprofit organizations and churches. Many groups have built retreats here. Large estates

Culturally significant Paramount Ranch (NPS archives).



The Santa Monica Mountains were and are a backdrop for numerous movies and television productions (NPS archives).

began to appear in the 1920s and continue to be built today.

The easy accessibility and varied topography of the Santa Monica Mountains was also key to the emergence of the movie industry in Los Angeles. From here, the movie industry created—and exported to the world—the Hollywood version of the American culture. The Paramount Ranch constitutes one of the best remaining cultural sites associated with the “golden age of motion pictures.” The motion picture production history spans silent movie making to modern television programming. As the motion picture industry brought fame to southern California, celebrated “stars” moved to Santa Monica, Pacific Palisades, and Malibu, forming the nucleus of luxurious movie colonies.

Visitor Experience

Visitors to Los Angeles experience the natural beauty and cultural richness of the national recreation area as a welcome natural and cultural alternative to the highly developed greater Los Angeles area.

Just outside the NRA boundary, the communities surrounding the Santa Monica Mountains have led growth in the state for the last 15 to 20 years. Residential and commercial centers have filled the valley floors and foothills north of the mountains. The San Fernando Valley, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Agoura Hills, Westlake Village, and

Thousand Oaks communities have developed new tract subdivisions, apartment complexes, large planned communities, and commercial centers. The desire to live in a rural setting, void of urban distractions and stresses, is a strong factor in the development within the recreation area boundary.

Each year more than 33 million visitors enjoy the beaches and mountains in the national recreation area. Visitors hike, bike, or ride on hundreds of miles of mountain trails or drive the scenic roads. Communities in and adjacent to the national recreation area provide a wide variety of visitor and tourist services.

Visitor Use Areas

Following are brief descriptions of the major visitor use areas organized by land management agencies.

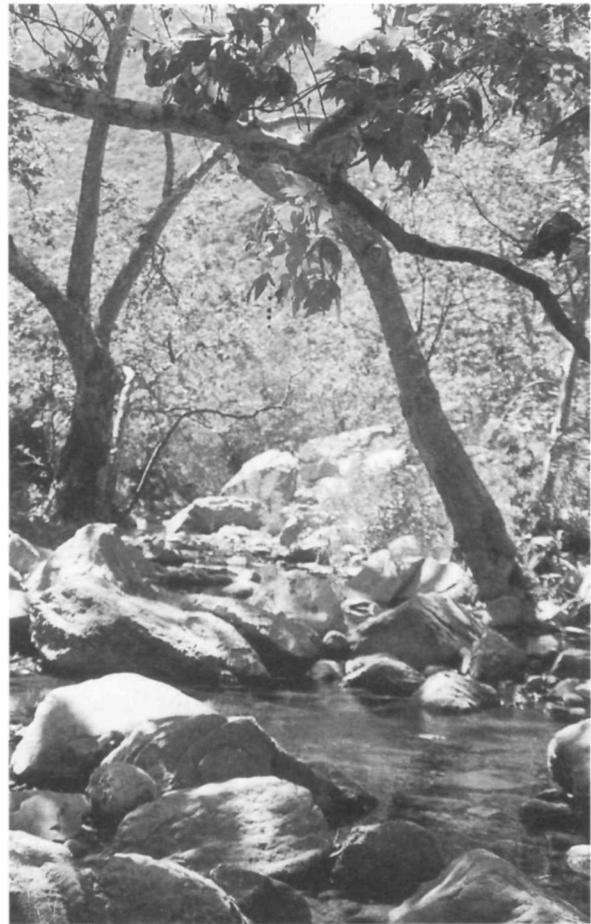
National Park Service Areas

The National Park Service “oversees” the national recreation area, but currently has direct responsibility for only about 15 percent of the land within the boundary. The National Park Service is a partner, sharing stewardship with the public, other agencies, and private landowners. The National Park Service provides for operation, maintenance, resource management, education, and resource and visitor protection on all NPS lands. See Figure 3 for the existing conditions and recreational opportunities of the park.

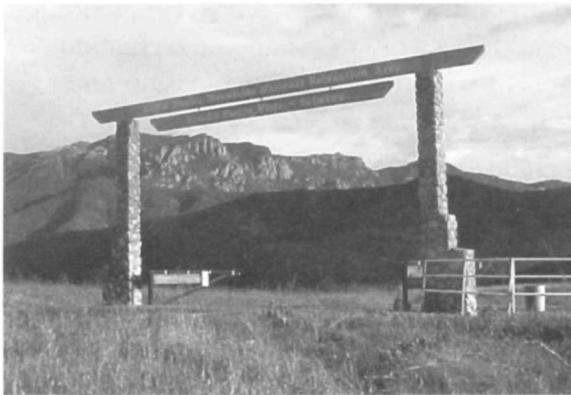


NPS units include:

- **Paramount Ranch** – This historic movie ranch is still used by filmmakers. The ranch features beautiful valley oak savannas and short hiking trails. This site provides visitor opportunities for interpretation and observation of filmmaking. There are several trails at the ranch and it is used as an outdoor classroom for environmental education.
- **Zuma-Trancas Canyon** – This wild coastal canyon is largely undisturbed by adjacent development and contains endangered species and rare perennial streams. The canyon also contains critical core habitat and abundant species diversity in large blocks of coastal sage scrub vegetation. Hiking trails are available. Bicycles are allowed on Zuma Ridge.



Zuma-Trancas Canyon (NPS photo).



Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa (NPS photo).

- **Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa** – This is a place of special significance to Native American Indians because it contains sites of a Chumash habitation and is the crossroad of two Native American Indian trails and trade routes. Beautiful views of Boney Mountain feature a pastoral ranchlike setting. The site is used for the Satwiwa Native American Cultural Center with interpretive



Kids and smiles at Satwiwa (NPS photo).





Upper Cheeseboro Canyon (NPS photo).



Circle X Ranch (NPS photo)



Castro Crest (NPS photo).

programs and recreational trails. The site is a gateway to Point Mugu State Park and the Boney Mountain Wilderness (state designation). There are several trails, and it is used as an outdoor classroom for environmental education.

- Arroyo Sequit – This area has rolling grassland mixed with chaparral, with a picnic area and a wood-frame ranch house serving as a ranger residence. The site is considered a significant example of the homesteading era. The area, tucked away from the lights of Los Angeles, is excellent for viewing the night sky.
- Circle X Ranch – One of the few individual and group campsites operated by the National Park Service, this site is the gateway to the most remote parts of the Santa Monica Mountains and has the highest peak in the range. It is a secluded mountainous area with impressive rocky outcrops and a variety of scenic trails. This site was a Boy Scout camp from the 1950s to the 1960s. The ranch has areas for picnicking and a ranch house for group use.
- Rocky Oaks – One of the more accessible sites in the mountains, Rocky Oaks contains scenic oak woodlands with a pond and wetlands. It is adjacent to the Saddle Rock pictograph site. This unit has nature trails, an amphitheater, and a picnic area.
- Castro Crest – Part of the Backbone Trail corridor, this prominent ridgeline has stunning rock formations and views of the ocean and the mountains.
- Cheeseboro Canyon and Simi Hills – Rolling hills with valley oak savannas and unique rock lands provide nesting habitat for a tremendous diversity of raptors. Lush riparian areas characterize this site. The area was a significant cattle ranching district used from the 1780s to



the 1900s. Significant Chumash and Gabrielino/Tongva religious sites occur very close to the NPS boundary. Views from Simi Peak dramatically contrast the surrounding valleys and natural landscapes with the human-made environment. This area receives a high level of use on the trails by mountain bikers, horseback riders, and hikers.

- Solstice Canyon – Solstice Canyon is a lush, narrow canyon that offers a perennial stream with an extensive riparian community. Site conditions are suitable for the reinroduction of endangered steelhead trout. The canyon also features several notable archeological sites and a stone cabin, built by Mathew Keller, which represents homesteading in the coastal Santa Monica Mountains. Several trails in the canyon connect the coastal and mountain habitats. The canyon is used as an outdoor classroom for environmental education.



Peter Strauss Ranch (NPS photo).

- Peter Strauss Ranch – A small ranch showcases the original stone house (1927) and outbuildings built by the original owner, Harry Miller, inventor of the carburetor. The Smithsonian refers to him as the greatest automotive genius of the century. This site is used for festivals, picnicking, concerts, and special events.

California State Parks Areas

Of the 153,075 acres in the boundary of the national recreation area, the California State Parks manages an estimated 35,059 acres.

The California State Parks administers its lands according to classifications defined in the California *Public Resources Code*. Classifications include wilderness, reserves, parks, recreation areas, historical units, and natural reserves. The District headquarters for the area is in Malibu Creek State Park. State park units are listed below and illustrated in Figure 3:

- Point Mugu State Park – This area makes up one of the largest contiguous undisturbed areas in the national recreation area. It features a large wilderness preserve and several perennial streams. There are significant diverse plant communities across the



Point Mugu State Park (NPS photos).



