



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

"Parks Make Life Better!"

John Wicker, Director

Norma E. Garcia, Chief Deputy Director

December 11, 2018

ADOPTED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

32 December 11, 2018

CELIA ZAVALA
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Supervisors:

**APPROVE AND ADOPT THE
SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS TRAILS MASTER PLAN – PHASE II
AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
(SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 5)
(3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

The approval of the recommended actions will adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and approve the Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan – Phase II (Master Plan or Project), a master plan intended to guide future multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian) trail planning and development in the vicinity of and including the unincorporated community of Stevenson Ranch.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Consider the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan – Phase II together with any comments received during the public review process; find that the Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board of Supervisors; adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, finding that it is adequately designed to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during the Project implementation; find on the basis of the whole record before the Board that there is no substantial evidence that the Project will have a significant effect on the environment; and adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration.
2. Approve the Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan – Phase II.

3. Delegate authority to the Director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation and/or his designee to approve any revisions or amendments to the Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan – Phase II and execute any documents or agreements necessary in connection with such revisions or amendments.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions will adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, approve the Master Plan, and delegate authority to the Director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (Director), or his designee, to approve and execute amendments related to the Master Plan that are in substantial conformance with the environmental analysis.

The Master Plan is the result of Stevenson Ranch area communities' strong interest in and the Department of Parks and Recreation's objective of a comprehensive multi-use trails plan for the unincorporated Santa Clarita Valley, building upon the Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan – Phase I (May 2015) and the Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan (October 2016). With support and funding from the Fifth Supervisorial District, the Department of Parks and Recreation engaged in a multidisciplinary effort in landscape architecture, environmental review, and trails planning to complete the draft trails plan, technical studies, community engagement process, and CEQA compliance.

The Master Plan area is bounded by the Santa Clara River to the north, the City of Santa Clarita and the I-5 freeway to the east, the Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan – Phase I area to the south, and the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area to the west. It proposes a 67.5-mile network of regional multi-use trails, 2 trailheads, 2 staging areas, 1 equestrian facility, and 2 bike skills areas. The Master Plan provides information for each of the 94 trail segments, including the name of the trail segment, if it is an existing or proposed conceptual trail segment, type of existing or recommended trail, length, the source of proposed trail segment, and baseline environmental conditions.

The Master Plan serves as a framework to encourage and promote new multi-use trails and recommend improvements to existing trails, identifying key connections and transitions to areas, jurisdictions, and prime destinations within and adjacent to the Master Plan area in the Santa Clarita Valley and northern foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains. The plan seeks to respect sensitive resources while reducing unmet demand for recreation opportunities in the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area and throughout the Fifth Supervisorial District.

The Department of Parks and Recreation worked closely with the Department of Regional Planning to ensure that the County's advanced planning efforts and related land

development projects were integrated into the subject Master Plan to ensure a comprehensive plan and effective delivery.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed recommendations further the Board-approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability (Goal 1), Community Support and Responsiveness (Goal 2), and Integrated Service Delivery (Goal 3) by providing an opportunity to enhance and increase trails and trail-related facilities and recreational opportunities for County residents and visitors; implement new trail facilities and amenities for multi-use (hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking); and provide well-designed, sustainable trails.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

No immediate fiscal impact to the Department of Parks and Recreation's operating budget will result from approval of the recommendations. However, should a new trail planning, design, and/or construction project be initiated or pursued, the Department of Parks and Recreation would need to work with the Chief Executive Office to determine the appropriate level of funding for operating costs and address the proposal in a New Facility Program request.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Key stakeholder engagement began in March 2017 with a meeting for interested public agencies to provide information about the Master Plan area, scope, and purpose. Twelve agency representatives attended the meeting, including other County departments, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, City of Los Angeles Council District 12, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Southern California Edison, and Trust for Public Land. Agencies in attendance introduced a variety of useful considerations, such as relevant projects within the study area, recommendations to partner with local conservancies to purchase property, and public access restrictions on government-owned lands.

In an effort to broadly advertise the community meetings, the Department of Parks and Recreation mailed meeting notices to 9,674 individual property owners in Los Angeles County; distributed printed meeting flyers at four bike shops, three equestrian centers, three sports stores, two grocery stores, and three libraries in the Santa Clarita Valley; contacted the Sierra Club, Equestrian Trails Incorporated (ETI) Corral 54, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition (LACBC) Santa Clarita Valley (SCV) Chapter, Concerned Off Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA), Santa Susana Mountains Park Association (SSMPA), and the Santa Clarita Valley (SCV) Trail Users via email to request that they

spread the word about the meetings via their website, Facebook page, and/or newsletter; posted articles about the proposed Project on DPR's website and County of Los Angeles Trails website; and posted on the social media sponsored by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Department of Parks and Recreation hosted a total of eight meetings in the early phases of the study, one with agency stakeholders, two with Native American tribal representatives, and five public workshops with trail users and the community-at-large. Although the general public was invited to attend any or all of the workshops, several user-specific meetings for the hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian advocates allowed for in-depth dialogue and data collection to inform the Master Plan. In November 2017, two community meetings and one agency outreach meeting were held during the 30-day public review period for the environmental documents and draft Trails Master Plan.

