

CASTAIC AREA MULTI-USE TRAILS PLAN  
INITIAL STUDY  
AND  
PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

PREPARED FOR:

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
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C	Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Biological Resources Assessment
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H	Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Traffic Assessment
I	Letters Received from Agencies for the Trails Plan

## Section 1

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### Project Description

The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) proposes to adopt a multi-use trails plan for the unincorporated area of Castaic.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as established by statute (Public Resources Code §§ 21000 *et seq.*), requires that the environmental implications of an action by a local agency be estimated and evaluated before project approval. This Initial Study was prepared by the County pursuant to CEQA, as amended (Division 13, California Public Resources Code) and the State CEQA Guidelines (Division 6, California Administrative Code).

## **1.1 PROJECT TITLE**

Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan

## **1.2 LEAD AGENCY**

County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation  
510 South Vermont Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90020

## **1.3 PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON**

Julie Yom, Park Planner  
510 South Vermont Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90020  
(213) 351-5127

## **1.4 PROJECT LOCATION**

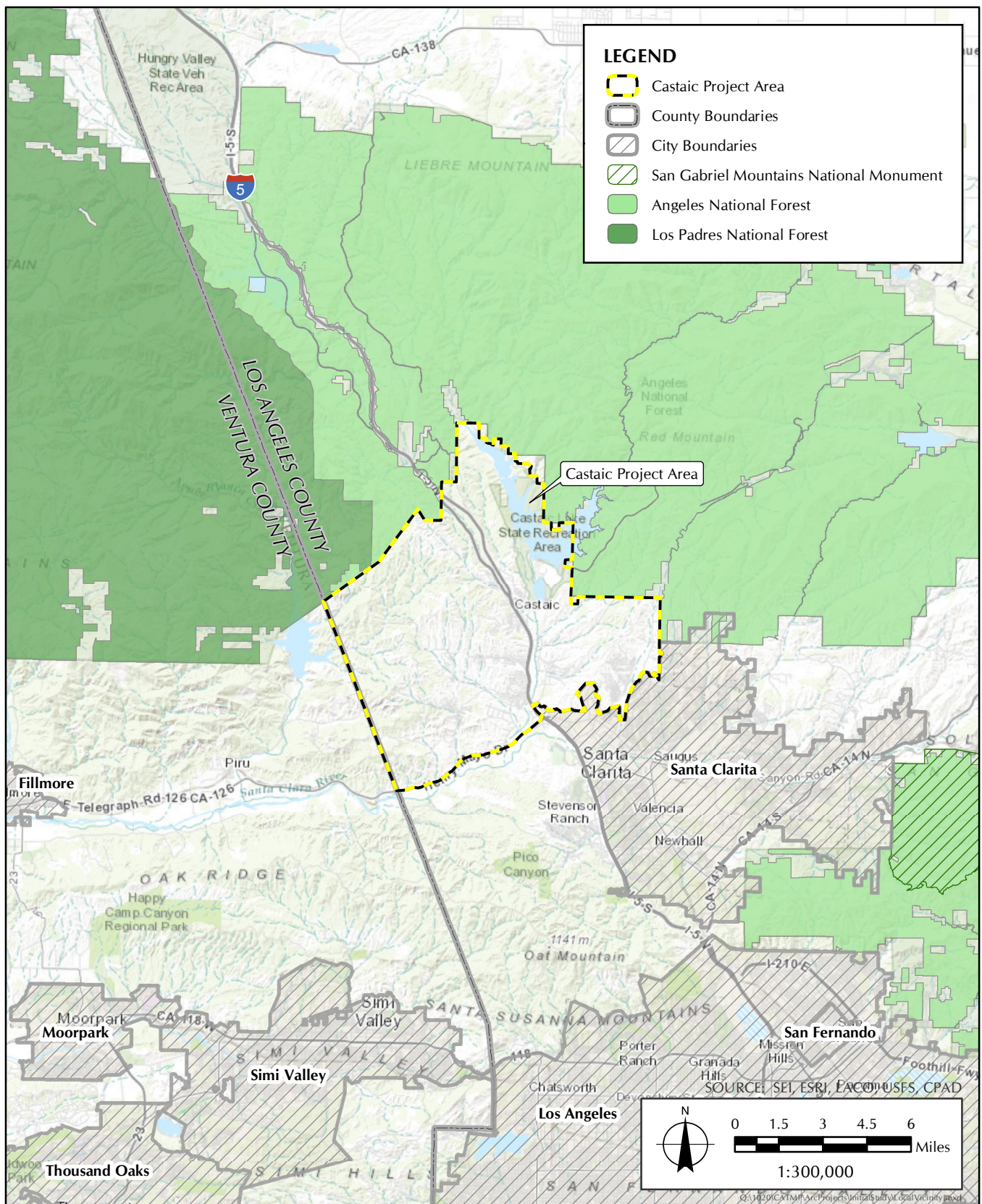
The Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan (proposed project) area encompasses approximately 75 square miles (approximately 48,107 acres) in the Castaic area of the Santa Clarita Valley in the northwestern portion of unincorporated County of Los Angeles (Figure 1.4-1, *Regional Vicinity Map*). The Santa Clarita Valley is centrally located between the San Gabriel Mountains to the east, the Sierra Pelona Mountains to the northeast, the Topatopa Mountains to the west, the San Emigdio Mountains and Tehachapi Mountains to the north, and the Santa Susana Mountains and Santa Monica Mountains to the south within the Transverse Ranges, a group of east-west trending mountains paralleling the Pacific Ocean between Santa Barbara and San Diego Counties.<sup>1</sup> The Castaic project area is composed of generally mountainous and valley terrain that abuts the Angeles National Forest to the north, the City of Santa Clarita to the southeast, California State Route 126 (Henry Mayo Drive) to the south, and Ventura County to the west (Figure 1.4-2, *Local Vicinity Map*). The Castaic project area, which is located in the Fifth Supervisorial District, includes a portion of the County-managed Castaic Lake State Recreation Area.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. Accessed 4 January 2016. TopoView. Available at: <http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/maps/TopoView/viewer/#11/34.5626/-118.5353>







**FIGURE 1.4-2**  
Local Vicinity Map

The Castaic project area appears on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute series Whitaker Peak, Warm Springs Mountain, Newhall, and Val Verde topographic quadrangles (Figure 1.4-3, *Topographic Map with USGS 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Index*).<sup>2,3,4,5</sup> The elevation of the Castaic project area ranges from 2,756 feet above mean sea level (MSL) near the northern edge of the Castaic project area between Violin Canyon and Palomas Canyon, to 863 feet above MSL near the Santa Clara River at the southwestern corner of the Castaic project area. Loma Linda Peak, at an elevation of approximately 2,494 feet above MSL, is located between Santa Felicia Canyon and Romero Canyon, approximately 0.2 mile south of the northern edge of the Val Verde topographic quadrangle.

## **1.5 PROJECT SPONSOR**

County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation  
510 South Vermont Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90020

## **1.6 GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION**

The Castaic project area, located within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Area, is bordered in the north by the Angeles National Forest, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service pursuant to the Angeles National Forest Land Management Plan; and the Los Padres National Forest, administered by the Los Padres National Forest Land Management Plan. The land to the southeast lies within incorporated City of Santa Clarita (administered by the City of Santa Clarita General Plan), designated as Major Commercial and Specific Plan land use designations. Ventura County land (administered by the Ventura County General Plan) is to the southwest. Portions of the Castaic project area are subject to the provisions of Specific Plans, Community Standards Districts, and the County of Los Angeles Rural Outdoor Lighting District Ordinance.<sup>6,7,8,9</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 4 January 2016. 7.5-Minute Series, Whitaker Peak, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 4 January 2016. 7.5-Minute Series, Warm Springs Mountain, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 4 January 2016. 7.5-Minute Series, Newhall, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 4 January 2016. 7.5-Minute Series, Val Verde, California, Topographic Quadrangle. Reston, VA.

<sup>6</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. June 1992. Northlake Specific Plan. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake_specific_plan/)

<sup>7</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 27 May 2003. Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall\\_ranch\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall_ranch_specific_plan/)

<sup>8</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 29 July 2014. Community Standards Districts. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/community\\_standards\\_districts](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/community_standards_districts)

<sup>9</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 28 September 2012. Ordinance No. 2012-0047. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/data/ord\\_outdoor-lighting.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/data/ord_outdoor-lighting.pdf)

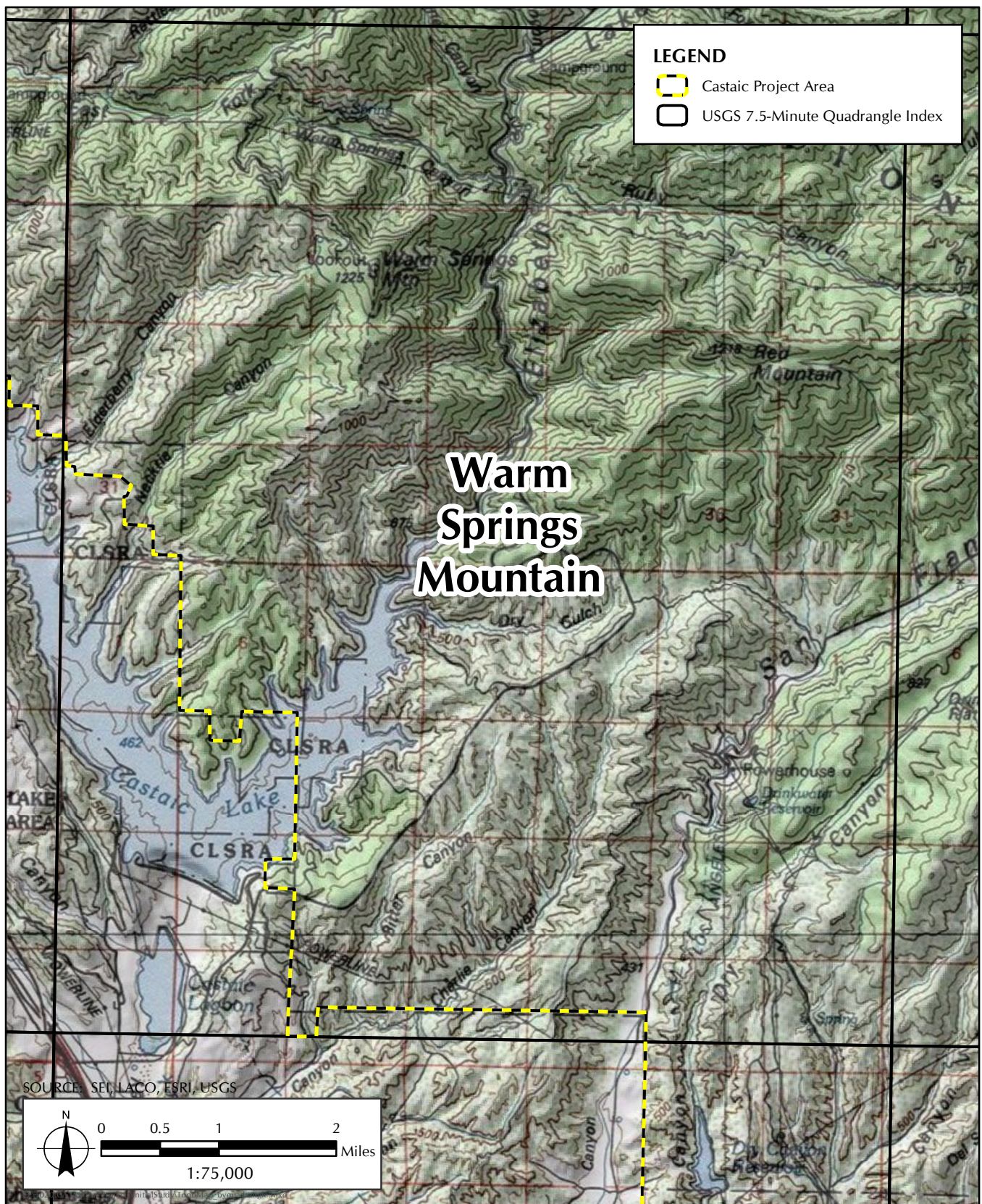






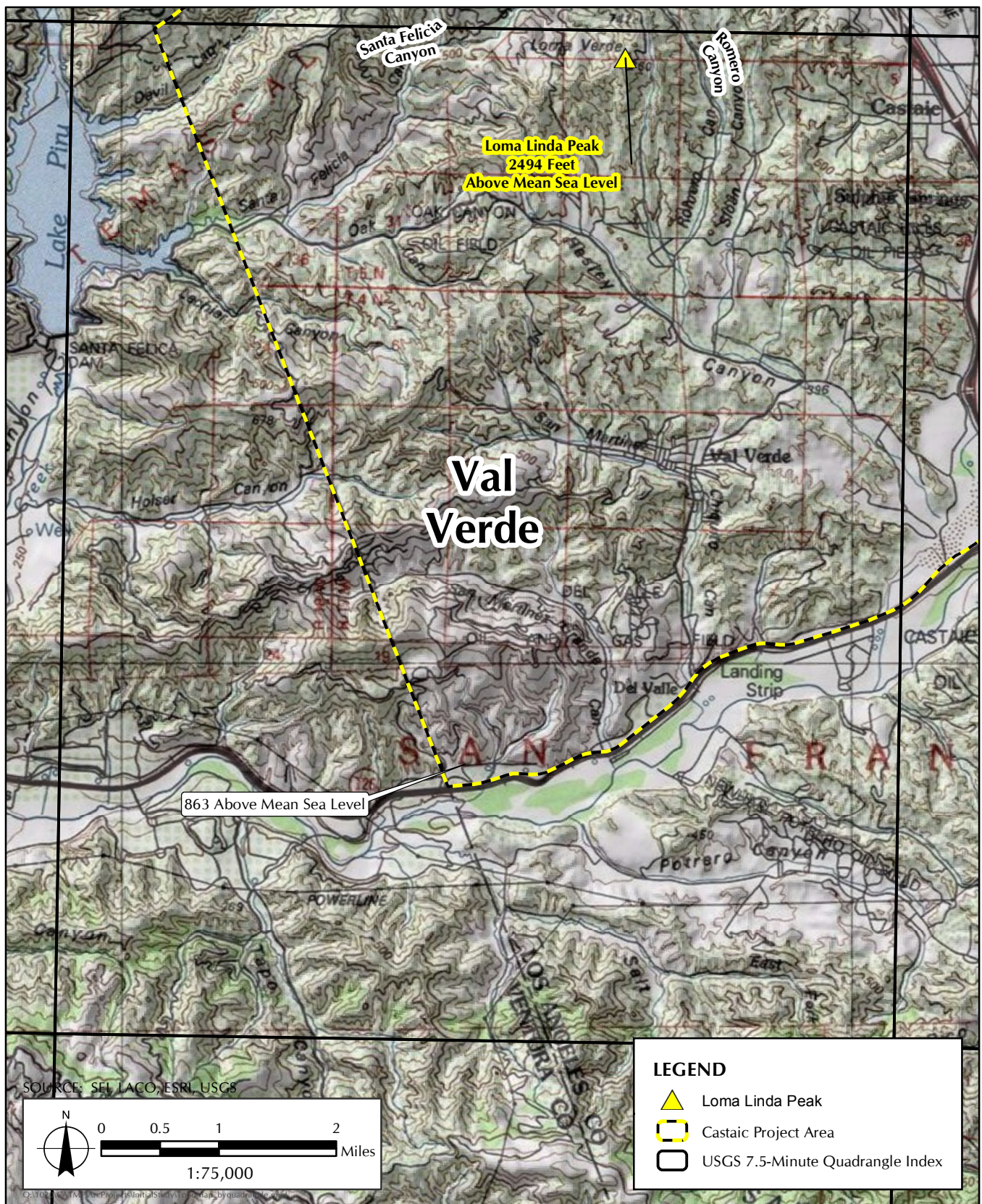






**FIGURE 1.4-3B**  
Topographic Map with United States Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Index





**FIGURE 1.4-3C**  
Topographic Map with United States Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Index







Approximately 45,247 acres of the Castaic project area are located within the Castaic Area Community Standards District (CSD), and approximately 899 acres of the Castaic project area is located within the San Francisquito Canyon CSD. The western portion (heavy agricultural, open space, neighborhood business, residential agricultural, and single-family residence zones) and northeastern portion (open space, heavy agricultural, and single-family residence zones) of the Castaic project area (approximately 29,006 acres) are located within the jurisdiction of the County of Los Angeles Rural Outdoor Lighting District (Figure 1.6-1, *County of Los Angeles Rural Outdoor Lighting District and Community Standards District Boundaries*).

The Northlake Specific Plan is located entirely within the Castaic project area, and a small portion of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area is located within the Castaic project area.

The County land use designations for the Castaic project area are predominantly Rural Land, Parks and Recreation, Public and Semi-Public, Residential, Water, Industrial Office, and Conservation (Table 1.6-1, *Castaic Project Area Land Use Designations*, and Figure 1.6-2, *County of Los Angeles Land Use Designations – Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan*). Although the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan only directly mentions trails within the Parks and Recreation land use designation, the land use policy defers to the specific allowable uses and development standards determined by underlying zoning designations and adopted Specific Plans.

Approximately 452.6 acres in the Castaic project area have been designated for OS-BLM use, and approximately 44.9 acres in the Castaic project area have been designated for OS-NF use (Figure 1.6-3, *Ownership of OS-BLM and OS-NF Land Use Categories within Castaic Project Area*). The majority of the OS-BLM land use (448.7 acres) is located well within the Castaic project area, and the remaining 3.9 acres are located along the boundary of the Castaic project area; three (3) proposed trail segments would have the potential to cross OS-BLM land owned by the U.S. Government: Elderberry Forebay (EF34 and EF4) and Lake West (LW1). A portion of this land is located within the County-managed Castaic Lake State Recreation Area. The OS-NF land use is located along the edge of the Castaic project area, and includes land owned by the U.S. government (42.3 acres), the State of California (0.0002 acre), and private landowners (2.5 acres). Two trail segments of the proposed Elderberry Forebay route (EF1 and EF4) would cross OS-NF land owned by the U.S. government. A portion of this land is also located within the County-managed Castaic Lake State Recreation Area.

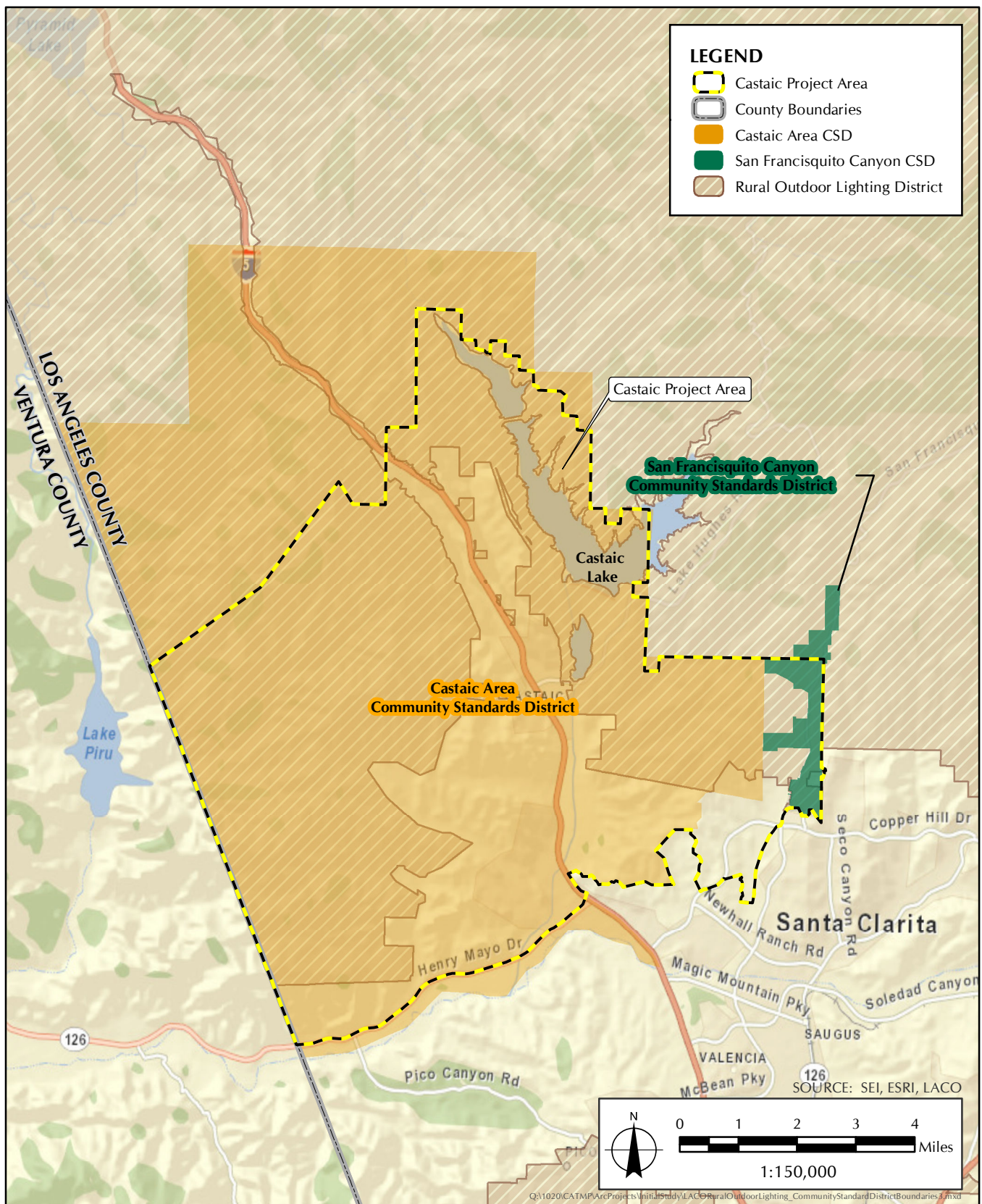
**TABLE 1.6-1  
CASTAIC PROJECT AREA LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

<b>County Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Acres in Castaic Project Area</b>	<b>Compatible with Trails?</b>
RL20 – Rural Land 20	14,708.7	<b>Yes</b> – Equestrian uses, private recreation, and public facilities are allowable uses; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
RL5 – Rural Land 5	5,052.3	<b>Yes</b> – Equestrian uses, private recreation, and public facilities are allowable uses; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
OS-PR – Parks and Recreation	4,065.2	<b>Yes</b> – Use for public and private parks and golf courses includes multi-purpose trails; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
RL2 – Rural Land 2	3,720.8	<b>Yes</b> – Equestrian uses, private recreation, and public facilities are allowable uses; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.

**TABLE 1.6-1  
CASTAIC PROJECT AREA LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

County Land Use Designation	Acres in Castaic Project Area	Compatible with Trails?
P – Public and Semi-Public	3,447.3	<b>Yes</b> – Not described in Area Plan
SP – Specific Plan	2,956.9	<p><b>Yes</b> – Specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the adopted Specific Plan.</p> <p><b>Newhall Ranch:</b> The adopted plan will allow construction of public trails. The design provides residents with access to nature by providing undeveloped open space accessible by trails from each village.</p> <p><b>Northlake:</b> Trails are a compatible use for the recreation/open space uses in the plan.</p>
H2 – Residential 2	2,545.3	<b>Yes</b> – Density-controlled development is encouraged to preserve open space for protection of natural features or resources; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
OS-W – Water	2,466.6	<b>Somewhat</b> – Use for open space lands that are water courses, including lakes, rivers, and creeks
H5 – Residential 5	2,035.6	<b>Yes</b> – Density-controlled development is encouraged to preserve open space for protection of natural features or resources; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
IO – Industrial Office	1,502.0	<b>Yes</b> – Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
RL10 – Rural Land 10	1,431.7	<b>Yes</b> – Equestrian uses, private recreation, and public facilities are allowable uses; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
OS-C – Conservation	1,052.6	<b>Yes</b> – Use for passive recreation; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
IL – Light Industrial	741.9	<b>Yes</b> – Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
RL1 – Rural Land 1	623.3	<b>Yes</b> – Equestrian uses, private recreation, and public facilities are allowable uses; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
OS-BLM – Bureau of Land Management	452.6	<b>Yes</b> – Use for land owned by BLM; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
H18 – Residential 18	391.4	<b>Yes</b> – Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
CG – General Commercial	87.6	<b>Yes</b> – Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
H30 – Residential 30	79.2	<b>Yes</b> – Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
CM – Major Commercial	70.2	<b>Yes</b> – Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.
OS-NF – National Forest	44.9	<b>Yes</b> – Use for land within the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests, including private inholdings that permit equestrian uses, private recreation, and public facilities; specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by underlying zoning designation.

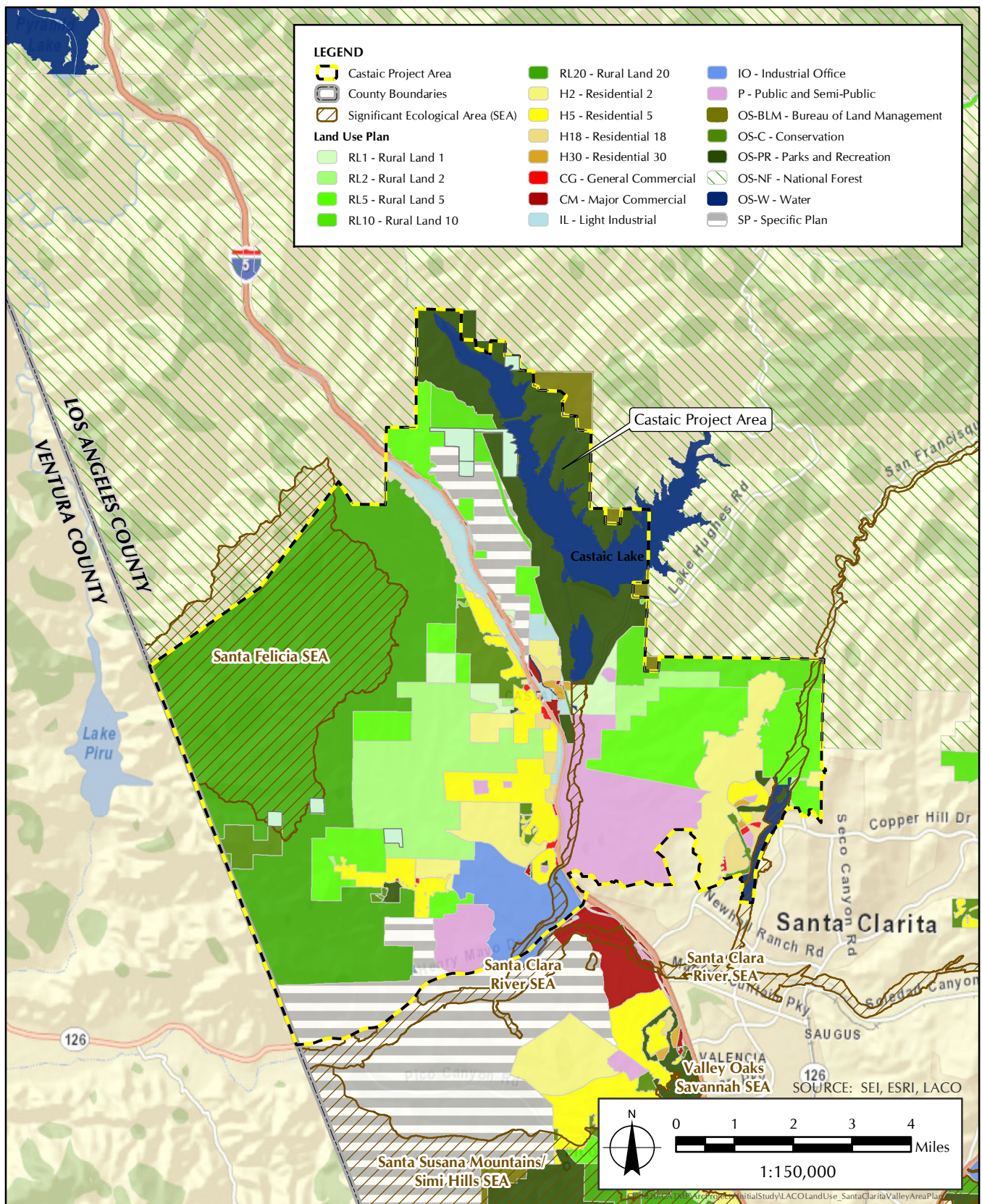
**SOURCE:** County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 2012. *Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan*. Chapter 2: Land Use. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>



**FIGURE 1.6-1**

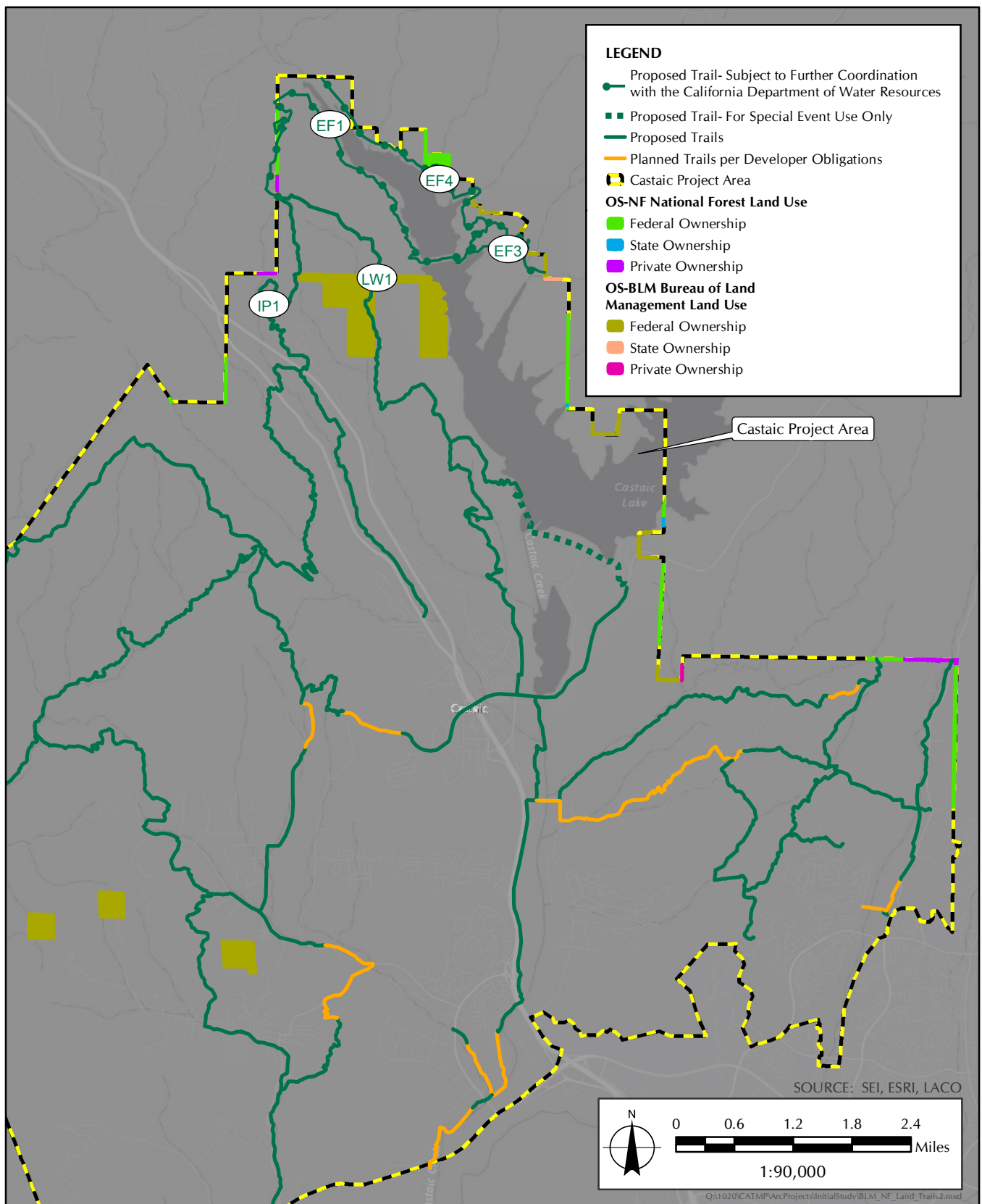
Los Angeles County Rural Outdoor Lighting District and Community Standards District Boundaries





**FIGURE 1.6-2**  
Los Angeles County 2015 Land Use Designations - Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan





**FIGURE 1.6-3**  
Ownership of OS-BLM and OS-NF Land Use Categories within Castaic Project Area

## 1.7 ZONING

The County zoning designations for the Castaic project area are predominantly heavy agricultural and open space, with two specific plan areas (Northlake Specific Plan and Newhall Specific Plan) and land designated with single-family residence, residential planned development, and restricted heavy manufacturing zones also comprising portions of the Castaic project area (Table 1.7-1, *Castaic Project Area Zoning Designations*, and Figure 1.7-1, *County of Los Angeles Zoning Designations*). The Heavy Agricultural Zone, Specific Plan Zone, manufacturing zones, Unlimited Commercial Zone, Neighborhood Business Zone, and Watershed Zone permit riding and hiking trails; the Open Space, Light Agricultural Zone, Manufacturing Industrial Planned Development Zone, Commercial Planned Development Zone, and residential zones in the Castaic project area allow for riding and hiking trails if they have been approved by the Planning Director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning (Director); and riding and hiking trails may be allowed in the Institutional Zone upon approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The Castaic project area is enclosed on the north by County-designated Watershed Zone; on the southeast by the City of Santa Clarita; on the south by Specific Plan Zone, Manufacturing Industrial Planned Development Zone, and Neighborhood Business Zone; and on the southwest by the County of Ventura.

**TABLE 1.7-1  
CASTAIC PROJECT AREA ZONING DESIGNATIONS**

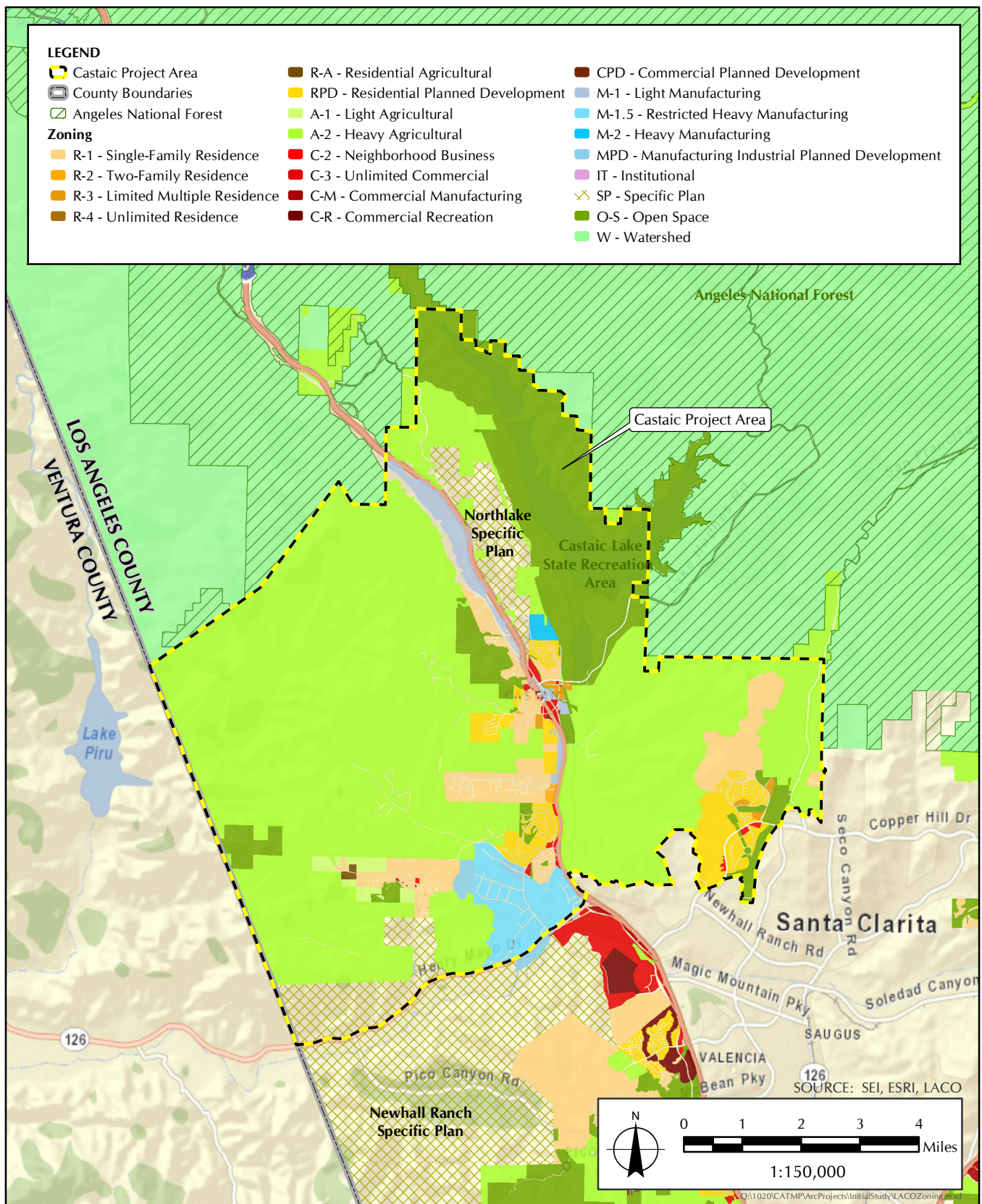
County Zoning Designation	Acres in Castaic Project Area	Compatible with Trails? <sup>1</sup>
A-2 – Heavy Agricultural	29,229.5	<p><b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are permitted (excludes trails for motor vehicles), provided all buildings or structures used in connection shall be located not less than 50 feet away from any street or highway or any building used or designed for human habitation.</p> <p>Also allows for campgrounds, picnic areas, and trails with overnight camping facilities (not structures for permanent human occupancy).</p>
O-S – Open Space	7,707.4	<p><b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails (excludes trails for motor vehicles), as well as campgrounds, picnic areas, and trails with overnight camping facilities (not structures for permanent human occupancy), are permitted uses, provided that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Premises shall remain essentially unimproved and building, structures, grading excavation, fill or other alterations are prohibited except as otherwise expressly provided in Sections 22.40.420 and 22.40.430.</li> <li>2 Where such premises are located within a significant ecological area, such uses shall be deemed to be uses subject to Director’s review and approval pursuant to Section 22.40.420.</li> </ol>
SP – Specific Plan	2,924.2	<p><b>Yes</b> – Subject to limitations and conditions of specific plan.</p> <p><b>Newhall Ranch:</b><sup>2</sup> Specific Plan’s objectives include (1) establishing a diverse system of pedestrian and bicycle trails, segregated from vehicle traffic and (2) providing an extensive system of pedestrian, bicycle, and hiking trails within the Villages and hiking trails in the <i>Special Management Areas (SMAs)</i> and <i>Open Area</i>.</p> <p><b>Northlake:</b><sup>3</sup> Specific Plan’s objectives include providing a network of biking, jogging, and equestrian trails.</p>
R-1 – Single-Family Residence	2,464.9	<p><b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles).</p>

**TABLE 1.7-1  
CASTAIC PROJECT AREA ZONING DESIGNATIONS**

County Zoning Designation	Acres in Castaic Project Area	Compatible with Trails? <sup>1</sup>
RPD – Residential Planned Development	1,610.1	<b>Somewhat</b> – Subject to the approval of the hearing officer, open space may include present or future hiking, riding or bicycle trails, designated for the use and enjoyment of all of the occupants of the planned residential development.
M-1.5 – Restricted Heavy Manufacturing	1,231.8	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are permitted
M-1 – Light Manufacturing	628.3	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are permitted (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
A-1 – Light Agricultural	279.8	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles); a conditional use permit allows for campgrounds, picnic areas, and trails with overnight camping facilities (not structures for permanent human occupancy)
MPD – Manufacturing Industrial Planned Development	162.6	<b>Yes</b> – As with R-A Zone, riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
R-3 – Limited Multiple Residence	114.1	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
M-2 – Heavy Manufacturing	104.1	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are permitted
C-3 – Unlimited Commercial	81.7	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are permitted (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
C-2 – Neighborhood Business	47.3	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are permitted (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
R-2 – Two-Family Residence	32.3	<b>Somewhat</b> – Riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
R-A – Residential Agricultural	30.2	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
W – Watershed	11	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are permitted (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
CPD – Commercial Planned Development	4.3	<b>Yes</b> – As with R-A Zone, riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles)
IT – Institutional	0.4	<b>Yes</b> – Trails are not specifically listed as a permitted use, but parks, playgrounds, and recreational areas are allowed upon approval of a conditional use permit
R-4 – Unlimited Residence	0.2	<b>Yes</b> – Riding and hiking trails are subject to Director’s review and approval (excludes trails for motor vehicles)

**SOURCE:**

1. Municode. Accessed 4 January 2016. Municode Library: County of Los Angeles, CA. Title 22 – Planning and Zoning. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO)
2. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted May 27, 2003. *Newhall Ranch Specific Plan*. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall\\_ranch\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall_ranch_specific_plan/)
3. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. June 1992. *Northlake Specific Plan*. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake_specific_plan/)



**FIGURE 1.7-1**  
Los Angeles County Zoning Designations

## 1.8 BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Background

At the direction of Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, the County embarked on the development of the proposed project due to the emerging need for additional trail and recreation opportunities in the Castaic area of the County. The proposed project is intended to address the existing practice of conceptualizing and requiring implementation of trail segments, in conjunction, with the approval process for development projects on a case-by-case basis to guide the development of a backbone trail system that meets the needs of the Castaic region. The County has participated in five trail planning efforts (Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor Master Plan, Northlake Specific Plan, Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, the Regional Trail System adopted in the County General Plan 2035, and Santa Susana Mountains Final Trails Master Plan (SSMF'TMP) over the past 26 years and has developed a trails manual; the development of trail planning in the Castaic region is needed in order to maintain and increase trail connectivity and access to open space with anticipated future private development and projected population growth in the Castaic area (Figure 1.8-1, *Previous Trail Planning Efforts in Proximity to Castaic Project Area*). Additional trail planning efforts have been undertaken by the United States Forest Service, National Park Service, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the City of Santa Clarita. The proposed project would recognize and complement other regional trail planning efforts being undertaken to provide another step towards providing trail connections in the County of Los Angeles.

**Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor Master Plan:** In 1990, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) published the *Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor Master Plan*, as authorized by Assembly Bill 1516 (1989) to guide the activities and expenditures of the SMMC and the legislature over a 5- to 10-year planning period in preservation of important resources and provision of public recreation. The Rim of the Valley Corridor is a wildlife corridor that connects the Santa Monica, Santa Susana, Sespe, and San Gabriel Mountains. The recreational objective of the plan was to provide opportunities for linear recreation in a natural setting through a continuous trails system in the Valley Trail Corridor, whether on foot, horseback, or mountain bikes, in consideration of trailhead access and facilities, difficult terrain, environmentally sensitive areas, existing trails and fire roads, access to natural or cultural resources, and views of the valleys and natural surroundings.

**Northlake Specific Plan:** In June 1992, the Northlake Specific Plan was approved, which proposed the development of a network of trails within the Castaic project area to provide adequate recreation opportunities for the population growth that would result from residential subdivision projects described in the Specific Plan.

**Newhall Ranch Specific Plan:** In May 2003, the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan was approved, which proposed the development of a system of trails connecting the development to natural open space in order to provide adequate recreation opportunities for the population growth that would result from residential subdivision projects described in the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan area overlaps with the Castaic project area.





**FIGURE 1.8-1**

**Previous Trail Planning Efforts in Proximity to Castaic Project Area**

**Adopted Proposed County Trails:** In 2007, the County adopted a proposed trails plan for the Santa Clarita Valley and Antelope Valley when the Santa Clarita Valley was largely undeveloped.<sup>10,11</sup> As stated on the Trails Map of the Antelope Valley Area Plan, the alignments of the adopted proposed trails, which include several trails within the Castaic project area, are not intended to be precise and require further study to determine the most feasible route as these properties are developed and the trail and trail connectivity needs of these developments become clear.

**County Trails Manual:** In June 2013, the County published the *County of Los Angeles Trails Manual* (County Trails Manual) as a manual to provide guidelines for trail planning, design, development, and maintenance of County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation trails.<sup>12</sup> The purpose of the County Trails Manual is to provide guidance to the County Department of Parks and Recreation that interfaces with trail planning, design, development, and maintenance of hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking recreational trails, while addressing physical and social constraints and opportunities associated with the diverse topographic and social conditions that occur in the unincorporated territory of the County. The County uses the planning process delineated in the County Trails Manual in considering the development of future trails. It is the policy of County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation that all trails in the County are multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, equestrian). The County Trails Manual serves as a procedural document.

**Santa Susana Mountains Final Trails Master Plan:** In May 2015, the County adopted the Santa Susana Mountains Final Trails Master Plan (SSMFTMP), which was undertaken at the direction of Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich in order to identify recreational trail opportunities in the Santa Susana Mountains area, located approximately 3 miles south of the Castaic project area, with the intent of adopting these proposed trails as part of the County's Regional Trail System.<sup>13</sup> The SSMFTMP involves the extension of the 35.7 miles of existing County-, City-, and Conservancy-managed trails in the Castaic project area by approximately 35.9 miles with 22 proposed trail segments, for a total of approximately 71.5 miles of trails within the SSMFTMP Area. The Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor encircles the San Fernando and La Crescenta Valleys and passes through the Northwest San Fernando Valley Subarea of the Trails Master Plan Area.

## Existing Conditions

The Castaic project area is generally considered rural and includes the existing communities of Castaic, Castaic Junction, Val Verde, Hasley Canyon, Hillcrest, and Paradise Ranch. The Castaic

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<sup>10</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. County of Los Angeles General Plan 2035. Figure 10.1: Regional Trail System. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_2035\\_2014-FIG\\_10-1\\_regional\\_trail\\_system.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_2035_2014-FIG_10-1_regional_trail_system.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 16, 2007. Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan: Trails Map. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/67/Antelope%20Valley%20Trail%20Plan.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. May 2015. Santa Susana Mountains Final Trails Master Plan. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/115/FINAL%20Santa%20Susana%20Mountains%20Final%20Trails%20Master%20Plan%20May%202015.pdf>

project area contains several ridges and canyons and approximately 4.9 miles of existing trail in three existing trail segments (Figure 1.8-2, *Existing Trails*):

- Cliffie Stone Trail (2.9 miles)
- Hasley Canyon Trail (1.7 miles)
- North Park Trail (0.3 miles)

Additionally, the County operates and maintains approximately 7 miles of recreational trails that are not part of the County's regional trail system near the southwestern edge of Castaic Lake at Castaic Lake State Recreation Area (SRA), which are multi-use and can be accessed from the Lower Lagoon near Grasshopper Canyon:<sup>14</sup>

- Fire roads (open to all users)
  - Cutler Canyon Fire Road
  - Pine Ridge Fire Road
  - Vista Ridge Fire Road
- Open trails (hiking, biking, horses)
  - Fisherman Trail
  - West Ridge Trail
  - Pro's Uphill
- Single track – mountain bikes only
  - Deer Trail
  - The Grapevine (Downhill Race Course)

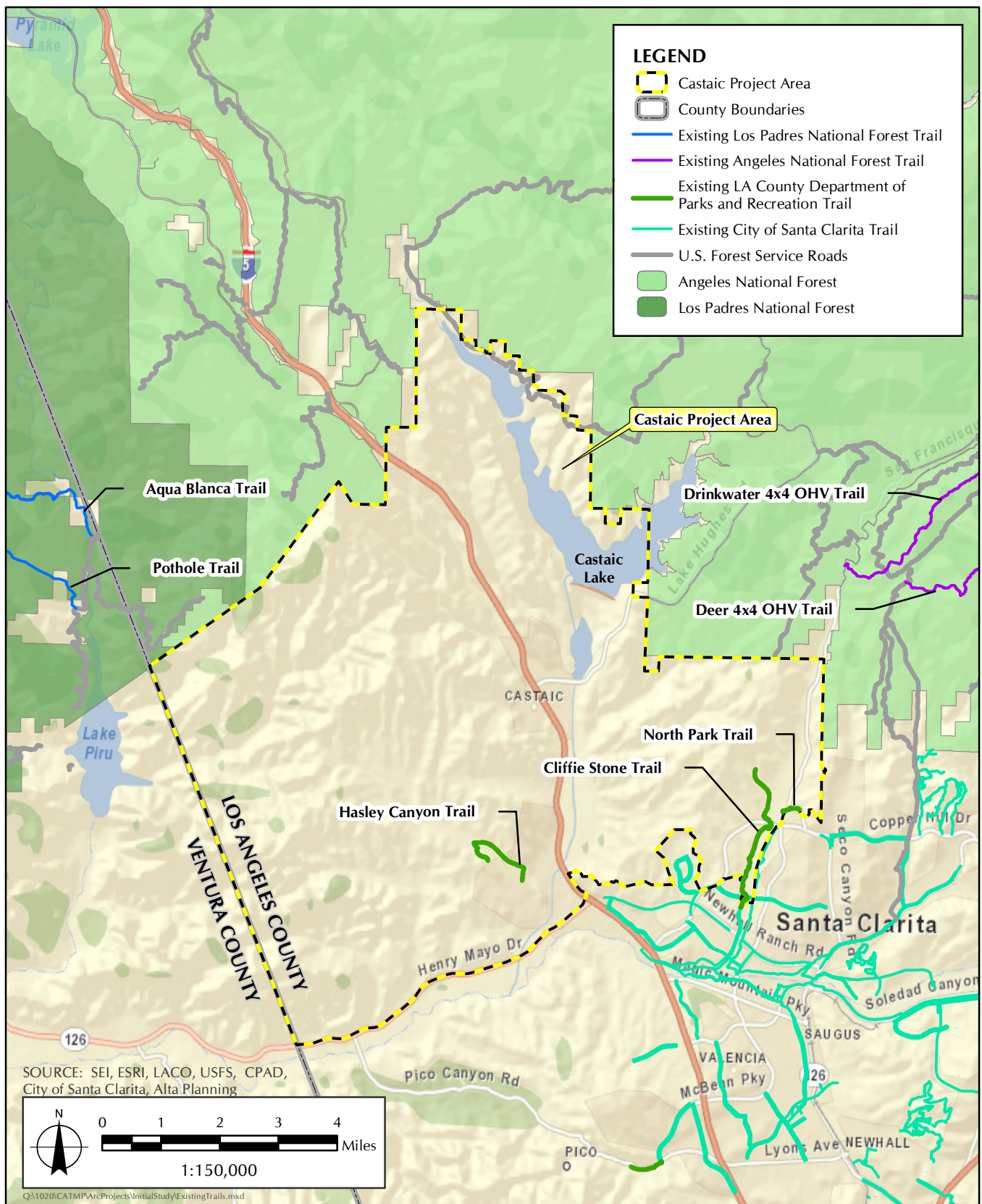
These trails do not currently connect to trails outside the SRA as it is a regional recreation destination on its own.

Major canyons and valleys within the Castaic project area include Santa Felicia Canyon, Palomas Canyon, Hasley Canyon, Violin Canyon, Devil Canyon, Oak Canyon, Castaic Valley, Charlie Canyon, Romero Canyon, Tapia Canyon, Sloan Canyon, San Martinez Grande Canyon, San Martinez Chiquito Canyon, Holser Canyon, and San Francisquito Canyon. The Castaic project area contains the Valencia Commerce Center, the Peter Pitchess Detention Center, the Northlake development area, and a portion of the Newhall Ranch development area. The Castaic project area includes a portion of Castaic Lake, as well as Castaic Lagoon and Castaic Creek, and the Santa Felicia Significant Ecological Area (SEA) has been adopted in the northwestern portion of the Castaic project area to preserve the area's ecological integrity. Proposed trails that have been adopted in the vicinity of the Castaic project area include the Condor Trail Corridor and Santa Clara River Trail Corridor identified in the California Recreational Trails Plan, adopted proposed trails from the County's adopted 2007 trails map, and trails identified in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (Figure 1.8-3, *Adopted Proposed Trails*).

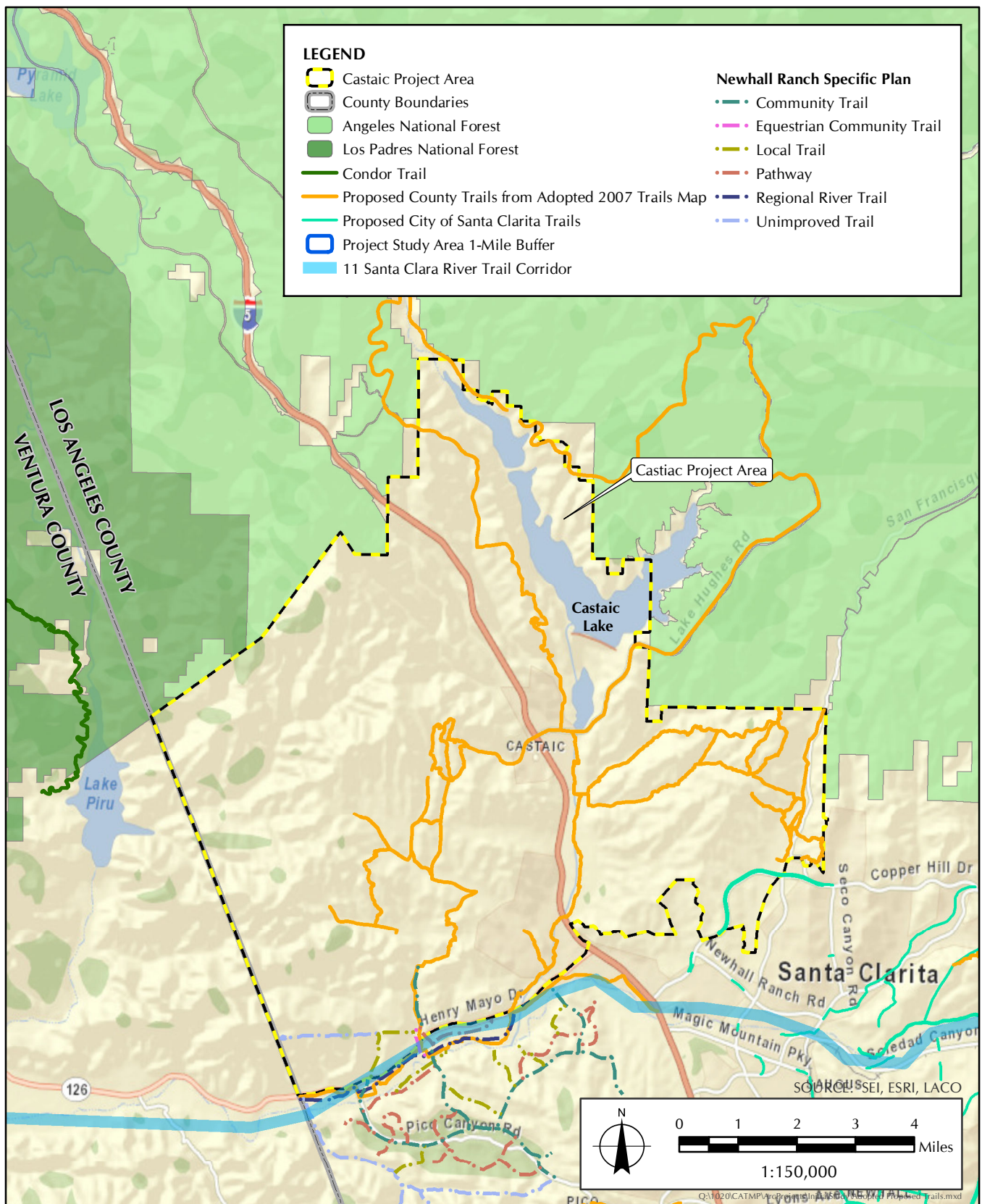
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<sup>14</sup> Friends of Castaic Lake. Accessed 6 January 2016. Castaic Lake State Recreation Area: Trails. Available at: <http://www.castaiclake.com/trails.html>





**FIGURE 1.8-2**  
Existing Trails



**FIGURE 1.8-3**  
Adopted Proposed Trails

## 1.9 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would work to encourage and promote new multi-use trails and recommend improvements to existing trails, providing an alignment to incorporate a transition throughout the Castaic project area to additional areas, jurisdictions, and prime destinations within and adjacent to the Castaic project area. The plan would recommend conditions for improvement of unmet local recreation demands in the 5th Supervisorial District. The proposed project would develop a complete multi-use trail system connecting user groups and local populations to desired recreation destinations and experiences, with unified transition to the trails of adjacent jurisdictions, compatibility with adjacent land uses and environmental resources, and incorporate a sustainable design that is consistent with the County Trails Manual.

The proposed project includes approximately 100 miles of proposed multi-use trails and related staging areas, bike skills parks, parking areas, and other supporting trail facilities in the Castaic Area of the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (Figure 1.9-1, *Proposed Trails Plan*). The proposed trails would provide connections to the Angeles National Forest, trails in the City of Santa Clarita, and trails in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The trails would be multi-use and range from 3 to 12 feet wide based on site conditions, with adequate space for combined pedestrian, equestrian, and mountain biking use, in accordance with the County of Los Angeles Trails Manual guidelines (Table 1.9-1, *County Trail Types*).

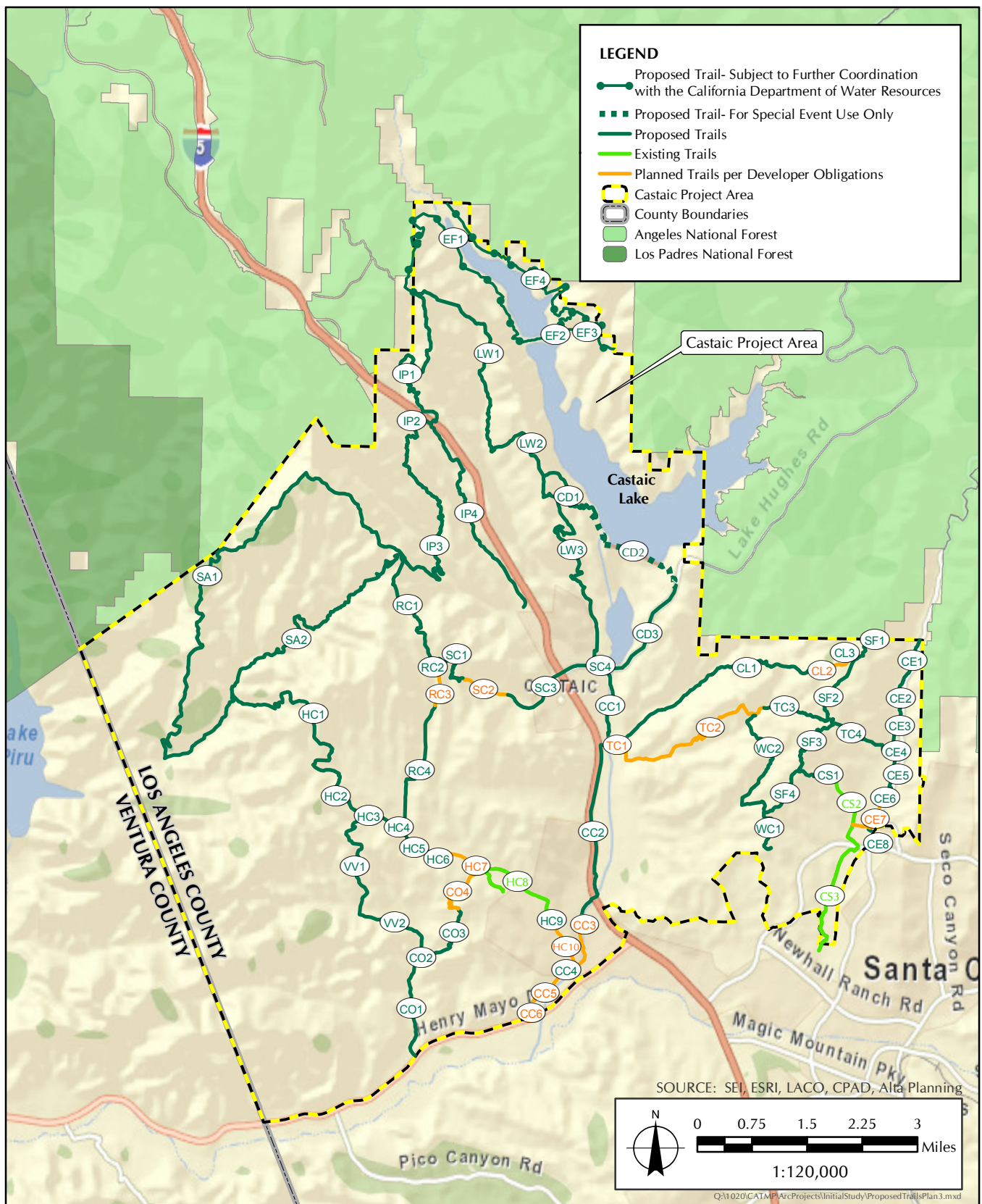
**TABLE 1.9-1  
COUNTY TRAIL TYPES**

Trail Type	Tread / Trail Width	Intensity of Use	Impact	Surface Type
Pedestrian	10–11 feet	High	High	Crusher fines / decomposed granite
Recreational Pathway	8–10 feet	High	High	Natural surface
Natural Trail 1	7–10 feet	High	Medium	Natural surface
Natural Trail 2	5–8 feet	Medium to high	Low	Natural surface
Natural Trail 3	2–3 feet	Low	Minimal	Natural surface

**SOURCE:** County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Adopted May 17, 2011. Revised June 2013. *County of Los Angeles Trails Manual*. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

The proposed project includes 18 trail routes, consisting of four (4) existing trail segments, ten (10) trail segments that have been planned per developer obligations, and 57 proposed trail segments (Table 1.9-2, *Existing, Planned per Developer Obligations, and Proposed Trail Segments*). The proposed trail segments would provide connections to the Santa Felicia SEA, the Angeles National Forest, Newhall Ranch trails and the Santa Clara River Trail, City of Santa Clarita trails, under Interstate-5, and to Castaic Lake.





**FIGURE 1.9-1**  
Proposed Trails Plan

**TABLE 1.9-2  
EXISTING, PLANNED PER DEVELOPER OBLIGATIONS, AND PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENTS**

Route Name	Trail Segment	Length (Miles)	Trail Type	Existing Conditions of Trail Segment and Trail Design Considerations
Castaic Creek (CC)	CC1 (Sports Complex)	1.24	Natural	No existing trail. Dirt road, de facto trail route along Castaic Creek.  De facto trail that does not cross private property. Crossing of drainage at RV park will wash out periodically unless an alternative crossing (bridge) is developed.
	CC2 (Pitchess)	2.63	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt road from Tapia Canyon Road along Interstate 5 and creekbed, including under the freeway bridge.  Potential for trailhead at southern end of segment.
	CC3 (Commerce Center East)	0.76	MUT	No existing trail. Portion of segment parallels existing dirt road.  Planned trail per developer obligations generally follows 2007 County adopted trail routes; alignment reflects subdivision plans.
	CC4 (Commerce Center Undercrossing)	0.25	Natural	No existing trail. Within Castaic creekbed and along paved utility road.  Slightly modified from 2007 County adopted trail routes to meet proposed subdivision trail.
	CC5 (Commerce Center Bike Trail)	0.46	MUT	No existing trail. Along paved utility road adjacent to creekbed.  Planned trail per developer obligations follows the subdivision plan indicating proposed bike trail with 10' minimum equestrian trail.
	CC6 (Commerce Center – 126)	0.48	MUT	No existing trail. Parallels Franklin Parkway and Castaic Creek.  Planned trail per developer obligations follows the subdivision plan indicating proposed sidewalk and equestrian trail.
Castaic Dam (CD)	CD1 (Castaic Upper Parking)	1.39	Natural	No existing trail. Parking lot median, follows existing switchbacks (dirt path) leading to and along existing Pine Ridge Fire Road.  Connection from 2007 County adopted trail routes to upper parking lot at Castaic Lake.
	CD2 (Castaic Dam Crossing)*	1.76	Natural	No existing trail. Follows paved road from upper parking lot at Castaic Lake, across Castaic Dam, to Lake Hughes Road.  Dam crossing, bridging east and west sides of Castaic Lake. Currently for special event use only. Subject to further coordination with State Department of Water Resources.
	CD3 (Lake Hughes East)	1.60	ROW	No existing trail. Unpaved ROW along Lake Hughes Road.  On-street connection from potential lagoon trailhead to parking lot on the east side of the dam.
Cliffie Stone Extension (CE)	CE1 (San Francisquito Wash - Upper)	0.63	Natural	No existing trail. Parallels existing dirt road/path along San Francisquito Canyon wash.  Passes from subdivision land into multiple private parcels. Runs adjacent to the street, but may need to enter street ROW.
	CE2 (Tesoro Del Valle – SF Wash)	0.52	Natural	No existing trail. Parallels existing dirt road / de facto route within San Francisquito Canyon wash.  Realigned 2007 County adopted trail. Passes through Tesoro Del Valle but is not including in subdivision plans.
	CE3 (San Francisquito Wash - Lower)	0.55	ROW	No existing trail. Parallels existing dirt road / de facto route within San Francisquito Canyon wash.  Realigned 2007 County adopted trail
	CE4 (Lady Linda)	0.55	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing dirt road (Lady Linda Lane).  Follows Lady Linda Lane to connect to proposed trailhead.
	CE5 (Cliffie Stone – From Lady Linda-Low Ridge)	0.53	ROW	No existing trail. Follows portions of existing de facto dirt path/road to the west of San Francisquito Canyon Road.  Primarily follows Cliffie Stone Extension identified in subdivision alignment.
	CE6 (Cliffie Stone – From Lowridge-Tesoro)	0.26	ROW	No existing trail. Dirt ROW exists along San Francisquito Canyon Road.  Crosses road ROW but original ROW does not match existing street.
	CE7 (North Park – Cliffie Stone Extension)	0.62	Natural	No existing trail or de facto route.  Follows 2007 County adopted alignment through subdivision until southern end, then branches west to meet Cliffie Stone Trail. Owned by MRCA but part of Tesoro subdivision.
	CE8 (North Park Trail Connector)	0.08	Natural	No existing trail or de facto route.  Connection to North Park Trail. Leaves subdivision property and enters Newhall Land parcel.
Charlie Canyon (CL)	CL1 (Charlie Canyon Road)	3.61	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing dirt roads (Tapia Canyon Road and Charlie Canyon Road), and what appears to be a de facto ridgeline path.  Realigned from 2007 County adopted trail routes to follow road on County property.
	CL2 (Charlie Canyon – Tesoro Del Valle)	0.37	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing dirt road or de facto path. Trail enters subdivision parcels but is not on subdivision plans.

**TABLE 1.9-2  
EXISTING, PLANNED PER DEVELOPER OBLIGATIONS, AND PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENTS**

Route Name	Trail Segment	Length (Miles)	Trail Type	Existing Conditions of Trail Segment and Trail Design Considerations
	CL3 (San Francisquito Connection)	0.16	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing dirt road or de facto path.  Connection to San Francisquito Trail.
Chiquito Canyon (CO)	CO1 (Chiquito Canyon and Creek)	3.52	Natural	No existing trail.  Modified 2007 County adopted alignment to follow creek instead of Chiquito Canyon Road.
	CO2 (Jackson St)	0.21	ROW	No existing trail. Parallels two existing paved roads – Lincoln Avenue and Jackson Street.  Follows existing street.
	CO3 (Chiquito Canyon and Creek – South)	1.04	Natural	No existing trail. Follows portions of Jackson Street and existing de facto dirt path or road.  Requires access beyond locked gate. Realigned from 2007 County adopted alignment to minimize parcel crossings.
	CO4 (Chiquito Canyon and Creek – North)	1.05	MUT	No existing trail. Parallels portion of Del Valley Road.  Planned trail per developer obligations - modified 2007 County adopted alignment to remain within subdivision parcels. Subdivision alignment not determined.
Cliffie Stone (CS)	CS1 (Cliffie Stone – San Francisquito Motorway)	0.68	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing ridgeline Farmer John Lat dirt road and paved utility access road.  Tesoro Del Valle Property. Requires access along utility road.
	CS2 (Cliffie Stone Trail [Tesoro])	1.16	Natural	Existing trail
	CS3 (Cliffie Stone Trail [San Francisquito])	1.73	Natural	Existing trail
Elderberry Forebay (EF)	EF1 (Forebay Connection)	4.76	Natural	No existing trail.  Follows existing dirt road and topography. May have security issues with dam and pipes at northern edge. Only include if Elderberry Forebay Dam is useable.
	EF2 (Forebay – Limit 2)	0.81	Natural	No existing trail. Parallels portion of Elderberry Forebay road.  Dam connection to northeastern corner route. Only include if Elderberry Forebay Dam is useable.
	EF3 (Forebay – Limit 1)	0.72	Natural	No existing trail. Parallels portion of Elderberry Forebay road.  Dam connection to northeastern corner route. Only include if Elderberry Forebay Dam is useable.
	EF4 (Northern Limit)	4.76	Natural	No existing trail. Parallels portions of existing roads: Goodell Road and USFS Route 6N13.  Northeast connection to USFS roads. Extends beyond Castaic project area.
Hasley Canyon (HC)	HC1 (Hasley – Santa Felicia)	3.48	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing unpaved Ayala Road for a portion of proposed route.  Connects Hasley Canyon to Santa Felicia SEA. Requires passage beyond locked gate at Hasley Canyon.
	HC2 (Hasley – Claremont)	0.70	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing de facto path or dirt road.  Trail falls within subdivision area but is not included in existing subdivision plans. Avoids using street ROW. Connects to 2007 County adopted trail alignment at northern end.
	HC3 (Hasley Canyon End)	0.16	Natural	No existing trail.  Realigned 2007 County adopted trail alignment.
	HC4 (Hasley Road West)	0.33	ROW	No existing trail. Parallels existing paved Hasley Canyon Road.  Follows 2007 County adopted trail alignment along public ROW. Ends at road.
	HC5 (Hasley Road East)	0.57	ROW	No existing trail. Parallels existing paved Hasley Canyon Road.  Realigned 2007 County adopted trail to avoid private parcel conflict, avoid a creek crossing, and to more directly connect to other trail segments.
	HC6 (Hasley Creek)	0.26	Natural	Existing de facto trail along Hasley Canyon Road.  Realigned 2007 County adopted trail to follow de facto trails.
	HC7 (Hasley-Los Valles)	0.56	MUT	No existing trail. Existing de facto trail along Hasley Canyon Road.  Planned trail per developer obligations - realigned 2007 County adopted trail to follow de facto trails. Within subdivision area a planned subdivision trail is not indicated.
	HC8 (Hasley Canyon Trail)	1.68	Natural	Existing trail
	HC9 (Commerce Center)	0.21	ROW	No existing trail. Existing paved maintenance road along channelized creek.

**TABLE 1.9-2  
EXISTING, PLANNED PER DEVELOPER OBLIGATIONS, AND PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENTS**

Route Name	Trail Segment	Length (Miles)	Trail Type	Existing Conditions of Trail Segment and Trail Design Considerations
				Line to proposed subdivision trails. Crosses under Commerce Center Drive and uses maintenance road.
	HC10 (Commerce Center NW)	0.61	MUT	No existing trail. Parallels creek bed.  Planned trail per developer obligations generally follows 2007 County adopted alignment, but realigned to avoid the creek bed where possible.
Interstate Paintball (IP)	IP1 (Interstate 5 to Ridge Route)	3.30	Natural	No existing trail. Existing utility access dirt roads.  Follows utility access roads. Northern end will need switchbacks to drop to Ridge Route Rd.
	IP2 (Paintball Site)	0.65	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt roads and paved roads.  Connects through former paintball site and proposed bike skills park. Alignment to be determined by park design.
	IP3 (Santa Felicia to 5 Connection)	3.67	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt roads along portions of alignment.  Connection from former paintball site to Santa Felicia SEA. Undercrossing at Interstate-5 will need to be evaluated for safety.
	IP4 (Between Interstate 5)	3.14	Natural	No existing trail. Existing utility access dirt roads between I-5 North and I-5 south.  Picks up from the end of Castaic Road and continues to paintball site.
Lake West (LW)	LW1 (Northlake North)	3.28	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt roads.  Follows 2007 County adopted trail route.
	LW2 (Northlake Central)	1.10	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt roads.  Follows 2007 County adopted trail route.
	LW3 (Lagoon-Lake)	4.05	Natural	Existing dirt roads, including a portion of Cutler Canyon Fire Road and Vista Ridge Fire Road, and paved Castaic Lake State Recreation Area road. Includes a portion of Pro's Uphill Open Trail and Castaic Brick Trail of Castaic Lake State Recreation Area. <sup>1</sup>  Follows 2007 County adopted trail route.
North Park Trail	North Park Trail	0.33	Natural	Existing trail
Romero Canyon (RC)	RC1 (Romero-Santa Felicia)	1.88	Natural	No existing trail. Follows existing dirt road/path.  Portions follow narrow ridgelines.
	RC2 (North of High School)	0.13	Natural	No existing trail. Currently a construction site.  Connection to Castaic High School path.
	RC3 (Castaic High School)	0.56	MUT	No existing trail. Currently a construction site leading to Romero Canyon Road.  Planned trail per developer obligations – alignment needs verification from development plan.
	RC4 (Romero Canyon Rd)	1.89	Natural	No existing trail. Parallels Romero Canyon Road.  Follows private road.
Santa Felicia (SA)	SA1 (Santa Felicia Upper Loop)	7.59	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt road.  Minimal constraints.
	SA2 (Santa Felicia Lower Loop)	5.80	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt road.  Portions follow narrow ridgelines.
San Francisquito (SF)	SF1 (San Francisquito Motorway)	0.34	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt road: San Francisquito Motorway.  Follows San Francisquito Motorway to the edge of the Castaic project area.
	SF2 (San Francisquito Motorway Bypass)	1.09	Natural	No existing trail. De facto ridgeline dirt road/path.  Two parallel alternative routes. Single alignment pending further study. Partially inside Tapia Ranch.
	SF3 (San Francisquito – Tapia)	1.15	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt road: San Francisquito Motorway.  Passes through Tesoro Del Valle, not included in subdivision plans.
	SF4 (San Francisquito – West Creek)	0.85	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt road: San Francisquito Motorway.



TABLE 1.9-2  
EXISTING, PLANNED PER DEVELOPER OBLIGATIONS, AND PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENTS

Route Name	Trail Segment	Length (Miles)	Trail Type	Existing Conditions of Trail Segment and Trail Design Considerations
				Follows utility road. Connects San Francisquito and Cliffie Stone Trails to West Creek.
Sloan Canyon (SC)	SC1 (Sloan Canyon West)	1.14	Natural	No existing trail. Existing dirt roads and construction sites.  Portions follow narrow ridgelines.
	SC2 (Homestead at Sloan Canyon)	0.68	MUT	No existing trail. Existing construction site and unpaved Sloan Canyon Road.  Planned trail per developer obligations follows existing dirt road.
	SC3 (Sloan Canyon Dr)	1.52	ROW	No existing trail. Parallels Sloan Canyon Road and Lake Hughes Road.  On-street connection. Crosses under Interstate 5. Requires coordination with Los Angeles County Public Works.
	SC4 (Lake Hughes at Lagoon)	0.19	ROW	No existing trail. Parallels Lake Hughes Road south of Castaic Lagoon.  Connects Castaic Creek to Castaic Lake.
Tapia Canyon (TC)	TC1 (Sports Complex – Tapia)	0.24	MUT	No existing trail. Parallels Tapia Canyon Road.  Planned trail per developer obligations – Tapia Ranch development plans to build path to Castaic Road.
	TC2 (Tapia Bypass)	2.74	MUT	No existing trail. Parallels Tapia Canyon Road and Wayside Canyon Road in between undeveloped portions of Tapia Canyon.  Planned trail per developer obligations – part of Tapia Ranch development plan. Portions follow 2007 County adopted alignment.
	TC3 (Tapia – San Francisquito)	1.11	Natural	No existing trail. Appears to be a de facto trail or dirt path between Tapia Canyon Road and San Francisquito Motorway.  Partially within Tapia Ranch development.
	TC4 (Tapia – Cliffie Stone)	1.03	Natural	No existing trail. A portion of alignment route follows an existing dirt road/path. A portion parallels dirt roads/paths: Quail Haven Trail, Las Tunas Trail, and Lady Linda Lane.  Trail would need to traverse a significant elevation change over the ridge at northern end.
Val Verde (VV)	VV1 (Kennsington Rd)	2.31	Natural	No existing trail. Follows a few de facto dirt roads/paths.  Requires access along private roads at either end of the alignment.
	VV2 (Chiquito – Val Verde)	0.94	Natural	No existing trail. Follows edge of Val Verde Park and drainage.  Follows drainage, marked as privately owned for portions but appears to all be LA County Flood Control property.
West Creek (WC)	WC1 (West Creek – Tapia)	1.49	Natural	No existing trail. Parallels two existing dirt roads: Company Road and Wayside Lateral Road.  Requires connection through cul-de-dac in West Creek.
	WC2 (West Creek – Tapia – Tesoro)	1.30	Natural	No existing trail. Follows a portion of existing de facto dirt road/paths and a portion of Tapia Canyon Road.  Within subdivision property, but alignment not included in subdivision. Connects West Creek development to Tapia Ranch area.
TOTAL				
Total of 18 Routes	Total of 71 Trail Segments		Total Of 102.94 Miles in Trail Planning Castaic project area	

NOTES:  
\*Subject to negotiation with California State Department of Water Resources (DWR) - Future negotiations with DWR and pending state and county agreement renewal  
MUT = Multi-Use Trail  
ROW = New Designation  
Source: <sup>1</sup> Friends of Castaic Lake. Accessed 12 April 2016. *Castaic Lake – Trail Map*. Available at: [http://castaiclake.com/map\\_trails.html](http://castaiclake.com/map_trails.html)



Consistent with Section 4.3.6, *Way-finding Signs*, of the County Trails Manual, the proposed project would include regular trail signs at trailheads, trail amenity locations, street and trail intersections, and the boundaries of trail easements on private property and National Forest lands.<sup>15</sup> Also consistent with the recommendations of the County Trails Manual, reassurance marker signs would be posted at eye level (62 inches above the ground surface) at every quarter (0.25) mile of trail that visually mark the trail line and identify the name of the trail and quarter milepost number in order to orient trail users and search and rescue services in the case of an emergency. As each trail segment is constructed, the County Department of Parks and Recreation would be responsible for sending the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department the location of each quarter milepost along the trail for emergency response purposes.