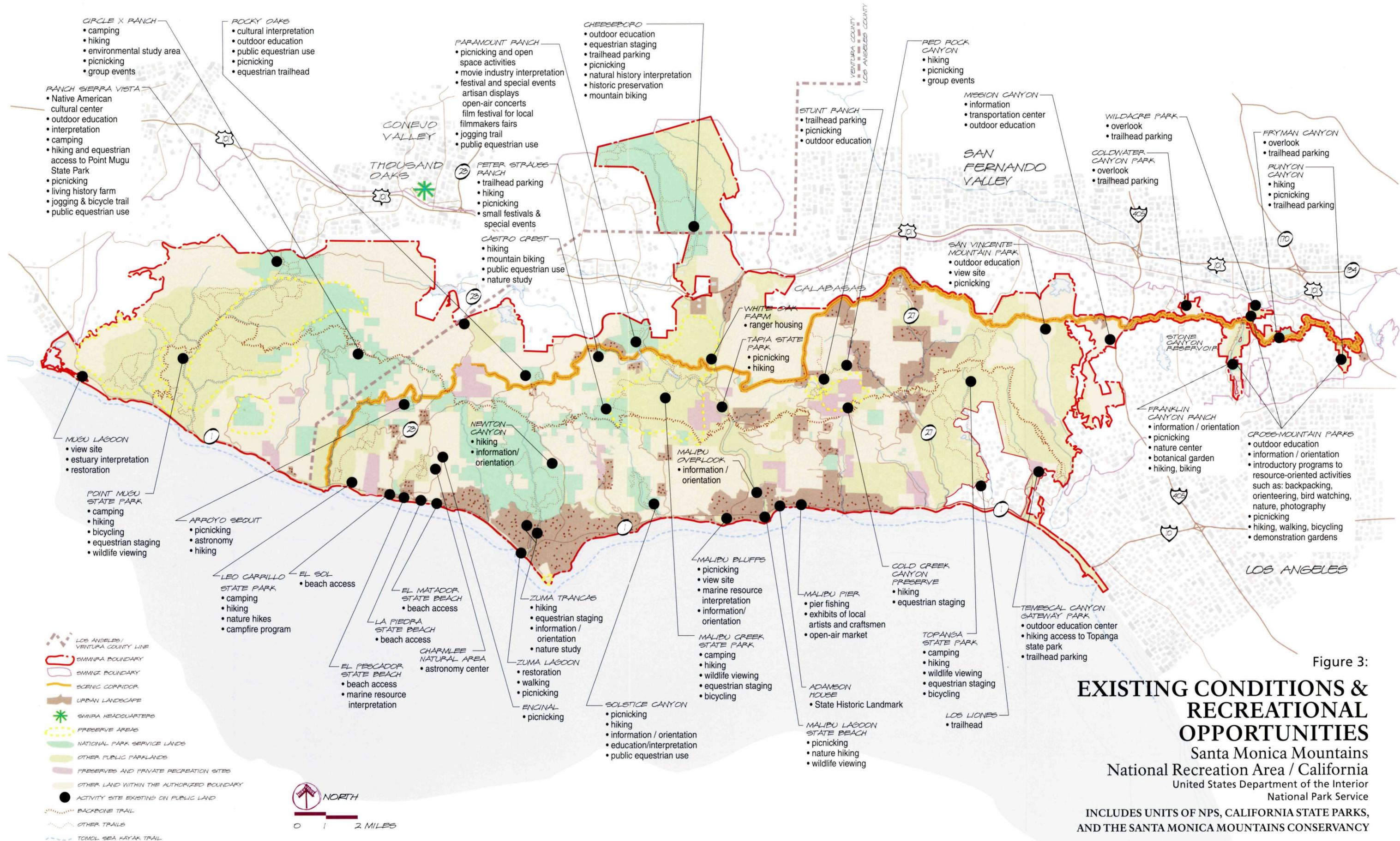


Figure 3:

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Santa Monica Mountains
National Recreation Area / California

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

INCLUDES UNITS OF NPS, CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS,
AND THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

area. The mountain and coastal interface provides a unique recreational experience. The Point Mugu area was also an important trade route for Native Americans and has numerous associated archeological sites. There are beach and canyon campgrounds, a group campground area, picnic facilities, and hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding trails.

- Leo Carrillo State Park – Habitat here varies from significant tide pools to upland vegetative habitats, and it is one of the best areas for viewing wildflowers in the western part of the national recreation area. It is also a monarch butterfly migration area. There are beach and canyon campground facilities (including group camping). A large archeological village site is near the beach.
- Point Dume State Beach – This promontory defines the northern end of Santa Monica Bay and provides spectacular views of the entire coastal corridor of the national recreation area. The unit is divided into a popular recreational beach area (on the up-coast end) operated by the County of Los Angeles, and a natural preserve that includes the promontory, natural upland habitat, tide pools, a remote beach, and a seal haul-out area.
- Malibu Creek State Park – This area has a variety of habitats, perennial creeks, pools, lakes, valley oaks, lush riparian areas, and views of rugged mountains. Malibu Canyon is a prominent feature of the area. At its deepest, it is about 1,900 feet deep. Malibu Creek State Park has been used for many movie and television locations. It was a significant interface site between the two Native American Indian groups, the Gabrielino/Tongva and the Chumash. There is a Chumash village site here as well as several historic

structures. Campground and picnic facilities are scattered throughout this state park, as are numerous hiking trails. This site also serves as headquarters for the Angeles District of the California State Parks.

- Malibu Lagoon State Beach – is one of the two significant lagoons in southern California. It is a habitat for steelhead trout and tidewater goby and is a major bird flyway. The beach area operated by the County of Los Angeles is considered superior for surfing. The Adamson House features the best surviving example of the Malibu Tile Industry. There was a Chumash village site that was a regional capital before the Spanish settled here.
- Topanga State Park – This area is the largest contiguous block of natural habitat in the eastern part of the Santa Monica Mountains and has some of the most significant marine and plant fossils in the Santa Monica Mountains. There are hiking and horse trails, a small picnic area, and a flat area for informal sports. The first archeological site recorded in Los Angeles County is here as well.
- Will Rogers State Historical Park – At the southern end of the Santa Monica Mountains, adjoining Topanga State



Malibu Creek State Park Campground (NPS photo).



Park, is the ranch created by humorist Will Rogers. The large equestrian ranch, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, includes numerous historic structures and site features. Structures include the main ranch house, stables, hay barn, and other outbuildings. Historic site features include the polo field, riding area, roping corral, pastures, historic trees, and an extensive system of rock walls and stone drainage channels. The unit provides a trailhead to Topanga State Park trails and to the Backbone Trail, as well as facilities for boarding horses, riding, and polo events.



Will Rogers house and polo grounds (NPS photo).

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Lands

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was created in 1979 (as the successor agency of the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Commission) to complement the zoning power of local governments and the acquisition of lands by the federal government in the Santa Monica Mountains Zone. The conservancy relies on

the *Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Plan* (1979), which is compatible with the goals of the national recreation area, to determine which land should be acquired. The conservancy also reviews the consistency of local government actions with the 1979 *Comprehensive Plan* as they determine their eligibility for NPS- or SMMC-managed grant programs. Headquarters for the conservancy is at the Ramirez Canyon Park in Malibu.

The primary responsibility of the agency is to acquire land and turn it over to the appropriate land management agencies. The conservancy is not a park management



California Sea Lion (NPS photo).





Rock outcrops (NPS photo).

agency, although it has acquired many key park and recreation parcels in the mountains, totaling 5,079 acres. The conservancy has also developed a series of scenic overlooks along the Mulholland scenic corridor and has been very supportive of the purposes of the national recreation area.

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is the land management arm of the conservancy; it was created under a joint powers agreement in cooperation with several local park agencies. Through the assistance of its joint powers authority, the conservation authority operates the following conservancy lands in the national recreation area:

- Coldwater Canyon – Once the mountain patrol headquarters for the Los Angeles

Fire Department, it is now an environmental education center with 7 miles of nature trail and environmental displays.

- Corral Canyon – This is the largest undeveloped canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains. It represents a conjunction of coastal and mountain habitats and accesses part of the Pacific Coast Trail network running east/west through the Santa Monica Mountains.
- Cross-Mountain Parks – Several pockets of open space within surrounding urban residential development in the eastern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains provide views and hiking trails. These natural oases contain riparian forests, oak woodlands, and chaparral.
- Franklin Canyon Ranch – Cooperatively administered by the National Park Service and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, this open space is a natural canyon in the heart of an urban area that features trails (including one fully accessible) and the William O. Douglas Outdoor Center. It is a site for filming with its picturesque springs, creek, and lake. The ranch still contains portions of the water delivery system to Los Angeles from the Owens Valley Aqueduct designed by Mulholland, and is potentially eligible for the national register.
- Fryman Canyon – A wayside overlook on Mulholland Drive provides spectacular views of Los Angeles, Hollywood, the San Fernando Valley, the Santa Susanna Mountains, and the west end of the San Gabriel Mountains. There is a mountain trail connecting to Coldwater Canyon and Wilacre Park, offering an opportunity to experience a chaparral wilderness hiking experience.



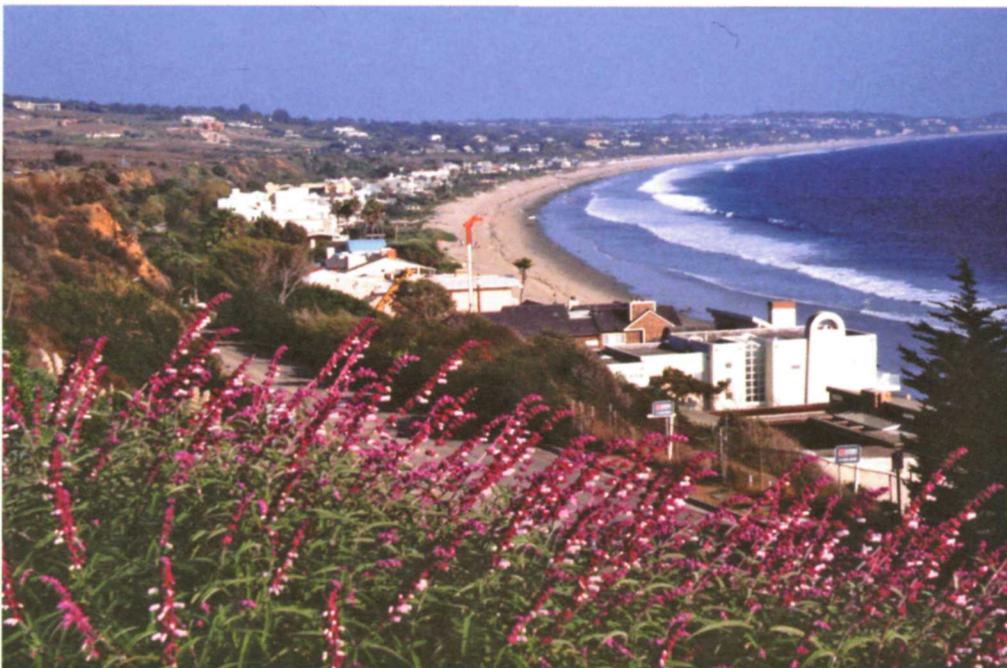
- Mission Canyon – Part of the original Mulholland scenic corridor park sites, this canyon was formerly attached to the Nike missile site and was a landfill for 20 years (serving the San Fernando Valley). The canyon is just west of the San Diego Freeway and south of Mulholland Drive.
- Red Rock Canyon – Large, beautiful eroded boulders of sandstone and conglomerate rock fill this canyon. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy has converted a Boy Scouts of America building into a wilderness training and education center.
- San Vicente Mountain Park – This small park was also the former site of a Nike missile tracking station in the 1950s and 1960s. The park is 1.5 miles west of the Los Angeles County Sanitation District Mission Canyon Landfill. After many years of public abuse, the park was restored to native vegetation and gravel paths, with the intent of using the old radar tower as a hillside viewing platform.
- Temescal Canyon Gateway Park – The main southern entrance and parking area for hikers headed into the steep backcountry of Topanga State Park is at this gateway park. The shaded canyon includes the facilities for the Presbyterian Conference Grounds, which in the 1920s used the canyon for their annual Chatauqua summer festivals.