The public workshops and community meetings consisted of a presentation on the Project overview, process, and timeline with a question-and-answer period and concluded with breakout sessions into community input stations. The community input stations covered the following topics: Project overview map, project goals and objectives, facilities and amenities, and trail classifications. Meeting attendees were invited to provide feedback and comments at each of these community input stations. Other methods of providing written comments included submitting a comment card; submitting an email; and via the Project website (<http://www.santasusanatrailsplan.org/>), which featured an interactive trail map and provided the opportunity for the public at large to engage in online discussions and digitally record their individual preferences for desired trail routes, destination points, and points of concern.

The Master Plan process included tribal consultation in conformance with California Assembly Bill (AB) 52. The Department of Parks and Recreation received a letter on April 11, 2017, requesting a consultation by the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians-Kizh Nation and a letter on May 11, 2017, requesting a consultation by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians. Both letters expressed concern that the proposed Project would have potential impacts to cultural resources, including tribal cultural resources, and requested a consultation with the County concerning the proposed Project. The Department of Parks and Recreation met with the designated tribal representatives to gather information; refine trail alignments to avoid impacts wherever feasible; and formulate mitigation measures that could guide the planning, construction, and operation of trail segments contemplated in the Master Plan. The recommended mitigation measures can be found in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program of the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration.

The Department of Parks and Recreation also met separately with representatives from the Los Angeles City Council and a public health advocacy group in response to comments received during the public comment period regarding the ongoing cleanup

efforts at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory. Both parties expressed concern for trail planning efforts near the facility, where the level of cleanup is yet to be determined. As a result of these meetings and the public comments received, adjustments to boundaries of the study area were established as the final Phase II Master Plan Area.

The Department of Parks and Recreation received six categories of comments, which included 21 written public comment letters and seven written agency comment letters. The responses to these written comments can be found in Appendix K of the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration. A reasonable effort has been made to address and integrate all of the requested adjustments and changes received during public agency meetings, public workshops, and written comments into the Final Master Plan for your consideration and adoption.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

An Initial Study (IS) was prepared for the Project in compliance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and the Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines for the County. Based on the IS and Project revisions, it was determined that a Mitigated Negative Declaration was the appropriate environmental documentation for the Project. The Mitigated Negative Declaration was circulated for 45 days for agency and public review from November 2, 2017, to December 16, 2017. Pursuant to Public Resources Code sections 21092 and 21092.3, public notice was published in the *Santa Clarita Valley Signal* and posted at various locations including the Stevenson Ranch Library (25950 The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381), Chatsworth Branch Library (21052 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth, CA 91311), County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (510 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020), and online at the Department of Parks and Recreation website (<http://parks.lacounty.gov/draft-santa-susana-mountains-trails-master-plan-phase-ii-available-for-public-review/>).

All comments received and responses to the comments are included in the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration, and responses to public agency comments were sent to these agencies in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21092.5.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

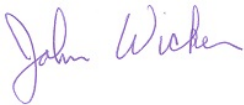
The recommended actions will have no impact on any other County services or projects.

CONCLUSION

Upon approval by the Board, please instruct the Executive Office-Clerk of the Board to forward one adopted copy to the Chief Executive Office and one adopted copy to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Zachary Likins at (626) 588-5318 or via email at zlikins@parks.lacounty.gov, Ms. Norma E. Garcia at (626) 588-5366 or via email at negarcia@parks.lacounty.gov, Ms. Nicole Melkonian at (626) 588-5367 or via email at nmelkonian@parks.lacounty.gov, or Mr. Aram Pirjanian at (626) 588-5368 or via email at apirjanian@parks.lacounty.gov.

Respectfully submitted,



JOHN WICKER
Director

JW:AB:KK:MO:zl

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS TRAIL MASTER PLAN PHASE II

Attachments

[Attachment I: SSMTMPII \(Master Plan\)](#)

[Attachment II: SSMTMPII \(Master Plan Appendices\)](#)

[Attachment III: SSMTMPII \(MND\)](#)

[Attachment IV: SSMTMPII \(MND Appendices\)](#)

[Attachment V: SSMTMPII \(MMRP\)](#)