The proposed project would involve the development of five (5) simple trailheads at access points, up to three (3) bike skills park amenities, four (4) equestrian amenities, and nine (9) staging areas and trail amenities (Table 1.9-3, *Proposed Trail Related Facilities*; Figure 1.9-2, *Proposed Trail Related Facility Locations*). The bike skills parks would occupy up to 45 acres.

**TABLE 1.9-3  
PROPOSED TRAIL RELATED FACILITIES**

Trail Related Facility Type	Related Facility Name (Size)
<b>Trail Access Only</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trailheads only</li> </ul>	Upper Ridge Route Road
	Sloan Canyon
	Castaic Road
	West Creek
	Hasley Canyon Equestrian Center
<b>Bike Skills Park Amenities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrooms</li> <li>Drinking Fountains</li> <li>Rest Areas/Seating</li> <li>Shade Structures</li> <li>Pump Tracks (no pedaling required)</li> <li>Progressive Jumps (natural soil with compacted dirt jumps)</li> <li>Balance Skills Features (e.g., wooden teeter-totter)</li> <li>Rock/Technical Features (e.g., rock garden with narrow width trails)</li> <li>Flow Trails (start at higher elevation for downhill ride)</li> <li>Trails (over variety of terrain, for all ages)</li> <li>Road Handling Skills Areas (hard-packed soil course)</li> <li>Beginner, Intermediate, and Expert Skills Courses (for all ages)</li> <li>Advanced Downhill Course (steep terrain, jumps, turns, obstacles)</li> <li>Slalom Course (two adjacent trails for competition)</li> </ul>	Castaic Sports Complex (up to 10 acres)
	Upper Lagoon (up to 5 acres)
	Ridge Route Road (up to 30 acres)

<sup>15</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

**TABLE 1.9-3  
PROPOSED TRAIL RELATED FACILITIES**

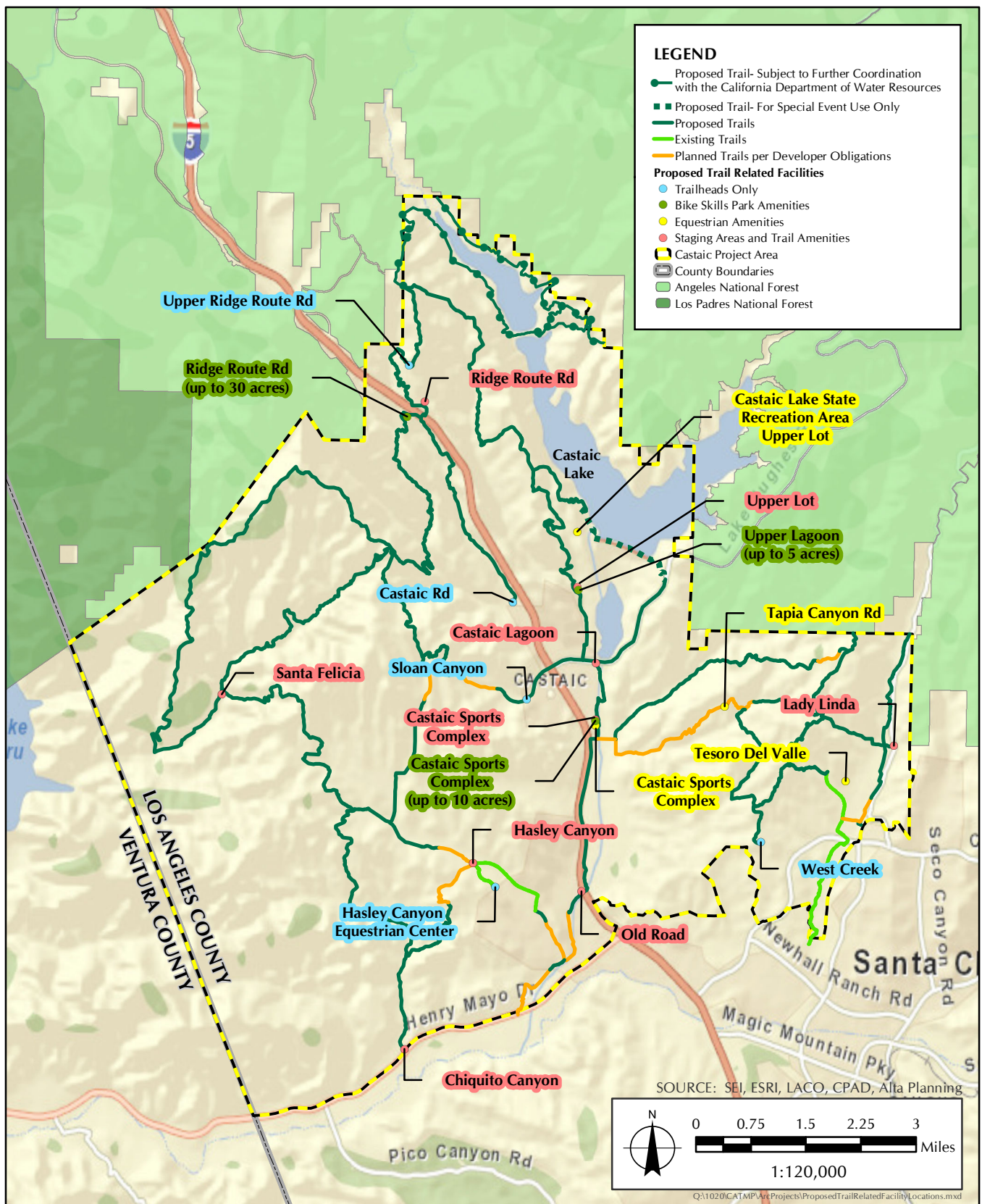
Trail Related Facility Type	Related Facility Name (Size)
<b>Equestrian Amenities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trailheads</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Restrooms</li> <li>• Drinking Fountains (for humans, equine, or pets)</li> <li>• Picnic Tables</li> <li>• Shade Structures</li> <li>• Horse Arenas</li> <li>• Gathering Areas</li> <li>• Horse Ties and Rails</li> </ul>	Tapia Canyon Road
	Castaic Lake Upper Lot
	Tesoro Del Valle
	Castaic Sports Complex
<b>Staging Areas and Trail Amenities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trailheads</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Restrooms</li> <li>• Drinking Fountains (for humans, equine, or pets)</li> <li>• Benches/Seating</li> <li>• Picnic Tables</li> <li>• Shade Structures</li> <li>• Wayfinding Signage</li> <li>• Interpretive Signage</li> <li>• Gathering Areas</li> <li>• Horse Ties and Rails</li> <li>• Bike Racks</li> </ul>	Old Road
	Hasley Canyon
	Chiquito Canyon
	Santa Felicia
	Castaic Lagoon
	Lady Linda
	Ridge Route Road
	Castaic Sports Complex
	Castaic Lake State Recreation Area Upper Lot

Restrooms would be design and required to demonstrate compliance with the standards of the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District or the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS), as applicable.

Trails and supporting facilities within a one-mile radius of officially designated and eligible State scenic highways would be designed, constructed, and maintained (where construction equipment is involved) to preserve scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within the scenic highway corridor. Where construction of trails or related supporting facilities requires cuts into the slope (which can be seen from a far distance), the visual character of the slope would be restored by planting locally native vegetation as a visual screen. Similarly, restrooms and other supporting structures would be constructed of materials that blend into the landscape, with locally native vegetative screening.

As stated in the County Trails Manual, the hours for operation for County trails are typically from dawn to dusk (County Code 17.04.330). In accordance with the guidelines in Section 4.3.18, *Lighting*, of the County Trails Manual, where lighting features are provided for safety and wayfinding reasons, lighting would installed in a manner to be non-intrusive to adjacent uses, avoid detracting from a natural outdoors experience for trail users, and directed downward to avoid light pollution or spillover in general.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 17, 2011. Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: [https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-](https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-1-16/22)



**FIGURE 1.9-2**  
Proposed Trail Related Facility Locations

## **1.10 STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

### **Goals**

The Multi-Use Trails Plan would act as a framework to encourage and promote new multi-use trails and recommend improvements to existing trails, providing an alignment with seamless transitions throughout the Castaic project area to areas, jurisdictions, and prime destinations within and adjacent to the Castaic project area. The plan would include recommendations for reducing unmet local recreation demand in the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area and in the 5th Supervisorial District. The County has identified two goals related to the proposed project:

1. Develop a complete multi-use trail system connecting user groups and local populations to desired recreation destinations and experiences, with seamless transitions to the trails of adjacent jurisdictions, compatibility with adjacent land uses and environmental resources, and a safe and sustainable design that is consistent with the County of Los Angeles Trails Manual.
2. Develop a recreational trail system that supports low-intensity use, including mountain biking, equestrian use, and hiking, to accommodate the population increase anticipated in the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area through the 2035 planning horizon consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element of the County of Los Angeles General Plan 2035.

### **Objectives**

The County identified and prioritized seven basic objectives that are important to achieving the project goals:

1. Accommodate a wide range of trail user types and abilities.
2. Connect to desirable destinations, features, and settings.
3. Provide safe and sustainable trails.
4. Avoid or minimize environmental impacts.
5. Identify the means to implement and maintain trails as feasible within the scope and budget of the Multi-Use Trails Plan.
6. Develop plan consistent with the County's multi-use (equestrians, hikers, and mountain bikers) trail policy.
7. Develop plan consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element of County General Plan.

## **1.11 CONSTRUCTION SCENARIO**

This Initial Study is based on an evaluation of the construction that would be required to build out the proposed trails in the general configurations of the conceptual plan. Proposed trail alignments are conceptual and will require additional survey, design, and engineering work to support dedication of easements and ultimately trail construction, operation, and maintenance. The final trail alignments are subject to refinement in relation to environmental, geologic, hydrologic, ownership, topology, and other factors, as specified in the County Trails Manual.

The approximately 102.2 miles of existing and planned trails within and adjacent to the Trails Plan include a wide variety of terrain and elevation range. The highest location of the planning area is the ridgeline between Palomas Canyon and Violin Canyon connected to Townsend Peak (elevation 3,184 feet above MSL) at 2,756 feet above MSL, and the lowest location is the Santa Clara River valley at 863 feet above MSL. This results in an elevation range of 1,893 feet (see Figure 1.4-3). Slopes in the planning area range from 0 degrees to 83 degrees at the steepest (Figure 1.11-1, *Castaic Project Area Slope*). Trails would need to be constructed consistent with the provisions of the trails plan, which sets standards for slope, width, visibility, and drainage. Additionally, six of the proposed trail segments and the Santa Felicia General Staging Area cross areas of wetland identified by the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) as identified in Table 1.11-1, *Proposed Trail Segment NWI Crossings*. The Santa Felicia General Staging Area crosses Riverine wetland.

**TABLE 1.11-1  
PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENT NWI CROSSINGS**

Proposed Trail Name	Number of NWI Crossings	NWI Wetland Types (Number of NWI Crossings)
Castaic Creek (CC4, CC5)	3	Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland (1) Freshwater Emergent Wetland (2)
Castaic Dam (CD1)	1	Lake (1)
Cliffie Stone East (CE4, CE5)	2	Riverine (2)
Elderberry Forebay (EF4)	1	Lake (1)
Hasley Canyon (HC1)	1	Riverine (1)
Santa Felicia (SA2)	1	Riverine (1)

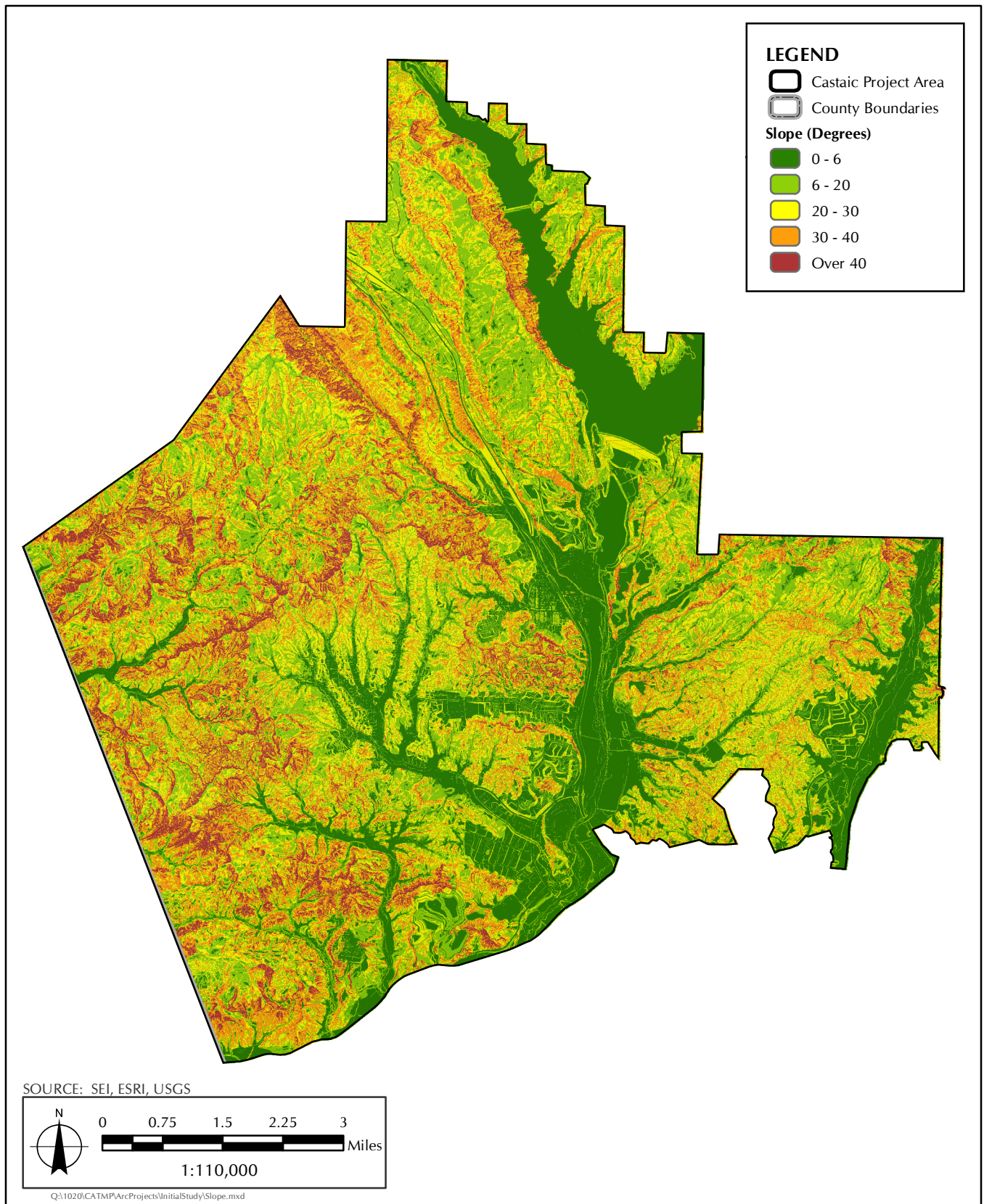
**SOURCE:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory. n.d. Wetlands Mapper. Available at: <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>

The environmental analysis for the proposed project is based on a potential worst-case scenario for construction activities, including improvements to existing trails, construction of new trails, site grading, and delivery and hauling of construction materials and equipment. Construction activities associated with the proposed project, as currently conceived, would entail improvements to and construction of approximately 100 miles of trails. Construction equipment would be limited to mini-dozers; graders; small tractors; a water truck; and hand tools including picks, hoes, shovels, and wheelbarrows. Construction would be conducted in accordance with the guidelines specified in the County Trails Manual.<sup>17</sup> The County Trails Manual contains specific methods for building trails in areas with steep slopes and riparian crossings. The County Trails Manual should be referenced for further information to determine the constructability of trail segments.

The easement area should include a minimum of two feet on either side of the trail tread to provide for construction and maintenance of the trail segment(s). In areas of very steep topography, it may be advantageous to acquire an easement that is much wider than the actual trail tread width to be constructed in order to provide a greater level of flexibility for trail design and construction.

<sup>17</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. [Adopted 17 May 2011] Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>





**FIGURE 1.11-1**  
Castaic Project Area Slope

Construction activities may include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads, rest areas, and trail staging areas. The County would require preparation of a trail site plan, site-specific geotechnical investigation, survey for biological and cultural resources, and a Categorical Exemption or Initial Study (the appropriate CEQA document) in support of each trail segment before project approval and construction can commence.

Site preparation and construction of the proposed project would be in accordance with all federal, state, and County building codes. Daily construction activities would be subject to County noise regulations, which state that construction equipment may not operate between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday, or at any time on Sunday or holidays. Noise levels exceeding 75 dBA (A-weighted decibels) for single-family residences, 80 dBA for multi-family residences, and 85 dBA for semiresidential/commercial land uses are prohibited by the County Noise Control Ordinance, Title 12 of the County Code. The contractor shall conduct construction activities in such a manner that the maximum noise levels at the affected buildings would not exceed established noise levels.

The construction contractor would be required to incorporate best management practices (BMPs) consistent with the guidelines provided in the *California Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction*, for elimination of non-stormwater discharge from the project site; retaining eroded sediments and other pollutants on the site; retaining stockpiles of earth and other construction related materials on site; proper storage of fuels, oils, solvents, and other toxic materials to prevent spills from being washed into the drainage system; retaining concrete wastes on-site until they can be disposed as solid waste; proper covered storage of trash and construction related solid wastes to prevent contamination of rainwater and dispersal by wind; stabilization of roadways to inhibit sediments from being deposited into the public way; and stabilization of any slopes with disturbed soils or denuded of vegetation to inhibit erosion by wind and water. Should the construction period continue into the rainy season, supplemental erosion measures would need to be implemented.

Wherever possible, grading activities would be undertaken outside the normal rainy season (i.e., October 15 to April 15 for most of Southern California), thus minimizing the potential for increased surface runoff and the associated potential for soil erosion. A recommended construction period would begin in late April or early May and completed in late January, assuming the majority of the construction would be completed in this recommended 9-month period. BMPs to control surface runoff and soil erosion would be required for construction taking place during rainy periods. In accordance with the guidelines in Section 4.5.2, *Construction Scenario*, of the County Trails Manual, in locations with steep sideslopes, loose soils and rocks, areas which are prone to destabilization, large retaining structures, or areas that require extensive annual maintenance work, grading and earthwork shall be performed under the supervision of an engineering geologist or soils engineer to ensure that appropriate recommendations are made to remediate site-specific erosion and soil stability conditions.<sup>18</sup> Retaining walls would be included in the trail design to hold back the backslope where cut trails are required. Where cutting specified in the trail design requires greater disturbance of the upslope vegetation, the plans and guidelines or maintenance plan must provide for supplemental slope and erosion control measures until adequate slope vegetation exists (Figure 4.5.2.3-1 of the County Trails Manual).

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<sup>18</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. [Adopted 17 May 2011] Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

Best management practices for erosion control would be implemented during trail construction and improvements in order to maintain the unique topography of designated Significant Ridgelines where trails of the Trail Planning Castaic project area traverse ridgelines that have been designated in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. The proposed project proposes three trail segments within San Francisquito Canyon (segments SF1, SF4, and WC1) that would intersect with three of the County's significant ridgelines. Although trails are exempted from Community Standards District (CSD) regulations regarding protection because they are not structures, care should be taken to not re-grade the ridgelines during trail construction. No supporting facilities are proposed on these significant ridgelines (i.e., restrooms, trailhead shade structures, or bike skills parks).

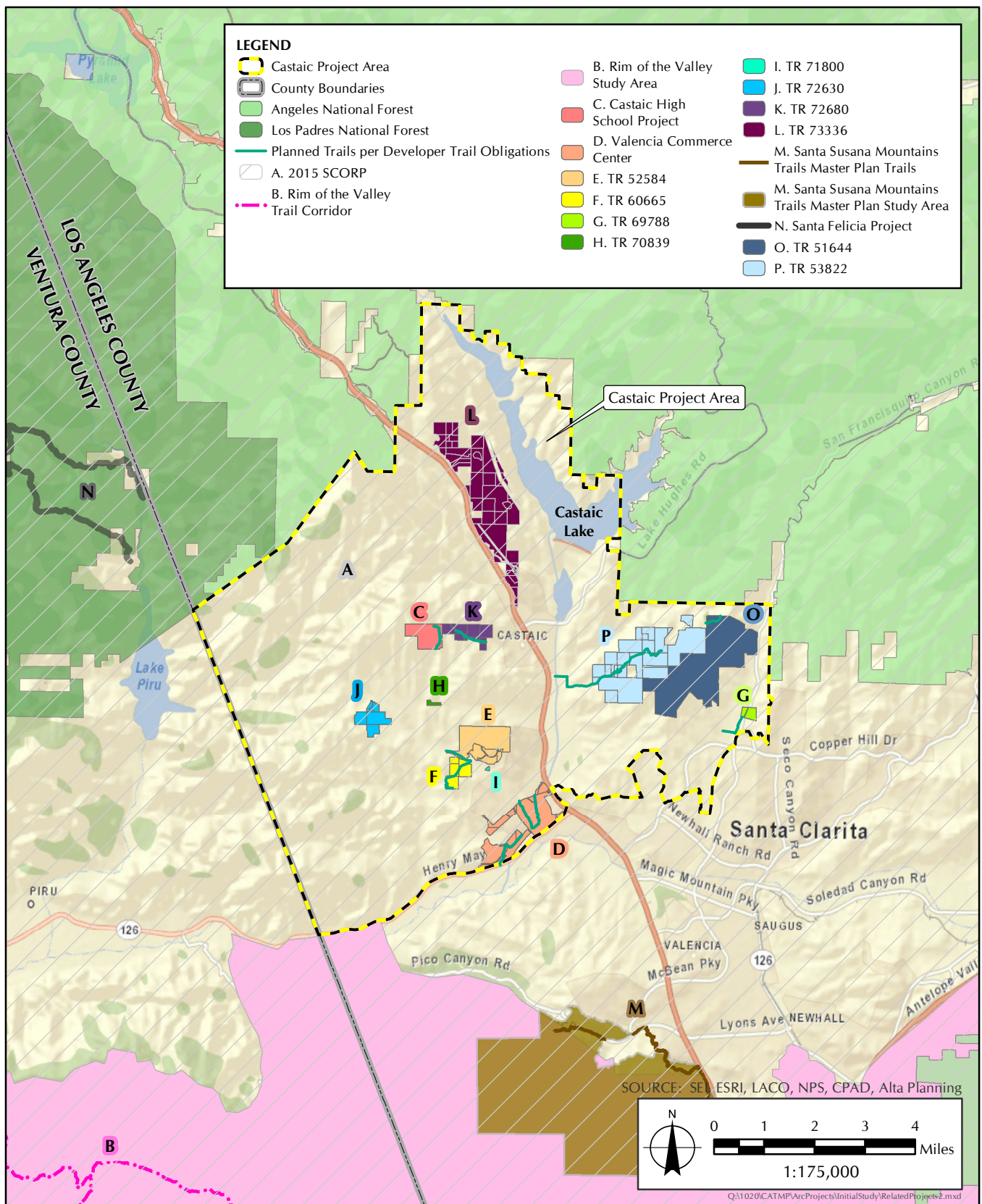
Where construction of trails or related supporting facilities requires cuts into the slope (which can be seen from a far distance), the visual character of the slope would be restored by planting locally native vegetation after construction as a visual screen. Similarly, restrooms and other supporting structures would be constructed of materials that blend into the landscape, with locally native vegetative screening.

Construction equipment would be turned off when not in use. The construction contractor would ensure that all construction and grading equipment is properly maintained. All vehicles and compressors would utilize exhaust mufflers and engine enclosure covers (as designed by the manufacturer) at all times.

## **1.12 RELATED PROJECTS**

The area surrounding the Castaic project area was examined in order to determine whether there are currently any projects in progress or proposed for the future that could potentially benefit the project or add to the impacts of the proposed project, creating cumulative significant impacts (evaluated in Mandatory Findings of Significance). It was determined that there are at least 16 related projects that could affect the cumulative impacts analysis for the proposed project. These projects, which are anticipated to be implemented within the next decade (when implementation of the trails plan is anticipated to occur), occur within an approximately 5-mile radius of the proposed project site (Table 1.12-1, *List of Related Projects*; Figure 1.12-1, *Related Projects*). Projects B, C, D, E, F, H, K, L, O, and P include the provision of trail easements in the Castaic project area. Projects M and N are trail planning projects in close proximity to the Castaic project area.





**FIGURE 1.12-1**  
Related Projects



**TABLE 1.12-1  
LIST OF RELATED PROJECTS**

Label	Cumulative Project	Location	Description
A.	2015 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) <sup>1</sup>	Statewide (California)	<b>Approved</b> – California Department of Parks and Recreation’s statewide master plan for state and local parks and outdoor recreational open space areas. The SCORP offers policy guidance to federal, state, local, and special district agency recreation providers and establishes priorities for Land and Water Conservation Fund grant allocations to local governments. No trail alignments.
B.	Rim of the Valley Special Resources Study <sup>2</sup>	Adjacent to southern edge of Castaic project area (State Route 126)  Approximately 650,000-acre Castaic project area includes portions of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, roughly bound by Highway 126 and Highway 14 to the north, Angeles Crest Highway to the east, urbanized areas and the Pacific Ocean to the south, and Mugu Lagoon to the west.	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – National Park Service study evaluating whether portions of the area known as the Rim of the Valley Corridor are nationally significant, suitable, and feasible for inclusion in the national park system. The study also evaluates whether any portions of the corridor would be eligible for inclusion in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA). Includes proposed regional Rim of the Valley Trail corridor, which would provide a challenging long distance trail encircling the San Fernando and La Crescenta valleys in County of Los Angeles, and another trail loop encircling Simi Valley in Ventura County.
C.	Castaic High School Project <sup>3,4,5</sup>	Within Castaic project area; APNs: 3247-068-900, 3247-068-901, 3247-068-902, 3247-068-903	<b>Approved</b> – Construction of a new approximately 250,000-square-foot Castaic High School facility and associated access roads within a 198-acre, four-parcel site, which includes the 58-acre site for development of the high school campus. The project proposes to permanently impact 1.20 acres of streambed, and mitigate with 2.48 acres of restoration of similar habitat to that which was impacted. In addition, the approved project provides for the grading and construction of other facilities on the School Site (such as water tanks, helipad, debris basins, and perimeter road), and grading and construction of access roads. A Supplemental EIR was prepared to address modification related to Approved Project including grading, site configuration, drainage, and location of mitigation sites. The project includes the dedication of a 12- to 16-foot wide multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian) trail easement and trail construction outside of the public right-of-way and any other easements. The proposed “Sloan Canyon Trail” or “unnamed SCVTAC trail” runs contiguous to and parallel to the north side of Sloan Canyon Road and Canyon Hill Road. Full public access will be provided for the trail easement dedications.
D.	Valencia Commerce Center (Vesting Tentative Parcel Map #18108) <sup>6</sup>	Within Castaic project area; APNs: 2866-001-001, 2866-002-045, 2866-002-052, 2866-002-061, 3271-001-038, 3271-002-017, 3271-002-038, 2866-002-007	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Subdivision to create 74 lots, including 25 industrial lots, 25 open space lots, 18 commercial lots, 3 water quality lots, 1 parking lot, 1 utility lot, and 1 debris basin, on 591 gross acres. Project requires an Oak Tree Permit for removal of 33 oak trees (1 heritage) and a CUP for grading in excess of 100,000 cubic yards, construction of supporting infrastructure including a water tank, and modification of the Castaic Area Community Standards District development standards. Project includes dedication of a 14-foot easement to the County for multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian) trail purposes, construction of a minimum 10-foot wide trail, and installation of appropriate fencing within the dedicated trail easement for the Castaic Creek Trail and the Hasley Canyon Trail.
E.	Los Valles (Tentative Tract Map 52584) <sup>7</sup>	Within Castaic project area; APNs: 2866-062-032, 2866-062-033, 3247-032-052	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Residential subdivision (497 single-family dwelling units) including a community recreation center controlled by a homeowner’s association, an approximately 19-acre community park, seven private recreational lots, and approximately 5 miles of pedestrian trails and accompanying infrastructure and public and private roadways. Approximately 232 acres, comprising over 50 percent of the Property, will be utilized as recreational and open space. Project requires an oak tree permit for the removal of one or more protected trees; a variance to authorize the non-exempted development of the easterly ridgeline, which is mapped as a significant ridgeline; and a CUP authorizing density-controlled development, a Castaic Area Community Standards District (CSD) significant ridgeline exemption with respect to the westerly ridgeline for open space, construction of trails, landscape areas, stabilization of a pre-existing sand mining operation and access via extension of Barcelona Road and related infrastructure, development in accordance with the County’s urban hillside management criteria, and an on-site grading project involving more than 100,000 cubic yards of combined cut/fill.
F.	The Del Valle Project (Tentative Tract Map 60665) <sup>8</sup>	Within Castaic project area; approximately 134 acres south of the Hasley Canyon/Del Valle Road intersection (east and west of Del Valle Road);	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Residential subdivision creating three lots to build 111 detached single family condominium units and one infrastructure lot on a site containing five active petroleum extraction sites. Project requires an Oak Tree Permit for the removal of 27 oak trees, a CUP for development within a Hillside Management Area, and a zone change from A-2-2 to A-1-1. Project includes internal roadway system with adjacent equestrian and hiking trails.
G.	Tentative Tract Map 69788 <sup>9</sup>	Within Castaic project area on San Francisquito Canyon Road; APN: 3244-030-005	<b>Approved</b> – Residential subdivision creating four single-family parcels on 29.1 gross acres, as well as a 13.5 gross acre remainder parcel. The entire remainder parcel, which is located on a SEA, shall be permanent open space. No trail requirements.
H.	Tentative Tract Map 70839 <sup>10</sup>	Within Castaic project area; APN: 3247-047-032	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Residential subdivision of one existing single-family parcel to create four new single-family parcels varying between two and six acres in size on 12.7 gross acres. Requires a CUP for non-urban hillside management, an Oak Tree Permit for two encroachments, and provision of 0.03 acres of park land obligation or \$5,686 of in-lieu fees. Project requires Applicant to dedicate two separate 12-foot-wide multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian) trail easements to the County of Los Angeles and construct the required segments of the Adopted Proposed Trail alignments consistent with the Master Plan of Trails within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan.
I.	Tentative Tract Map 71800 <sup>11</sup>	Within Castaic project area on Hasley Canyon Road; APN: 2866-060-073	<b>Approved</b> – Two industrial lots in an M-1.5-DP (Restricted Heavy Manufacturing-Development Program) zone; a re-subdivision of one of 21 lots created through Parcel Map No. 20685. Existing Hasley Canyon Trail passes through northern side of the project site. No trail requirements.
J.	Tentative Tract Map 72630 <sup>12</sup>	Within Castaic project area; APNs: 3247-052-003, 3247-052-004	<b>Approved</b> – Residential subdivision creating four single-family parcels on 29.1 gross acres, as well as a 13.5 gross acre remainder parcel. The entire remainder parcel, which is located on a SEA, shall be permanent open space. No trail requirements.
K.	Homestead at Sloan Canyon (Tentative Tract Map 72680) <sup>13</sup>	Within Castaic project area, on Sloan Canyon Road at Canyon Hill Road in Hasley Canyon Area; APNs: 2865-023-006, 2865-023-007, 2865-018-033, 2865-018-034, 3247-026-055, 2865-023-019, 2865-023-021, 3247-026-056	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Residential subdivision (139 single-family lots, 2 open space lots, and 9 public facility lots) on approximately 186.5-acre project site. Project requires a zone change from A-2-2 and A-2-1 Zone to RPD Zone, a variance to allow development within 50-foot radius of the crest of a primary ridgeline, a CUP for hillside management and onsite grading in excess of 100,000 cubic yards, and an oak tree permit for removal of 24 oak trees. Project included payment of Quimby parkland obligation in-lieu fees of \$80,634 to meet obligation of 0.42 net acres. Project (not yet approved) has been revised to include trail easement dedication to the County.

TABLE 1.12-1  
LIST OF RELATED PROJECTS

Label	Cumulative Project	Location	Description
L.	Northlake (Tentative Tract Map 73336) <sup>14</sup>	Within Castaic project area, in Northlake Specific Plan Area; APNs: 3247-040-008, 3247-041-008, 3247-041-020, 3247-041-021, 3247-041-023, 3247-041-022, 2865-036-003, 2865-036-002, 2865-036-001, 2865-003-013, 3244-012-049, 3244-012-048, 3244-012-046, 3244-012-058, 3244-004-052, 3244-004-024, 3244-013-001, 3244-012-045, 3247-017-019, 3244-012-050, 3244-014-015, 3244-014-067, 3244-014-068, 3247-041-018, 3247-041-015, 3244-014-053, 3244-013-004, 3244-013-002, 3244-013-005, 3244-013-009, 3244-013-010, 3244-014-050, 3244-014-062, 3247-041-007, 3247-041-009, 3247-041-010, 3244-014-045, 2865-003-035, 3244-004-051, 3244-004-053, 3247-040-013, 3247-040-009, 3244-012-054, 3244-012-059, 3244-012-057, 3244-012-013	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Residential subdivision (1,974 residential dwelling units [DUs] consisting of 288 single-family lots, 23 multi-family lots [1,686 DUs]; 2 commercial lots; 5 industrial lots; 10 park [1 public] lots; 40 open space lots [including private parklets, trails, natural open space, landscaping, and various other green spaces]; 2 water tanks; 10 debris basins; 1 water quality basin; 1 pump station; and 1 fire station) on approximately 720-acre project site, with a basic Quimby park land obligation of 16.00 net acres (maximum slope 3%). Subdivider proposes to include one public park as part of the subdivision: Lot 319 (15.1 net acres). Project includes a 20-foot wide easement dedication to the County for multi-use trail purposes, construction of a variable seven to ten-foot wide natural trail within the dedicated trail easement, and installation of required trail infrastructure. Trail alignments will be designated as the Castaic Lake Trail and the Castaic Lake Connector Trail (Grasshopper Canyon Area).
M	Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan <sup>15</sup>	Located approximately 3 miles south of Castaic project area  Approximately 24,122.5-acre (37.7 square miles) Castaic project area	<b>Approved</b> – Trails master plan for the development of approximately 35.9 miles of trail with 22 proposed trail segments, for a total of approximately 71.5 miles of trails within the Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan Area. The Santa Susana Mountains Trails Master Plan would connect Newhall Ranch Specific Plan trails to the Rim of the Valley Trail corridor.
N	Santa Felicia Project <sup>16,17</sup>	Located adjacent to the Santa Felicia Canyon portion of Castaic project area in eastern Ventura County, approximately 5 miles north of Piru, California	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – The United Water Conservation District (United) is preparing a Recreational Trail Plan to comply with its Santa Felicia Project (FERC License No. 2153-12). The Plan would provide enhanced trail access on the northwestern end of Lake Piru, specifically related to two existing National Forest Trails outside of the Project boundary: Pothole Tal (No. 18W04) and Agua Blanca Trail (No. 19W10).
O	Tesoro Del Valle Project (Tentative Tract Map 51644) <sup>18</sup>	Within Castaic project area, north of Tesoro Del Valle Drive; APNs: 3244-30-3 & 27, 3244-160-ALL PARCELS ON SHT.1, 3244-160-043, 3244-160-048, 3244-161-ALL PARCELS, 3244-162-ALL PARCELS, 3244-163-ALL PARCELS, 3244-163-ALL PARCELS, 3244-164-ALL PARCELS	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Residential subdivision (795 residential units, including 115 senior’s units) on 1,795 gross acres, with 1,263 acres of open space. The project includes a conceptual master trails plan that proposes community trails, proposed neighborhood trails, and a proposed County trail segment of the Cliffie Stone Trail to connect to the existing Cliffie Stone Trail. All trails are subject to County approval prior to recordation of final maps.
P	Tapia Ranch Project (Tentative Tract Map 72126) <sup>19</sup>	Located within eastern portion of Castaic project area  Approximately 1,167 acres of undeveloped hillside and canyon land located approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the community of Castaic, and approximately one mile east of Interstate 5 in unincorporated Los Angeles County.	<b>Under Review in 2016</b> – Residential subdivision (405 detached single-family residential homes), with 74 percent of project site retained as landscaped or natural open space. Offsite areas that would be improved in conjunction with the project include portions of Castaic Road, Tapia Canyon Road, and the construction of a new bridge spanning Castaic Creek, as well as a small area for the roadway connection to the adjacent Tesoro Del Valle Project (Project O). The project would incorporate portions of existing unpaved hiking and equestrian trails into the larger trail system, which loops around and through the project site.