The Plan



The general management plan presents the approved strategy for managing the resources of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area for the next 15 to 20 years.





The National Park Service, California State Parks, and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy developed this management plan for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

The overall concept of the management plan is that significant natural and cultural resources and highly sensitive areas will be protected while providing compatible recreation (hiking, wildlife observation) and increased educational opportunities to a diverse public. Also, private recreation service providers will be encouraged to meet growing demand for recreational services and facilities.

Implementing this general management plan will allow visitors to continue to experience the variety of activities in the national recreation area and create a feeling of compassion for the treasures of California's past and to encourage appreciation for the remaining land so that it would continue to be protected and available for future enjoyment.

SIGNIFICANCE, MISSION, ISSUES, GOALS, AND THEMES

Congress established the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in 1978 as a cooperative effort to preserve the scenic, natural, and historic, as well as public health values of the Santa Monica Mountains. Those purposes serve as the basic guide for this plan. Planning direction was further refined by the progression through four successive steps. First, consideration was given to the national recreation area's national significance. Then, a basic statement of mission based on significance and legislative purposes was established. This was followed by the identification of planning issues that challenge the success of the national recreation area's mission. Finally, a set of mission goals was established defining the necessary outcomes and conditions that the plan must take to realize the basic purpose and mission of the national recreation area. The approved plan fulfills and/or is consistent with the national recreation area's mission goals.

Plant life flourishes in the national recreation area (NPS photo).



Significance

The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area is nationally significant because it protects the greatest expanse of mainland Mediterranean ecosystems in the national park system for the American people. As such, it is among the world’s rarest and most endangered ecosystems that occurs in only five locations throughout the world. A Mediterranean ecosystem is characterized by mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers, plus scrubby vegetation called “chaparral” in California. This extraordinarily diverse ecosystem is home to 26 distinct natural communities, from freshwater aquatic habitats and two of the last salt marshes on

the Pacific Coast, to oak woodlands, valley oak savannas, and chaparral. Within a one-hour commute to more than 17 million people (a population large enough to rank behind California, New York, and Texas in size), the recreation area is a critical haven for more than 450 animal species, including mountain lions, bobcats, and golden eagles. It is also home to more than 20 federal or state-listed threatened or endangered plants and animals and another 46 animals and 11 plants that are federal or state species of concern—among the highest concentrations of such rare species in the United States.

There are more than 1,000 archeological sites within the NRA boundaries. These sites reflect human habitations in the mountains dating back at least 10,000 years. Three structures are listed on the national register of Historic Places, and more than 73 archeological/historical sites are potentially eligible for listing on the national register.

In addition, Native American Indians have a long and deeply spiritual history of interaction with the Santa Monica Mountains, and many parts of the national recreation area are especially valued by them as places to seek spiritual renewal, conduct traditional ceremonies, and gather plants for traditional purposes.



Chaparral (NPS photo).



Coastal salt marsh (NPS photo).



Petroglyph found within the NRA boundaries (NPS photo).



Coastal live oak (NPS photo).

The national recreation area is also rich in historical themes, ranging from California's earliest exploration and settlement by Spain to its subsequent administration by the Republic of Mexico, as well as the course of Los Angeles' urbanization, from citrus groves to tract homes by way of oil development, motion pictures, and freeways. Paramount Ranch, as a case in point, is held by some historians to be the Nation's best remaining example of a film production facility from Hollywood's "golden era of motion pictures." Continued use of the Santa Monica Mountains for film production preserves a 75-year tradition that still holds the world's fascination.

Mission

Drawing upon the legislative purpose and significance, the staff of the National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy created a joint mission statement in 1997 to guide the general management plan through its evolution.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area is to protect and enhance, on a sustainable basis, one of the world's last remaining examples of a Mediterranean ecosystem and to maintain the area's unique natural, cultural, and scenic resources, unimpaired for future generations. The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area is to provide an inter-linking system of parklands and open spaces that offer compatible recreation and education opportunities that are accessible to a diverse public. This is accomplished by an innovative federal, state, local, and private partnership that enhances the region's quality of life and provides a model for other parks challenged by urbanization.



Planning Issues (Mission Challenges)

The six issue categories below highlight the challenges affecting the recreation area’s future. The dimensions of many of these problems exceed the reach of this plan’s solutions, such as traffic and population growth. Even so, this general management plan includes strategies that limit their impact on NRA resources and enhance the fulfillment of the NRA’s mission.

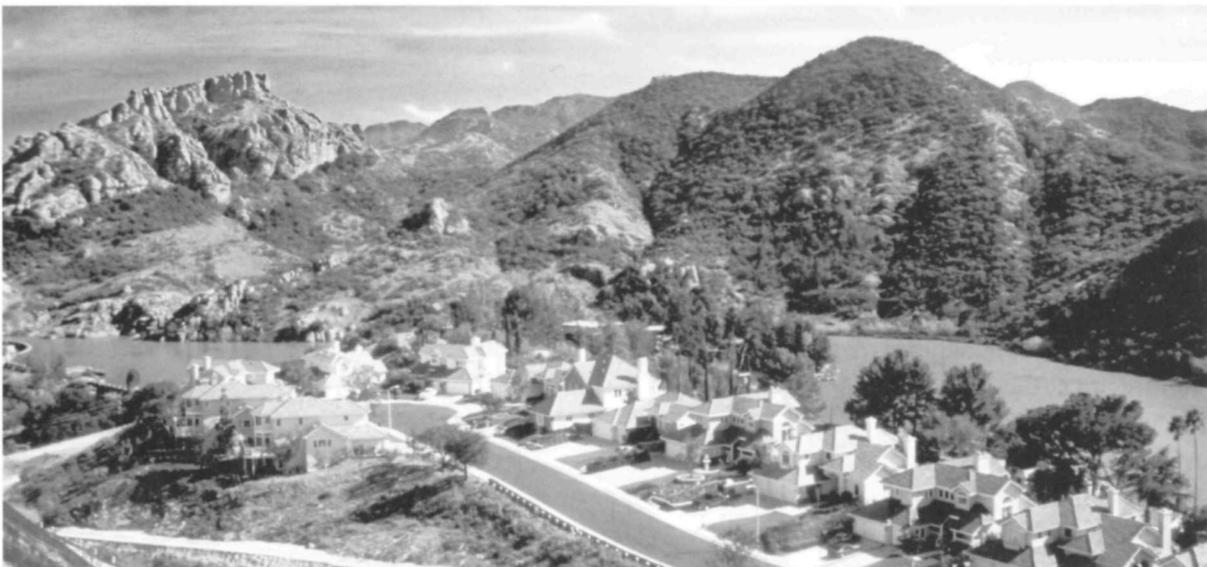
Resource Condition Issues

- The Los Angeles region continues to grow rapidly, placing immense pressure on the national recreation area. Construction and intrusion have resulted in the loss or degradation of resources, including threatened and endangered species habitat.
- Cultural resources are at risk as more people visit the recreation area and development continues on each side of the boundary.
- Critical habitat, wildlife corridors, watersheds, and archeological and historical sites on private lands are disappearing to development.

- Certain cultural landscapes have a unique character that is important to the human history of the Santa Monica Mountains. They may be diminished by incompatible development.
- Many home sites, highly susceptible to fire, floods, landslides, and earthquakes, are being developed with little regard for environmental consequences, the potential for causing human misery, or the consequent burden on taxpayers.
- Competition for remaining open lands diminishes NRA values, and ongoing development continues to escalate land prices.
- Private development of residences along ridgelines and the oceanfront intrude on the scenic vistas.

Land Use and Ownership Issues

- Implementation of an effective land management strategy is difficult because more than 65 government entities share jurisdiction of land within the NRA boundary.



New homes overlooking Lake Sherwood with Stoney Point in the background (photo by Ed Lawrence).





Hikers on one of many trails in the national recreation area (NPS photo).

- The public land managing partners are often unable to acquire additional lands due to limited funding and a lengthy acquisition process.

Visitor Experience Issues

- Conflicts among different recreational users, such as mountain bikers, horseback riders, and hikers, detract from the quality of the NRA experience.
- Population growth and increasing visitation require more facilities, parking areas, and established trails and decreased opportunities for solitude in much of the national recreation area.

Education and Interpretation Issues

- Current environmental education programs are too limited in availability to meet the needs and numbers of the diverse population of the Los Angeles area.

Access and Transportation Issues

- Mountains and beaches are inaccessible to many people in the Los Angeles area due

to the lack of public transportation, insufficient routing information about how to access recreation sites, and heavily congested roads during commuter periods and weekends.

- Many NRA facilities are not universally accessible.

Operations Issues

- Proximity and similarities in missions overlap among the public land managers in the national recreation area, resulting in a risk of duplication of facilities and effort.

Mission Goals

The NPS staff will strive to achieve the following goals. These goals incorporate public comments about desired future conditions for the national recreation area. The goals reflect the planning issues identified in the previous section, as well as the mission, law, core values, and policies of the three principal agencies that joined in this planning effort.



Coastal sage scrub (NPS photo).





Valley oak savanna (NPS photo).

Resource Condition Goals

- Protect and enhance species, habitat diversity, and natural processes.
- Protect and restore native plant species and plant communities, such as coastal sage scrub, coastal live oak woodland, and valley oak savannas.
- Protect and restore estuaries and wetlands.
- Develop a plan and enact programs to combat and remove the encroachment of exotic flora and fauna into natural ecosystems where feasible.
- Manage fire throughout the national recreation area to mimic natural fire regimes where feasible and reduce the threat of wildfires.



Wildfire in the Santa Monica Mountains (NPS photo).

- Maintain or improve water quality and manage riparian communities, natural stream characteristics, estuaries, and coastal waters for their significant ecological value.
- Implement collaborative scientific research and innovative resource management programs among federal, state, and local agencies and the private sector to manage, restore, and maintain natural processes.
- Develop scientific geographic information data to inform decision makers about appropriate parkland development. Share geographic information data with private landowners and local agencies to promote and support sustainable development in the Santa Monica Mountains.
- Work with private landowners and local agencies to promote and perpetuate biological diversity through development density strategies, such as buffer areas adjacent to significant NRA resources.
- Preserve the cultural history of the Santa Monica Mountains, and encourage cooperative cultural resource stewardship with private landowners and other federal, state, and local agencies.
- Evaluate potentially eligible ethnographic sites, traditional cultural properties, buildings, structures, and cultural landscapes for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places as required by the National Historic Preservation Act. Manage these sites and properties according to policy and legislation. Develop interpretive programs to educate the public about their significance and to solicit public and private assistance in preservation efforts.
- Encourage cooperation between land managing agencies, local organizations, and private landowners to protect and preserve ethnographic and historic resources.

- Create a shared curatorial facility for the three primary land-managing agencies to preserve the baseline data of the natural and cultural resources and museum collections. Develop a process to protect significant resource collections that would include resources recovered from private lands.
- Develop influential museum partnerships with other agencies and institutions and the Friends of Satwiwa.
- Conduct consultations and oral histories with Native American Indians and other ethnic groups with historical ties to the Santa Monica Mountains to improve understanding of cultural resources.
- Establish an ongoing dialogue and partnership with state and local governments, agencies, jurisdictions, and private landowners to promote shared responsibilities to protect open space and habitat, recreation trails, ethnographic and historical resources, and scenic vistas.

Land Use and Ownership Goals

- Make proposed NPS-, CSP-, and SMMC-built environments work in harmony with the natural environment. Use aesthetically pleasing and compatible design principles.
- Apply sustainable design to minimize the short- and long-term environmental impacts of NPS, CSP, and SMMC development. Use resource conservation, recycling, waste minimization, and energy-efficient and ecologically responsible materials and techniques for construction when feasible.
- Work with private landowners and other agencies to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of using public funding to restore buildings destroyed by natural disasters in areas of known high hazards (e.g., flood zones, high fire hazard zones, earthquake fault zones, and landslide zones).

- Be a good neighbor to the other landowners, helping to protect their interests and rights by taking into account their individual concerns.

Visitor Experience Goals

- Complete the Backbone Trail and manage it as a scenic corridor to provide nonmotorized access to diverse opportunities for recreation, interpretation, and appreciation of natural and cultural resources.
- Anticipate and manage potential conflicts among recreational uses. Appropriately enhance the visitor experience and provide a safe and conflict-free environment.
- Accord privacy for the traditional and ceremonial uses of ethnographic resources. Although visitors will gain an appreciation of the Native American Indian history and culture, do not draw attention to the most sensitive of the national recreation area's ethnographic resources.



Chumash Dancer (photo by Dennis Garcia).

- Create a seamless, enjoyable, and safe experience for visitors.





Malibu Creek State Park campground (NPS photo).

- Make NRA facilities, programs, and services reasonably accessible to all people, including those with disabilities.
- Encourage private enterprise to provide many of the necessary services and recreational developments to support visitor enjoyment of the national recreation area. Encourage compatible recreational, educational, research, and other facilities on appropriate private lands as a part of and adjacent to the national recreation area.
- Plan and develop appropriate recreation and education facilities and amenities necessary to promote and support an enjoyable and safe recreation experience in the national recreation area.

Education and Interpretation Goals

- Provide an educational outreach program to instruct participants on the functions, issues, opportunities, and values of the ecosystem in an expanding urban community. A formal component of this outreach program would be developed in partnership with the local educational systems.
- Request that members of distinct cultural communities provide interpretation and education programs.
- Encourage safe and enjoyable resource use and protection. Place information and

interpretation at appropriate locations throughout the recreation area and nearby communities. Visitors with differing levels of interest and understanding will easily find the area's cultural and natural features, visitor facilities, activities, and services.

- Create an experience that may increase visitor appreciation and awareness of the environment and historic sites and their place in the history of California.



Children participating in the biodiversity program at Satwiwa (NPS photo).

- Place visitor contact facilities strategically at several locations within the national recreation area to detail significant stories and provide information and directions to sites and activities.

Access and Transportation Goals

- Make NRA facilities universally accessible to people of all abilities when possible.
- Promote development of efficient transportation to the national recreation area from locations throughout southern California and within the national recreation area.
- Work with state and local agencies and the public to ensure that environmentally sensitive development and maintenance of public roads in the mountains occurs.
- Work with the surrounding communities to improve adjoining trail systems for access to the national recreation area.

- Make the national recreation area accessible to a greater portion of the public by providing a wider range of transportation alternatives.
- Encourage surrounding communities to expand their transit systems into the national recreation area by modifying existing visitor facilities and developing new facilities that are accessible to large transit vehicles.
- Educate the public about the benefits of using transportation alternatives.
- Involve surrounding communities in a cooperative effort to develop partnerships to assist in funding transportation alternatives and achieve common transportation objectives.
- Explore the feasibility of providing a low-emission shuttle system within the national recreation area.
- Improve the air quality by encouraging the use of alternative forms of transportation and the use of alternative fuels, including the conversion of NRA vehicles to low-emission fuel sources and financial incentives for employee use of public transportation.
- Work with surrounding communities to reduce visually intrusive overhead power and telephone lines and street lighting along scenic roadway corridors within the national recreation area.
- Redesign existing trailhead parking facilities and build new ones in known areas of congestion to increase capacity and efficiency and provide for growing visitor use.
- Coordinate operational resources to foster better protection of resources and services to the visitor.
- Develop uniform rules and regulations to the extent possible among the agencies.
- Promote the use of concessioners and other private sector operators to provide recreational services to meet growing demand.
- Use information management and telecommunication technology to promote rapid, reliable, and efficient NRA operations and visitor services.
- Provide for increased use and appreciation of museum collections by staff of all agencies, researchers, and the public.
- Achieve sustainability in all NRA operations and development of NRA facilities, resulting in cost savings and reduced impacts on NRA resources.
- Recognize and enhance the opportunities for creating partnerships and sharing responsibilities with state and local governments and the private sector for protecting resources and providing recreational and educational services in ways appropriate to the rules, authorities, and capabilities of the partners.

Operations Goals

- Develop and implement a preventative maintenance program for all historic structures and cultural landscapes.



The beach at Leo Carillo State Park (NPS photo).



Educational Themes

The rich cultural and natural landscape and varied recreational features offer tremendous possibilities for interpretation. The Santa Monica Mountains also provide a setting for a wide range of cultural, educational, and research activities. This management plan includes general recommendations for the location and subject matter of such programs. The visitor educational experience level is discussed under “Management Areas” in the next section. It may vary from a self-guided tour with low impact signs in the low intensity areas to or an overnight environmental education camp in the high intensity areas.

The following themes will provide the basis for educational opportunities outlined in this plan.

Ecosystems

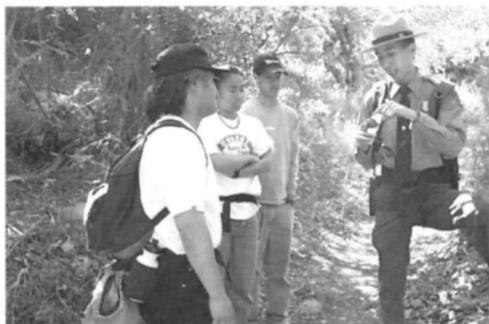
- The national recreation area preserves an example of the rare, dynamic, and diverse Mediterranean-type ecosystem.
- The combination of a transverse mountain range, seasonal rainfall, proximity to the ocean, and temperate latitude create the unique Mediterranean-type climate found in only four other locations in the world comprising less than three percent of the global land mass.
- Collective habitats from the mountain to the sea bring together a vast diversity of individual organisms and processes, which interact to create a unique and irreplaceable ecosystem.
- A biotic system acted upon by geology, climate, and fire, both natural and human-influenced, results in an ever-changing landscape.
- Local and global human activities have had and will continue to have a significant

impact on the integrity of Mediterranean-type ecosystems.

- The combination of climate and scenery has created an attractive place for people to settle, impacting the environment through urban encroachments, introduction of exotic plant and animal species, pollution, and fragmentation and loss of habitat.
- Through education, restoration, mitigation and wise use of the land, the habitats of this unique ecosystem can be preserved for the enjoyment of present and future generations.
- Long term, worldwide human alterations in Mediterranean-type ecosystems make undisturbed examples, like those found in the national recreation area, nationally and globally significant.

Culture and History

- The national recreation area preserves a record of thousands of years of human interactions with the area.



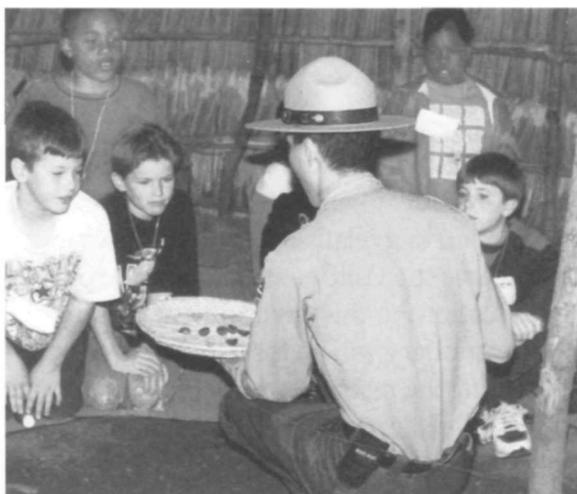
Ranger-led hike (NPS photo).