**Source:**

1. California Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 4 January 2016. *Parks for All Californians*. Available at: <http://www.parksforcalifornia.org/scorp>.
2. National Park Service. Accessed 4 January 2016. *Rim of the Valley Draft Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment (Spring 2015)*. Available at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=65351>.
3. California Governor’s Office of Planning & Research. 28 August 2013. *Castaic High School: NOD*. Available at: <http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov/NODdescription.asp?DocPK=674175>.
4. California Governor’s Office of Planning & Research. 28 August 2013. *Castaic High School: SIR*. Available at: <http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov/DocDescription.asp?DocPK=679974>.
5. King, Kathline, County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. May 19, 2014. Letter to Mr. Ben Rodriguez, COO at William S. Hart Union High School District. *Subject: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Castaic High School*.
6. County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. *Park Obligation Report: Tentative Map # 18108*. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/case/pm18108\\_parks-report-20151119.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/case/pm18108_parks-report-20151119.pdf)
7. County of Los Angeles. December 19, 2013. *Notice of Preparation/Notice of Scoping Meeting*. “Los Valles” Project. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/case/tr52584\\_nop.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/case/tr52584_nop.pdf)
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## **Section 2**

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### Environmental Checklist and Impact Analysis

## **Section 2**

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### Environmental Checklist and Impact Analysis





## Environmental Checklist Form (Initial Study)

### County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation

**Project title:** “Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan”

**Lead agency name and address:** Los Angeles County, 510 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90020

**Contact Person and phone number:** Julie Yom, AICP, Park Planner, (213) 351-5127

**Project sponsor’s name and address:** Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 510 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90020

**Project location:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description*

APN: several USGS Quad: Whitaker Peak, Warm Springs Mountain, Val Verde, Newhall

**Gross Acreage:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description*

**General plan designation:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description*

**Community/Area wide Plan designation:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description*

**Zoning:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description*

**Description of project:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description*

**Surrounding land uses and setting:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description*

**Other public agencies whose approval may be required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):**

Public Agency

Approval Required

USFS

Project Level Approval for Elderberry Forebay Trail

US Army Corps of Engineers

Nationwide or Individual Permits under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Section 10(a)(1) of the Federal Endangered Species Act for incidental take of listed species

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Streambed Alteration Agreement pursuant to Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code

Section 2081 of the California Endangered Species Act for incidental take of listed species

Native American Heritage Commission

Consultation Pursuant to AB52, as applicable

Los Angeles Regional Water  
Quality Control Board

Water Quality Certification or Waiver of Water Quality Certification  
under Section 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act

County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional  
Planning

Conditional Use Permit, Site Plan Review, and/or Oak Tree Permits

County of Los Angeles  
Department of Public Works

Site Plan Review, Building Permit, and/or Grading Permit

County of Los Angeles Flood  
Control District

Shared Use Agreement

**Major projects in the area:** Please see Section 1, *Project Description (Table 1.12-1)*

*Project/Case No.*

*Description and Status*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Reviewing Agencies:

### *Responsible Agencies*

- ☐ None  
Regional Water Quality Control  
Board:  
☒ Los Angeles Region  
☐ Lahontan Region  
☐ Coastal Commission  
☒ Army Corps of Engineers

### *Trustee Agencies*

- ☐ None  
☒ State Dept. of Fish and  
Wildlife  
☐ State Dept. of Parks and  
Recreation  
☐ State Lands Commission  
☐ University of California  
(Natural Land and Water  
Reserves System)

### *Special Reviewing Agencies*

- ☒ None  
☐ Santa Monica Mountains  
Conservancy  
☐ National Parks  
☒ National Forest  
☐ Edwards Air Force Base  
☐ Resource Conservation  
District of Santa Monica  
Mountains Area  
☐

### *County Reviewing Agencies*

- ☒ DPW:  
- Land Development Division  
(Grading & Drainage)  
- Geotechnical & Materials  
Engineering Division  
- Watershed Management  
Division (NPDES)  
- Traffic and Lighting Division  
- Environmental Programs  
Division  
- Waterworks Division  
- Sewer Maintenance Division

### *Regional Significance*

- ☒ None  
☐ Criteria  
☐ Air Quality  
☐ Water Resources  
☐ Santa Monica Mtns. Area  
☐

- ☒ Fire Department  
- Forestry, Environmental  
Division  
- Planning Division  
- Land Development Unit  
- Health Hazmat  
☒ Sanitation District  
☒ Public Health/Environmental  
Health Division: Land Use  
Program (OWTS), Drinking  
Water Program (Private  
Wells), Toxics Epidemiology  
Program (Noise)  
☒ Regional Planning  
☒ Sheriff Department  
☐ Subdivision Committee  
☐

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics           | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions           | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture/Forest              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials        | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Services                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings<br>of Significance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils        |   |   |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Department.)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Laura Male  
Signature (Prepared by)

5/11/16  
Date

Katharine King  
Signature (Approved by)

5/11/16  
Date



## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources the Lead Department cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the Lead Department has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level. (Mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced.)
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA processes, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. (State CEQA Guidelines § 15063(c)(3)(D).) In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of, and adequately analyzed in, an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 7) The explanation of each issue should identify: the significance threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question, and; mitigation measures identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance. Sources of thresholds include the County General Plan, other County planning documents, and County ordinances. Some thresholds are unique to geographical locations.
- 8) Climate Change Impacts: When determining whether a project's impacts are significant, the analysis should consider, when relevant, the effects of future climate change on : 1) worsening hazardous conditions that pose risks to the project's inhabitants and structures (e.g., floods and wildfires), and 2) worsening the project's impacts on the environment (e.g., impacts on special status species and public health).

## 1. AESTHETICS

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to aesthetics, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis in this section is based on the *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Aesthetics Assessment* (Appendix A).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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**Would the project:**

**a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would result in no impacts to aesthetics in regard to having a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. There are no designated scenic vista points within the Castaic project area; nor is the Castaic project area visible from scenic vista points designated within the Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 (County General Plan) or by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).<sup>1</sup> There are no officially designated County scenic vistas in the northern one-third of the County, according to the County General Plan.<sup>2</sup> Caltrans has designated one scenic vista within the County, Lamont Odett Vista Point, which is located at Post Mile 57.8 along the northbound side of State Route 14 and overlooks the Aerospace Valley, Lake Palmdale, and the California Aqueduct toward the north and northeast from the Vista Point (see Figure 8, *Caltrans Designated Scenic Vista Points*, in Appendix A). Lamont Odett Vista Point is located approximately 23.8 miles east of the Castaic project area, on the opposite side of the San Gabriel Mountains. The Castaic project area is not visible from this vista point due to distance, an intended directional vista towards the north, and intervening topography. Therefore, there would be no impacts to scenic vistas as a result of the proposed project, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Be visible from or obstruct views from a regional riding or hiking trail?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to aesthetics in regard to being visible from or obstructing views from a regional riding or hiking trail. Existing regional riding or hiking trails in the vicinity of the Castaic project area include the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT), an approximately 2,650-mile trail extending from the Mexico-California border northward along the mountain ranges of the West Coast states to the Canadian-Washington border, and the County's Regional Trail System. The proposed project has the potential to be barely visible from the PCT, which is located approximately 8.5 miles north of the Castaic project area. A viewshed analysis determined that approximately 17.0 percent of the Castaic project area (including proposed trails on northeastern aspects near the Elderberry Forebay, the western edge of Castaic Lake, within Santa Felicia SEA, Castaic Valley, and Hasley Canyon) would potentially be visible from the PCT (see Figure 14, *Viewshed Map – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail*, in Appendix A). The visual character of the viewshed from the PCT within the Castaic project area includes ridgelines and slopes, several of which are crossed by dirt roads, and a few of which

<sup>1</sup> Male, Laura, Sapphos Environmental, Inc. Pasadena, CA. 3 July 2015. Communication with Daniel Kitowski, Transportation Manager (GIS), California Department of Transportation.

<sup>2</sup> The County has designated scenic vistas in the Santa Monica Mountains land use plans, which are located more than 15 miles south of the Castaic project area. As the Castaic project area is not located in the vicinity of these scenic vistas, they have not been included in the analysis. Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program map with public viewing areas available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/coastal\\_adopted-map3.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/coastal_adopted-map3.pdf)

have been extensively graded for oil drilling and other industrial uses; agricultural land and the Santa Clara River Corridor along State Route 126; suburban and industrial development in Hasley Canyon; suburban development in Villa Canyon and the community of Castaic; portions of the graded hillside on the western side of Castaic Lake; the edges of the I-5 freeway; agricultural land in the Castaic Valley; and suburban development in the community of Valencia. The Castaic Lake State Recreation Area is a major component of the viewshed, including portions of the existing Fisherman Trail and Pine Ridge Fire Road.<sup>3</sup> According to the viewshed analysis based on topography, none of the existing trail segments are visible from the PCT due to distance and intervening topography; approximately 16.2 percent (approximately 1.1 miles) of the approved subdivision trail segments have the potential to be visible from the PCT with clear atmospheric conditions and no intervening trees or shrubs; and approximately 17.9 percent (16.0 miles) of the proposed trails have the potential to be visible from the PCT with clear atmospheric conditions and no intervening trees or shrubs. It should be noted that a viewshed analysis evaluates visibility based solely on topographic data, and the presence of large trees, large shrubs, buildings, and infrastructure between the PCT and the Castaic project area would be expected to reduce the potential visibility level further than this estimate. Furthermore, trails and supporting facility structures would not be expected to dramatically alter the form of ridgelines within the Castaic project area and would therefore not be likely to be visible from, or obstruct views from, the PCT.

Three existing trail segments within the Castaic project area, with a maximum length of approximately 140 feet of consecutive County trail, are part of the County's Regional Trail System. There are approximately 4.9 miles of existing trail segments in the Castaic project area. Although the proposed project would be visible from these existing regional trail segments because new trail segments would be located adjacent to the existing segments, it would enhance the existing recreational experience and trail system by providing connections between the existing trail segments that would be visible from these trails. The proposed project, which would involve new trails, staging areas, bike skills parks, restrooms, parking lots, and other related trail facilities, would be designed to enhance views from recreational trails and would not be expected to obstruct views from existing County trails or the PCT. Therefore, there would be less than significant impacts to regional riding or hiking trails as a result of the proposed project, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to aesthetics in regard to substantially damaging scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. Although the proposed project would not be visible from Officially Designated State Scenic Highways, the Castaic project area is located within two Eligible State Scenic Highway corridors: Henry Mayo Drive (State Route 126) and the Golden State Highway (Interstate 5). The proposed project would not be visible from the nearest officially designated state scenic highways—Angeles Crest Highway (State Route 2) and Maricopa Highway (State Route 33)—due to distance and intervening topography. Angeles Crest Highway is located over 24 miles east of the Castaic project area, and Maricopa Highway is located over 28 miles west of the Castaic project area.

The proposed project would be located within the scenic highway corridor of the nearest eligible state scenic highways—Henry Mayo Drive (State Route 126) and the Golden State Highway (Interstate 5)—because the proposed trails would cross over Henry Mayo Drive to connect to the Santa Clara River Trail

<sup>3</sup> Friends of Castaic Lake. N.d. Castaic Lake – Trail Map. Available at: [http://www.castaiclake.com/map\\_trails.html](http://www.castaiclake.com/map_trails.html)



and cross under the Golden State Highway to connect recreational trails from the Castaic Lake area to the western portion of the Castaic project area. The Castaic project area is located within a 15-mile potential visible radius of four eligible state scenic highways:

- **Interstate 5** from the Interstate 210 North Tunnel Station in Pasadena east to State Route 126 near Castaic (located within the Castaic project area)
- **State Route 126** (located adjacent to the southern edge of the Castaic project area)
- **State Highway 118** (located approximately 8.6 miles south of the Castaic project area)
- **Interstate 210** (located 9.4 miles southeast of southeastern edge of the Castaic project area)

A viewshed analysis determined that approximately 17.9 percent of the Castaic project area (including proposed trails on southern and southwestern aspects near San Martinez Canyon, Hasley Canyon, Castaic Valley, and San Francisquito Canyon) would have the potential to be visible from these four eligible state scenic highways (see Figure 15, *Viewshed Map – Eligible State Scenic Highways*, in Appendix A). According to the viewshed analysis based on topography, approximately 2.6 miles of the existing trail segments are visible from eligible state scenic highways; approximately 2.2 miles of the approved subdivision trail segments have the potential to be visible from eligible state scenic highways; and approximately 15.7 miles of the proposed trails have the potential to be visible from eligible state scenic highways. As shown at Key Observation Points (KOPs) 1 and 2, the landscape along the Henry Mayo Drive visual corridor contains trees and rock outcroppings that could be affected by the proposed project (see Attachment A, *Key Observation Points*, in Appendix A). There is a potential for the proposed project to affect the health of existing coast live oak trees and other protected trees that are located along the proposed trail alignments and supporting facilities that are important to the character of the scenic highway corridors. The proposed project involves trail segments within scenic San Francisquito Canyon (within the wash), along scenic water bodies including Castaic Creek and San Francisquito Canyon), and through protected forests/woodlands: two Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest areas (segments IP2, IP3, CC2, CC3, CC4, CC5, and CC6), one Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland area (EF4), and three Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest areas (SA2, TC2, and TC3). Although the construction of trails within these scenic resource areas and sensitive woodland areas would not result in significant impacts to visual character because trail construction can be conducted in a low-impact manner in accordance with the County Trails Manual, there is a potential for significant impacts to occur if scenic trees are removed. Therefore, the proposed project would result in the potential for significant impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure AES-1:** Trails and supporting facilities within a one-mile radius of officially designated and eligible state scenic highways shall be designed, constructed, and maintained (where construction equipment is involved) to avoid damaging or removal of scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within the scenic highway corridor.

**Mitigation Measure AES-2:** Trails and supporting facilities shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid the drip line of any coast live oak trees and other protected trees that are located along the proposed trail alignments, in order to maintain the visual character of the area. Best Management Practices shall be used during construction and trails maintenance activities to protect the root structures of protected trees:

- A Worker Education and Awareness Program shall inform all construction workers of County Ordinances protecting oak trees and the sensitivity of roots to damage from compaction or excessive water.

- Drip line of oak trees shall be designated as off-limits during construction on all construction drawings and diagrams.
- Fencing and/or flagging shall be used to delineate the drip line of the trees as off-limits during trail construction.
- On-site monitors shall be utilized for periods when trail construction will be undertaken within 100 feet of the drip line of the oak trees.
- If a protected tree must be removed, the same species shall be replaced at a minimum of a 1:1 ratio.

**d) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features?**

☐
☐
☒
☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to aesthetics in regard to substantially degrading the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features. The Castaic project area is characterized by rugged topography, steep ridges, deep canyons with wide creek beds that are tributaries to the Santa Clara River, and several ridgeline and canyon trails and fire roads. The Castaic project area is generally rural and includes the existing communities of Castaic, Castaic Junction, Val Verde, Hasley Canyon, Hillcrest, and Paradise Ranch. The Castaic project area contains several ridges and canyons and approximately 4.9 miles of existing County trails. Trails and related supporting facilities would generally not be expected to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, or character because they would be low to the ground, spaced and designed in a pattern that follows the natural topography and existing paved and dirt roads, and be consistent with the scale and character of the rural Castaic project area that already contains several dirt access roads and fire roads throughout the mountainous and hilly terrain.

Trails and related supporting facilities are generally consistent with the existing visual character of the Castaic project area and surrounding areas. Although the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan only directly mentions trails within the Parks and Recreation land use designation, the land use policy defers to the specific allowable uses and development standards determined by underlying zoning designations and adopted Specific Plans. The County zoning designations for the Castaic project area are predominantly heavy agricultural and open space, with two specific plan areas (Northlake Specific Plan and Newhall Specific Plan) and land designated with single-family residence, residential planned development, and restricted heavy manufacturing zones also comprising portions of the approximately 78-square-mile Castaic project area.<sup>4</sup> The Heavy Agricultural Zone, Specific Plan Zone, manufacturing zones, Unlimited Commercial Zone, Neighborhood Business Zone, and Watershed Zone permit riding and hiking trails; the Open Space, Light Agricultural Zone, Manufacturing Industrial Planned Development Zone, Commercial Planned Development Zone, and residential zones in the Castaic project area allow for riding and hiking trails if they have been approved by the Planning Director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning (Director) and riding and hiking trails may be allowed in the Institutional Zone upon approval of a conditional use permit (CUP).

Consistent with planning guidelines provided by the County Trails Manual, conceptual trail alignments have been planned to maintain the characteristic rugged aesthetic of the trail. The proposed project has the potential to enhance the trail's visual quality through clarified trail designation, maintenance, and

<sup>4</sup> Municode. Accessed 12 February 2016. Municode Library: County of Los Angeles, CA. Title 22 – Planning and Zoning. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO)

revegetation along constructed portions of the trail with native plants that may not have survived construction of subdivisions. The experience of recreation users would be enhanced through the incorporation of informational signs at trail intersections to provide orientation. The County Trail Manual specifies desired minimum trail widths for multi-use trails (accommodating bicyclists, hikers, and equestrians) at 5 feet, wherever possible, with 6- to 10-foot-wide turn outs in high-traffic areas.<sup>31</sup> Where trails of up to 10 feet wide are developed or existing trails are expanded up to 10 feet wide, impacts to the visual character of the viewshed from surrounding residences can be avoided through the incorporation of native vegetation as a screening material. Restoration of native vegetation along conceptual trail alignments would have the potential to enhance the visual character within the Castaic project area. Preserving existing native vegetation adjacent to the trail would protect the aesthetic quality of the Castaic project area.<sup>5</sup>

Trails proposed as a result of the proposed project would be consistent with the visual character of the Castaic project area and surrounding areas. The visual nature of the Castaic project area is dominated by native and non-native vegetation, transmission corridors, roads, isolated structures, suburban and industrial/commercial developed areas, and trails (see Attachment A in Appendix A). The proposed trail improvements are compatible with the existing visual character of the Castaic area. Several official trails and many unofficial trail segments currently traverse the Castaic project area. Hiking and riding are passive recreation activities that are compatible with the land use allowed within the two adopted Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) that encompass small portions of the Castaic project area. The proposed trail alignments would not substantially degrade or alter the existing visual character of the Castaic area. As the majority of trail designations in the proposed project already exist as access roads, fire roads, right-of-ways, and desire line trails (unofficial trails created where a significant number of people want to travel), trail construction would be relatively minor, predominantly consisting of realignments, improvements, and signage. Therefore, future trails anticipated in the proposed project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to aesthetics related to substantial degradation of the existing visual character of the site and its surroundings.

A viewshed analysis was conducted using ArcGIS to evaluate the potential visibility level of the Castaic project area from County-designated Town and Country Scenic Drives and City-designated scenic highways.<sup>6</sup> It was determined that the entire Castaic project area would not be visible from any of the City-designated scenic highways due to the intervening topography of the Santa Susana Mountains between these highways and the Castaic project area. The viewshed analysis for County-designated Town and Country Scenic Drives determined that approximately 44.2 percent of the Castaic project area (including proposed trails in San Francisquito Canyon, Castaic Valley, Hasley Canyon, the community of Castaic, the Santa Felicia SEA, near Castaic Lake, and within the vicinity of Elderberry Forebay) would be visible from the sixteen County-designated Town and Country Scenic Drives located within a 15-mile radius of the Castaic project area (see Figure 15 in Appendix A). According to the viewshed analysis based on topography, approximately 2.9 miles of the existing trail segments are visible from Town and Country Scenic Drives, approximately 1.8 miles of the approved subdivision trail segments have the potential to be visible from Town and Country Scenic Drives, and approximately 51.0 miles of the proposed trails in the proposed project have the potential to be visible from Town and Country Scenic Drives. It should be noted that a viewshed analysis evaluates visibility based solely on topographic data, and the presence of large trees, large shrubs, buildings, and infrastructure between the Town and Country Scenic Drives and the Castaic project area would be expected to reduce the potential visibility level further than this estimate. Furthermore, trails and supporting facility structures would not be expected to dramatically alter the form of ridgelines within the Castaic project area, and would therefore not be likely to be substantially visible from Town and

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<sup>5</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 17, 2011. Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Sapphos Environmental, Inc. 17 February 2016. Viewshed analysis calculated using 10-foot DEM data in ArcGIS.



Country Scenic Drives over five miles (foreground view) from the Castaic project area.

Trails are normally considered a compatible use within an SEA. Trail development within an SEA would likely require preparation of a Biota Report to demonstrate that the trail could be constructed, operated, and maintained in a manner that avoids significant impacts to the properties for which the SEA was designated, inclusive of the visual character of the area. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features as a result of the proposed project, and no mitigation would be required.

**e) Create a new source of substantial shadows, light, or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

☐☐☒☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to aesthetics in regard to creating a new source of substantial shadows, light, or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. County trails are open for use from dawn to dusk (County Code 17.04.330), and the County does not install lighting on trails. Parking lots and restrooms would also normally be operated from dawn to dusk but would be equipped with security lighting consistent with the provisions of the County General Plan and the Castaic Area Community Standards District (CSD) that requires the use of downward directed light to minimize disruption of the night sky. Where lighting features are provided for safety and wayfinding reasons, lighting would be installed in a manner to be nonintrusive to adjacent uses, avoid detracting from a natural outdoors experience for trail users, and directed downward to avoid light pollution or spillover in general, consistent with the guidelines of the County Trails Manual.

As the Castaic project area is generally rural, with suburban areas typically containing single-story to two-story residences and commercial and industrial buildings generally surrounded by parking lots and landscaping that provide a buffer between the buildings and potential shadow sensitive land uses, the structures considered within the proposed project would not be expected to create a new source of substantial shadows. Facilities such as restrooms, shade structures, and parking lots in support of the proposed trails would not be expected to be taller than a two-story building. Where buildings included in the proposed project are part of subdivision agreements, they would be designed to avoid creating substantial shadows on the new residences.

Approximately 62 percent of the Castaic project area is located within the County's Rural Outdoor Lighting District and subject to restrictions in terms of light and glare at night to maintain dark skies at night for the residents and wildlife in the district (see Figure 7 in Appendix A).<sup>7</sup> Under the ordinance, outdoor lighting shall be fully shielded on properties located in residential, agricultural, open space, or watershed zones.<sup>8</sup> Exterior lighting on restrooms and other trail related supporting facilities would be required to conform to the ordinance. As shown in Figure 13, *Existing Light Levels at Night*, of Appendix A, the remaining 38 percent of the Castaic project area that is not located within the County's Rural Outdoor Lighting District is predominantly characterized by a high level of existing nighttime sky glow, including the nearby City of Santa Clarita, the communities of Castaic (near Castaic Lake) and Valencia (near the City of Santa Clarita), and the industrial Castaic Junction area in the southeastern portion of the Castaic project area. Due to the high level of existing nighttime sky glow, impacts from exterior lighting on restrooms and other trail-related supporting facilities would be less than significant.

<sup>7</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 16 February 2016. GIS-NET3 Public. Planning & Zoning Information for Unincorporated LA County. Available at: [http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3\\_Public/Viewer.html](http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html)

<sup>8</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 28 September 2012. Ordinance No. 2012-0047. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/data/ord\\_outdoor-lighting.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/data/ord_outdoor-lighting.pdf)

The hours of operation for County trails are typically from dawn to dusk (County Code 17.04.330). Therefore, the proposed project does not include installation of nighttime lighting along the proposed trails; nor would the trails include nighttime safety lights that may affect nighttime views or add an additional source of light to the surrounding area. For safety purposes and to avoid disturbing the neighborhood from which the site is accessed, construction would not be conducted at night. In accordance with the guidelines in Section 4.3.18, *Lighting*, of the County Trails Manual, where lighting features are provided for safety and wayfinding reasons, lighting would be installed in a manner to be nonintrusive to adjacent uses, avoid detracting from a natural outdoors experience for trail users, and directed downward to avoid light pollution or spillover in general.<sup>9</sup> As this guideline is independent of whether the trail segment or related supporting facility is located within the County's Rural Outdoor Lighting District, the proposed project, which would comply with the County Trails Manual, would not be expected to result in a significant new source of nighttime light.

The trail alignments under the proposed project would be predominantly natural surface trails that would not create a new source of substantial glare. The proposed project also would include interpretive signage, small structures, new parking lots, and other related supporting facilities that would have the potential to create a source of daytime glare where glass, metal, asphalt, and additional vehicles are involved. However, these facilities would be small and are anticipated to be constructed in the areas with an existing moderate to high daytime glare level, towards the City of Santa Clarita, Castaic Lake, and the Interstate 5 freeway, which contain paved roads; commercial, industrial, and residential development and infrastructure; moderate to high vehicle traffic levels on major roads and freeways; and the presence of reflective water bodies. Therefore, the supporting facilities would not be expected to create a new source of substantial glare. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to shadows, light and glare, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>9</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. [Adopted 17 May 2011] Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

## **2. AGRICULTURE / FOREST**

*In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.*

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact on agriculture and forestry resources, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Agriculture and forestry resources at the Castaic project area were evaluated with regard to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency,<sup>10</sup> the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan One Valley One Vision Program EIR,<sup>11</sup> the Conservation and Natural Resources Element of the County General Plan,<sup>12</sup> the California Department of Conservation Williamson Act Contract Land website,<sup>13</sup> and Title 22 (Zoning) of the County of Los Angeles Municipal Code.<sup>14</sup>

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to agriculture/forest in regard to converting Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use. Section 21060.1(a) of CEQA (Public Resources Code §§ 21060-21074) delineates the consideration of agricultural land to include “prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or unique farmland, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) land inventory and monitoring criteria, as modified for California,” and is herein collectively referred to as “Farmland.”<sup>15</sup> The FMMP was established in 1982 to assess the location, quality, and quantity

<sup>10</sup> State of California Department of Conservation. Accessed 21 March 2014. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Available online at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/FMMP/Pages/Index.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. November 2010. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision Program EIR. Section 3.5: Agricultural Resources. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2010-deir-3-5-ag-resources.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2010-deir-3-5-ag-resources.pdf) Prepared by Impact Sciences, Inc.

<sup>12</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County General Plan 2035. Chapter 9: Conservation and Natural Resources Element. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch9.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch9.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection. 2015. State of California Williamson Act Contract Land: Data Submissions Current to 2014. Map available online at: [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/2014%20Statewide%20Map/WA\\_2014\\_11x17.pdf](ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/2014%20Statewide%20Map/WA_2014_11x17.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Municode. Accessed 4 January 2016. Municode Library: County of Los Angeles, CA. Title 22 – Planning and Zoning. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO)

<sup>15</sup> State of California. Accessed 17 March 2016. California Law: California Public Resources Code Section 21060-21074. Available at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=prc&group=21001-22000&file=21060-21074>



of agricultural lands in the State of California and conversion of these lands over time.<sup>16</sup> The FMMP, which most recently mapped the entire Castaic project area for 2012, has classified the majority of the Castaic project area as grazing land, with approximately 13.4 percent other land (not suitable for agricultural use), approximately 9.1 percent urban and built-up land, approximately 0.6 percent Prime Farmland within Castaic Valley and along SR-126, approximately 0.3 percent Farmland of Local Importance southeast of Castaic Lagoon, approximately 0.2 percent Farmland of Statewide Importance within Castaic Valley, and approximately 0.03 percent Unique Farmland (Table 2.2-1, *FMMP Important Farmland*, Figure 2.2-1, *Important Farmland Map*).<sup>17</sup>

**TABLE 2.2-1**  
**FMMP IMPORTANT FARMLAND**

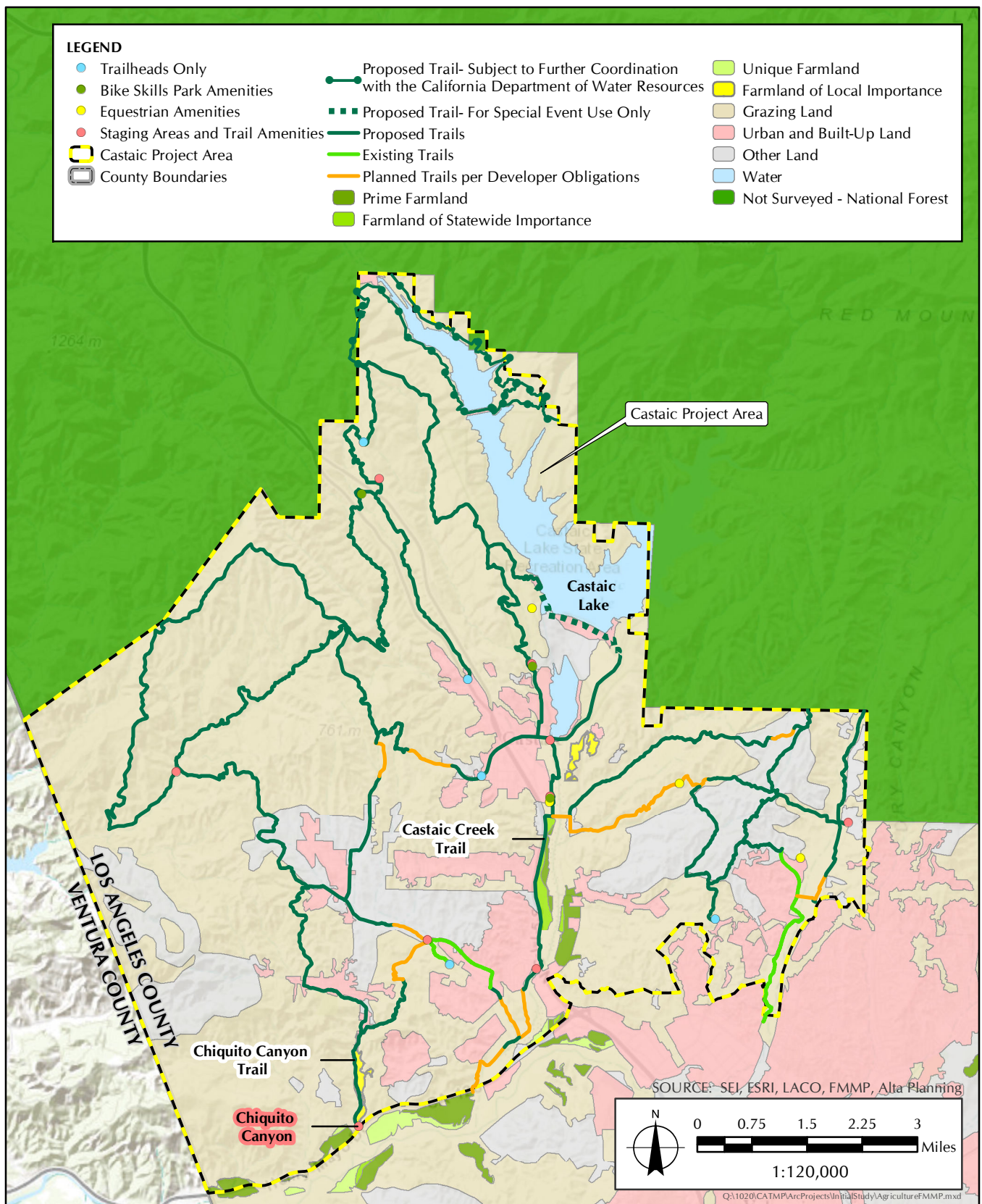
FMMP Category	Acres in Castaic Project Area	Percentage of Castaic Project Area	Impact Area / Proposed Trails within FMMP Category
Prime Farmland	299.1	0.6%	0 acres / None
Farmland of Statewide Importance	98.8	0.2%	3.6 acres / 1.5 miles of proposed Castaic Creek Trail (Segment CC2) on the eastern side of Interstate 5
Unique Farmland	14.2	0.03%	0 acres / None
Farmland of Local Importance	130.2	0.3%	2.4 acres / 0.9 mile of proposed Chiquito Canyon Trail (segment CO1) along three segments of Chiquito Canyon Road
Grazing Land	34,478.4	71.7%	211.9 acres / 71.2 miles of proposed trails (Castaic Creek, Castaic Dam, Charlie Canyon, Chiquito Canyon, Cliffie Stone East, Elderberry Forebay, Hasley Canyon, Interstate Paintball, Lake West, Romero Canyon, San Francisquito, Santa Felicia, Sloan Canyon, Tapia Canyon, Val Verde, and West Creek); 6.5 miles of planned trails per developer trail obligations (Castaic Creek, Hasley Canyon, Romero Canyon, Sloan Canyon, Tapia Canyon)
Urban and Built-Up Land	4,393.6	9.1%	24.9 acres / 6.8 miles proposed trails (Castaic Creek, Castaic Dam, Chiquito Canyon, Elderberry Forebay, Hasley Canyon, Interstate Paintball, Lake West, Romero Canyon, Sloan Canyon, Val Verde, and West Creek)
Other Land	6,436.9	13.4%	33.9 acres / 12.5 miles of proposed trails (Castaic Dam, Charlie Canyon, Chiquito Canyon, Cliffie Stone East, Cliffie Stone West, Hasley Canyon, Romero Canyon, San Francisquito, Sloan Canyon, Tapia Canyon, Val Verde, and West Creek)
Water	2,167.4	4.5%	0.5 acres / 0.2 miles of proposed trails (Castaic Dam)
Not Surveyed	68.8	0.1%	1 acre / 0.4 miles of proposed trails (Elderberry Forebay)
<b>Total</b>	<b>48,087.4</b>	<b>99.93%</b>	<b>278.1-acre Impact Area</b>

**SOURCE:** California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. 2014. *Important Farmland Data Availability*. Available at: <ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/2014/>

No existing or proposed trail alignments cross Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland within the Castaic project area. Based on a maximum constructed trail width of 12 feet and a maximum 20-foot-wide construction disturbance area for proposed trails and trail related facilities, the proposed project would directly impact up to 3.6 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, along approximately 1.5 miles of the proposed Castaic Creek Trail (see Table 2.2-1). However, as the proposed alignment would follow an existing dirt road (at least 15 feet wide) adjacent to the agricultural fields in this area, it would not be

<sup>16</sup> State of California Department of Conservation. Accessed 21 March 2014. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Available online at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/FMMP/Pages/Index.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> State of California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Published January 2015. Los Angeles County Important Farmland 2012. Available at: <ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/pdf/2012/los12.pdf>



**FIGURE 2.2-1**  
Important Farmland Map

expected to convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use.

Within the approximately 278.1-acre project impact area, 11 of the 18 proposed trail related facilities would be located on or partially located on Grazing Land, three trail-related facilities would be located on Urban and Built-Up Land, three facilities would be located on other (non-agricultural) land, and one General Staging Area (Chiquito Canyon) would be located on Farmland of Local Importance. Approximately 77.7 miles of proposed trails would cross Grazing Land, 1.5 miles of the proposed Castaic Creek Trail would cross Farmland of Statewide Importance, and approximately 0.9 mile of the proposed Chiquito Canyon Trail would cross Farmland of Local Importance. Thus, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance as a result of the construction of the trail-related facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to converting Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) to non-agricultural use, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, with a designated Agricultural Opportunity Area, or with a Williamson Act contract?**

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to agriculture/forest in regard to conflicting with existing zoning for agricultural use, with a designated Agricultural Opportunity Area, or with a Williamson Act contract. Although approximately 61.4 percent of the Castaic project area is located within areas zoned for agricultural use (29,229.5 acres of the Castaic project area is located within an A-2 – Heavy Agriculture zone designation, approximately 279.8 acres are located within an A-1 – Light Agricultural zone designation, and approximately 30.2 acres are located within a R-A – Residential Agricultural zone designation), trails are generally an allowable use on agricultural lands that would not conflict with existing zoning (see Table 1.7-1, *Castaic Project Area Zoning Designations*; see Figure 1.7-1, *County of Los Angeles Zoning Designations*). As described in Table 1.7-1, the Heavy Agricultural Zone permits riding and hiking trails; and the Light Agricultural Zone and Residential Agricultural Zone in the Castaic project area allow for riding and hiking trails if they have been approved by the Director.

Agricultural Opportunity Areas (AOAs) were a Los Angeles County identification tool to indicate land with an existing or anticipated future commercial agricultural use based on the presence of prime agricultural soils, compatible adjacent land uses, and an existing County agricultural land use policy.<sup>18</sup> Agricultural Opportunity Areas have been replaced by Agricultural Resource Areas (ARAs) in the County General Plan, consisting of farmland identified by the California Department of Conservation, including Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, and Unique Farmland.<sup>19</sup> There is one designated ARA for the preservation of agricultural land that has been identified by the FMMP as Farmland of Local Importance within the Castaic project area, located southeast of Castaic Lagoon and Lake Hughes Road (Figure 2.2-1).<sup>20</sup> No trails or trail supporting facilities are proposed within this ARA.

<sup>18</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, November 2010. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision Program EIR. Section 3.5: Agricultural Resources. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2010-deir-3-5-ag-resources.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2010-deir-3-5-ag-resources.pdf) Prepared by Impact Sciences, Inc.

<sup>19</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County General Plan 2035. Chapter 9: Conservation and Natural Resources Element. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch9.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch9.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, May 2014. Los Angeles County General Plan 2035. Figure 9.5: Agricultural Resource Areas Policy Map. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_2035\\_2014-FIG\\_9-5\\_agricultural\\_resource\\_policy.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_2035_2014-FIG_9-5_agricultural_resource_policy.pdf)

According to the Los Angeles County Williamson Act FY 2015/2016 map by the California Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection, the Castaic project area is classified as nonenrolled land or urban and built-up land and therefore not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract.<sup>21,22</sup> There are no Williamson Act contract properties in the Castaic project area. The nearest Williamson Act contract property in the County is located approximately 64 miles south of the Castaic project area on Santa Catalina Island. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to conflicting with existing zoning for agricultural use, with a designated Agricultural Opportunity Area, or with a Williamson Act contract, and no mitigation measures are required.

**c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code § 12220 (g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined in Government Code § 51104(g))?**

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to agriculture/forest in regard to conflicting with existing zoning for, or causing rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Public Resources Code § 12220(g) of CEQA defines forest land as “land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.”<sup>23</sup> Public Resources Code § 4526 defines Timberland as “land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees.”<sup>24</sup> California Government Code § 51104(g) defines a Timberland Production Zone (TMZ) as “an area which has been zoned pursuant to § 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses, as defined in subdivision (h). With respect to general plans of cities and counties, ‘timberland preserve zone’ means ‘timberland production zone.’”<sup>25</sup>

Forest land is protected within the adjacent Angeles National Forest and Los Padres National Forest. Within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan area, “open space used for the managed production of resources, including but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber” is a land use type that has been designated for open space preservation pursuant to state law.<sup>26</sup> Although approximately 60.8 percent of the Castaic project area is zoned A-2, approximately 0.6 percent is zoned A-1, and approximately 0.1 percent is zoned R-A. Trails are generally an allowable use on agricultural lands that would not conflict with existing zoning. As described in Table 1.7-1, the A-2 zone permits riding and hiking trails, and the A-1 and R-A zones in the Castaic project area allow

<sup>21</sup> California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection. 2016. Los Angeles County Williamson Act FY 2012/2013. Map available online at: [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/LA\\_15\\_16\\_WA.pdf](ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/LA_15_16_WA.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection. 2015. State of California Williamson Act Contract Land: Data Submissions Current to 2014. Map available online at: [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/2014%20Statewide%20Map/WA\\_2014\\_11x17.pdf](ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/2014%20Statewide%20Map/WA_2014_11x17.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> State of California. Accessed 17 March 2016. Public Resources Code Section 12220. Available online at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=prc&group=12001-13000&file=12220>

<sup>24</sup> State of California. Accessed 21 March 2014. Public Resources Code Section 4521-4529.5. Available online at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=prc&group=04001-05000&file=4521-4529.5>

<sup>25</sup> State of California. Accessed 21 March 2014. Government Code Section 51100-51104. Available online at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=gov&group=51001-52000&file=51100-51104>

<sup>26</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Chapter 4: Conservation and Open Space. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2012-ch\\_04\\_os.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2012-ch_04_os.pdf)



for riding and hiking trails if they have been approved by the Director. As Zones A-1, A-2, and R-A permit crops (including trees and nursery stock), and Zones A-1 and A-2 permit the sale of Christmas trees if approved by the Director, there is a potential for forest land to exist in the Castaic project area.<sup>27</sup> The County does not have a designated zone for timberland or Timberland Production. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to conflicting with existing zoning for, or causing rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production, and no mitigation would be required.