- Human spirit and imagination have allowed people in this region to reach beyond their geographic limitations (e.g., Chumash trading networks, film industry, aerospace industry, water distribution, and transportation).
- This region provides a global perspective on the continuing relationships between



the land and human history from past to present to future.

- Geography, local and national events, technological advances, and changing attitudes and perceptions influence the evolving cultural landscape of this region.



Educational program at Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa (NPS photo).

Recreation and Education

- The national recreation area provides a variety of educational and recreational opportunities.
- Damage to recreational resources will threaten visitor opportunities.
- The national recreation area provides a diverse, pleasing, natural and cultural landscape where visitors can experience personal solitude, contemplation, and inspiration.
- Education programs instill a sense of cultural and environmental responsibility.
- Learning about natural and cultural history in a park setting proves to be more relevant than in a classroom setting.
- The national recreation area is a gateway between the urban environment and the natural world.

Urban Interface

- The national recreation area can be described as an island of parklands buffeted by urban development and urban challenges.
- The balance of development and the need for preservation is necessary for the continued existence of both.
- Education is essential to ensure an awareness of natural and cultural resources to foster an environmental ethic.
- The existence of intact habitat within the Santa Monica Mountains faces increasing challenges from incompatible human activities within and beyond its geographic boundaries.



Hikers at Paramount Ranch (NPS photo).

- Cooperation between public and private organizations is essential in guaranteeing the future of parks that must be well managed and accessible to all to enhance the quality of life for all.
- In a world of diminishing biological diversity, the national recreation area provides an extraordinary global window to promote local and worldwide awareness of the value of wise use, responsible development, and parkland preservation.



MANAGEMENT AREAS

The general management plan includes five separate and distinct management areas that have been mapped and uses prescribed. The mapping is based on a general scale and does not imply that actions will be taken on private lands. This management plan has no binding authority over these lands. It suggests a future condition that would be compatible with the NRA's mission statement. Figure 4 illustrates the plan's management areas and facilities. The five management areas described include:

- low intensity areas
- moderate intensity areas
- high intensity areas
- scenic corridor areas
- community landscape areas

The management areas outline the existing and desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that should be achieved and maintained over time in a specific area. The management areas provide a critical foundation for all subsequent decision-making in the national recreation area and are the core of this general management plan. They are depicted in Table 2, Management Areas.

Under the plan, about 80 percent of parkland is designated as low intensity.

Moderate intensity areas (15 percent) will act as a buffer around urban areas and scenic corridors in some instances. Only designated trails are multiuse. Small pockets of concentrated high intensity activities are located in nonsensitive or previously developed areas (5 percent).

Low Intensity Areas

As stated above, approximately 80 percent of the national recreation area is designated low intensity. Facilities will be maintained in a relatively primitive manner to preserve the visitor experience. The only modifications to this environment within the NRA boundary will be for the purposes of protecting the resources from the impacts of use. Wildlife corridors will be identified and protected. Natural processes will be allowed to continue unimpeded except when active manipulation to manage for native biological diversity or rare, threatened, or endangered species of communities is deemed appropriate. Historical and ethnographic resources will be preserved and protected. All disturbed lands (except those with significant cultural resources) will be cleared of debris and restored to their natural state.

A boundary adjustment study will be done for the following areas to protect wildlife habitat and corridors: the western escarpment



Scenic brook in the national recreation area (NPS photo).

of the Santa Monica Mountains (to buffer some of the impacts of the CSUCI [California State University at Channel Islands] expansion and associated development on the western edge of the national recreation area), the area around Las Virgenes Reservoir, and a portion of Ladyface.

Agreements will be pursued with other land management agencies to ensure that the area north of the national recreation area into the Conejo Valley and from Simi Hills to Santa Susanna Pass will be protected as a critical wildlife corridor and open space.

NPS parklands north and west of Circle X Ranch will be inventoried for potential addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Land prone to repeated hazards due to natural disasters will be proposed to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for accelerated acquisition.

Lagoons, coastal wetlands, estuaries and marine interface areas will receive focused protection and management through the use of general agreements with land use regulatory agencies, research agencies, and university research. Estuaries and lagoons will be restored to their natural state. Steelhead trout reintroduction will be attempted in Solstice Creek and perhaps Malibu Creek and Arroyo Sequit. Nonhistoric trails and recreation will be relocated away from sensitive areas. Lagoons, coastal wetlands and interface areas will receive focused attention.

Simi Hills will be managed to maximize biological habitat while preserving ethnographic historic sites and cultural landscapes. Pictographs will be in low intensity areas and will be interpreted at visitor centers and at exhibits in high intensity areas.

Watersheds and coastal resources will be protected and preserved through watershed management practices and improvements.

Specific goals of the “Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Water Resources Management Plan” include acquiring baseline watershed and coastal resources data, protecting and restoring existing water resources where appropriate, maintaining information and data on water resources for use by other agencies, managing water resources for educational/recreational activities, and protecting public health by identifying and mitigating sources of pollution and other degradation in cooperation with appropriate regulatory bodies.

The National Park Service will develop agreements with other land management agencies and Caltrans to maintain open space in critical wildlife habitat linkage areas. The level of monitoring for the use of these wildlife connections will be increased.

A portion of the 1,200-mile Juan Batista de Anza National Historic Trail through the Simi Hills/NPS lands will be marked with commemorative signs.

An archeological district of the national recreation area will be documented and nominated to the national register.

Sensitive historic and ethnographic resources will be protected and preserved. Alien plant species will be eradicated, where appropriate, and habitat for animal and plant populations will be maintained and restored. Highly sensitive areas will be protected.

Moderate Intensity Areas

About 15 percent of the area within the NRA boundary is designated moderate intensity. Boundary adjustment studies will be done for the area north and east of Hidden Valley, the southeastern part of Ladyface, Las Virgenes Reservoir, Marvin Braude Mulholland Gateway Park, and Stone Canyon.

With more than a thousand archeological sites documented within the NRA boundary,



Table 2

MANAGEMENT AREAS				
Five Management Areas	Resource Management, Character & Condition	Visitor Experience & Activities	Development	Management Activities
Low Intensity Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve natural and cultural resources of area. • Protect resources from impacts of visitors and facility development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow quiet enjoyment of natural sights and sounds. • Restrict activities to horseback riding, mountain biking, and hiking on designated trails. • Provide accessibility for persons with disabilities to buildings, programs, parking, trails, and restrooms. • Use by day only. • Allow no pets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect resources and public safety. • Allow development harmonious with natural setting. • Prohibit motorized equipment in designated wilderness areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect resources. • Restore disturbed lands, estuaries, and lagoons to their natural state. • Close/revegetate some fire roads. • Close or reroute some nonhistoric trails. • Monitor resource deterioration. • Allow compatible scientific research. • Manage fire to minimize landscape disturbance.
Moderate Intensity Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve natural and cultural resources of area. • Allow harmonious development with natural settings. • Provide only essential visitor services and facilities. • Preserve/rehabilitate historic structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect higher visitation/frequent encounters with people. • Limit activities to hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking on designated trails. • Provide guided walks or self-guided trails. • Allow low impact camping and picnicking. • Provide accessibility for persons with disabilities to buildings, programs, parking, trails, and restrooms. • Permit commercial filming. • Allow pets on leashes in designated areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide essential visitor services (restrooms, water, trailhead parking). • Build boardwalks to protect resources where necessary. • Build picnic areas/equestrian access sites. • Limit campground development. • Put utilities underground. • Restrict utility and fire roads for administrative use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect resources. • Restore disturbed lands, estuaries, and lagoons to their natural state. • Manage visitor use/recreational activities. • Maintain trails with motorized equipment. • Provide law enforcement. • Close or reroute some trails. • Maintain utility corridors/put utilities underground. • Manage fire to minimize landscape disturbance. • Minimize impacts from search and rescue missions/fire suppression.
High Intensity Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect frequent sights and sounds of people and development. • Protect resources from impacts of visitors with higher degree of infrastructure and facility development. • Harmonize facility development with natural and cultural settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect higher visitation/frequent encounters with people and vehicles. • Develop parking areas for beaches or frequently used trails. • Provide structured interpretive and education programs or self-guided activities. • Create more interpretive exhibits. • Increase visitation to historic structures and cultural landscapes. • Provide accessibility for persons with disabilities to buildings, programs, parking, trails, and restrooms. • Allow overnight camping, including group camping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide full visitor services (restrooms, water/potable water, trailhead parking, visitor orientation). • Encourage harmonious development to protect resources. • Use gravel, compacted gravel/soil or pavement for trails. • Build boardwalks as needed. • Use pavement or gravel for trailhead parking. • Develop campgrounds, interpretive overlooks, waysides, exhibits, self-guided interpretive trails, and appropriate public transportation areas (park-and-rides). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect resources. • Restore disturbed lands, estuaries, and lagoons to their natural state. • Manage visitor use/recreational activities. • Maintain trails with motorized equipment. • Close, reroute, or revegetate some nonhistoric trails. • Close/revegetate nonessential roads. • Maintain utility corridors/put utilities underground. • Manage fire to minimize landscape disturbance. • Minimize impacts from search-and-rescue missions/fire suppression.

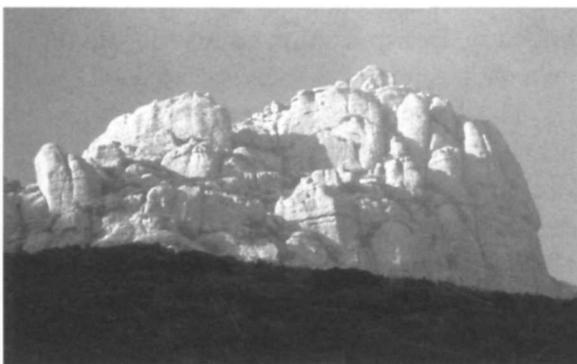


(cont'd) Table 2

MANAGEMENT AREAS				
Five Management Areas	Resource Management, Character & Condition	Visitor Experience & Activities	Development	Management Activities
High Intensity Areas (cont'd)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow picnicking, swimming, surfing, kayaking. Permit commercial filming. Allow pets on leashes in designated areas. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit emergency response staging.
Scenic Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support lowering speed limits throughout the national recreation area. Promote traffic safety consistent with the character of the national recreation area. Limit the expansion of roadways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design interpretive program to be used in a "windshield" tour. Provide waysides at existing and proposed scenic pullouts. Provide shuttle system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop additional scenic pullouts. Remove streetlights, overhead powerlines, and exotic landscape material. Replace street lights with directed, low level lighting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deemphasize the use of private vehicles by providing a wider range of transportation alternatives. Work collaboratively with CALTRANS on decisions affecting the roadways and right-of-ways in the national recreation area. Educate the public about benefits of using transportation alternatives.
Community Landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No management of resources would take place in these areas, but residents are encouraged to maintain the character of these areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor experience throughout the recreation area would be enhanced by retaining the unique features of the architecture and landscape in these areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No development by NPS, CSP, or SMMC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPS, CSP, and SMMC would provide local decision makers with the resource data and technical assistance to maintain the unique character.

a nomination package will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places to designate an archeological district.

The Backbone Trail will be completed with eight additional group or multiday



Boney Mountains (NPS photo).

individual campsites along the length of the trail, as suggested by the "Santa Monica Mountains Area Recreational Trails (SMMART) Coordination Project Report." As part of the Backbone Trail, a bicycle trail reroute around the Boney Mountain Wilderness will be constructed.

Existing facilities and trails will be analyzed for impacts; if damage is occurring, the trail will be redesigned.

A trail management plan will be prepared to address trail management, improvement needs, use conflicts, missing trail links, trail camps, and other appropriate trail amenities. Trails will be managed and improved in a sustainable manner that protects natural,



cultural, and scenic resources and provides for growing visitation. The Backbone Trail will be completed, and an accessible trail will be developed at Liberty Canyon.

A facility will be located at Rancho Sierra Vista to provide more educational programs concerning contemporary and traditional Native American Indian culture. Programs will also be offered to interpret ranching history in the area.

High Intensity Areas

Approximately 5 percent of area within the NRA boundary is designated high intensity. Resource-compatible recreation will be encouraged (hiking, wildlife observation), and environmental education programs will be increased.

The California State University Channel Islands campus at the mouth of Long Canyon near the western corner of the national recreation area will provide facilities for the northwest environmental research and education programs. An effort will be made to work cooperatively with the University and local planning jurisdictions to plan growth and protect the historic character and natural resources of the setting. A research and information center is planned for this complex.

Joint administration of NPS and CSP operations will occur where feasible. Both agencies will share a common vision and a visitor/operations center that consolidates all resources, fosters cooperation, and increases efficiency.

Information management and telecommunication technology will be used to promote rapid, reliable, and efficient internal NRA operations. Achieving sustainability in all NRA operations and development of NRA-related facilities will result in cost savings and reduced impacts on NRA resources.



Malibu area (NPS photo).

The National Park Service will enter into a general agreement with Caltrans to support the concept of encouraging use of other mass transit options instead of enlarging the Pacific Coast Highway or any other state routes through the national recreation area.

Future “gateway” transportation visitor centers will be designed to ease traffic problems at parking lots and to encourage ridership of recreational shuttle buses. Information will be available about transportation alternatives, and how to make transit connections to regional transit service.

The National Park Service will provide transportation education as part of the regular interpretive programs, indicating how alternative transportation is good for the national recreation area and the region.

Visual and recreational elements of Mulholland Drive and Highway will be promoted and preserved. Support will be given for limiting roadway expansion and improved management of the Pacific Coast Highway. Transportation education will be provided. Alternative fuels will be used.

The National Park Service will enter into a general agreement with the surrounding communities and other regional agencies to explore possible transit options to serve the national recreation area and expanding existing service to include regular transit service on weekends. The National Park Service will support



neighboring communities to create park-and-ride facilities that will be used by transit operations serving the national recreation area.

Transit operators, the National Park Service, and municipalities will pursue funding for transportation systems to meet the recreational needs of visitors. This could be accomplished by linking the park-and-ride facilities in the nearby communities to trail-heads and other recreational destinations within the national recreation area.

Caltrans and the city of Malibu will be encouraged to develop a policy of restricting roadside parking along the Pacific Coast Highway to encourage the use of off-street parking facilities for pedestrian safety and promote transit use.

NRA management agencies in the Santa Monica Mountains will seek Caltrans' cooperation to establish safe pedestrian crossings where a state highway intersects NRA and other recreational lands.

Bicycling, both on paved routes and off-road developed trails (as well as bicycle parking racks), will be encouraged as an alternative form of transportation throughout the national recreation area.

Facility development in high intensity areas includes the following :

- Mugu Lagoon Visitor Education Center – will be located at the western end of the national recreation area off the Pacific Coast Highway. This facility will emphasize use of sustainable energy and materials through a working education demonstration. Mugu Lagoon, managed by the U.S. Navy, is the largest coastal wetland in California outside the San Francisco Bay area. The National Park Service will play a greater role in the administration of the lagoon, in cooperation with the Navy. This facility will provide an important interpretation point for the estuarine ecosystem. The proposed site for the education center will



Mugu Lagoon (NPS photo).



be in an already disturbed area off the Pacific Coast Highway. A boardwalk around the lagoon will allow visitors an opportunity to experience the lagoon system. This location allows beautiful views of the coast, an unspoiled view of the mountains, and a panorama of the lagoon.

- Circle X Ranch – will become a primitive overnight education camp with expanded facilities for group camping. The upper levels of the site will be redesigned and re-developed to offer a quality, accessible camping experience. The facilities will also offer improved access to backcountry recreation trails, including the Backbone Trail.
- Paramount Ranch – will include facilities for a film history education center and museum. Film production will be encouraged as a means to preserve a traditional use associated with the facility. The western town set at Paramount Ranch and the surrounding landscape will be adaptively reused for filming. Parking and circulation will be improved to accommodate visitation while protecting the cultural landscape.
- White Oak Farm – near the intersection of Mulholland Highway and Las Virgenes Canyon Road will offer interpretive and education programs.
- The barn at Rancho Sierra Vista – will be adaptively reused for environmental education.
- The Morrison House – will be rehabilitated to reflect the ranching period. The cultural landscape surrounding the house will be maintained. The Morrison Ranch House and cultural landscape will be restored.
- An environmental education facility – will be established at Solstice Canyon. Minor

improvements will be made to previously disturbed areas to improve parking, restroom facilities, and the outdoor classroom experience.

- A visitor education center – will be located at Malibu Bluffs. This location will serve as a staging area and orientation for NRA facilities such as the Adamson House, Malibu Lagoon, and Malibu Pier.
- A jointly operated administration and environmental and cultural education center – will be at the Gillette Ranch site near the intersection of Mulholland Highway and Las Virgenes Canyon Road. The National Park Service and California State Parks will house administration and curatorial functions at this location. Some of the existing buildings will be adapted for classroom use.
- A scenic coastal boat tour – will offer visitors a unique view of the coastline and mountain scenery. Docking points will be at the Santa Monica Pier and Malibu Pier, where there will also be a visitor contact station.
- 415 Pacific Coast Highway (Marion Davies Home) – located near the Santa Monica Pier, the facility will serve as an eastern

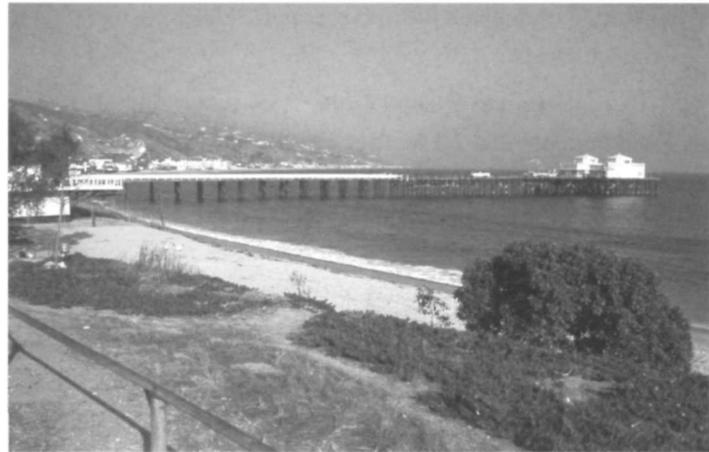


Paramount Ranch structures (NPS photo)



gateway to the national recreation area and provide visitor orientation to the national recreation area. Exhibits will interpret the evolution of southern California coastal culture, the history of the Pacific Coast Highway, and the terminus of Historic Route 66. Congress recently passed legislation to preserve the cultural resources of the Route 66 corridor.

- A visitor information site – will be located in the Los Angeles International Airport to provide orientation to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and serve as a retail sales site for NRA merchandise.
- The William O. Douglas Outdoor Center – at Franklin Canyon will offer an expanded educational day camp program for Los Angeles County schools.



Malibu Pier (NPS photo)

- A visitor information site – will be in downtown Los Angeles at El Pueblo, providing NRA orientation, information, and an introduction of recreation and learning opportunities in the mountains to inner city populations.
- A coastal education center – will be developed at Leo Carrillo State Park with



Pacific Coast Highway and the City of Santa Monica in the shadow of the Santa Monica Mountains (NPS photo).



exhibits on marine life and the culture of the Chumash.

- The campground at Leo Carrillo State Park – will be rehabilitated to integrate the campground with natural riparian processes. Interpretation of the riparian setting will be provided to educate visitors on the sensitive condition of this coastal landmark.
- The staging area at Cheeseboro Canyon – will be expanded, and facilities improved.
- Temescal Canyon Earth Adventure Camp – will offer expanded educational day camp programs for the greater Los Angeles area.
- Mission Canyon – will offer a trailhead, toilets, parking, and interpretive facilities.