**d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to agriculture/forest in regard to resulting in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Forest land is protected within the adjacent Angeles National Forest and Los Padres National Forest.<sup>28</sup> Although oak and other native woodlands are present in the Castaic project area, there are no forest resources within the Castaic project area that would be affected by the proposed project. As stated above, trees, nursery stock, and Christmas trees are permitted agricultural uses. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to resulting in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and no mitigation would be required.

**e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to agriculture and forestry resources in regard to involving other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Trails are generally a compatible use with agricultural and forest land uses. The proposed project would involve trails ranging from 3 to 12 feet in width, with a maximum easement of 20 feet, and supporting facilities that would be located to avoid Important Farmland and follow existing roads and disturbed areas where possible. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to involving other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>27</sup> Municode. Accessed 4 January 2016. Municode Library: County of Los Angeles, CA. Title 22 – Planning and Zoning. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO)

<sup>28</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Chapter 4: Conservation and Open Space. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2012-ch\\_04\\_os.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2012-ch_04_os.pdf)

### **3. AIR QUALITY**

*Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.*

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to air quality, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis presented in this section is based on the Air Quality Analysis for Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan (Appendix B).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				

**a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans of either the South Coast AQMD (SCAQMD) or the Antelope Valley AQMD (AVAQMD)?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality in regard to conflicting with or obstructing implementation of applicable air quality plans within the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The two main plans of concern are the Air Quality Element of the County General Plan and the SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). The proposed project would also be consistent with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS).

The construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project would not cause a violation of the SCAQMD AQMP because it would not impede the ability of the basin to achieve the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) attainment deadlines for those pollutants not in attainment. Designations for attainment are determined from the ambient air quality. The proposed project would be consistent with the AQMP's goals to invest in strategies that improve air quality by supporting transportation control measures to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This is also consistent with the Air Quality Element for the County General Plan, which states a direct link between transportation activities and air pollution. The project design measures to limit particulate matter from construction are in alignment with Policy AQ 1.3.

For operations, the proposed project would minimally increase the number of vehicles coming to and from the parks and open space areas in the area by providing recreational opportunities close to where people live and through the long-term conservation of open space lands. These trips would be recreational in purpose, occurring mainly on weekends and/or outside peak hour traffic, and therefore not causing additional traffic. With limited new trips, the proposed project would support Goal 2 of the County General Plan by coordinating land use, transportation, and air quality planning. The proposed project would also not have a long-term consequence on achieving attainment deadlines in the SCAQMD AQMP for criteria pollutants that are not in attainment. The proposed project is aligned with the 2016–2040 RTP/SCS because it would reduce VMT and encourage nearby recreation. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to conflicting with or obstructing implementation of applicable air quality plans, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality in regard to violating any air quality standard or contributing substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. The SCAQMD monitors air quality through a network of 39 permanent, multi-pollutant monitoring stations and 4 additional single-pollutant source impact lead (Pb) monitoring stations in the South Coast Air Basin and a portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin in Coachella Valley. Ambient air quality of two nearby monitoring stations is reported in Table 7, *Summary of 2012–2014 Ambient Air Quality Data in the Trails Plan Vicinity*, in Appendix B. The project's daily construction emissions were generated using CalEEMod 2013.2.2. Table 10, *Estimated Daily Construction Emissions*, in Appendix B summarizes the daily construction emissions associated with the proposed project's construction activities and indicates that emissions would be far below the SCAQMD daily constructional emissions thresholds of significance. Given that the proposed project would be operated as a trail that would not require any stationary sources for daily operation and maintenance, long-term operation-related air emissions in the Castaic project area are likely to result from vehicles traveling to and from the trailheads and minimal usage of a loader/backhoe/tractor for trail maintenance. According to Table 11, *Estimated Daily Operational Emissions*, in Appendix B operational emissions associated with the proposed project are expected to be below the level of significance as determined by the SCAQMD. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to air quality standards, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality in regard to resulting in cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is in non-attainment. Compared to the NAAQS, the County portion of the South Coast Air Basin is a nonattainment area for 1-hour ozone, 8-hour ozone, fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and lead for near-source monitors. Compared to the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), the County portion of the South Coast Air Basin is a nonattainment area for 1-hour ozone, 8-hour ozone, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and respirable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). The proposed project would generate these pollutants during the construction of trail improvements. It is not expected for the operations and maintenance phases of the proposed project to cause a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant, as the proposed project is a recreational trail generating minimal new vehicle trips and requiring minimal equipment for trail maintenance. Short-term cumulative impacts related to air quality could occur if project construction and nearby construction activities were to occur simultaneously. In particular, with respect to local impacts, cumulative construction particulate matter (i.e., fugitive dust) impacts are considered when projects are located within a few hundred yards of each other.

Many of the related projects located within the Castaic project area are residential subdivisions with the potential to create significant air quality impacts cumulatively during the construction phase. However, the proposed project is a trails plan, which provides recreational opportunities close to areas where people live and work. This is consistent with the strategies in the 2016–2040 RTP/SCS for reducing VMT and enhancing public health. Therefore, the proposed project's emissions would not be cumulatively considerable, impacts would be less than significant, and mitigation would not be required.

**d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality in regard to exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Land uses identified to be sensitive receptors by SCAQMD in the California Air Resources Board's (CARB's) Air Quality Handbook include residences, schools, playgrounds, child care centers, athletic facilities, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes.<sup>29</sup> There are 12,011 known sensitive receptors within the Castaic project area. There are an additional 5,318 known sensitive receptors within a 0.5-mile radius of the Castaic project area (Figure 2.3-1, *Sensitive Receptors*). Exposure of sensitive receptors to potential emissions would vary from day to day, depending on the amount of work being conducted, the weather conditions, the location of receptors, and the length of time that receptors would be exposed to air emissions. Due to the short-term nature of project construction, sensitive receptors would not be expected to be adversely affected by construction. For operation or maintenance of the proposed project, sensitive receptors would experience a longer duration of exposure. These emissions are below the level of significance and would decrease rapidly with distance from the proposed project site. Best management practices would be required for dust suppression, pursuant to County building codes. Therefore, impacts in regard to exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations would be less than significant, and mitigation would not be required.

**e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?**

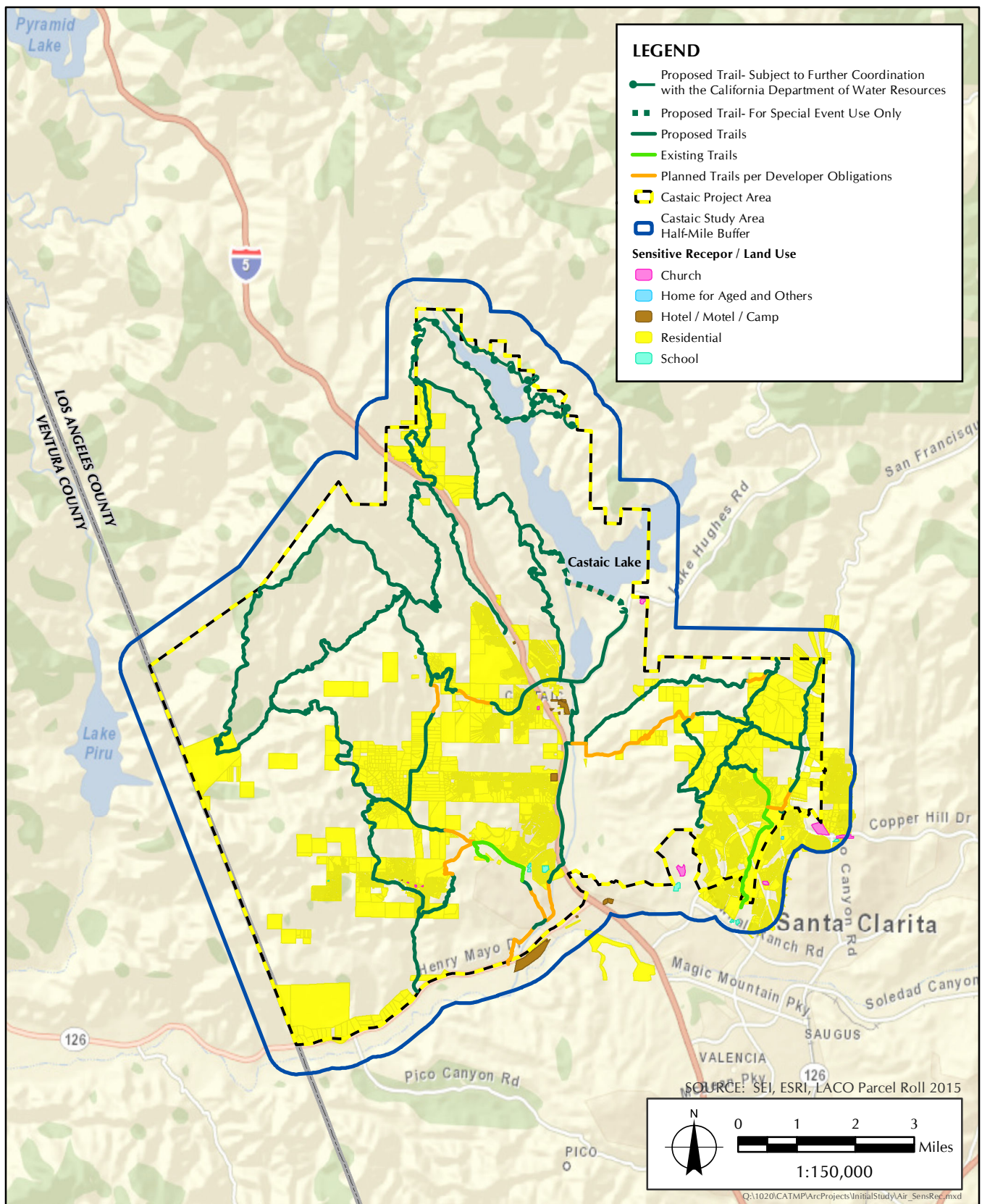
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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality in regard to creating objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. According to the CARB's Air Quality Handbook,<sup>30</sup> land uses and industrial operations associated with odor complaints include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project would not involve the type of land uses or industrial operations typically associated with odor nuisance. There are no land uses typically associated with the generation of nuisance odors in the Castaic project area. Construction and maintenance of the proposed project would occur over very short durations. With the exception of providing access for individuals afforded protection pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the County does not allow the use of motorized equipment on trails or within park facilities, other than those designated for such use. Therefore, impacts in regard to creation of objectionable odors would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

<sup>29</sup> California Air Resources Board. April 2005. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective. Available at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> California Air Resources Board. April 2005. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective. Available at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf>





**FIGURE 2.3-1**  
Sensitive Receptors

#### 4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to biological resources, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis presented in this section is based on the *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Biological Resources Assessment* (Appendix C).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to having a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through the disturbance of natural habitats capable of sustaining these species during the construction and operation of trails and associated structures. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance.

Approximately 268.0 acres of USFWS-designated critical habitat for the federally endangered Arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*), 154.8 acres of critical habitat for the federally and state endangered southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), and 1.9 acres of critical habitat for the federally and state endangered least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) are located within the Castaic project area (see Figure 6, *Critical Habitat Present within the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C). There are also California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) records of these species present within the Castaic project area. Therefore, it is assumed that the species are present within the Castaic project area. In addition to arroyo toad, southwestern willow flycatcher, and least Bell's vireo, there are 15 federally and/or state listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species listed under protection of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or California ESA that are known from the region and have a moderate to very high likelihood to be present in the Castaic project area (see Figure 5, *Listed Plant and Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur in the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C). Furthermore, there are 35 other sensitive wildlife species and 33 rare and locally important plant species with a moderate to very high likelihood to occur within the Castaic project area based on CNDDDB records, California Native Plant Society (CNPS) records, and an evaluation of suitable habitat (see Figure 7, *Sensitive Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur in the Proposed Project*, and Figure 8, *California Natural Diversity Database Rare and Locally Important Plant Species with the Potential to Occur in the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C).

Proposed trail width within the proposed project varies between 3 and 12 feet. Therefore, based on a worst-case analysis using a maximum width of 12 feet and incorporating a 250-foot buffer to account for construction disturbances beyond the trail footprint, approximately 191.5 acres of critical habitat for listed species (126.3 acres for arroyo toad, and 65.2 acres for southwestern willow flycatcher) would be converted

to trails and other recreation amenities or would be disturbed through associated construction activities. Furthermore, there are CNDDDB records and suitable habitat for the federally and state-listed endangered unarmored threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*), the CNPS rare plant slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*), and sensitive wildlife species including western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) within 250 feet of the planned trail activities that may be disturbed through trail development and associated construction activities. Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. These construction activities have the potential to occur within areas of potentially suitable and occupied habitat for listed and special-status species. Direct impacts would occur during trail construction and would include direct loss of sensitive plant and/or wildlife species resulting from injury, death, or disturbance of these species. Additionally, direct impacts may occur through the direct habitat loss and fragmentation during construction of the trails and associated structures; introduction of non-native plants; and introduction of lighting, dust, and noise during construction. Further, indirect impacts resulting from the development of trails projects in the proposed project could occur as a result of increased human interaction with sensitive plants and wildlife.

This analysis of impacts of trails projects included in the proposed project to sensitive plant and wildlife species and their habitats and designated critical habitat is programmatic, and conservatively assumes that all species with critical habitat and/or CNDDDB records in the Castaic project area are present. The level of impact of subsequent projects would be subject to verification at the project level of environmental review pursuant to CEQA. Trail development projects would be subject to the provisions of the federal and state ESA, as well as Sections 1900–1913, 3511, 4150, 4700, 5050, and 5515 of the State Fish and Game Code and Sections 80071–80075 of the State Food and Agriculture Code.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to having a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-1:** To mitigate potential impacts on listed, sensitive, and locally important species and their habitats, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation shall require that a habitat assessment by a qualified biologist take place using approved U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protocols to identify suitable habitat for any listed, sensitive, and locally important species on-site. Where suitable and/or occupied habitat is determined to be present, mitigation shall be implemented such that there is no net loss of habitat functions or values. Opportunities for achieving this performance standard, consistent with the provisions of the federal and state Endangered Species Acts (ESAs), may include:

- Demonstration that trail segment projects have been and will be designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid disturbance of any occupied habitat, potentially suitable habitat, and designated critical habitat for any listed, sensitive, or locally important species and to minimize impacts to native plant communities, wherever practicable and feasible.
- Consultation with USFWS and CDFW with regards to trail building activities within critical habitat and suitable habitat.
- Implementation of pre-construction habitat surveys to delineate occupied or suitable sensitive species' habitat to facilitate avoidance.
- Formal consultation with the USFWS will be required if a species afforded protection pursuant to the federal ESA is determined to be present as a result of focused protocol

surveys. Formal consultation with the CDFW will be required if a species afforded protection pursuant to the state ESA is determined to be present as a result of focused protocol surveys.

- Altering the timing of construction to avoid seasons when sensitive species may be present (i.e., nesting bird season).
- Worker Education and Awareness Program to inform all construction workers of their responsibilities in regards to avoiding and minimizing impacts on sensitive biological resources.
- Designation of suitable habitat as off-limits during construction on all construction drawings and diagrams.
- Use of fencing and/or flagging to delineate environmentally sensitive areas as off-limits during trail construction.
- Use of on-site monitors for periods when trail construction will be undertaken within 250 feet of environmentally sensitive areas.
- Where temporary impacts to critical habitat may occur, the development and implementation of a habitat restoration plan shall be required.
- Where permanent impacts to critical habitat may occur, compensatory mitigation such as purchasing credits at a mitigation bank, purchasing off-site lands, or similar shall be required.

**b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural communities (e.g., riparian habitat, coastal sage scrub, oak woodlands, non-jurisdictional wetlands) identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by CDFW or USFWS?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to having a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS through the disturbance of these communities during the construction of trails and associated structures. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance.

Based on a review of the information available through the Natural Heritage Division of CDFW, approximately 3,362 acres of the Castaic project area are state designated sensitive plant communities.<sup>31</sup> Of the 3,362 acres of state designated sensitive plant communities, approximately 2,448 acres are riparian plant communities (see Figure 9, *Riparian and State Sensitive Plant Community Records in the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C).

Proposed trail width for trail projects within the proposed project varies between 3 and 12 feet. Therefore, based on a worst-case analysis using a maximum width of 12 feet and incorporating a 250-foot buffer to account for construction disturbances beyond the trail footprint, approximately 308 acres of state designated sensitive plant communities (including 248 acres of riparian communities) would be converted to trails and other recreation amenities or would be disturbed through associated construction activities. Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. These construction activities have the potential to occur within sensitive natural communities on-site. Impacts associated with the disturbance of sensitive and riparian habitats would include direct loss and fragmentation of sensitive

<sup>31</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2015. Rarefind 5: A Database Application for the Use of the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base. Sacramento, CA.



communities and riparian habitats as trails projects are developed and the introduction of non-native plants that would degrade existing communities. Further, indirect impacts resulting from the development of trails projects in the proposed project could occur as a result of increased public access to sensitive plant communities.

This analysis of impacts of trails projects included in the proposed project to sensitive plant communities and riparian habitats is programmatic, and conservatively assumes that sensitive plant communities have the potential to exist throughout the Castaic project area and that all waterways have the potential to contain riparian habitat. The level of impact of subsequent projects would be subject to verification at the project level of environmental review pursuant to CEQA. Trail development projects would be subject to the provisions of Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code in which a Streambed Alteration Agreement would need to be obtained prior to the alteration of a state jurisdictional area.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to having a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-2:** To mitigate potential impacts on riparian, state-sensitive plant communities, state protected wetlands, and federally protected wetlands and waters of the United States, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation shall require that plant community mapping be conducted by a qualified biologist with experience classifying plant communities in Southern California and/or a formal jurisdictional delineation be conducted by a certified wetland delineator to identify any state or federally protected wetlands, riparian areas, and state-sensitive plant communities on-site. Where state designated sensitive plant communities, riparian habitat, state or federally protected wetlands, or waters of the United States are determined to be present, mitigation measures shall be implemented such that there is no net loss of habitat functions or values. Opportunities for achieving this performance standard, consistent with the provisions of Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code and Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act, may include:

- Demonstration that trail segment projects have been and will be designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid disturbance of any state-sensitive plant communities or riparian habitat, or any state or federally protected wetlands or waters of the United States wherever practicable and feasible.
- Conduct pre-construction habitat surveys to delineate sensitive plant communities and riparian habitats to facilitate avoidance.
- Consult with CDFW with regards to trail building activities within state-sensitive plant communities.
- Use of on-site monitors for periods when trail construction will be undertaken within 250 feet of oak woodlands, native woodlands, and 100 feet of the dripline of native trees.
- Where temporary impacts may occur to sensitive plant communities, the development and implementation of a habitat enhancement and restoration plan shall be required.
- Where permanent impacts may occur to sensitive plant communities, compensatory mitigation such as purchasing credits at mitigation bank, purchasing off-site lands, or similar shall be required.
- Where impacts are located in areas subject to the jurisdiction of the CDFW pursuant to Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code, obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement prior to commencing ground-disturbing activities or any other alternation of a lake or stream.

- Where impacts are located in areas subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act, obtain authorization to complete the required work pursuant to a Nationwide or individual permit.
- Where impacts are subject to the jurisdiction of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, obtain a Waiver of Water Quality Certification or Notice of Applicability of Waste Discharge Requirement permit.

**c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally or state protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, coastal wetlands, and drainages) or waters of the United States, as defined by § 404 of the federal Clean Water Act or California Fish & Game code § 1600, et seq. through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to having a substantial adverse effect on federally or state protected wetlands or waters of the United States through the disturbance and/or diversion of federally or state protected wetlands or waters of the United States during the construction of trails and associated structures. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance.

Approximately 144 linear miles of features identified as blue-line drainages and approximately 2,306 acres of National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) features that have the potential to be considered federally and/or state protected wetlands and/or waters of the United States are present within the Castaic project area (see Figure 10, *Federally Protected Wetlands and Waterways Reported in the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C). In addition to these areas, approximately 2,448 acres within the Castaic project area were identified by the CNDDB as containing riparian plant communities, which are protected under California Fish and Game Code Section 1600 (see Figure 9, Appendix C). It is anticipated that additional state and federal jurisdictional areas beyond those identified through database and literature review may occur on-site.

Proposed trail width for trail projects within the proposed project varies between 3 and 12 feet. Therefore, based on a worst-case analysis using a maximum width of 12 feet and incorporating a 250-foot buffer to account for construction disturbances beyond the trail footprint, approximately 252 acres of riparian communities that may be under CDFW jurisdiction, 122.7 acres of federally protected wetlands, and 36.5 miles of blueline drainages that may include waters of the United States would be converted to trails and other recreation amenities or would be disturbed through associated construction activities. Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. These construction activities have the potential to occur within and adjacent to state and federal wetlands and or waters of the United States on-site. Impacts would include disruption of streams and wetlands as new trails are developed and dredge and fill activities associated with trail development. Trail development projects would be subject to the provisions of Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Dredge or fill in waters of the United States is subject to the regulatory authority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Trail development projects would also be subject to the provisions of Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code in which a Streambed Alteration Agreement would need to be obtained prior to the alteration of a state jurisdictional area.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to having a substantial adverse effect on federally or state protected wetlands or waters of the United States.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to interfering substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impeding the use of native wildlife nursery sites directly as a result of trail construction or indirectly through the interruption of movement or migratory corridors caused by construction and use of trails and associated structures. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance.

The Castaic project area is considered an important wildlife corridor as determined by the County General Plan (Appendix C). Within the County General Plan, the Santa Clara River and Santa Felicia SEAs are identified as important corridors for wildlife movement, linking the Santa Monica Mountains, the San Gabriel Mountains, and Piru Lake in Ventura County. Trails and passive recreation use are an allowable use within SEAs. Although trail use would not conflict with the goals of the SEA program, new trail construction within an SEA would require consultation with the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning and a Biological Technical Report prepared for Significant Ecological Area Technical Advisory Committee (SEATAC) review. Furthermore, nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) have the potential to be present throughout the Castaic project area.

Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. These construction activities have the potential to occur within areas used for native wildlife movement and within and adjacent to suitable nesting locations for native and migratory birds on-site. Impacts would include direct habitat removal that would disrupt nesting birds as new trails projects are developed, and introduction of lighting and noise during construction and operation that may interrupt wildlife movement and disturb nursery sites. Additionally, an increase in wildlife-human interactions as a result of the development of new trails projects may increase wildlife injury.

This analysis of impacts of trails projects included in the proposed project to wildlife corridors and nursery sites is programmatic, and conservatively assumes that wildlife movement areas and nesting birds may occur throughout the Castaic project area. The level of impact of subsequent projects would be subject to verification at the project level of environmental review pursuant to CEQA. Trail development projects would be subject to the provisions of the MBTA.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to interfering substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impeding the use of native wildlife nursery sites. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-3 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-3:** To avoid impacts to nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), trail construction should take place outside of the nesting bird season, which generally occurs between February 15 and September 1. If trail construction activities cannot avoid the nesting bird season,

pre-construction nesting bird surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist a maximum of three days prior to the start of construction. Should nesting birds be discovered within or adjacent to the construction footprint during these surveys, a non-disturbance buffer shall be placed on the active nest as determined by the biologist to prevent impacts to nesting birds. Construction shall be halted within the non-disturbance buffer of 250 feet of songbirds and 500 feet for raptors until the biologist has determined that the young have fledged and are flying well enough to avoid the proposed construction activities.

**e) Convert oak woodlands (as defined by the state, oak woodlands are oak stands with greater than 10% canopy cover with oaks at least 5 inch in diameter measured at 4.5 feet above mean natural grade) or otherwise contain oak or other unique native trees (junipers, Joshuas, southern California black walnut, etc.)?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to converting oak woodlands or woodlands otherwise containing oak or other unique native trees through the disturbance of these woodlands during the construction of trails and associated structures. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance.

Based on a review of the information available through the Natural Heritage Division of CDFW of approximately 50,000 acres within the Castaic project area, approximately 984 acres are state designated Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest (see Figure 9, Appendix D).<sup>32</sup> It is anticipated that individual oak and native trees beyond those within existing woodland communities may be present in the Castaic project area.

Proposed trail width for trail projects within the proposed project varies between 3 and 12 feet. Therefore, based on a worst-case analysis using a maximum width of 12 feet and incorporating a 250-foot buffer to account for construction disturbances beyond the trail footprint, approximately 123.1 acres of state designated Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest and 128.8 acres of Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest would be converted to trails and other recreation amenities or would be disturbed through associated construction activities. Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. These construction activities have the potential to occur within oak and other native woodlands on-site or within the dripline of individual oak or other native trees. Impacts associated with the disturbance of oak and other native woodlands would include direct loss and fragmentation of woodlands as trails projects are developed, and the introduction of non-native plants that would degrade existing woodlands.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to converting oak woodlands or woodlands otherwise containing oak or other unique native trees. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, and BIO-4 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-4:** To mitigate potential impacts on oak and other native woodlands, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) shall require that for every protected tree that must be removed, the same species shall be replaced at a minimum of a 1:1 ratio. Compensatory mitigation for protected trees in the jurisdiction of County Parks may include replacement at a 3:1 ratio for

<sup>32</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2015. Rarefind 5: A Database Application for the Use of the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base. Sacramento, CA.



trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of eight inches or more at an appropriate mitigation site, and replacement at a 10:1 ratio for heritage oaks. Monitoring for at least one year would be required to meet success criteria.

**f) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including Wildflower Reserve Areas (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.36), the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.56, Part 16), the Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) (L.A. County Code, Title 22, § 22.56.215), and Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERAs) (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.44, Part 6)?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts to biological resources related to conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including Wildflower Reserve Areas (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.36), the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.56, Part 16), SEAs (L.A. County Code, Title 22, § 22.56.215), or Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERAs) (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.44, Part 6).

The Castaic project area is not located within any Wildflower Reserve Areas or SERAs; therefore, it would not conflict with these policies. The Northlake Specific Plan does not contain any policies related to biological resources; therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the policies of this plan. The proposed project would not result in significant impacts to biological resources related to conflicts with the County General Plan, Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, or Newhall Ranch Specific Plan because trails and other recreation facilities are required to be designed consistent with the County Trails Manual, which requires no net loss of habitat functions and values.<sup>33</sup> The application of the County Trails Manual to the individual trails projects within the proposed project would accomplish the objectives within these plans of minimizing impacts to the natural environment. Furthermore, the implementation of the proposed project would be beneficial to biological resources because it would direct visitors to the Castaic project area to designated areas for use rather than permit disorganized use of the land without acknowledgement and protection of environmentally sensitive areas.

The proposed project would not conflict with Los Angeles County Municipal Code Title 22, § 22.56.215 – Significant Ecological Areas because trails and recreation facilities are an allowed use in SEAs, and any trails project under the proposed project would be required to comply with the SEATAC CUP application process. The proposed project would not conflict with Municipal Code Sections 22.56.2050–22.56.2260 – Oak Tree Ordinance because trails and recreation facilities would be designed to avoid the removal or disturbance of any protected oak tree, and any trails project under the proposed project would be required to comply with the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Removal Permit application process should tree removal be necessary. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to conflicts with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>33</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 17, 2011. Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

**g) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted state, regional, or local habitat conservation plan?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts to biological resources in regard to conflicting with the provisions of an adopted state, regional, or local habitat conservation plan. There are no Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) or Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs) with boundaries that intersect the Castaic project area. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts related to conflicts with the provision of adopted state, regional, or local habitat conservation plans, and no mitigation would be required.

## 5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project may have a significant impact to cultural resources, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This analysis is based on the Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Cultural Resources Assessment (Appendix D).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would have the potential to result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. As a result of a records search with the South Central Coastal Information Center at California State University, Fullerton, and a search of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and the County of Los Angeles Register of Landmark and Historic Districts, historical resources are located in the Castaic project area. The record search indicates that an estimated 32,000 acres have been previously surveyed in the Castaic project area. Of 89 recorded resources within the Castaic project area, only one is listed in the CRHR. This resource (P-19-002233, a prehistoric campsite) is an individual property determined eligible for the NRHP by a consensus through Section 106 process, and it is listed in the CRHR. However, the resource is not in the immediate impact area, which comprises a 60-foot buffer along the proposed trail alignment and related elements. In total, 52 of the 89 recorded resources are situated within a quarter-mile of the proposed trail alignment, but only 12 are located within the immediate impact area (Table 2.5-1, *Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within the Immediate Impact Area*). A proposed trail segment passes through the Angeles National Forest, which is State Historical Landmark No. 717.

The general vicinity of the trail alignment has a moderate to high sensitivity to contain historical resources as defined pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Eligible resource would be avoided to the greatest extent feasible. In addition, the majority of the Castaic project area has not been subject to a Phase I pedestrian survey. Although previous development in the area may have disturbed historical resources, undeveloped areas could still support resources. Therefore, there is potential to encounter resources identified in either the Phase I pedestrian surveys and/or later activities during construction, operation, and maintenance of trails, bike skills areas, and related appurtenant facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts in regard to causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CULTURAL-1 and CULTURAL-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**TABLE 2.5-1  
PREVIOUSLY RECORDED CULTURAL RESOURCES  
WITHIN THE DIRECT IMPACT AREA**

Primary Number	Trinomial	Time Period		Description
		Prehistoric	Historic	
P-19-001446	CA-LAN-001446H		X	Foundation of Two Buildings (Historic)
P-19-001650	CA-LAN-001650	X		Prehistoric Village
P-19-001651	CA-LAN-001651	X	X	Large Milling Station (Prehistoric)
P-19-001662	CA-LAN-001662	X		Small Milling Station (Prehistoric)
P-19-002070	CA-LAN-002070H		X	Clougherty Ranch Caretaker's House
P-19-002072	CA-LAN-002072H		X	Small Scatter of Historic Debris
P-19-004282	CA-LAN-004282	X		Prehistoric Midden, Hearth and Oven
P-19-004321	CA-LAN-004321H		X	Historic Refuse Deposit
P-19-100511		X		Prehistoric Artifact
P-19-186535			X	Los Angeles National Forest
P-19-189816			X	Sloan Canyon Road
P-19-190941			X	Castaic Emergency Spillway

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1:** *Archaeological and Historic Resources – Avoidance and Monitoring.* Completion of a Worker Education and Awareness Program for all personnel who will be engaged in ground-disturbing activities shall be required prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities. This shall include training that provides an overview of cultural resources that might potentially be found and the appropriate procedures to follow if cultural resources are identified. This requirement extends to any new staff prior to engaging in ground disturbing activities.

Prior to the initiation of ground-disturbing activities, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) shall review the construction plans to ensure that any known cultural resources sites that are required to be avoided have been marked as “off-limits” areas for construction and construction staging. In addition, County Parks shall require monitoring of all ground disturbing activities by a qualified archaeologist within 100 feet of a known extant unique archaeological resources, significant historical resources, or tribal cultural resource. In addition, consultation shall be undertaken with the Most Likely Descendants designated by Native American Heritage Commission to determine if a Native American monitor shall also be present during all or a portion of the ground-disturbing activities.

In the event that previously unknown unique archaeological resources, significant historical resources, or tribal cultural resources are encountered during construction, the resources shall either be left in situ and avoided through realignment of the trail, or the resources shall be salvaged, recorded, and repositioned consistent with the provisions of a Phase III data recovery program consistent with the provisions of a Cultural Resource Management Plan. Data recovery is not required by law or regulation. It is, though, the most commonly agreed-upon measure to mitigate adverse effects to archaeological sites eligible or listed under Section 106 Criterion D, as it preserves important information that will otherwise be lost.

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-2:** *Pre-Construction Surveys* At the time that any new segment of trail is proposed for development that would require ground-disturbing activities in soils that have been predominantly *in situ* during the past 50 years, records and archival information shall be reviewed to determine if there are any recorded unique archaeological resources, significant historical resources as defined in Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines, or tribal cultural resources as defined in AB52 in the Area of Potential Effects. At a minimum, the records and archival review will include a search of the



South Central Coastal Information Center, a request for Sacred Lands File from the Native American Heritage Commission, and a request for information regarding tribal cultural resources from the Most Likely Descendants designated by Native American Heritage Commission. The appropriate course of action will be undertaken in light of the results of the records search:

- (A) Where the Area of Potential Effect has been subject to a Phase I Walkover Survey within two years of the proposed activity and no unique archaeological resources, significant cultural resources, or tribal cultural resources are known from the Area of Potential Effect, work shall proceed per the provision of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1.
- (B) Where all or a portion of the Area of Potential Effect has not been surveyed for cultural resources within two years of a proposed ground-disturbing activity, a qualified archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's professional qualification standards for archaeology and shall conduct a Phase I Walkover Survey to ascertain the presence or absence of unique archaeological and/or significant historic resources, as defined in Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.
  - a. If the survey determines no unique archaeological resources or significant historical resources, including potential tribal cultural, then the work shall proceed consistent with the provisions of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1.
  - b. If the survey determines potential unique archaeological resources or significant historical resources, including potential tribal cultural resources, then one of two courses of action shall be employed:
    - i. Where avoidance is feasible, the trail alignments shall be realigned to avoid the potentially significant resource, and the work shall then proceed consistent with the provisions of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1. The new alignment will be surveyed by a qualified archaeologist. An archaeological monitor shall be present during ground-disturbing activities. In addition, consultation shall be undertaken with the Most Likely Descendants designated by Native American Heritage Commission to determine if a Native American monitor shall also be present during all or a portion of the ground-disturbing activities.
    - ii. Where avoidance is not feasible, a Phase II evaluation of the cultural resources shall be undertaken to determine the significance of the cultural resource. If the Phase II investigation identifies a unique/eligible cultural resource within the area proposed for ground-disturbing work, the County shall determine whether to avoid the resource through redesign or to proceed with a Phase III data recovery program consistent with the provisions of a Cultural Resource Management Plan. The work shall then proceed consistent with the provisions of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1.

**b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5?**

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The proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts to archaeological resources. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. As a result of the records search with the South Central Coastal Information Center and a search of the NRHP, CRHR, and County of Los Angeles Register of Landmarks and Historic Districts, 89 cultural sites have been previously recorded within the boundaries of the Castaic project area. Of these, 38 are archaeological resources situated within a quarter-mile buffer along the trail alignment. One resource (P-19-002233, a

prehistoric campsite), is an individual property determined eligible for the NRHP by a consensus through Section 106 process, and is listed in the CRHR. However, only seven (7) archaeological resources are located within the direct impact area (P-19-001446, P-19-001650, P-19-001651, P-19-001662, P-19-001672H, P-19-002070, P-19-002072H, P-19-004282, P-19-004321, P-19-186535, and P-19-190941 [Table 2.5-1]).

While the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) search of the Sacred Lands File did not identify the presence of Native American cultural resources in the Castaic project area, Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requires lead agencies to consult with California Native American Tribes that request such consultation prior to the agency's release of a Notice of Intent (NOI) of a Mitigated Negative Declaration on or after July 1, 2015. Therefore, consultation has been undertaken with NAHC and Native American Representatives. The Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians stated the project area to be of extreme risk to cultural and tribal resources and that they would like to consult with the lead agency regarding project mitigation. Another group, the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, expressed no specific concerns with the proposed project, but did request that the appropriate consultation to take place between tribes, project proponents, and government agencies. A third group, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, had no concerns with the project, since the Castaic project area lies outside the tribe's ancestral territories.

Although previous development in the area may have disturbed archaeological resources, undeveloped areas could still support resources. Field surveys should be undertaken to assess the presence or likelihood of archaeological or tribal resources, followed by an evaluation of those resources and data recovery if avoidance is not possible. Therefore, the proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts in regard to causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CULTURAL-1 and CULTURAL-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature, or contain rock formations indicating potential paleontological resources?**



The proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts to unique paleontological resources or unique geologic features. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. As a result of the records search with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, the surficial geology of Castaic Lake and surrounding areas revealed that the following rock formations have the potential to yield significant paleontological resources based on previous collections and/or age and lithology and are given high paleontological sensitivity: the Saugus Formation (non-marine Pliocene and Pleistocene), Pico Formation (marine Pliocene); Towsley Formation (marine late Miocene to early Pliocene), the Sisquoc Formation (marine late Miocene), the Castaic Formation (marine late Miocene), the Monterey Formation; the Mint Canyon Formation (non-marine Miocene), and the San Francisquito Formation (marine Paleocene). Igneous and metamorphic rocks have a low potential for yielding significant paleontological resources, and are therefore assigned low paleontological sensitivity within the Castaic project area.

The proposed project would have the potential to result in impacts to paleontological resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature. As previously outlined, most of the Castaic project area has geological units that could contain significant paleontological resources. Therefore, the proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts in regard to directly or indirectly destroying a unique paleontological resource or site or unique

geologic feature. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-3 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-3: Paleontological Resources – Paleontological Monitoring.** Impacts to cultural resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource from the proposed project shall be reduced to below the level of significance by monitoring, salvage, and curation of unanticipated paleontological resources discovered during ground-disturbing activities in previously undisturbed native soils located five or more feet below the ground surface that would have the potential to contact geologic units with a high to moderate potential to yield unique paleontological resources. Ground-disturbing activities include, but are not limited to, drilling, excavation, trenching, and grading. If paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) shall require and be responsible for salvage and recovery of those resources consistent with standards for such recovery established by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.

Paleontological Resources Sensitivity Training shall be required for all project personnel prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities in geologic units with a moderate to high potential to yield unique paleontological resources. This shall include a brief field training that provides an overview of fossils that might potentially be found, and the appropriate procedures to follow if fossils are identified. This requirement extends to any new staff that joins the project.

Construction monitoring by a qualified monitor (archaeologist cross-trained in paleontology or paleontologist) shall be implemented during all ground-disturbing activities that affect previously undisturbed geologic units 12 or more inches below the ground surface and have the potential to encounter geologic units with a moderate to high potential to yield unique paleontological resources. In the event that a paleontological resource is encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing activity within 100 feet of the find shall be halted until a qualified paleontologist can evaluate the significance of the discovery. Additional monitoring recommendations may be required. If the resource is found to be significant, the paleontologist shall determine the most appropriate treatment and method for removing and stabilizing the specimen. Curation of the any significant paleontological finds shall be required with a qualified repository, such as the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (LACM).

Within 90 days of the completion of any salvage operation or monitoring activities, a mitigation report shall be submitted to County Parks with an appended, itemized inventory of specimens. The report and inventory, when submitted to County Parks, shall signify the completion of the program to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources. A copy of the report/inventory shall be filed with the County of Los Angeles Planning and Development Agency.