Scenic Corridor

Scenic corridors are designated for Mulholland Highway, the Pacific Coast Highway from Pt. Mugu to Malibu Bluffs, and Malibu Canyon Road from Malibu Bluffs to the Mulholland Highway. Part of this route (Malibu Canyon Road from Malibu Bluffs to Mulholland, Mulholland to Sequit Point, and back to Malibu Bluffs) will comprise a scenic loop with several destination points, which will be an opportunity for an interpretive tour operated by a concessioner. These roadways are significant for their visual quality and as recreation transportation routes. A tour shuttle will travel Mulholland, the Pacific Coast Highway, and Malibu Canyon Road, connecting points of interest such as the Adamson House, Malibu Lagoon, Gillette Ranch, White Oak Ranch, Paramount Ranch, Leo Carrillo State Park, and Point Dume State Preserve in a circular route. The shuttle service will serve these multiple points of interest as well as dropping and



Zuma Beach ((NPS photo)

picking up visitors at designated points along this loop.

Mulholland will be cooperatively managed to emphasize its continuity, historic significance, and scenic values.

The establishment of agreements and design review boards will ensure that proposed developments are evaluated and found to be consistent with the scenic values of the corridors.



Mulholland Highway (NPS photo).



Appendixes





APPENDIXES

National Recreation Area Enabling Legislation

Refer to the following pages for the Public law related to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

United States Code

- TITLE 16 - CONSERVATION
- CHAPTER 1 - NATIONAL PARKS, MILITARY PARKS, MONUMENTS, AND SEASHORES
- SUBCHAPTER XCV - SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Sec. 460kk. Establishment

- (a) Findings
 - The Congress finds that -
 - (1) there are significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific, natural, archeological, and public health benefits provided by the Santa Monica Mountains and adjacent coastline area;
 - (2) there is a national interest in protecting and preserving these benefits for the residents of and visitors to the area; and
 - (3) the State of California and its local units of government have authority to prevent or minimize adverse uses of the Santa Monica Mountains and adjacent coastline area and can, to a great extent, protect the health, safety, and general welfare by the use of such authority.
- (b) Establishment; management
 - There is hereby established the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (hereinafter referred to as the "recreation area"). The Secretary shall manage the recreation area in a manner which will preserve and enhance its scenic, natural, and historical setting and its public health value as an airshed for the Southern California metropolitan area while providing for the recreational and educational need of the visiting public.
- (c) Description; boundary revisions: notice to Congressional committees, publication in Federal Register; acquisition of property: manner, transfer from Federal agency to administrative jurisdiction of Secretary, exchange of lands with city of Los Angeles, development of municipal cultural resource management program; Nike Site transfer to Secretary
 - (1) The recreation area shall consist of the lands and waters and interests generally depicted as the recreation area on the map entitled "Boundary Map, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, California, and Santa Monica Mountains Zone", numbered SMM-NRA 80,000, and dated May 1978, which shall be on file and available for inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, District of Columbia, and in the offices of the General Services Administration in the Federal Office Building in West Los Angeles, California, and in the main public library in Ventura, California. After advising the Committee on Natural Resources of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate, in writing, the Secretary may make minor revisions of the boundaries of the recreation area when necessary by publication of a revised drawing or other boundary description in the Federal Register.
 - (2)
 - (A) Not later than ninety days after November 10, 1978, the Secretary, after consultation with the Governor of the State of California, the California Coastal Commission, and the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Commission, shall commence acquisition of lands, improvements, waters, or interests therein within the recreation area. Such acquisition may be by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, transfer from any Federal agency, exchange, or otherwise. Except as provided in subparagraph (B), any lands or interests therein owned by the State of California or any political subdivision thereof (including any park district or other public entity) may be acquired only by donation, except that such lands acquired after November 10, 1978, by the State of California or its political subdivisions may be acquired by purchase or exchange if the Secretary determines that the lands were acquired for purposes which further the national interest in protecting the area and that the purchase price or value on exchange does not exceed fair market value on the date that the State acquired the land or interest: Provided, however, That the value of any lands acquired by the Secretary under the exception in this sentence shall be deducted from the amount of moneys available for grants to the State under subsection (n) of this section. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any Federal property located within the boundaries of the recreation area shall, with the concurrence of the head of the agency having custody thereof, be

- transferred without cost, to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for the purposes of the recreation area.
- (B) The Secretary shall negotiate, and carry out, and exchange with the city of Los Angeles (acting through its department of water and power) of [1] certain federally owned lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management in the vicinity of the Haiwee Reservoir in Inyo County for certain lands owned by the city of Los Angeles which are associated with the Upper Franklin Reservoir in the city of Los Angeles. Lands acquired by the Secretary pursuant to such exchange shall be transferred without cost to the administrative jurisdiction of the National Park Service for inclusion within the recreation area. The Secretary shall include in such exchange a provision for an easement to be granted to the city of Los Angeles for the existing water pipeline associated with the Upper Franklin Reservoir and for the city of Los Angeles to provide for replacement water to maintain the water elevations of the Franklin Reservoir to the current levels. The values of lands exchanged under this provision shall be equal, or shall be equalized, in the same manner as provided in section 1716 of title 43.
 - (C) The city shall assume full responsibility for the protection of cultural resources and shall develop a cultural resource management program for the public lands to be transferred to the city in the vicinity of the Haiwee Reservoir. The program shall be developed in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.
- (3) The Administrator of the General Services Administration is hereby authorized and directed to transfer the site generally known as Nike Site 78 to the Secretary for inclusion in the recreation area: Provided, That the county of Los Angeles shall be permitted to continue to use without charge the facilities together with sufficient land as in the determination of the Secretary shall be necessary to continue to maintain and operate a fire suppression and training facility and shall be excused from payment for any use of the land and facilities on the site prior to November 10, 1978. At such time as the county of Los Angeles, California, relinquishes control of such facilities and adjacent land or ceases the operation of the fire suppression and training facility, the land and facilities shall be managed by the Secretary as a part of the recreation area.
- (d) Identification and revision of areas: public ownership for critical purposes; land and area plan: submission to Congressional committees
 - (1) Within six months after November 10, 1978, the Secretary shall identify the lands, waters, and interests within the recreation area which must be acquired and held in public ownership for the following critical purposes: preservation of beaches and coastal uplands; protection of undeveloped inland stream drainage basins; connection of existing State and local government parks and other publicly owned lands to enhance their potential for public recreation use; protection of existing park roads and scenic corridors, including such right-of-way as is necessary for the protection of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Corridor; protection of the public health and welfare; and development and interpretation of historic sites and recreation areas in connection therewith, to include, but not be limited to, parks, picnic areas, scenic overlooks, hiking trails, bicycle trails, and equestrian trails. The Secretary may from time to time revise the identification of such areas, and any such revisions shall become effective in the same manner as herein provided for revisions in the boundaries of the recreation area.
 - (2) By January 1, 1980, the Secretary shall submit, in writing, to the committees referred to in subsection (c) of this section and to the Committees on Appropriations of the United States Congress a detailed plan which shall indicate -
 - (A) the lands and areas identified in paragraph (1),
 - (B) the lands which he has previously acquired by purchase, donation, exchange, or transfer for the purpose of this recreation area,
 - (C) the annual acquisition program (including the level of funding) recommended for the ensuing five fiscal years, and
 - (D) the final boundary map for the recreation area.
 - (e) Improved property and scenic easement acquisitions

With respect to improved properties, as defined in this section, fee title shall not be acquired unless the Secretary finds that such lands are being used, or are threatened with uses, which are detrimental to the purposes of the recreation area, or unless each acquisition is necessary to fulfill the purposes of this section. The Secretary may acquire scenic easements to such improved property or such other interests as, in his judgment are necessary for the purposes of the recreation area.



- (f) "Improved property" defined
For the purposes of this section, the term "improved property" means -
 - (1) a detached single-family dwelling, the construction of which was begun before January 1, 1978 (hereafter referred to as "dwelling"), together with so much of the land on which the dwelling is situated as is in the same ownership as the dwelling and as the Secretary designates to be reasonably necessary for the enjoyment of the dwelling for the sole purpose of noncommercial residential use, together with any structures necessary to the dwelling which are situated on the land so designated, and
 - (2) property developed for agricultural uses, together with any structures accessory thereto as were used for agricultural purposes on or before January 1, 1978. In determining when and to what extent a property is to be treated as "improved property" for purposes of this section, the Secretary shall take into consideration the manner of use of such buildings and lands prior to January 1, 1978, and shall designate such lands as are reasonably necessary for the continued enjoyment of the property in the same manner and to the same extent as existed prior to such date.
- (g) Owner's reservation of right of use and occupancy for fixed term of years or life; election of term; fair market value; termination; notification
The owner of an improved property, as defined in this section, on the date of its acquisition, as a condition of such acquisition, may retain for herself or himself, her or his heirs and assigns, a right of use and occupancy of the improved property for noncommercial residential or agriculture purposes, as the case may be, for a definite term of not more than twenty-five years, or, in lieu thereof, for a term ending at the death of the owner or the death of her or his spouse, whichever is later. The owner shall elect the term to be reserved. Unless the property is wholly or partially donated, the Secretary shall pay to the owner the fair market value of the property on the date of its acquisition, less the fair market value on that date of the right retained by the owner. A right retained by the owner pursuant to this section shall be subject to termination by the Secretary upon his determination that it is being exercised in a manner inconsistent with the purposes of this section, and it shall terminate by operation of law upon notification by the Secretary to the holder of the right of such determination and tendering to him the amount equal to the fair market value of that portion which remains unexpired.
- (h) Hardship sale offers
In exercising the authority to acquire property under this section, the Secretary shall give prompt and careful consideration to any offer made by an individual owning property within the recreation area to sell such property, if such individual notifies the Secretary that the continued ownership of such property is causing, or would result in, undue hardship.
- (i) Administration
The Secretary shall administer the recreation area in accordance with this Act and provisions of laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 of this title. In the administration of the recreation area, the Secretary may utilize such statutory authority available for the conservation and management of wildlife and natural resources as appropriate to carry out the purpose of this section. The fragile resource areas of the recreation area shall be administered on a low-intensity basis, as determined by the Secretary.
- (j) Cooperative agreements for rescue, fire prevention and firefighting, and law enforcement services
The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with the State of California, or any political subdivision thereof, for the rendering, on a reimbursable basis, of rescue, firefighting, and law enforcement services and cooperative assistance by nearby law enforcement and fire preventive agencies.
- (k) Donations
Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary is authorized to accept donations of funds, property, or services from individuals, foundations, corporations, or public entities for the purpose of land acquisition and providing services and facilities which the Secretary deems consistent with the purposes of this section.
- (l) Report of Advisory Commission to Secretary
By January 1, 1981, the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Advisory Commission, established by this section, shall submit a report to the Secretary which shall -
 - (1) assess the capability and willingness of the State of California and the local units of government to manage and operate the recreation area,
 - (2) recommend any changes in ownership, management, and operation which would better accomplish the purposes of this section, and
 - (3) recommend any conditions, joint management agreements, or other land use mechanisms to be contingent on any transfer of land.