**d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

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The proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts in regard to disturbing human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center and the NAHC Sacred Lands File, and a review of historic topographic maps, revealed known areas with historic and prehistoric burials (Table 2.5-2, *Previously Recorded Burial Grounds and Cemeteries within the Castaic project area*). The burial grounds are not located in the immediate impact area; however, they are located within the quarter-mile buffer along the trail alignment. One of the burial grounds (P-19-000324) is a prehistoric cemetery; however, it was inundated during the construction of the Castaic Reservoir. The other (P-19-001448H) is an early-twentieth-century cemetery for victims of the 1928 St. Francis Dam

Disaster. In addition, not all areas of the proposed trail alignment and areas proposed for the three bike skills areas and appurtenant recreational facilities have been subject to a Phase I pedestrian survey for cultural resources. Therefore, there is a possibility to encounter human remains during the construction, operation, and maintenance phases of the proposed project. As such, the proposed project has the potential to result in significant impacts to human remains. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-4 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**TABLE 2.5-2  
PREVIOUSLY RECORDED BURIAL GROUNDS AND CEMETERIES  
WITHIN THE CASTAIC PROJECT AREA**

Primary Number	Trinomial	Time Period		Description
		Prehistoric	Historic	
P-19-000324	CA-LAN-000324	X		Elderberry Canyon Site - Cremation Site
P-19-001448	CA-LAN-001448H		X	Historic Cemetery

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-4: Regulatory Requirements – Human Remains.** In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are encountered during excavation activities, the County Coroner shall be notified within 24 hours of the discovery. No further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby areas reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the County Coroner has determined, within two working days of notification of the discovery, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains.

If the County Coroner determines that the remains are or are believed to be Native American, s/he shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in Sacramento within 24 hours. In accordance with Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code, the NAHC shall immediately notify the person(s) it believes to be the most likely descendant (MLD) of the deceased Native American. The descendants shall complete their inspection and make a recommendation within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated Native American representative would then determine, in consultation with the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks), the disposition of the human remains. The MLD's recommendation shall be followed if feasible, and may include scientific removal and non-destructive analysis of the human remains and any items associated with Native American burials. If County Parks rejects the MLD's recommendations, the agency shall rebury the remains with appropriate dignity on the property in a location that will not be subject to further subsurface disturbance (14 California Code of Regulations §15064.5(e)).



## 6. ENERGY

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to energy, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Energy at the Castaic project area was evaluated with regard to Los Angeles County Code Title 31.

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Conflict with Los Angeles County Green Building Standards Code (L.A. County Code Title 31)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in no impacts to energy related to a conflict with the Los Angeles County Green Building Standards Code. The purpose of the Code is to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact, or positive environmental impact, and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, and environmental air quality. The proposed project involves proposed multi-use trails and related staging areas, bike skills parks, parking areas, and other supporting trail facilities. At the programmatic level, restrooms would be constructed at the bike skills park. This building would be constructed consistent with the Code. While the details of the trail facilities are not known at this time, to be consistent with the County General Plan Air Element, the proposed project would be required to abide by the County's Green Building Program, Environmental Stewardship Program, and County's Community Climate Action Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to conflicts with L.A. County Code Title 31, and no mitigation would be required.

<b>b) Involve the inefficient use of energy resources (see Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would have no impact to energy related to the inefficient use of energy resources. According to Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, the goal of conserving energy implies the wise and efficient use of energy. This includes decreasing overall per capita energy consumption; decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas, and oil; and increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.

According to the SCAG 2016–2040 RTP/SCS Program Environmental Impact Report, residential energy use per household was 70 million Btu (British thermal units) in 2012.<sup>34</sup> The proposed project would reduce energy usage by providing recreation close to residential land uses, which is consistent with the 2016–2040 RTP/SCS. The construction equipment required to construct the trails would be minimal and in compliance with CARB regulations for diesel programs relating to mobile source, stationary engines, and portable equipment. The proposed project would additionally help achieve the goals in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines by reducing VMT by creating more local recreational opportunities, thereby decreasing overall per capita energy consumption and decreasing reliance on fossil fuels. As a trails plan, construction, operations, and maintenance of the proposed project would use energy in a manner that is consistent with

<sup>34</sup> Southern California Association of Governments. March 2016. Program Environmental Impact Report for the 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy. Prepared by: Sapphos Environmental, Inc.

the region. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact related to the inefficient use of energy resources, and no mitigation would be required.

## **7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to geology and soils, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis presented in this section is based on the Results of the Geology and Soils Analysis for the Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan (Appendix E).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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**Would the project:**

**a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**

**i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known active fault trace? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault. Although the Castaic project area is not located within a designated Alquist-Priolo zone, the San Gabriel and San Cayetano/Holser/Del Valle faults are fault zones of concern to the Castaic project area with regard to ground rupture. It is possible that fault movement of a few inches to several feet could occur with potential Magnitude (M) 6 to 7 events. However, the probability of such events and related movements is very low. The designated Alquist-Priolo zone is located to the southeast just outside of the Castaic project area, with only a few hundred feet of trail proposed in the AP zone (see Figure 8, *Earthquake Fault Activity*, in Appendix E). Active and potentially active faults may be sources of large earthquakes (M6.0 to 7.0) that would produce severe ground shaking within the Castaic project area. Local active strike-slip, reverse and thrust faults (e.g., San Fernando, Oak Ridge, San Cayetano/Holser/Del Valle, Garlock, White Wolf, San Gabriel, and San Andreas faults) and more distant buried (blind) thrust faults (e.g., Northridge Hills, Puente Hills, and Elysian Park) have this potential as well. Severe shaking can be very destructive to narrow ridgelines and steep slopes, causing severe cracking and slope failures (Appendix E). Proposed trails cross potentially active fault traces in six locations. Proposed trail facilities that may propose the construction of restrooms are not located within 50 feet of potentially active fault traces (see Figure 8 in Appendix E). These structures are not considered habitable and would be operated only between dawn and dusk. Therefore, the proposed trails and restroom facilities would not result in the exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault beyond those that already exist in the area. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong

seismic ground shaking. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The San Gabriel and San Cayetano/Holser/Del Valle faults are fault zones of concern to the Castaic project area with regard to strong seismic ground shaking as a result of the potential for M6 to 7 events (see Figure 8 in Appendix E). Active and potentially active faults may be sources of large earthquakes (M6.0 to 7.0) that would produce severe ground shaking within the Castaic project area. Local active strike-slip, reverse and thrust faults (e.g. San Fernando, Oak Ridge, San Cayetano/Holser/Del Valle, Garlock, White Wolf, San Gabriel, and San Andreas faults) and more distant buried (blind) thrust faults (e.g., Northridge Hills, Puente Hills, and Elysian Park) have this potential as well. Proposed trail facilities that may propose the construction of restrooms are not located within 50 feet of potentially active fault traces (see Figure 8 in Appendix E). These structures are not habitable and would be operated only between dawn and dusk. However, proposed trails cross potentially active fault traces in six locations. Any severe shaking could be very destructive to narrow ridgelines and steep slopes, causing severe cracking and slope failures (Appendix F). Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure GEO-1:** A geotechnical and engineering geology investigation shall be conducted for the Proposed Project, based on preliminary design plans (showing trail and restroom locations), by a licensed geotechnical engineer and a licensed engineering geologist in the State of California. The resulting Geotechnical and Engineering Geology Report and Erosion Control Plan shall summarize the results of field investigations, laboratory testing, and geotechnical/geologic analysis regarding: (1) active and potentially active faults, (2) seismic ground shaking, (3) seismic related ground failure, (4) landslides, (5) soil erosion, (6) unstable geologic and soil units, (7) expansive soils, (8) wastewater disposal characteristics, and (9) the effects of hillside ground slope on trail/restroom design and construction. The technical data, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations shall be considered and adopted in the design and construction of the project facilities based on the review and approval by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works and County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Adherence to the approved design and construction recommendations shall be verified by review and approval of the final design. Construction site inspections shall be conducted by, and in coordination with, the project geotechnical engineer and engineering geologist. All activities shall be consistent with the County of Los Angeles Trails Manual, and shall adhere to the standards and requirements in the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24), Los Angeles County Building Code, Title 26, and/or professional engineering standards appropriate for such construction within the County. The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division, shall enforce conformance with these design standards through plan review and approval, prior to the issuance of building permits for any facility.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including  
liquefaction and lateral spreading?

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The expected level of ground shaking in the Castaic project area is high enough to initiate liquefaction as a result of there being expected high seismic shaking levels, areas of shallow groundwater, and cohesionless sands (see Figure 9, *Earthquake Induced Landslides and Liquefaction* [CDMG, 1997, etc.], in Appendix E). The southern portion of the Castaic project area contains several areas that are subject to liquefaction, and 13 of the 21 proposed facility locations are within an area of liquefaction (see Figure 9 in Appendix E). As a result, the proposed project may result in the exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving



seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and lateral spreading. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance as established by the Uniform Building Code.

**iv) Landslides?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. An estimated 40 to 50 percent of the mountains and hills of the Castaic project area are potential earthquake-induced landslide areas. These areas correspond to bedrock and to a lesser extent older alluvium with steep slopes (see Figure 9 and Figure 5, *Multi-Use Trails Area Geology*, in Appendix E). Landslide movement may occur along bedding planes within these formations, as rocks dislodged from exposures on steep slopes, or as surficial failures of weathered rock and soil/colluvium. Such movement could cause rock masses to dislocate and damage overlying facilities and facilities nearby and downslope from these bedrock and older alluvium areas (Appendix E). The majority of the Castaic project area is located in areas subject to earthquake induced landslides and two of the proposed facility locations are within areas subject to earthquake induced landslides (see Figure 9 in Appendix E). As a result, the proposed project may result in the exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismically induced landslides, thus requiring implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 to reduce the risk to below the level of significance as established by the Uniform Building Code.

**b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to resulting in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. The Castaic project area has numerous primary and secondary drainages. West of Castaic Valley and the I-5 freeway the primary drainages from north to south include Violin, Palomas, Santa Felicia, Devil, Romero, Sloan, Hasley, Oak, Lechier, San Martinez Chiquito, Holser, and San Martinez Grande. These empty into either Castaic Valley or the Santa Clara River. East of Castaic Valley and the I-5 Freeway from north to south are Grasshopper, Charlie, Tapia, Wayside, and San Francisquito Canyons all of which also empty into either Castaic Valley or the Santa Clara River. Within the Castaic project area, most drainage areas form relatively narrow canyons at higher elevations and transition to the broader floodplains. With regard to drainage area size,<sup>35,36,37,38</sup> the larger drainages in the Castaic project area are Grasshopper, Violin, and Palomas from north to south; Romero and Hasley from west to east; San Martinez Grande/Chiquito from west to east to south; Charlie, Tapia, Wayside, and San Francisquito Canyons from east to west; and Castaic Valley from north to south. All eventually empty into the Santa Clara River (see Figure 7, *Multi-Use Trails Plan Area Hydrology Map*, in Appendix E). Rainfall events may result in erosion or the loss of topsoil in these drainages. Proposed trails are required to be designed consistent with the standards of the County Trails Manual that requires erosion control to be an element of trail design. Additionally, trail construction would also be subject to the requirements of the County. As a result, significant impacts related to substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil would be avoided, and no mitigation would be required.

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 1969. Oat Mountain 7.5-minute quadrangle, Los Angeles County, California.

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 1969, Simi Valley East 7.5-minute quadrangle, Los Angeles County, California.

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 1995. Val Verde 7.5-minute quadrangle, Los Angeles County, California.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Geological Survey. 1995. Newhall 7.5-minute quadrangle, Los Angeles County, California.

**c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to being located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project. Oil field activity in the project area could lead to local subsidence that could manifest as cracks and areas of ground settlement. Large portions of the Castaic project area contain oil fields and past oil drilling and well activity. Approximately 10.4 miles of trails are proposed for areas located within oil fields (see Figure 10, *Oil Wells in the Castaic project area*, in Appendix E). Due to the likely limited extent of trails in these areas, the years over which pumping has already occurred, and the relatively low level of oil extraction, this would have a minimum impact. Affected areas can be repaired to level ground and eliminate ground cracks that may form (Appendix E). Compliance with County Grading Application Requirements, the County Building Code, and the County Trails Manual are sufficient to avoid significant impacts related to proposed project trails or facilities that may be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and mitigation would not be required.

**d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to being located on expansive soil. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The proposed project may result in the placement of trails or structures in areas of expansive soil. Surface subsidence/settlement may occur in the Castaic project area where it is found to have soil susceptible to expansion/contraction (very clay-rich soils) and possibly hydroconsolidation (fine-grained granular soils). When present, moderate to high expansion indices indicate that there is a substantial amount of clay in the soils and repeated episodes of wetting and drying will cause distress to structures in contact with such soils (Appendix E). Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts in regard to expansive soil risks. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to having soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The proposed project includes the use of restrooms at various locations throughout/along the trail system. Depending on the selected locations (e.g., bedrock or alluvium), soils may have inadequate infiltration capacity or groundwater may be sufficiently shallow that infiltration will reach potentially potable groundwater (Appendix E). The proposed project plans for restroom facilities at trailheads that may require siting within soil types that would not support onsite water treatment systems. Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts in regard to having soils incapable of

adequately supporting the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems where sewers are not available. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**f) Conflict with the Hillside Management Area Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 22, § 22.56.215) or hillside design standards in the County General Plan Conservation and Natural Resources Element?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to geology and soils in regard to conflicts with the Hillside Management Area Ordinance or hillside design standards in the County General Plan. The Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance applies to areas greater than 25 percent slope.<sup>39</sup> Approximately 1,926 acres of the total Castaic project area consists of slopes greater than 25 percent (see Figure 1.11-1, *Castaic Project Area Slope*). Ground surface slopes in the Castaic project area are relatively steep with most greater than 20 percent in the upper elevation hills and mountains, reaching greater than 40 percent adjacent to ridges. Slopes in the lowest foothills immediately adjacent to the mountains, in canyons, valley and active drainages designated above are generally less than 20 percent and predominantly less than 6 percent (e.g., Castaic Valley and Violin, Hasley, San Martinez Grande, and San Francisquito Canyons). Portions of proposed recreational trails may cross through the areas greater than 25 percent slope. As a result, trails that cross through these areas would be subject to the requirements and design standards of the Hillside Management Ordinance and hillside design standards in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element of the General Plan. Specifically, sensitive hillside design measures (2.1 through 2.12) would be applied to the trail and facilities (e.g., restrooms) (Appendix E). Further, the Hillside Management Ordinance requires that all new development in areas over 25 percent slope obtain a CUP as part of the entitlement process.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, the proposed project would not result in in conflicts with the Hillside Management Area Ordinance or the hillside design standards in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element of the County General Plan. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>39</sup> County of Los Angeles. Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance. November 5, 2015. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma\\_adopted-ordinance.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma_adopted-ordinance.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> County of Los Angeles. Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance. November 5, 2015. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma\\_adopted-ordinance.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma_adopted-ordinance.pdf)

## **8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis presented in this section is based on the *Air Quality Analysis for Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan* (Appendix B).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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**Would the project:**

**a) Generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to generating GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment. The principal anthropogenic GHGs that enter the atmosphere consist of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (CFCs), perfluorocarbons (HCFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>). Among these GHGs, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are considered to be the most abundant type of GHG emissions contributing to global climate change. To quantitatively analyze the proposed project's impacts on global climate change, URBEMIS 2007, version 9.2.4, was used to calculate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions resulting from construction and operation of the proposed project (Appendix B). Given the absence of federal, state, or regional construction-related and operation related GHG emissions thresholds of significance, California's total GHG emissions for 2010 (most recent data) were used to determine the significance level of the proposed project's impacts on global climate change. In 2010, California was reported to have contributed approximately 369.8 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions statewide. According to URBEMIS 2007, version 9.2.4, Combined Annual Emission Reports (Tons/Year), approximately 121.89 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) per year would be emitted as result of the proposed project's construction (Appendix B). This is approximately 0.00003 percent of California's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2010. Operations of the proposed project would be expected to result in approximately 82.12 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions per year (Appendix B). This is approximately 0.00002 percent of California's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2010. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to generating greenhouse gas emissions, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to conflicting with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. The applicable plans are the SCAQMD AQMP, SCAG 2016–2040 RTP/SCS, Air Quality Element in the County General Plan, and the County of Los Angeles Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP). The proposed project would be consistent with the SCAQMD AQMP that was adopted in 2012. Because the construction and operational emissions (Table 10, *Estimated Daily Construction Emissions*, and Table 11, *Estimated Daily Operational Emissions*, of Appendix B) for PM<sub>2.5</sub> and the ozone precursors are below the significance threshold set by SCAQMD, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of SCAQMD's AQMP, cause a violation of the standards, or impact the attainment status of SCAQMD. The proposed project would be consistent with the SCAG 2016–2040 RTP/SCS and the Air

Quality Element of the County of Los Angeles General Plan 2035 because, by decreasing the distance people travel to recreational trails, the proposed project would reduce VMT and resulting GHG emissions. CARB has set the following reduction targets for the SCAG region: reduce per capita GHG emissions 8 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 13 percent by 2035. The proposed project also fulfills the land use and transportation strategy area in the County of Los Angeles CCAP to reduce VMT and promote sustainability in land use design in the unincorporated areas of the County. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation related to reducing GHG emissions, and no mitigation would be required.



## **9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to hazards and hazardous materials, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, storage, production, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hazards and hazardous materials in regard to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Land use within the Castaic project area is not typically associated with hazards or hazardous materials, as the predominant land use designations within the Castaic project area are agricultural and open space (see Figure 1.7-1, *Los Angeles County Zoning Designations*). No routine hazardous materials transport, use, or disposal would occur as a result of the proposed project, and hazardous materials storage would not occur. The construction of the proposed project would require limited use of hazardous materials; however, construction would occur pursuant to County building code requirements. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, and mitigation would not be required.

<b>b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials or waste into the environment?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials or waste into the environment. Land use within the Castaic project area is not typically associated with hazards or hazardous materials, as the predominant land use designations within the Castaic project area are agricultural and open space (see Figure 1.7-1). Construction activities would involve the use of hazardous materials, such as paints, thinners, solvents, acids, curing compounds, grease, oils, and other chemicals, which could pose risks to construction workers or lead to soil and groundwater contamination if not properly stored, used, or disposed. However, handling of hazardous materials would be in accordance with the following existing regulations: the Toxic Substance Control Act, Hazardous Material Transportation Act, Resource Conservation Act, Certified Unified Program Agency, and Californian Accidental Release Prevention Program. These regulations include the proper transport of hazardous materials; on-site storage and use; and procedures to implement in the event of a spill. Proposed trails may cross underground pipelines. Grading and excavation may disturb oil and gas pipelines and lead to leaks, fire, explosions, and related hazards. Compliance with Title 8, Section 1541, of the California Code of Regulation (CCR), regarding notification of and coordination with the pipelines' owners/operators (through the DigAlert program) and their approval and monitoring of activities near the pipelines would avoid damage to these lines and would prevent the creation of hazards to the surrounding area. The Federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Acts include regulations pertaining to worker safety, including

standards for safe workplaces and work practices. The California Office of Emergency Services, Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Section, under the Fire and Rescue Division, coordinates statewide implementation of hazardous materials accident prevention and emergency response programs for all types of hazardous materials incidents and threats. In response to any hazardous materials emergency, the Section staff is called upon to provide state and local emergency managers with emergency coordination and technical assistance.<sup>41</sup> The California Office of Emergency Services immediately takes on the Incident Command responsibility after an emergency incident involving transport on the railways, and has a goal of resolving incidents within 90 minutes. The proposed project would follow the requirements of the County Trails Manual and County building codes. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of sensitive land uses?**

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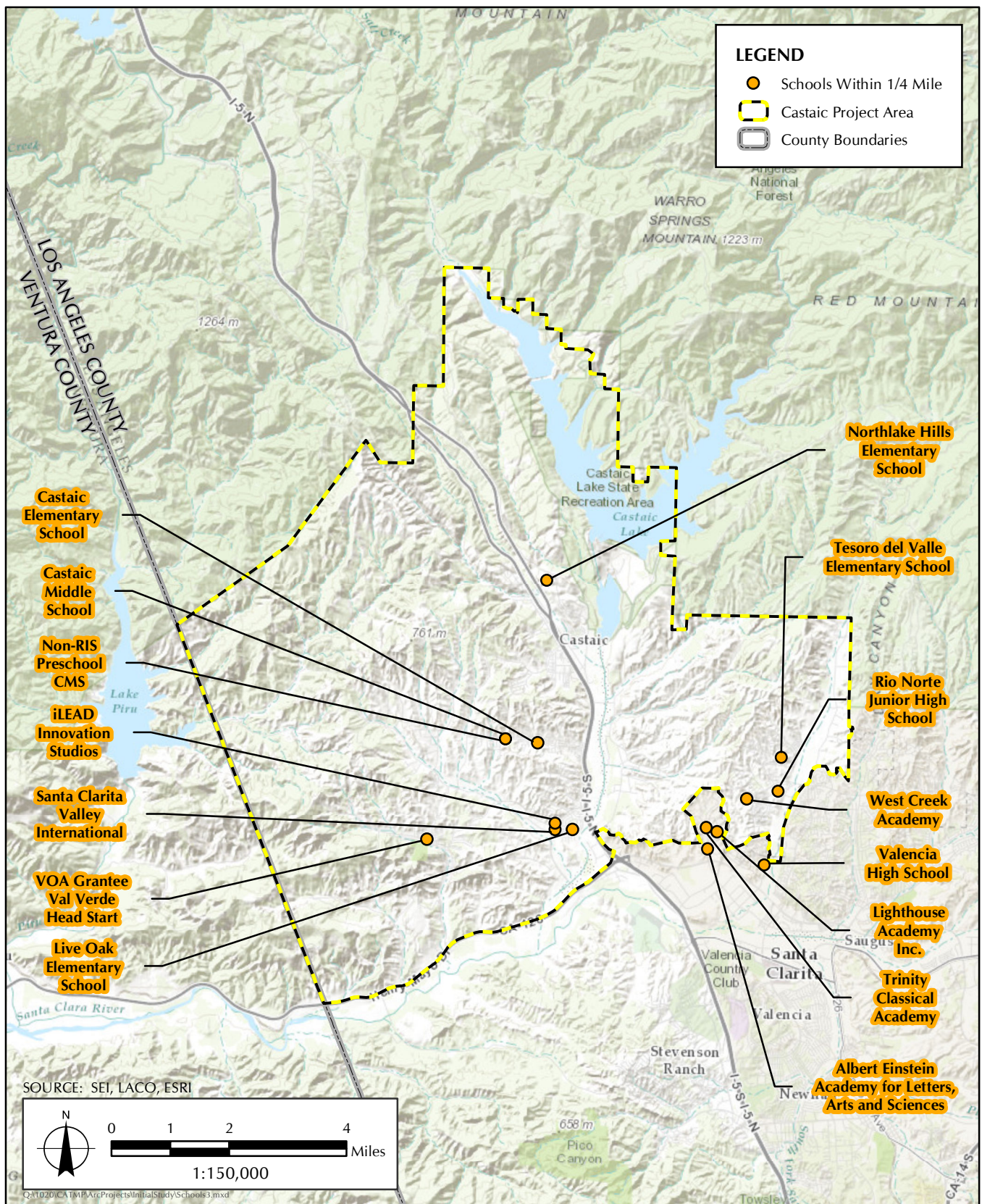
The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to emitting hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of sensitive land uses. There are 15 schools located within one-quarter mile of the Castaic project area (Figure 2.9-1, *Schools within One-Quarter Mile of Castaic Project Area*). The proposed project would not pose a significant hazard to the students and faculty of the schools due to the lack of routine hazardous materials use associated with the proposed trails and supporting trail facilities. During construction, hazardous material use, storage, and disposal would be made in accordance with existing regulations found in the Toxic Substance Control Act, Hazardous Material Transportation Act, Resource Conservation Act, Certified Unified Program Agency, and Californian Accidental Release Prevention Program. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to emitting hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of sensitive land uses, and no mitigation would be required.

**d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?**

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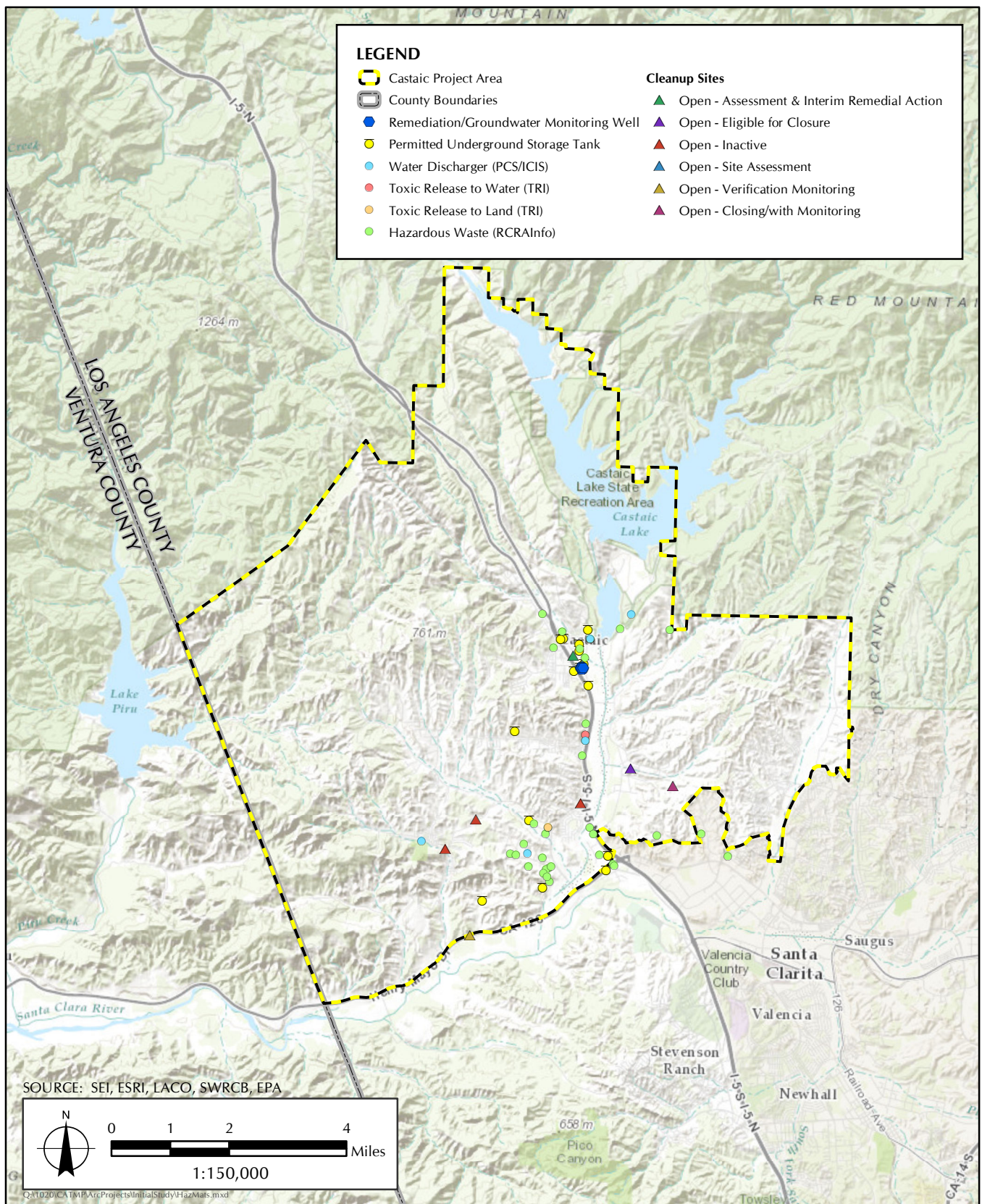
The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to being located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment. The review of the CalEPA EnviroStor database indicates that areas in the vicinity of the proposed trails plan are included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (Figure 2.9-2, *Hazardous Sites within One-Eighth Mile of Castaic Project Area*; Table 2.9-1, *Hazardous Materials Sites*). However, construction of the proposed project would conform to requirements of the County Trails Manual and County building codes. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to being located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment, and mitigation would not be required.

<sup>41</sup> State of California. 2011. <http://www.caloes.ca.gov/for-individuals-families/hazardous-materials>



**FIGURE 2.9-1**  
Schools within One-Quarter Mile of Castaic Project Area





**FIGURE 2.9-2**  
Hazardous Sites Within One-Eighth Mile of Castaic Project Area

**TABLE 2.9-1  
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES**

<b>Business Name</b>	<b>Case Type</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Potential Hazardous Material</b>	<b>Potential Source Affected</b>
CASTAIC OPERATIONS & MAINT CTR	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Soil
NEWHALL LAND & FARMING	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Soil
SCHWARTZ OIL CO.	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
7-ELEVEN STORE #26945	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
GIANT TRUCK STOP	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Diesel	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
UNOCAL - DEL VALLE	Cleanup Program Site	Open - Inactive		
PROPOSED SCHOOL BUS STOP	Cleanup Program Site	Completed - Case Closed		
NEWHALL LAND & FARMING	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Soil
Gallions Castaic Corner	LUST Cleanup Site	Open - Site Assessment	Gasoline	Soil
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - NEWHALL MOOSE LO	Cleanup Program Site	Completed - Case Closed		
MOBIL #11-FKA	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Aviation	Soil
CASTAIC BRICK	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Soil
GIANT TRUCK STOPS	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Diesel	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
LA CO FD FIRE STATION #077	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Aviation	Soil
Gilmour Mud Sump	Land Disposal Site	Open - Inactive		
PETER PITCHESS LANDFILL	Land Disposal Site	Open - Closing/with Monitoring		
UNOCAL #5970	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Waste Oil / Motor / Hydraulic / Lubricating	Soil
NEWHALL LAND & FARMING	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Diesel	Soil
EARL SCHMIDT TREATMENT PLANT	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Waste Oil / Motor / Hydraulic / Lubricating	Soil
SHELL SERVICE STATION	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL	Land Disposal Site	Open - Verification Monitoring		
UNION OIL COMPANY/ UNOCAL STATION	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Gasoline	Soil



VALENCIA WATER RECLAMATION PLN	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Diesel	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
FORMER SHELL STATION	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Other Solvent or Non-Petroleum Hydrocarbon, Benzene	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
Unocal Station #255970	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	MTBE / TBA / Other Fuel Oxygenates	
VINTAGE PETROLEUM	LUST Cleanup Site	Open - Inactive		
UNOCAL - LINCOLN LEASE	Cleanup Program Site	Completed - Case Closed		
Former SADD Lease North and South Pads	Cleanup Program Site	Completed - Case Closed	Crude Oil	Soil
CHEVRON #9-1899 (FORMER)	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Waste Oil / Motor / Hydraulic / Lubricating	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
US POSTAL - SANTA CLARITA P & DC	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	MTBE / TBA / Other Fuel Oxygenates	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
SCHWARTZ OIL CO.	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Other Solvent or Non-Petroleum Hydrocarbon	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
VILLAGE FUEL STOP	LUST Cleanup Site	Open - Assessment & Interim Remedial Action	Gasoline	Aquifer used for drinking water supply
LA CO SHERIFF PJP HONOR	LUST Cleanup Site	Open - Eligible for Closure	Other Solvent or Non-Petroleum Hydrocarbon	Soil
LA CO FIRE STATION #076	LUST Cleanup Site	Completed - Case Closed	Other Solvent or Non-Petroleum Hydrocarbon	Soil

**e) For a project located within an airport land use plan, or where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to being located within an airport land use plan, or where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Castaic project area. The distance to the nearest public airports are 12.7 miles for the Agua Dulce Airpark and 15.1 miles for the Whiteman Airport. The proposed project would not be located within the airport influence area of either airport. Therefore there would be no impacts, and no mitigation would be required.

**f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to being located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, or resulting in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Castaic project area. The

distance to the nearest private airstrip is 13.0 miles for the Quail Lake Sky Park. Therefore there would be no impact, and no mitigation would be required.

**g) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to impairing implementation of, or physically interference with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The proposed project would involve construction near public roadways that are used for emergency response and evacuation.

Based on the traffic and parking assessment prepared for the proposed project, it was determined that peak trail demand (weekends during mid-day) would not coincide with peak roadway demand and, thus, would have minimal impact on traffic conditions during the weekday AM and PM commuter peaks (Appendix G, *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Traffic Assessment*). Emergency response to County trails would be provided by various agencies, depending on the location. In many cases, the closest public safety agency would respond, which may include County sheriffs, local police, or national forest personnel. Way-finding signs should also include emergency response information, such as emergency phone numbers and trail addresses if applicable. The proposed project would conform to the County Trails Manual. Therefore, there would be less than significant impacts in regard to the impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, and no mitigation would be required.

**h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving fires, because the project is located:**

**i) within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Zone 4)?**

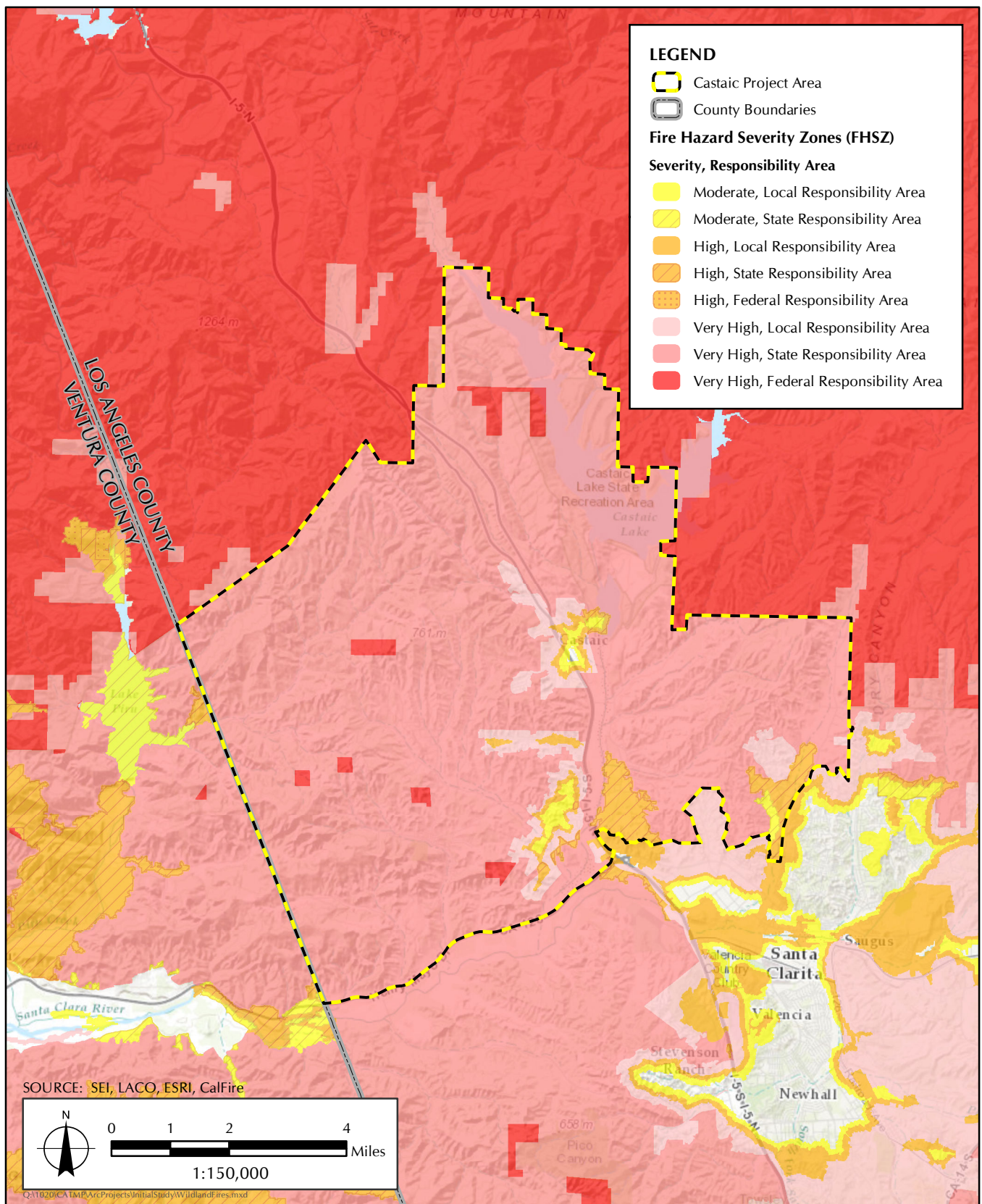
☐☐☒☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to exposing people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving fires. Based on the review of fire severity hazard zone maps developed by CAL FIRE,<sup>42</sup> portions of the proposed initiative are situated in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (Figure 2.9-3, *Fire Hazard Severity Zones*). The proposed project would allow development of trails and trail related structures in areas that have been designated as High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, where there is the potential for exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. However, the County building permit process reduces the potential exposure of people and structures to significant loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires to below the level of significance, through the requirement to use fire-resistant construction materials such as for roofs and design features such as enclosing eaves, and through the requirement for submittal and approval of a fuel modification plan, prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>42</sup> California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Fire and Resources Assessment Program. Available at: [http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire\\_prevention/fhsz\\_maps\\_losangeles.php](http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fhsz_maps_losangeles.php)

<sup>43</sup> County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Prevention Services Bureau, Forestry Division, Brush Clearance Section. 2011. Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines: A Firewise Landscape Guide for Creating and Maintaining Defensible Space.



**FIGURE 2.9-3**  
Fire Hazard Severity Zones

ii) within a high fire hazard area with inadequate access?

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to being located in a high fire hazard area with inadequate access. Mutual aid agreements are maintained with local, state, and federal agencies. As part of the Consolidated Fire Protection District, the entire Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan area, including the entire Castaic project area, receives urban and wildland fire protection services from the LACoFD.<sup>44</sup> LACoFD provides fire protection services, fire prevention services, emergency medical services, hazardous materials services, and urban search and rescue services. According to the Safety Element of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) has adopted a goal of responding to calls in urban areas within five minutes, in suburban areas within eight minutes, and in rural areas within 12 minutes.<sup>45</sup> However, actual response times vary due to distances and road conditions. The Castaic project area is located within the service areas of LACoFD Station #149 (Castaic) and #76 (Valencia) (Figure 2.15.2, *Los Angeles County Fire Department Fire Station Services Areas*). Station #149, which also serves as Battalion 6 and is located in the community of Castaic at 31770 Ridge Route Road, Castaic, CA 91384, provides fire and rescue services and safe haven services for unincorporated Los Angeles County and for cities in the County which contract with it, including forest areas.<sup>46</sup> Station #76 is located at 27223 Henry Mayo Drive, Valencia, CA 91355. Four fire stations are proposed in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan that are located within the Castaic project area on Chiquito Canyon Road, along Hasley Canyon Road (#143), near Avenida Rancho Tesoro (#138), and on Copper Hill Drive (#156).<sup>47</sup> The LACoFD has adopted the State Fire Code standards for new development in hazardous fire areas. Fire prevention requirements include provision of access roads, adequate road width, and clearance of brush around structures located in hillside areas. In addition, proof of adequate water supply for fire flow is required within a designated distance for new construction in fire hazard areas.

The LACoFD operates an approximately 0.25-mile training facility in the southwestern corner of the Castaic project area, near Chiquito Canyon Road. During coordination with LACoFD in the agency/community outreach planning phase for the proposed project, LACoFD asked that trails be designed to not interfere with training at LACoFD's Del Valle training center. LACoFD also asked about providing specific quarter-mile trail markers to be used and GIS shapefiles of trails to be provided to LACoFD upon development of trails with trail marker locations to facilitate emergency response and evacuation. This feedback has been integrated into the scope of the proposed project.

The proposed project involves planning for the construction and maintenance of approximately 100 miles of new trails, up to 45 acres of bike skills parks, and related facilities. Trails would be up to 12 feet wide to support bicyclists, equestrians, and hikers. The proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth because it involves no new homes or businesses, and it does not propose the extension of roads or other infrastructure to support new trails and related facilities. However, the proposed project would be expected to serve as a regional recreation facility in the County of Los Angeles that would be expected to generate day use from local residents and from throughout the area,

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<sup>44</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>. Chapter 5: Safety. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2012-ch\\_05\\_safety.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2012-ch_05_safety.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>

<sup>46</sup> County of Los Angeles Fire Department. Accessed 4 March 2016. Find Services in Los Angeles County. Available at: <http://www.fire.lacounty.gov/fire-station-listings/>

<sup>47</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>

which has the potential to result in a very minor increase in emergency response, search and rescue, and other fire protection services if any injuries, missing persons, or fire incidents occur. Consistent with Section 4.3.6, *Way-finding Signs*, of the County Trails Manual, the proposed project would include reassurance marker signs at every quarter (0.25) mile of trail that identify the name of the trail and quarter milepost number in order to orient search and rescue services in the case of an emergency. The County Department of Parks and Recreation would be responsible for providing updated data to the Los Angeles County Fire Department marking the location of each quarter milepost along the trail for emergency response purposes. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**iii) within an area with inadequate water and pressure to meet fire flow standards?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regards to being located within an area with inadequate water and pressure to meet fire flow standards. Mutual aid agreements are maintained with local, state, and federal agencies. As part of the Consolidated Fire Protection District, the entire Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan area, including the entire Castaic project area, receives urban and wildland fire protection services from the LACoFD.<sup>48</sup> LACoFD provides fire protection services, fire prevention services, emergency medical services, hazardous materials services, and urban search and rescue services. According to the Safety Element of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) has adopted a goal of responding to calls in urban areas within five minutes, in suburban areas within eight minutes, and in rural areas within 12 minutes.<sup>49</sup> However, actual response times vary due to distances and road conditions. The Castaic project area is located within the service areas of LACoFD Station #149 (Castaic) and #76 (Valencia) (Figure 2.15.2, *Los Angeles County Fire Department Fire Station Services Areas*). Station #149, which also serves as Battalion 6 and is located in the community of Castaic at 31770 Ridge Route Road, Castaic, CA 91384, provides fire and rescue services and safe haven services for unincorporated Los Angeles County and for cities in the County which contract with it, including forest areas.<sup>50</sup> Station #76 is located at 27223 Henry Mayo Drive, Valencia, CA 91355. Four fire stations are proposed in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan that are located within the Castaic project area on Chiquito Canyon Road, along Hasley Canyon Road (#143), near Avenida Rancho Tesoro (#138), and on Copper Hill Drive (#156).<sup>51</sup> The LACoFD has adopted the State Fire Code standards for new development in hazardous fire areas. Fire prevention requirements include provision of access roads, adequate road width, and clearance of brush around structures located in hillside areas. In addition, proof of adequate water supply for fire flow is required within a designated distance for new construction in fire hazard areas. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

<sup>48</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>. Chapter 5: Safety. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2012-ch\\_05\\_safety.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2012-ch_05_safety.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>

<sup>50</sup> County of Los Angeles Fire Department. Accessed 4 March 2016. Find Services in Los Angeles County. Available at: <http://www.fire.lacounty.gov/fire-station-listings/>

<sup>51</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>



**iv) within proximity to land uses that have the potential for dangerous fire hazard?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to exposing people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving fires. Based on the review of fire severity hazard zone maps developed by CAL FIRE,<sup>52</sup> portions of the proposed initiative are situated in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (Figure 2.9-3, *Fire Hazard Severity Zones*). The proposed project would allow development of trails and trail related structures in areas that have been designated as High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, where there is the potential for exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. However, the County building permit process reduces the potential exposure of people and structures to significant loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires to below the level of significance, through the requirement to use fire-resistant construction materials such as for roofs and design features such as enclosing eaves, and through the requirement for submittal and approval of a fuel modification plan, prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**i) Does the proposed use constitute a potentially dangerous fire hazard?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to constituting a potentially dangerous fire hazard. Consistent with the County Trails Manual, landscaping around trailheads and along trails would be designed to balance fire mitigation with habitat conservation and slope preservation.<sup>54</sup> In accordance with County Code, fires are only permitted in signed and designated areas of County Parkland (County Code 17.04.590), fireworks or other combustible materials are not permitted along any trail (County Code 17.04.520 and 17.04.610), and firearms are not permitted on County trails except in designated areas (County Code 17.04.620 and 17.08.300).<sup>55</sup> Structures and parking lots would be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the County of Los Angeles Fire Code (Title 32).<sup>56</sup> Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>52</sup> California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Fire and Resources Assessment Program. Available at: [http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire\\_prevention/fhsz\\_maps\\_losangeles.php](http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fhsz_maps_losangeles.php)

<sup>53</sup> County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Prevention Services Bureau, Forestry Division, Brush Clearance Section. 2011. Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines: A Firewise Landscape Guide for Creating and Maintaining Defensible Space.

<sup>54</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Municode Library. Accessed 13 March 2016. Los Angeles County, CA: Part 3 – Park Rules and Regulations. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT17PABEOTPUAR\\_CH17.04PAREAR\\_PT3PARURE](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT17PABEOTPUAR_CH17.04PAREAR_PT3PARURE)

<sup>56</sup> Municode Library. Accessed 13 March 2016. Los Angeles County, CA: Title 32 – Fire Code. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT32FICO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT32FICO)

## 10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to hydrology and water quality, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis presented in this section is based on the *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Hydrology and Water Quality Assessment* (Appendix F), as well as on the *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Biological Resources Assessment* (Appendix C).

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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**Would the project:**

**a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to violating any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. The Castaic Lake is the only water body listed as impaired within the Castaic project area (Figure 2.10-1, *Impaired Water Bodies*). The Castaic Lake is listed as impaired for mercury, and has a designated use of commercial and sport fishing. A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is required, but has not yet been developed for Castaic Lake Mercury. Construction activity associated with trail construction and operations is not anticipated to add additional mercury pollutants. Where grading is required to construct the trail improvements is in excess of one acre, it would be subject to General Construction Permit and require preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Additionally, grading that occurs in the vicinity of an SEA may be subject to storm water controls at the discretion of the County Building Department when disturbance is less than an acre.

Most of the main drainages are classified on USGS topographic maps as blue-line streams, indicating that under certain conditions the streams convey water flows. A blue-line stream would be classified as either a positive or negative control point for planning the path of a new trail. In some instances, blue-line streams can be identified as negative control points because the stream can pose a hazard to users or cause excessive damage to natural resources. However, blue-line streams can also provide access to water bodies where the Basin Plan identifies the water body as being suitable for body contact recreation or the water body provides an important visual or aesthetic experience and the blue-line stream would then be considered a positive control point.

Impacts in regard to violating any water quality standards or waste discharge would be less than significant through compliance with the County's LID ordinance, requiring the use of two best management practices (BMPs), and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**FIGURE 2.10-1**  
Impaired Water Bodies



The proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to substantially depleting groundwater supplies or interfering substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of preexisting nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted). Depth to groundwater has reported at 10 to 100 feet below ground surface from the limited investigations that have been undertaken in the Castaic project area (Figure 2.10-2, *Water Resources*); therefore, there would be no impact as a result of near surface grading required to accommodate new trails and improvements to existing trails.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, near surface grading would not generate demand for groundwater supplies. Therefore, there would be no impacts in regards to depleting groundwater supplies, and mitigation would not be required.

**c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?**

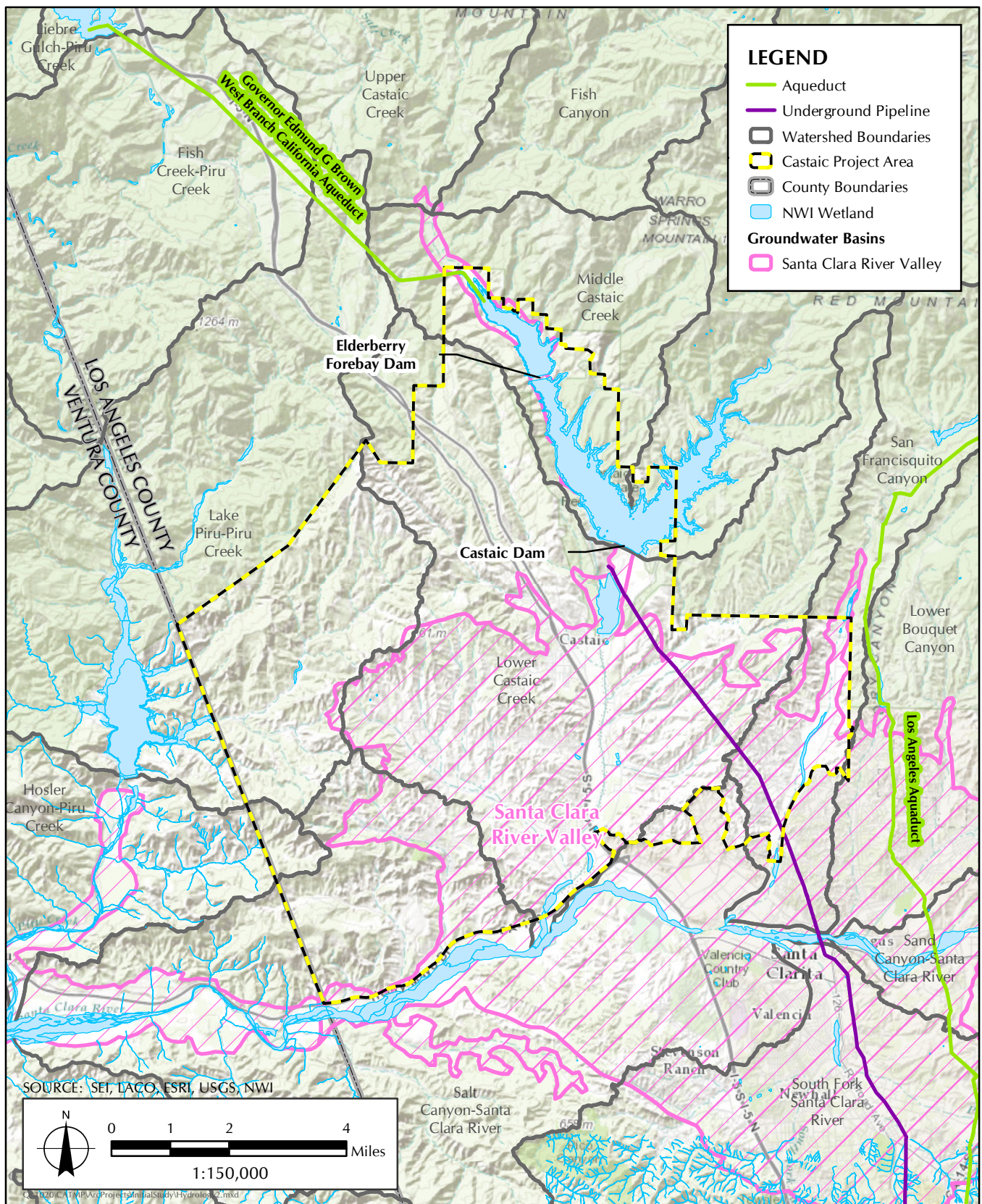


The proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts to hydrology through the alteration of natural drainages where the trails cross such drainages, which in turn would have the potential to substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site during the construction of trails and associated structures. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance.

There are approximately 144 linear miles of features identified as blue-line drainages in the Castaic project area (see Figure 2.10-1). Proposed trail width in the proposed project varies between 3 and 12 feet. Therefore, based on a worst-case analysis using a maximum width of 12 feet and incorporating a 250-foot buffer to account for construction disturbances beyond the trail footprint, approximately 36.5 miles of features identified as blue-line drainages that may include waters of the United States would be converted to trails and other recreation amenities or would be disturbed through associated construction activities. Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. Additionally, proposed trail facilities such as the proposed bike parks are proposed to be developed near jurisdictional waterbodies, namely Castaic Creek. These construction activities have the potential to occur within and adjacent to state and federal waters of the United States on-site. Impacts would include disruption of streams as new trails are developed, and dredge and fill activities associated with trail development. Trail development projects would be subject to the provisions of Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Dredge or fill in Waters of the United States is subject to the regulatory authority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Trail development projects would also be subject to the provisions of Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code in which a Streambed Alteration Agreement would need to be obtained prior to the alteration of a State jurisdictional area. The proposed trails plan will be in compliance with the County's LID ordinance, requiring the use of two BMPs.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to hydrology in regard to substantially altering the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in erosion or siltation on or off site. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

<sup>57</sup> California's Groundwater Bulletin 118; Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, Santa Clara River Valley East Subbasin. 2006.



**FIGURE 2.10-2**  
Water Resources



**d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to hydrology in regard to substantially altering the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off-site. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance.

There are approximately 144 linear miles of features identified as blue-line drainage in the Castaic project area (see Figure 2.10-1). Proposed trail width in the proposed project varies between 3 and 12 feet. Therefore, based on a worst-case analysis using a maximum width of 12 feet and incorporating a 250-foot buffer to account for construction disturbances beyond the trail footprint, approximately 36.5 miles of blue-line drainages that may include waters of the United States would be converted to trails and other recreation amenities or would be disturbed through associated construction activities. Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. These construction activities have the potential to occur within and adjacent to state and federal waters of the United States on-site. Impacts would include disruption of streams as new trails are developed and also dredge and fill activities associated with trail development. Trail development projects would be subject to the provisions of Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Dredge or fill in waters of the United States is subject to the regulatory authority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Trail development projects would also be subject to the provisions of Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code in which a Streambed Alteration Agreement would need to be obtained prior to the alteration of a state jurisdictional area. Additionally, trail maintenance following flood events will be addressed in any permits pursuant to section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act and Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to hydrology in regard to substantially altering the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off-site. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**e) Add water features or create conditions in which standing water can accumulate that could increase habitat for mosquitoes and other vectors that transmit diseases such as the West Nile virus and result in increased pesticide use?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to adding water features or create conditions in which standing water can accumulate that could increase habitat for mosquitoes and other vectors that transmit diseases such as the West Nile virus and result in increased pesticide use. Major water bodies in the Castaic project area include Castaic Lake and Castaic Lagoon, both of which are located within the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area. In the past four years, the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area has attracted an average of 206 visitor parties (individual vehicles) per day, ranging throughout the year from an average of 60 to 90 visitor parties per day between November and February to

an average of 250 to 412 visitor parties between May and September (summer peak visitor season).<sup>58</sup> The Los Angeles County Vector Control District was contacted to inquire about reported cases in the Castaic Area.<sup>59</sup> Although mosquitoes are present in the Castaic Area, in 2015, there were no West Nile Virus samples of the mosquitoes tested by the Los Angeles County Vector Control District in the vicinity of Castaic Lake. The nearest West Nile Virus sample of mosquitoes was identified in November 2015 at Central Park (located approximately 2 miles southeast of Castaic project area) in the City of Santa Clarita. This was the only case in the vicinity of the Castaic project area all year. The proposed project would not add water features or create conditions in which standing water can accumulate. Additionally the proposed project would be required to be designed consistent with the recommendations of the County Trails Manual.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to adding water features or create conditions in which standing water can accumulate that could increase habitat for mosquitoes and other vectors that transmit diseases such as the West Nile virus and result in increased pesticide use, and no mitigation would be required.

**f) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to creating or contributing runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Portions of the proposed trails plan will be in areas serviced by stormwater drainage systems (see Figure 2.18-1, *Storm Drain Network*, in Section 2.18, *Utilities/Services*). The proposed project would be required to be designed in accordance with the recommendations of the County Trails Plan. The plan requires the use of erosion control devices that would limit the amount of runoff entering existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Additionally, the proposed project would result in a worst case scenario of direct impacts to approximately 278.1 acres as a result of construction and operations of the trails and trail related facilities. The project would be in compliance with the County's LID ordinance, requiring the use of two BMPs, and would not be expected to increase stormwater runoff. Therefore, the project would not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff, and no mitigation would be required.

**g) Generate construction or post-construction runoff that would violate applicable stormwater NPDES permits or otherwise significantly affect surface water or groundwater quality?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to generating construction or post-construction runoff that would violate applicable stormwater NPDES permits or otherwise significantly affect surface water or groundwater quality. Depth to groundwater has reported at 10 to 100 feet below the ground surface from the limited investigations that have been undertaken in the Castaic project area (see Figure 2.10-2); therefore, there would be no impacts as a result of near surface

<sup>58</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Provided March 1, 2016. Number of Tickets Sold by Month, Castaic Lake State Recreation Area, 2012-2015.

<sup>59</sup> Male, Laura. March 21, 2016. Telephone communication with Mr. Wesley Collins, Operations Supervisor at Sylmar Office, Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District. 562-944-9656

<sup>60</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. [Adopted 17 May 2011] Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

grading required to accommodate new trails and improvements to existing trails.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, near surface grading would not generate demand for groundwater supplies; thus, there would be no impacts in regards to depleting groundwater supplies. The proposed project would be required to be designed consistently with the recommendations of the County Trails Manual.<sup>62</sup> The plan requires the use of erosion control devices. Additionally, construction or maintenance of trails that require grading in excess of one acre have the potential to violate water quality standards, particularly in relation to total dissolved sediments and be subject to the General Construction permit. Procedures from the County's LID Standards Manual will be followed to determine the difference in the proposed initiative's pre- and post-development runoff volumes and potential pollutant loads. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to generating construction or post-construction runoff that would violate applicable stormwater NPDES permits or otherwise significantly affect surface water or groundwater quality, and no mitigation would be required.

**h) Conflict with the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.84)?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to conflicting with the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.84). The County's LID Standards Manual requires developments to manage stormwater runoff. The entire Castaic project area is subject to the Los Angeles County LID Ordinance. State lands are subject to the LID Ordinance because the County leases the lands and, thus, would require any activity to comply with the LID Ordinance, even though the state is not required to comply with the LID Ordinance. Developments are categorized as Designated or Non-Designated. The proposed project is considered new development located in or directly adjacent to or discharging directly to an SEA, as defined in Section 22.08.190 of Title 22 of the LID Development Standards, which will discharge stormwater runoff that is likely to impact a sensitive biological species or habitat and create 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface area. The County's LID Ordinance does not require a specific reduction in pollutant discharges, but it does have requirements on the size of the BMPs in the manual. BMPs listed for Non-Designated Projects are not required to meet a specific pollutant load reduction or to retain a specified amount of runoff. They are only intended to reduce a development's pollutant load, but not necessarily to reduce all pollutant loads to a predevelopment condition; therefore, project development will result in an increase of pollutant discharges. Procedures from the County's LID Standards Manual will be followed to determine the difference in the proposed project's pre- and post-development runoff volumes and potential pollutant loads. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to Hydrology in regard to conflicting with the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.84), and no mitigation would be required.

**i) Result in point or nonpoint source pollutant discharges into State Water Resources Control Board-designated Areas of Special Biological Significance?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to resulting in point or nonpoint source pollutant discharges into State Water Resources Control Board-designated Areas of Special Biological Significance There are 34 special marine reserves called "Areas of Special Biological Significance"

<sup>61</sup> California's Groundwater Bulletin 118; Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, Santa Clara River Valley East Subbasin. 2006.

<sup>62</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. [Adopted 17 May 2011] Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

(ASBS).<sup>63</sup> ASBS are areas requiring protection of species or biological communities through maintaining high water quality. There are several ASBS in the County, the closest being approximately 30 miles from the Castaic project area and including the stretch of coast between Latigo Point up to Mugu Lagoon.<sup>64</sup> The proposed project is not located in the vicinity of any ASBSs. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to resulting in point or nonpoint source pollutant discharges into State Water Resources Control Board-designated Areas of Special Biological Significance, and no mitigation would be required.

**j) Use onsite wastewater treatment systems in areas with known geological limitations (e.g. high groundwater) or in close proximity to surface water (including, but not limited to, streams, lakes, and drainage course)?**

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems in areas with known geological limitations (e.g. high groundwater) or in close proximity to surface water (including, but not limited to, streams, lakes, and drainage course). Trail amenities such as restrooms that would add additional water or wastewater systems within the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District are proposed to be constructed. Specifically, restrooms at the Sports Complex Bike Skills Park, three equestrian facilities (Tesoro Del Valle, Hasley Canyon Equestrian Center, and Tapia Canyon Road) and two general staging areas (Hasley Canyon and Old Road) are proposed to be constructed within the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (see Figure 1.9-2, *Proposed Trail Related Facility Locations*).<sup>65</sup> The other two bike skills parks, one equestrian amenities area, and four general staging areas would include restroom facilities outside the jurisdiction of Sanitation Districts. The Castaic project area is located within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and regulated by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS), which sets standards for development of septic tanks and fields, as well as the use of pit toilets. Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District sets standards for a portions of the Castaic project area that is within their service area. The proposed project would follow procedures in the County Trails Manual, which says to incorporate restrooms into trailhead and parking locations where water lines and sewage conveyance is possible. In areas without available water, design restrooms to be pit toilets as per U.S. Forest Service guidelines. Restrooms would be designed to demonstrate compliance with the standards of the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation or the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health for OWTS, as applicable. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts with regards to the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems in areas with known geological limitations or in close proximity to surface water, and no mitigation would be required.

**k) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to otherwise substantially degrading water quality. The Castaic Lake is listed as impaired for mercury, and has a designated use of commercial and sport fishing. A TMDL is required, but has not yet been developed for Castaic Lake Mercury. Construction activity associated with trail construction and operations is not anticipated to add additional mercury pollutants (see Figure 2.10-1). Where grading is required to construct the trail improvements is in excess of one acre, it would be subject to General Construction Permit and require

<sup>63</sup> California Environmental Protection Agency, State Water Resources Control Board. Accessed 28 March 2016. State Water Quality Protection Areas of Special Biological Significance. Available at: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/ocean/asbs\\_areas.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ocean/asbs_areas.shtml)

<sup>64</sup> Los Angeles Waterkeeper. Accessed 28 March 2016. Areas of Special Biological Significance. Available at: <https://lawaterkeeper.org/asbs/>

<sup>65</sup> Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed 8 April 2016. Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District. Available at: [http://www.lacsd.org/wastewater/wastewater\\_services/connectionfee/scv.asp](http://www.lacsd.org/wastewater/wastewater_services/connectionfee/scv.asp)



preparation of a SWPPP. Additionally, grading that occurs in the vicinity of an SEA may be subject to storm water controls at the discretion of the County Building Department when disturbance is less than an acre.

Most of the main drainages are classified on USGS topographic maps as blue-line streams, indicating that under certain conditions the streams convey water flows. A blue-line stream would be classified as either a positive or negative control point for planning the path of a new trail. In some instances, blue-line streams can be identified as negative control points because the stream can pose a hazard to users or cause excessive damage to natural resources. However, blue-line streams can also provide access to water bodies where the Basin Plan identifies the water body as being suitable for body contact recreation or the water body provides an important visual or aesthetic experience and the blue-line stream would then be considered a positive control point.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regards to violating any water quality standards or waste discharge through compliance with the County's LID ordinance, requiring the use of two BMPs, and no mitigation would be required.

**l) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map, or within a floodway or floodplain?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to hydrology in regard to placing housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map, or within a floodway or floodplain. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps flood risk areas within the United States as part of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP is a federal program that allows property owners in areas of participating communities to purchase insurance against possible loss due to flooding. The majority of the Castaic project area falls within Flood Hazard Zone D; areas where there are possible but undetermined flood hazards (Figure 2.10-3, *100-Year Floodplain*). Castaic Lake falls within Flood Hazard Zone A; no base flood elevation determined.<sup>66</sup> However, the proposed project does not include the placement of housing. Therefore there would be no impact, and mitigation would not be required.

**m) Place structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows, within a 100-year flood hazard area, floodway, or floodplain?**

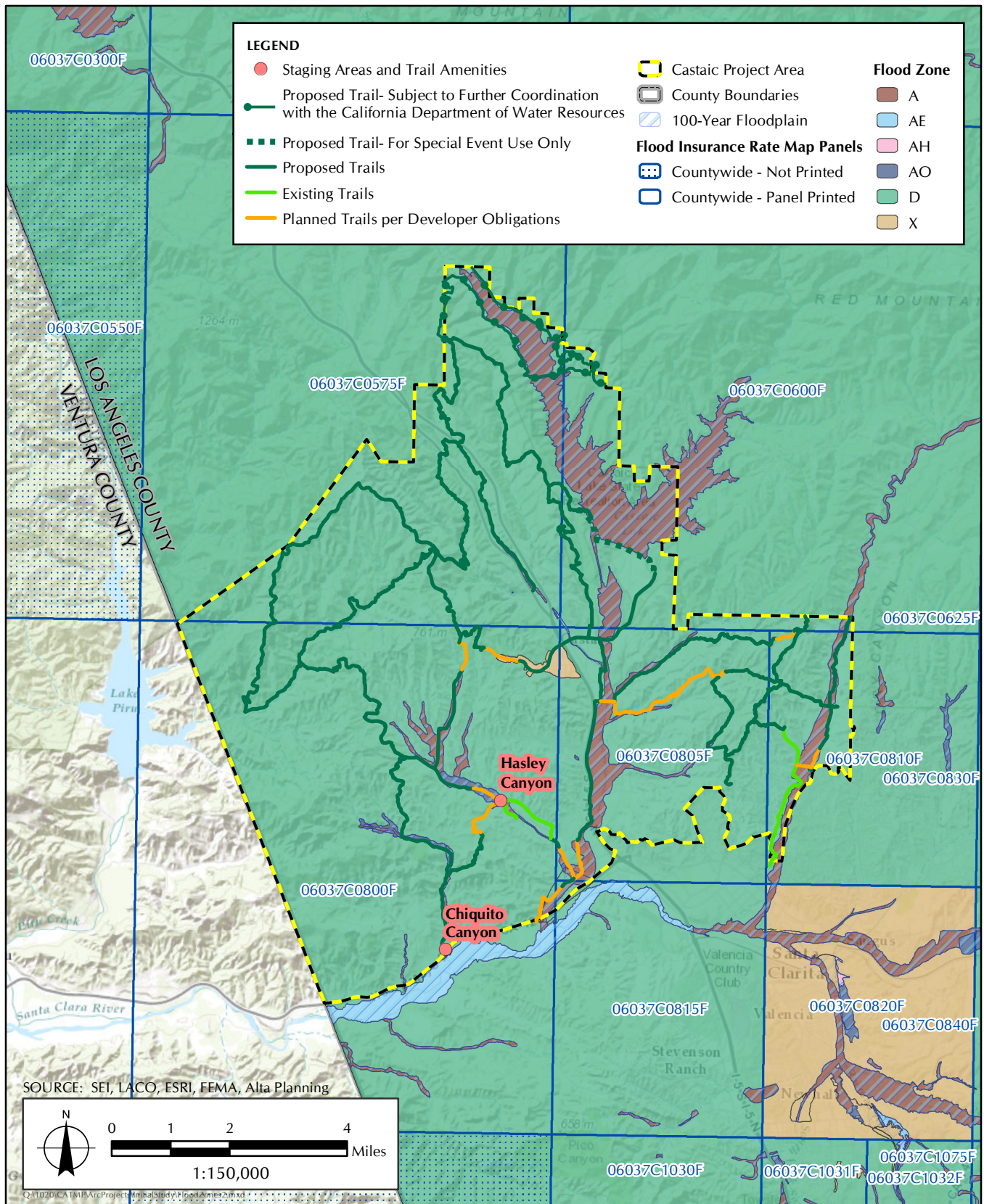
☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impact to hydrology in regard to placing structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows, within a 100-year flood hazard area, floodway, or floodplain. The FEMA) maps flood risk areas within the United States as part of the NFIP. The NFIP is a federal program that allows property owners in areas of participating communities to purchase insurance against possible loss due to flooding. The majority of the Castaic project area falls within Flood Hazard Zone D, areas where there are possible but undetermined flood hazards (see Figure 2.10-3). Castaic Lake falls within Flood Hazard Zone A; no base flood elevation determined.<sup>67</sup> However, the proposed project would not include the placing of structures within a 100-year flood hazard area, floodway, or floodplain. Therefore there would be no impact, and mitigation would not be required.

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<sup>66</sup> FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel 600.

<sup>67</sup> FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel 600.



**FIGURE 2.10-3**  
100-Year Floodplain

**n) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?**

☐☒☐☐

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to hydrology in regard to exposing people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The Castaic Dam is an embankment dam in northern Los Angeles County, California, near the city of Castaic. The dam was built by the California Department of Water Resources and construction was completed in 1973. The lake has a capacity of 325,000 acre-feet (af) (401,000,000 cubic meters). Seismically induced ground acceleration or seiche could jeopardize the integrity of the Castaic Dam. Floods that could result from failure of the Castaic Dam could expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. The Castaic Dam meets the Department of Water Resources requirement for design of such structures. However, the implementation of Mitigation Measure HYD-1 would be required to reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure HYD-1:** The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation shall:

- Coordinate with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to ensure that State Water Project critical infrastructure (water intake tower, spillway, and the Castaic Dam) is protected if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.
- Coordinate with the DWR to ensure that the use of dam crest roads for recreational trail use is according to design intent if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.
- Install emergency call-boxes and first-responder emergency vehicle access if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.
- Coordinate with the DWR to ensure DWR access roads at the base of the Castaic Dam are compatible with recreational use if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.

**o) Place structures in areas subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

☐☒☐☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology in regard to placing structures in areas subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. Seiche and tsunamis are the result of tectonic activity, such as an earthquake. A seiche is an oscillation of the surface of a landlocked body of water that can create a hazard to persons and structures on and in the vicinity of the water. A tsunami is a long-period, high-velocity tidal surge that can result in a series of very low (trough) and high (peak) sea levels, with the potential to inundate areas up to several miles from the coast, creating hazards to people or structures from loss, injury, or death. Most of the hazards created by a tsunami come when a trough follows the peak, resulting in a rush of sea water back into the ocean. A mudflow is a moving mass of soil-made fluid by a loss of shear strength, generally as a result of saturation from rain or melting snow.

A tsunami is a series of water waves caused by the displacement of a large volume of water in the ocean that have the potential to cause damage at shorelines. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, glacier carvings, meteorite impacts and other disturbances above or below water all have the potential to generate a tsunami. Due to the distance and rise in elevation from the Pacific Ocean to the Castaic project area, the

area is unlikely to be affected by tsunami.

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR), in a letter of comment provided to County Parks during scoping, requested that the following information be included in the environmental analysis:

The Castaic Dam is an embankment dam located within the proposed Castaic project area. The dam was built by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and construction was completed in 1973. The lake has a capacity of 325,000 af (401,000,000 m<sup>3</sup>). Seismically induced ground acceleration or seiche could jeopardize the integrity of the Castaic dam. Floods that could result from failure of the Castaic Dam could expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. The Castaic Dam meets the DWR requirement for design of such structures.

However, implementation of mitigation measure HYD-1 would be required to reduce impacts to below the level of significance.



## **11. LAND USE AND PLANNING**

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to land use and planning, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Land use and planning at the Castaic project area were evaluated with regard to the Northlake Specific Plan,<sup>68</sup> Newhall Ranch Specific Plan,<sup>69</sup> Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision,<sup>70</sup> Los Angeles County Zoning Code,<sup>71</sup> and Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance.<sup>72</sup> The analysis presented in this section is also based on the *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Biological Resources Assessment Technical Memorandum* (Appendix C).

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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**Would the project:**

**a) Physically divide an established community?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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The proposed project would result in no impacts to land use related to the division of an established community. There are two County-designated communities within the Castaic project area: Castaic-Val Verde and Agua Dulce (Figure 2.11-1, *Los Angeles County Designated Communities*). The proposed project is intended to provide greater connectivity between existing trails and approved subdivision agreement trails in the Castaic project area (see Figure 1.9-1, *Proposed Trails Plan*). The Northlake Specific Plan is entirely within the Castaic project area, and the northern portion of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan is also within the Castaic project area. Both of these specific plans propose trails within their respective planning areas (Figure 2.11-2, *Specific Plans in the Castaic Project Area*).<sup>73,74</sup> The entirety of the Castaic project area is located within the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan (SCVAP) area. The SCVAP contains policies that support the development of trails in the plan area in both its Circulation and Conservation and Open Space elements.<sup>75</sup> Rather than dividing established communities, the CAMTP would result in greater connectivity through trails. Therefore, there would be no impacts with regard to the division of an established community, and no mitigation would be required.

<sup>68</sup> Northlake Specific Plan. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake_specific_plan/)

<sup>69</sup> Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. May 27, 2003. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall\\_ranch\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall_ranch_specific_plan/)

<sup>70</sup> Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, One Valley One Vision. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 2012. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa\\_clarita\\_valley\\_area\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa_clarita_valley_area_plan/)

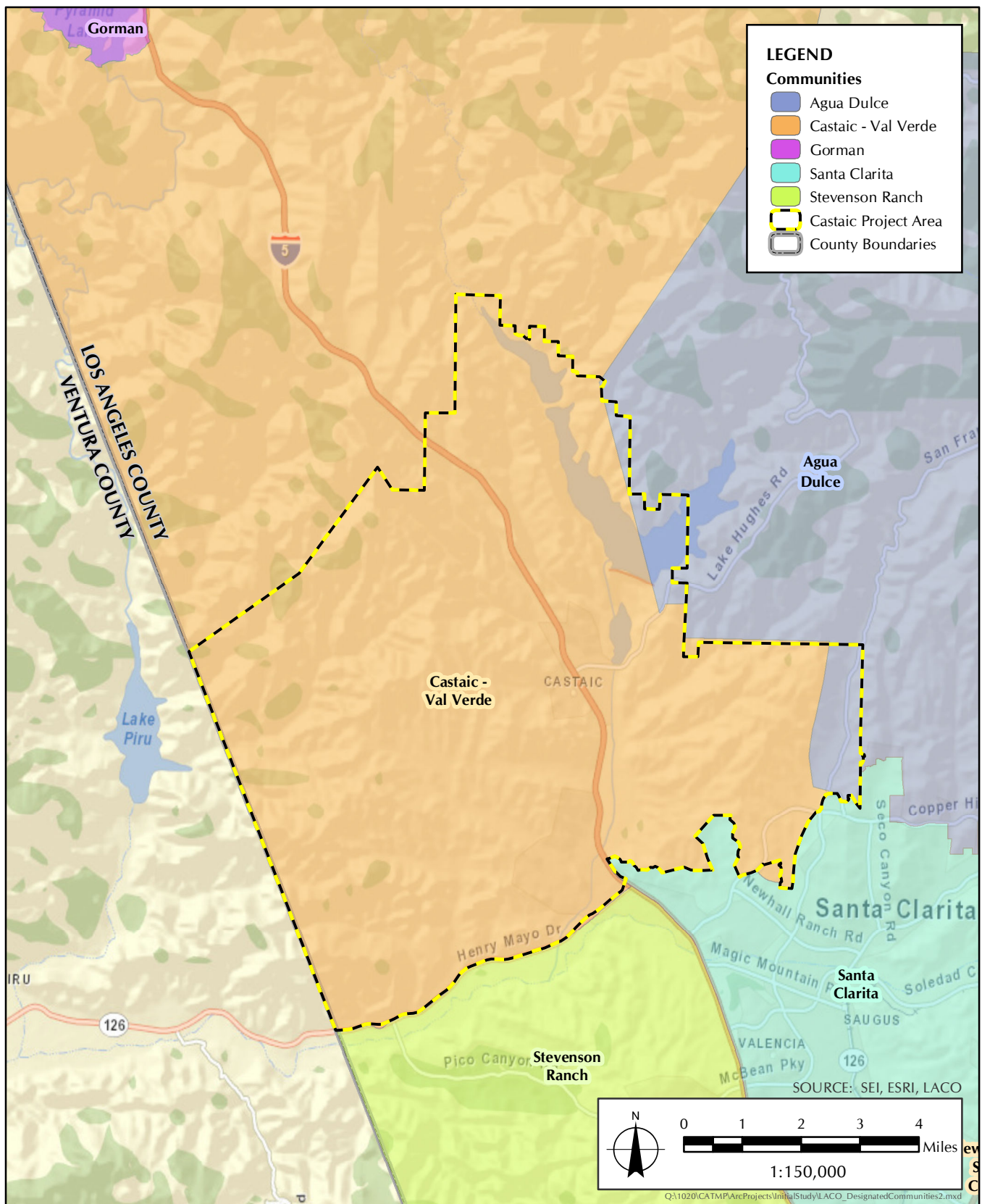
<sup>71</sup> Los Angeles County Zoning Code. Los Angeles County. Available online at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO\\_DIV1PLZO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO_DIV1PLZO)

<sup>72</sup> Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance. November 5, 2015. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma\\_adopated-ordinance.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma_adopated-ordinance.pdf)

<sup>73</sup> Northlake Specific Plan. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake_specific_plan/)

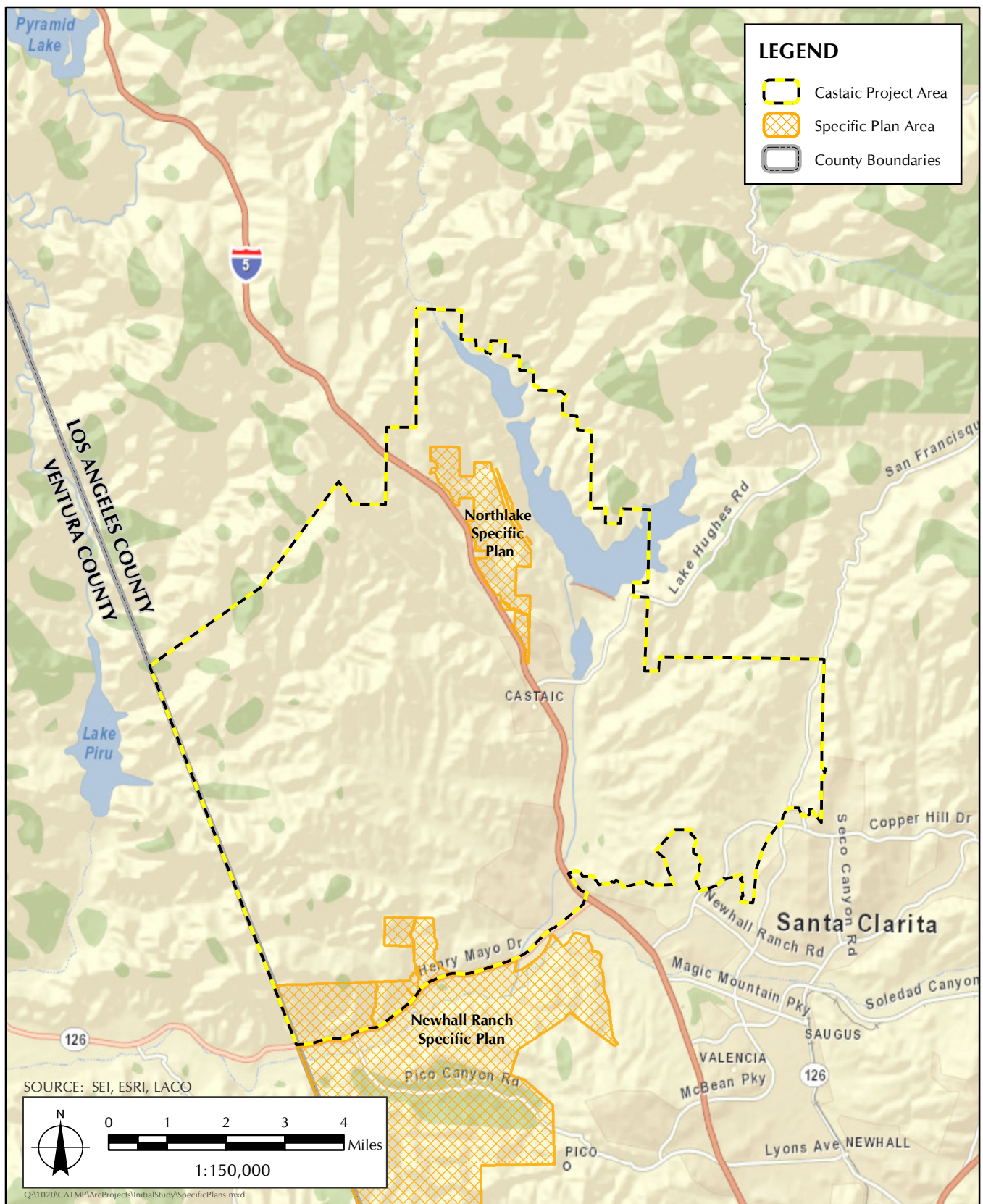
<sup>74</sup> Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. May 27, 2003. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall\\_ranch\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall_ranch_specific_plan/)

<sup>75</sup> Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, One Valley One Vision. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 2012. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa\\_clarita\\_valley\\_area\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa_clarita_valley_area_plan/)



**FIGURE 2.11-1**  
Los Angeles County Designated Communities





**FIGURE 2.11-2**  
Specific Plans in the Castaic Project Area

**b) Be inconsistent with the applicable County plans for the subject property including, but not limited to, the General Plan, specific plans, local coastal plans, area plans, and community/neighborhood plans?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impact to land use related to being inconsistent with applicable County plans for the subject property including, but not limited to, the General Plan, specific plans, local coastal plans, area plans, and community/neighborhood plans. The Northlake Specific Plan area is located entirely within the Castaic project area, and the northern portion of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area is also located within the Castaic project area. Both of these specific plans propose trails within their respective planning areas.<sup>76,77</sup> The entirety of the Castaic project area is within the SCVAP area (see Figure 1.6-2, *Los Angeles County 2015 Land Use Designations — Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan*). The SCVAP contains policies and plans that support the development of trails in the plan area in both its Circulation and Conservation and Open Space elements.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, there would be no impacts with regard to inconsistencies with applicable County plans for the subject property within the Castaic project area, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Be inconsistent with the County zoning ordinance as applicable to the subject property?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to land use in regard to inconsistencies with the County zoning ordinance. The trails proposed within the proposed project intersect with 12 County zoning designations (Figure 1.7-1, *Los Angeles County Zoning Designations*). Riding and hiking trails are an inherently permitted use in eight of these zones and a permitted use after hearing officer or planning director approval for the remaining four zones (Table 2.11-1, *Zoning Designations for Proposed Trail Routes*).