- (m) Report of Secretary to Congressional committees
The Secretary, after giving careful consideration to the recommendations set forth by the Advisory Commission, shall, by January 1, 1982, submit a report to the committees referred to in subsection
- (c) of this section which shall incorporate the recommendations of the Advisory Commission as well as set forth the Secretary's recommendations. Such report shall -
 - (1) assess the benefits and costs of continued management as a unit of the National Park System,
 - (2) assess the capability and willingness of the State of California and the local units of government to manage and operate the recreation area, and
 - (3) recommend any changes in ownership, management, and operation which would better accomplish the purposes of this section.
- (n) Comprehensive plan; contents; approval considerations; environmental consultations; grants and funds; assurance and grant requirements; plan changes: liability for reimbursement of funds, approval by Secretary
 - (1) The Secretary shall request the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Commission to submit a comprehensive plan, prepared in accord with this section and title 7.75 of the California Government Code (commencing with section 67450), for the Santa Monica Mountains Zone generally depicted on the map referred to in subsection (c) of this section for approval.
 - (2) The comprehensive plan shall include, in addition to the requirements of California State law-
 - (A) an identification and designation of public and private uses which are compatible with and which would not significantly impair the significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific, natural, archeological, and public health benefits present in the zone and which would not have an adverse impact on the recreation area or on the air quality of the south coast air basin;
 - (B) a specific minimum land acquisition program which shall include, but not be limited to, fee and less than fee acquisition of strategic and critical sites not to be acquired by the Federal Government for public recreational and other related uses; and a program for the complementary use of State and local authority to regulate the use of lands and waters within the Santa Monica Mountains Zone to the fullest extent practicable consistent with the purposes of this section; and
 - (C) a recreation transportation system which may include but need not be limited to existing public transit.
 - (3) No plan submitted to the Secretary under this section shall be approved unless the Secretary finds the plan consistent with paragraph (2) and finds that -
 - (A) the planning commission has afforded adequate opportunity, including public hearings, for public involvement in the preparation and review of the plan, and public comments were received and considered in the plan or revision as presented to him;
 - (B) the State and local units of government identified in the plan as responsible for implementing its provisions have the necessary authority to implement the plan and such State and local units of government have indicated their intention to use such authority to implement the plan;
 - (C) the plan, if implemented, would preserve significant natural, historical, and archeological benefits and, consistent with such benefits, provide increased recreational opportunities for persons residing in the greater Los Angeles-southern California metropolitan area; and
 - (D) implementation of the plan would not have a serious adverse impact on the air quality or public health of the greater Los Angeles region. Before making his findings on the air quality and public health impacts of the plan, the Secretary shall consult with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.
 - (4) Following approval of the plan with respect to the Santa Monica Mountains Zone, upon receipt of adequate assurances that all aspects of that jurisdiction's implementation



responsibilities will be adopted and put into effect, the Secretary shall -

- (A) provide grants to the State and through the State to local governmental bodies for acquisition of lands, waters, and interests therein identified in paragraph (2)(B), and for development of essential public facilities, except that such grants shall be made only for the acquisition of lands, waters, and interests therein, and related essential public facilities, for park, recreation, and conservation purposes; and
- (B) provide, subject to agreements that in the opinion of the Secretary will assure additional preservation of the lands and waters of the zone, such funds as may be necessary to retire bonded indebtedness for water and sewer and other utilities already incurred by property owners which in the opinion of the Secretary would if left outstanding contribute to further development of the zone in a manner inconsistent with the approved plan developed by the planning commission. No grant for acquisition of land may be made under subparagraph (A) unless the Secretary receives satisfactory assurances that such lands acquired under subparagraph (A) shall not be converted to other than park, recreation, and conservation purposes without the approval of the Secretary and without provision for suitable replacement land.
- (5) Grants under this section shall be made only upon application of the recipient State and shall be in addition to any other Federal financial assistance for any other program, and shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this section. Any jurisdiction that implements changes to the approved plan which are inconsistent with the purposes of this section, or adopts or acquiesces in changes to laws [2] regulations or policies necessary to implement or protect the approved plan, without approval of the Secretary, may be liable for reimbursement of all funds previously granted or available to it under the terms of this section without regard to such additional terms and conditions or other requirements of law that may be applicable to such grants. During the life of the planning commission, changes to the plan must be submitted by the planning commission to the Secretary for approval. No such application for a grant may be made after the date five years from the date of the Secretary's approval of the plan.
- (o) Comments on undertakings prior to expenditure of Federal funds or issuance of licenses or permits
The head of any Federal agency having direct or indirect jurisdiction over a proposed Federal or federally assisted undertaking in the lands and waters within the Santa Monica Mountains Zone, generally depicted on the map referred to in subsection (c) of this section, and the head of any Federal agency having authority to license or permit any undertaking in such lands and waters shall, prior to the approval of the expenditure of any Federal funds on such undertaking or prior to the issuance of any license or permit, as the case may be, afford the Secretary a reasonable opportunity to comment with regard to such undertaking and shall give due consideration to any comments made by the Secretary and to the effect of such undertaking on the "findings" and purposes of this section.
- (p) State agency recommendations; consideration
The Secretary shall give full consideration to the recommendations of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Commission, and the California Coastal Commission.
- (q) Advisory Commission; establishment and termination; membership; term; meetings; notice, publication in newspapers; compensation and expenses; consultations of Secretary with Commission
 - (1) There is hereby established the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Advisory Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "Advisory Commission"). The Advisory Commission shall terminate ten years after the date of establishment of the recreation area.
 - (2) The Advisory Commission shall be composed of the following members to serve for terms of five years as follows:
 - (A) one member appointed by the Governor of the State of California;
 - (B) one member appointed by the mayor of the city of Los Angeles;



- (C) one member appointed by the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County;
 - (D) one member appointed by the Board of Supervisors of Ventura County; and
 - (E) nine members appointed by the Secretary, one of whom shall serve as the Commission Chairperson.
- (3) The Advisory Commission shall meet on a regular basis. Notice of meetings and agenda shall be published in local newspapers which have a distribution which generally covers the area. Commission meetings shall be held at locations and in such a manner as to insure adequate public involvement. Such locations shall be in the region of the Santa Monica Mountains and no more than twenty-five miles from it.
 - (4) Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation as such, but the Secretary may pay expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their responsibilities under this Act on vouchers signed by the Chairperson.
 - (5) The Secretary, or his or her designee, shall from time to time but at least semiannually, meet and consult with the Advisory Commission on matters relating to the development of this recreation area and with respect to carrying out the provisions of this section.
- (r) Authorization of appropriations for property acquisitions and State grants
There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for acquisition of lands and interests in land within the boundaries of the recreation area established under this section, but not more than \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 1979, \$40,000,000 for fiscal year 1980, \$45,000,000 for fiscal year 1981, \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 1982, and \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 1983, such sums to remain available until expended. For grants to the State pursuant to subsection (n) of this section there are authorized to be appropriated not more than \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 1979, \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 1980, \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 1981, and \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 1982, such sums to remain available until expended. For the authorizations made in this subsection, any amounts authorized but not appropriated in any fiscal year shall remain available for appropriation in succeeding fiscal years.
 - (s) Authorization of appropriations for public facilities development
For the development of essential public facilities in the recreation area there are authorized to be appropriated not more than \$500,000. The Congress expects that, at least until assessment of the report required by subsection (t) of this section, any further development of the area shall be accomplished by the State of California or local units of government, subject to the approval of the Director, National Park Service.
 - (t) General management plan; transmission to Congressional committees
Within two years from the date of establishment of the recreation area pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall, after consulting with the Advisory Commission, develop and transmit to the Committees referred to in subsection (c) of this section a general management plan for the recreation area consistent with the objectives of this section. Such plan shall indicate -
 - (1) a plan for visitor use including the facilities needed to accommodate the health, safety, education and recreation needs of the public;
 - (2) the location and estimated costs of all facilities;
 - (3) the projected need for any additional facilities within the area;
 - (4) any additions or alterations to the boundaries of the recreation area which are necessary or desirable to the better carrying out of the purposes of this section; and
 - (5) a plan for preservation of scenic, archeological and natural values and of fragile ecological areas.

Footnotes

[1] So in original.

[2] So in original. Probably should be followed by a comma.



GLOSSARY

Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
COSCA	Conejo Open Space Conservation Authority
CSP	California State Parks
SMMC	Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Community landscape	an area of unique architectural and landscape quality.
Compatible recreation	recreation use that is matched to the area and does not compromise the nature and characteristics of the area or cause physical damage.
Cultural resources	archeological, historic, and ethnographic sites or objects.
Ecosystem	the community of plants, animals, and bacteria and the related physical and chemical environment.
Estuarine	pertaining to a river, stream, or swamp drainage channel adjacent to the sea in which the tide ebbs and flows.
Mitigation measures	modifications to a proposal that lessen the intensity of its impact on a particular resource.
Noncompatible activity	those activities that have potential to cause harm to the area and compromise the nature and characteristics of the area or cause physical damage.
Pictographs	images on rock made by painting using vegetal or mineral paints.
Riparian	the vegetation and habitat along the banks of a body of water, usually a river or stream.
Watershed	the area drained by a river or river system.



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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

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