As shown in Table 2.11-1, the majority of proposed trails are located within the Heavy Agricultural and Open Space zones. Trails are an allowable use in all of the zones that intersect with the proposed trail routes. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the County zoning ordinance as applicable to the subject property within the Castaic project area, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>76</sup> Northlake Specific Plan. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake_specific_plan/)

<sup>77</sup> Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. May 27, 2003. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall\\_ranch\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall_ranch_specific_plan/)

<sup>78</sup> Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, One Valley One Vision. County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 2012. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa\\_clarita\\_valley\\_area\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa_clarita_valley_area_plan/)



**TABLE 2.11-1  
ZONING DESIGNATIONS FOR PROPOSED TRAIL ROUTES**

<b>Zone<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Trail Length (Miles)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Riding and Hiking Trails Required Review</b>
Heavy agricultural	52.3	54.9%	Permitted
Light agricultural	0.48	0.51%	Permitted
Light manufacturing	3.74	3.93%	Permitted
Limited multiple residence	0.01	0.01%	Permitted
Manufacturing-industrial planned	0.01	0.01%	Planning Director Approval
Open space	17.3	18.2%	Permitted
Residential planned development	0.64	0.67%	Hearing Officer Approval
Restricted heavy manufacturing	2.81	2.95%	Permitted
Single-family residence	5.86	6.15%	Planning Director Approval
Specific plan	3.69	3.88%	Planning Director Approval
Unlimited commercial	0.29	0.03%	Permitted
Watershed	10.0	1.32%	Permitted
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>95.31</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**SOURCE:** <sup>1</sup> Los Angeles County Zoning Code. Los Angeles County. Available online at:

[https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO\\_DIV1PLZO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT22PLZO_DIV1PLZO)

**d) Conflict with Hillside Management criteria,  
Significant Ecological Areas conformance criteria, or  
other applicable land use criteria?**

☐
☐
☒
☐

The proposed project would have a less than significant impact on land use in regard to Hillside Management Criteria, Significant Ecological Areas, and HCPs and NCCPs. The nearest federally designated habitat conservation plans (HCPs) to the proposed project study are the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan and the West Mojave Conservation Plan located approximately 12 miles to the northeast (see Figure 12, *HCPs and NCCPs Present in the Vicinity of the Trail Planning Castaic project area*, in Appendix C). Portions of two County-designated SEAs are located within the Castaic project area. These include the Santa Felicia SEA in the northwestern portion of the Castaic project area and the Santa Clara River SEA located to the southern and eastern portions of the Castaic project area (see Figure 11, *Significant Ecological Areas Present in the Trail Planning Castaic Project Area*, in Appendix C). The Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance applies to areas greater than 25 percent slope.<sup>79</sup> Approximately 1,926 acres of the total Castaic project area consists of slopes greater than 25 percent (see Figure 1.11-1, *Castaic Project Area Slope*). Portions of proposed recreational trails cross through the areas greater than 25 percent slope. As a result, trails that cross through these areas would be subject to the requirements and design standards of the Hillside Management Ordinance and hillside design standards in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element of the General Plan. Specifically, sensitive hillside design measures (2.1 through 2.12) would be applied to the trail and facilities (e.g., restrooms). Further, the Hillside Management Ordinance requires that all new development in areas over 25 percent obtain a conditional use permit as part of the entitlement process.<sup>80</sup> Trails will also be designed to standards of the County Trails Manual. Of the approximately 100 miles of trails planned in the proposed project, approximately 19.2 miles would be located within County SEAs.

<sup>79</sup> County of Los Angeles. Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance. November 5, 2015. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma\\_adopted-ordinance.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma_adopted-ordinance.pdf)

<sup>80</sup> County of Los Angeles. Los Angeles County Hillside Management Ordinance. November 5, 2015. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma\\_adopted-ordinance.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hma_adopted-ordinance.pdf)

These trails would be subject to the conformance criteria for the specific SEA. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to conflicts with the Hillside Management Area Ordinance, Significant Ecological Areas conformance criteria, or other applicable land use criteria, and no mitigation would be required.

## 12. MINERAL RESOURCES

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to mineral resources, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives, in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.<sup>81</sup> Mineral resources at the Castaic project area were evaluated with regard to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975,<sup>82</sup> Mineral Land Classification of the Greater Los Angeles Area: Classification of Sand and Gravel Resource Areas,<sup>83</sup> the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision,<sup>84</sup> the County of Los Angeles Trails Manual,<sup>85</sup> the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan,<sup>86</sup> and the Northlake Specific Plan.<sup>87</sup> The analysis presented in this section is also based on the *Results of the Geology and Soils Analysis for the Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan* (Appendix E).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to mineral resources in regard to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. The proposed project includes approximately 100 miles of proposed multi-use trails in the Castaic Area of the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area. The Castaic project area contains mineral resources that are classified and subject to regulation under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975. SMARA requires adoption of state policy for the reclamation of mined lands and conservation of natural resource, regulates mining activities, and direct classification and mapping of mineral resources by State Geologists to show the occurrence or likely occurrence of economically significant mineral deposits. Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) are classified according to the existence or nonexistence of significant mineral deposits. The Castaic project area is within a designated MRZ-2 region as classified by geologically surveyed data to contain significant mineral deposits or areas where geologic information indicates the possible presents of resources.<sup>88</sup> The Castaic Multi-Use Trails Plan area is within the Saugus-Newhall P-C Region, which establishes MRZs by assessment of active sand and gravel mining operations, geologic

<sup>81</sup> California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

<sup>82</sup> California Public Resources Code, Section 2710, “Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975.”

<sup>83</sup> Part V: Mineral Land Classification of the Greater Los Angeles Area: Classification of Sand and Gravel Resource Areas, Saugus-Newhall Production-Consumption Region, Stephen E. Joseph, Russell V. Miller, Siang S. Tan, and Roy W. Goodman 1987 available at: [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dmg/pubs/sr/SR\\_143/PartV/](ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dmg/pubs/sr/SR_143/PartV/)

<sup>84</sup> County of Los Angeles. 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa\\_clarita\\_valley\\_area\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa_clarita_valley_area_plan/)

<sup>85</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation Planning and Development Agency. June 2013, County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Accessed February 28, 2016 Available at: [http://file.lacounty.gov/dpr/cms1\\_208899.pdf](http://file.lacounty.gov/dpr/cms1_208899.pdf)

<sup>86</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 27 May 2003. Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall\\_ranch\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall_ranch_specific_plan/)

<sup>87</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. June 1992. Northlake Specific Plan. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake_specific_plan/)

<sup>88</sup> California Public Resources Code, Section 2710, “Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975.”

reports and maps, and field investigations.<sup>89</sup> Designated sand, gravel, and rock (MRZ-2) resources are primarily concentrated along waterways within the Trails Plan area includes portions of the Santa Clara River Valley floodplain, which incorporates, Castaic Creek, Castaic Junction, State Route 126, and Sand Canyon Road (Figure 2.12-1, *Mineral Resources*).

Historically extracted minerals such as gold, natural gas, and oil are also identified within the Castaic project area and encompass abandoned mines and oil wells as well as several oil and natural gas wells still in production (Figure 2.12-2, *Oil Wells in the Castaic Project Area*). Portions of the Castaic project area overlies state-designated oil fields, although no known substantial effects have been recorded in the Castaic project area or its proximity, and future effects from oil extraction in the area are considered very low. It is advisable to avoid oil field areas and to provide signage warning of the dangers within the areas of proximity.<sup>90</sup>

SMARA requires that significant mineral resources be protected from encroachment by incompatible development, as they provide a needed resource to support construction and areas containing significant mineral aggregate resources are designated by an MRZ zoning overlay district that permits extraction along with other compatible uses. The Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan contains policies to protect significant state-designated mineral resource from incompatible development in conformance with SMARA regulation and also work to ensuring that extraction and reclamation activities are compatible with other development activities and adverse environmental impacts are mitigated.<sup>91</sup>

The County Trails Manual requires compliance in the elements of all project trails design in the County. The proper trail development and maintenance will be determined by site-specific conditions and will differ depending on the location. Trail requirements include avoidance of environmentally sensitive features by evaluating feasible alternative routes and minimizing potential impacts to the maximum extent possible and design alignments located in areas where grade and obstacles would not pose a problem for accessible trails requiring. In areas with site-specific environmental constraints, trails should adhere to the guidelines to reduce impacts to the surrounding environmental.<sup>92</sup>

Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to mineral resources in regard to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?**

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to mineral resources in regard to the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. The Castaic project area is subject to the provisions County of Los Angeles General Plan,

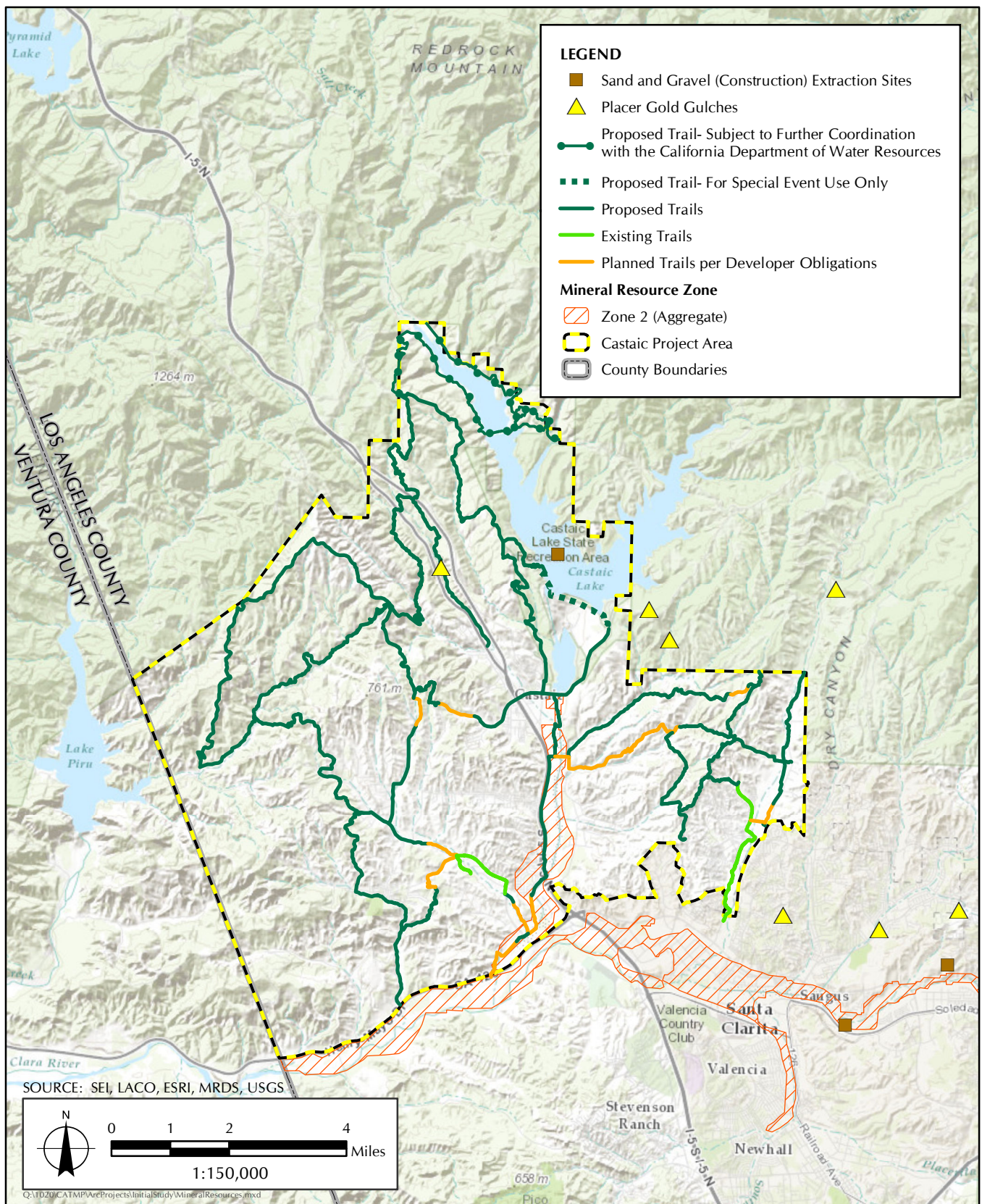
<sup>89</sup> Part V: Mineral Land Classification of the Greater Los Angeles Area: Classification of Sand and Gravel Resource Areas, Saugus-Newhall Production-Consumption Region, Stephen E. Joseph, Russell V. Miller, Siang S. Tan, and Roy W. Goodman 1987 available at: [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dmg/pubs/sr/SR\\_143/PartV/](ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dmg/pubs/sr/SR_143/PartV/)

<sup>90</sup> Memorandum for the Record – Results of the Geology and Soils Analysis for the Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan. Wilson Geosciences Inc., Sapphos Environmental, Inc. March 1, 2016.

<sup>91</sup> City of Santa Clarita, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision, “Conservation and Open Space Element.” Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa\\_clarita\\_valley\\_area\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa_clarita_valley_area_plan/)

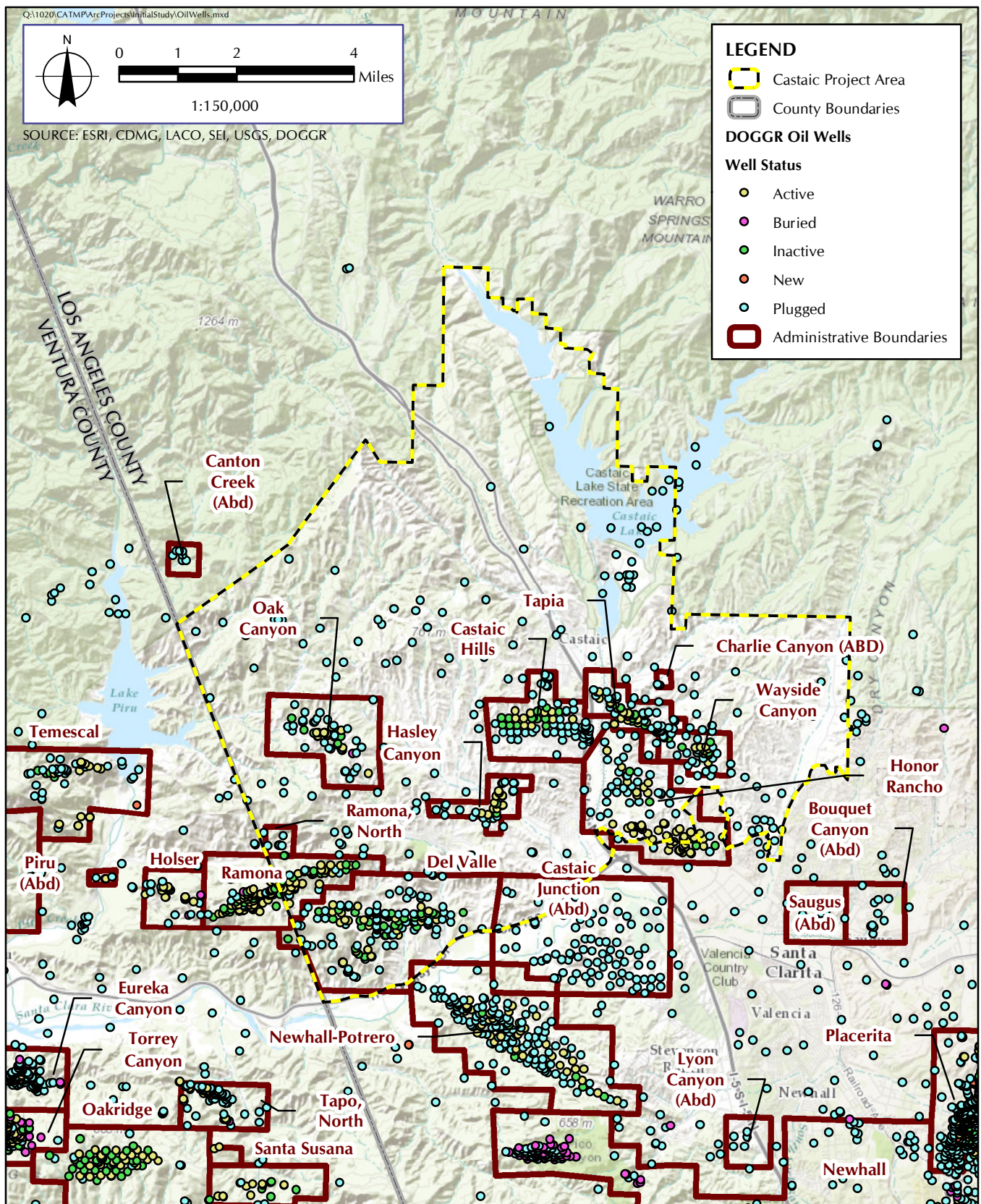
<sup>92</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation Planning and Development Agency. June 2013, County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Accessed February 28, 2016 Available at: [http://file.lacounty.gov/dpr/cms1\\_208899.pdf](http://file.lacounty.gov/dpr/cms1_208899.pdf)





**FIGURE 2.12-1**  
Mineral Resources





**FIGURE 2.12-2**  
Oil Wells in the Castaic Project Area

Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, Newhall Ranch Specific Plan and Northlake Specific Plan. The County of Los Angeles General Plan 2035, Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, and Northlake Specific Plan do not identify any locally important mineral resources that will be crossed by proposed trails within the proposed project. Furthermore, the proposed trails do not cross any lands designated as locally extractive by the County of Los Angeles General Plan 2035 or Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, and Northlake Specific Plan and will not result in a loss of a locally important mineral resource.<sup>93,94,95</sup>

Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts to mineral resources in regard to the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan, and no mitigation would be required.

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<sup>93</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. June 1992. Northlake Specific Plan. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/northlake_specific_plan/)

<sup>94</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 27 May 2003. Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall\\_ranch\\_specific\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/newhall_ranch_specific_plan/)

<sup>95</sup> City of Santa Clarita, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision, “Conservation and Open Space Element.” Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa\\_clarita\\_valley\\_area\\_plan/](http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/santa_clarita_valley_area_plan/)

### 13. NOISE

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to noise, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis presented in this section is based on the *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Noise Assessment* (Appendix G).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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Would the project result in:

a) Exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the County General Plan or noise ordinance (Los Angeles County Code, Title 12, Chapter 12.08), or applicable standards of other agencies?

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to noise in regard to exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the County General Plan or noise ordinance (Los Angeles County Code, Title 12, Chapter 12.08), or applicable standards of other agencies. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The baseline conditions for ambient noise levels in the Castaic project area were characterized based on noise monitoring conducted at four locations near potential sensitive receptors within the Castaic project area. Ambient noise levels were established by continuously recording noise measurements in 15-minute intervals with a Larson Davis Spark 706 Noise Dosimeters on January 20, 2016, from 10:40 am through 1:35 p.m., as described in Appendix G. The average of the A-weighted ambient noise level for all four monitoring sites at the Castaic project area is 62.7 dBA (Table 2.13-1, *Ambient Noise Levels*; Figure 2.13-1, *Noise Monitoring Sites*). The highest L50 measurement was recorded at 64 dBA at Site B.  $L_{eq}$  data can be used as representatives of the minimum threshold because “if the ambient L50 exceeds the foregoing level, then the ambient L50 becomes the exterior noise level for Standard No. 1” pursuant to the noise control ordinance of the County of Los Angeles, Section 12.08.390, exterior noise standards (Table 2.13-2, *Ambient Noise Level L Statistics*).

**TABLE 2.13-1  
AMBIENT NOISE LEVELS**

Monitoring Site (Sensitive Receptor)	Average $L_{eq}$ (dBA)	Maximum $L_{eq}$ (dBA)	Minimum $L_{eq}$ (dBA)
A	63.3	79.1	58.8
B	64.0	74.9	60.5
C	61.1	79.4	56.7
D	62.3	67.0	59.8

**KEY:**  $L_{eq}$ : The equivalent-continuous sound ( $L_{eq}$ ) is the level of a constant sound, expressed in decibels (dB), which in a given time period ( $T=T_2 - T_1$ ) has the same energy as a time varying sound. For the Spark dosimeters, a  $L_{eq}$  value is recorded for 2 different time intervals. First, a  $L_{eq}$  is recorded for the entire record’s run time. Second, a  $L_{eq}$  is recorded for each individual time history sample.

dBA: A-weighted decibels (dBA) are an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear. In the A-weighted system, the decibel values of sounds at low frequencies are reduced compared with unweighted decibels, in which no correction is made for audio frequency.





**FIGURE 2.13-1**  
Noise Monitoring Sites



**TABLE 2.13-2  
AMBIENT NOISE LEVELS L STATISTICS**

Monitoring Site (Sensitive Receptor Site)	L10	L30	L50	L70	L90
A	64	63.5	63	62.5	62
B	64.5	64	64	63	62
C	61	60	59.5	59.5	59.5
D	63	62.5	62	61.5	60.5

According to the County of Los Angeles Municipal Codes, mobile equipment shall not generate noise levels above 75 dBA for single-family residences and stationary equipment shall not generate noise levels above 60 dBA for single-family residences during weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Furthermore, daily construction activities would be subject to County noise regulations, which state that construction equipment may not operate between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday, or at any time on Sunday or holidays. Construction activities are not expected to occur outside of the time frame from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The analysis described in Appendix G predicted distance at which noise impacts would be below the level of significance for the four construction phases (ground clearing, excavations, erection of structures) indicates that construction impacts would be below the level of significance when activities occur at a minimum of 251 feet away from a sensitive receptor. The noise monitoring and modelling conducted by Sapphos Environmental, Inc. in March 2016 identified 1,260 parcels with potentially sensitive receptors (primarily residential land uses) within 251 feet of the project impact area (proposed trail routes and related trail facilities) in the southern portion of the Castaic project area, south of Castaic, California, and adjacent to the Castaic Junction and in the southwestern portion of the Castaic project area in Val Verde, California. Impacts related to noise from construction, operation, and maintenance of trails for sensitive receptor located within 251 feet would be avoided by complying with the County Noise Ordinance by limiting construction and maintenance activities to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays, and prohibiting work on federal holidays and Sundays, along with limiting noise levels to below 75 dBA for mobile equipment and 60 dBA for stationary equipment at sensitive receptor locations through the use of noise-attenuating barriers, baffles, or blankets. Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to noise in regard to exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the County General Plan or noise ordinance (Los Angeles County Code, Title 12, Chapter 12.08), or applicable standards of other agencies. Implementation of mitigation measure NOISE-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**Mitigation Measure NOISE-1:** Noise-attenuating barriers, baffles, or blankets shall be installed to reduce noise levels to a maximum of 75 dBA for mobile construction equipment and 60 dBA for stationary construction equipment for potential sensitive receptors within 251 feet. Furthermore, construction equipment shall not operate between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday, or at any time on Sunday or holidays.

**b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts to noise in regard to exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. Existing conditions for ground-borne vibration in the vicinity of the Castaic project area are limited to recreational uses of current trails including, but not limited to, motorized dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). There are no current construction projects, oil fields, mining operations, blasting, or other activities resulting in ground-borne vibrations in the vicinity of the proposed project. Construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project would not require blasting, drilling, or other activities that would result in excessive ground-borne vibrations on the

Castaic project area. The proposed project would not result in exposure of sensitive receptors or generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impact in regard to exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from parking areas?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to noise in regard to a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. The average of the A-weighted ambient noise level for all four monitoring sites at the Castaic project area is 62.7 dBA (Table 2.13-1). The highest L50 measurement was recorded at 64 dBA at Site B.  $L_{eq}$  data can be used as representatives of the minimum threshold because “if the ambient L50 exceeds the foregoing level, then the ambient L50 becomes the exterior noise level for Standard No. 1” pursuant to the noise control ordinance of the County of Los Angeles, Section 12.08.390, exterior noise standards (Table 2.13-2). The proposed project would result in a less than significant impact in regard to a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from parking areas. The primary sources of noise within the Castaic project area can be attributed to conversational noise from recreational uses such as hiking, bike riding, and equestrian riding along with other environmental factors such as wind. A normal conversation at 5 to 10 feet would typically measure 60 dBA, which would not exceed the measured existing ambient noise level (62.7 dBA). As a result, the operation of the proposed project would not result in substantial permanent increases in ambient noise levels in the vicinity above levels existing without the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact in regard to a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from parking areas, and no mitigation would be required.

**d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from amplified sound systems?**

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The proposed project would result in significant impacts to noise in regard to a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from amplified sound systems. Incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to below the level of significance. The average of the A-weighted ambient noise level for all four monitoring sites at the Multi-Use Trails Plan Area is 62.7 dBA (Table 2.13-1). The highest L50 measurement was recorded at 64 dBA at Site B.  $L_{eq}$  data can be used as representatives of the minimum threshold because “if the ambient L50 exceeds the foregoing level, then the ambient L50 becomes the exterior noise level for Standard No. 1” pursuant to the noise control ordinance of the County of Los Angeles, Section 12.08.390, exterior noise standards (Table 2.13-2). Noise impacts associated with the construction of the proposed project are expected to occur in three phases: ground clearing, excavations, and erections of poles and amenities. The average noise levels associated with these construction phases where all pertinent equipment is present and operating at a reference distance of 50 feet are presented in Table 2.13-3, *Construction Activity Noise Levels at 50 Feet*. By assigning the highest potential noise level during construction at 89 dBA during excavations ( $L_1$ ) at a distance of 50 feet ( $d_1$ ), the distance at which construction activities would reach a maximum of 75 dBA ( $L_2$ ) and still be in compliance with Title 12, Chapter 8 of the Los Angeles County Municipal Codes for construction noise restrictions, is approximately 251 feet ( $d_2$ ). This distance, along with

the other predicted distances at which the noise impacts would be below 75 dBA for each construction phase, are presented in Table 2.13-4, *Predicted Distance at Which Noise Impact Would Be below Level of Significance*.

**TABLE 2.13-3  
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY NOISE LEVELS AT 50 FEET**

Activity	Noise Level at 50 Feet (dBA)
Ground clearing	84 ± 6 dBA
Excavations	89 ± 6 dBA
Erection of structures	85 ± 5 dBA

**SOURCE:** VSA & Associates. 7 January 2008. *Aliadena Crest Trail Improvement Noise Impact Analysis*. Whittier, CA.

**TABLE 2.13-4  
PREDICTED DISTANCE AT WHICH NOISE IMPACT  
WOULD BE BELOW LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Construction Phase	Distance at Which Noise Impact Would Be below 75 dBA*	Number of Sensitive Receptors within this Distance
Ground clearing	141 feet	1,246
Excavations	251 feet	1,715
Erection of structures	158 feet	1,305

**NOTE:** \* According to Title 12, Chapter 8 of the Los Angeles County Municipal Codes, construction activities for mobile equipment may not exceed 75 dBA during weekly daytime hours from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for single-family residential. Construction activities are not expected to occur during nighttime hours from 8 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

The distance at which noise impacts would be below the threshold of significance for the different construction phases ranges from 141 to 251 feet. Any impacts to sensitive receptors within the referenced distances would be avoided by limiting construction and maintenance activities to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays, and prohibiting work on federal holidays and Sundays, along with limiting noise levels to below 75 dBA for mobile equipment and 60 dBA for stationary equipment at sensitive receptor locations through the use of noise-attenuating barriers, baffles, or blankets. Furthermore, exposure to potential noise impacts would vary from day to day, depending on the amount of work being conducted, the weather conditions, the location of receptors, and the length of time that receptors would be exposed. Due to the short-term nature of project construction, sensitive receptors would not be expected to be significantly affected by the proposed project. Construction activities may result in temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a significant impact to noise in regard to a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from amplified sound systems. Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The Castaic project area is not within an airport land use plan, or within 2 miles of a public airport. The distance to the nearest public airports are 12.7 miles for the Agua Dulce Airpark and 15.1 miles for the Whiteman Airport. The project area is sufficiently removed from public airports to protect workers engaged in construction or

maintenance of the trails from exposure to excessive noise levels. Similarly, recreational users would not be exposed to excessive noise levels from an airport. Therefore there would be no impact, and mitigation would not be required.

**f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels, for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip. The Castaic project area is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip. The distance to the nearest private airstrip is 13.0 miles for the Quail Lake Sky Park. The project area is sufficiently removed from private airstrips to protect workers engaged in construction or maintenance of the trails from exposure to excessive noise levels. Similarly, recreational users would not be exposed to excessive noise levels from a private airstrip. Therefore there would be no impact, and mitigation would not be required.

## **14. POPULATION AND HOUSING**

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to population and housing, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.<sup>96</sup> Population and housing at the Castaic project area was evaluated with regard to the Housing Element of the County General Plan.<sup>97</sup>

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in no impacts to population and housing in regard to inducing substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure). The Housing Element of the County General Plan has assigned a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation of 30,145 housing units for the 2014–2021 Housing Element planning period within the vicinity of the Castaic project area, including 21,308 housing units in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan and 3,623 housing units in the Northlake Specific Plan (Table 2.14-1, *Unincorporated Los Angeles County RHNA Allocation, 2014–2021*).<sup>98</sup>

**TABLE 2.14-1  
UNINCORPORATED LOS ANGELES COUNTY RHNA ALLOCATION, 2014–2021**

Source of Residential Sites	Affordability				Total
	Very Low	Lower	Moderate	Above Moderate	
RHNA	7,854	4,650	5,060	12,581	30,145
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan	440	550	1,210	19,108	21,308
Marina Del Rey Specific Plan	51	94	82	1,484	1,711
Northlake Specific Plan	—	—	—	3,623	3,623
2013 vacant and underutilized sites	5,445		2,295		7,740
2008 vacant and underutilized sites	10,587		3,574		14,161
Total adequate sites	17,167		7,161	24,215	48,543

**SOURCE:** County of Los Angeles. Adopted by Board of Supervisors February 4, 2014. Certified by State April 30, 2014. *Los Angeles County Housing Element, 2014–2021, Text Only Version*. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/housing\\_element.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/housing_element.pdf)

The proposed project would not directly induce population growth because it involves no new homes or businesses. Although some of the trail segments considered under the proposed project would be designed

<sup>96</sup> California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387, Appendix G.

<sup>97</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted by Board of Supervisors February 4, 2014. Certified by State April 30, 2014. *Los Angeles County Housing Element, 2014–2021, Text Only Version*. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/housing\\_element.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/housing_element.pdf)

<sup>98</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted by Board of Supervisors February 4, 2014. Certified by State April 30, 2014. *Los Angeles County Housing Element, 2014–2021, Text Only Version*. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/housing\\_element.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/housing_element.pdf)



and constructed concurrently with residential development that may require the extension of roads or other infrastructure, the proposed project does not propose the extension of roads or other infrastructure to support new trails and related facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts in regard to substantial population growth in an area, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, especially affordable housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to population and housing in regard to displacing substantial numbers of existing housing, especially affordable housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The proposed project involves proposed multi-use trails and related staging areas, bike skills parks, parking areas, and other supporting trail facilities that would be designed and constructed per trail easements or open space dedications that accommodate trails, including developer trail and recreation obligations. The Castaic Area is generally rural. The proposed project would not require the demolition of existing residential structures. The proposed project would be designed and constructed concurrently with residential development projects, including affordable housing projects, or would involve easements on undeveloped portions of private properties. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts to population and housing in regard to displacing substantial numbers of existing housing, especially affordable housing, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to population and housing in regard to displacing substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The proposed project involves proposed multi-use trails and related staging areas, bike skills parks, parking areas, and other supporting trail facilities that would be designed and constructed per trail easements or open space dedications that accommodate trails, including developer trail and recreation obligations. The Castaic Area is generally rural, with large parcels. The proposed project would not require the demolition of existing housing. The proposed project would be designed and constructed concurrently with incremental residential development projects, or would involve easements on undeveloped portions of private properties. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts to population and housing in regard to displacing substantial numbers of people, and no mitigation would be required.

**d) Cumulatively exceed official regional or local population projections?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would result in no impacts to population and housing in regard to cumulatively exceeding official regional or local population projections. The proposed project involves proposed multi-use trails and related staging areas, bike skills parks, parking areas, and other supporting trail facilities that would be designed and constructed per trail easements or open space dedications that accommodate trails, including developer trail and recreation obligations. As the proposed project would not induce population growth, it would not affect regional or local population projections. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to cumulatively exceeding regional or local population projections, and no mitigation would be required.

## **15. PUBLIC SERVICES**

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to public services, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Public services at the Castaic project area were evaluated with regard to the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan One Valley One Vision,<sup>99</sup> the Los Angeles County Fire Department website,<sup>100</sup> the County Trails Manual,<sup>101</sup> the County of Los Angeles Fire Code (Title 32),<sup>102</sup> the Safety Element of the County General Plan,<sup>103</sup> the Parks and Recreation Element of the County General Plan,<sup>104</sup> and the County of Los Angeles Public Library website.<sup>105</sup> Coordination was undertaken with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department during the agency outreach planning phase.

	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>			

**a) Would the project create capacity or service level problems, or result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:**

**Fire protection?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to public services in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection services. As described in Section 9, *Hazards/Hazardous Materials*, the majority of the Castaic project area (approximately 95.9 percent) is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). Approximately 93.1 percent of the Castaic project area is a State Responsibility Area (SRA) that is the responsibility of CAL FIRE, with fire protection services on federal-owned Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone land (approximately 1.4 percent of Castaic project area) the responsibility of BLM and other federal agencies, and approximately 5.5 percent of the Castaic project area is a Local Responsibility Area, provided by Los Angeles County Fire Department

<sup>99</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>

<sup>100</sup> County of Los Angeles Fire Department. Accessed 4 March 2016. Find Services in Los Angeles County. Available at: <http://www.fire.lacounty.gov/fire-station-listings/>

<sup>101</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>102</sup> Municode Library. Accessed 13 March 2016. Los Angeles County, CA: Title 32 – Fire Code. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT32FICO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT32FICO)

<sup>103</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 12: Safety Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch12.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch12.pdf)

<sup>104</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)

<sup>105</sup> County of Los Angeles Public Library. 30 June 2015. County of Los Angeles Public Library: Statistics. Available online at: <http://www.colapublib.org/aboutus/info.html>

(LACoFD).<sup>106</sup> High Fire Hazard Severity Zone areas are concentrated in the southern portion of the Castaic project area and near I-5, with Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone areas in the vicinity of the communities of Val Verde and Castaic (Figure 2.15-1, *Federal, State, and Local Fire Responsibility Areas*; see Figure 2.9-3, *Fire Hazard Severity Zones*).

Mutual aid agreements are maintained with local, state, and federal agencies. As part of the Consolidated Fire Protection District, the entire Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan area, including the entire Castaic project area, receives urban and wildland fire protection services from the LACoFD.<sup>107</sup> LACoFD provides fire protection services, fire prevention services, emergency medical services, hazardous materials services, and urban search and rescue services. According to the Safety Element of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, LACoFD has adopted a goal of responding to calls in urban areas within five minutes, in suburban areas within eight minutes, and in rural areas within 12 minutes.<sup>108</sup> However, actual response times vary due to distances and road conditions. The Castaic project area is located within the service areas of LACoFD Station #149 (Castaic) and #76 (Valencia) (Figure 2.15.2, *Los Angeles County Fire Department Fire Station Services Areas*). Station #149, which also serves as Battalion 6 and is located in the community of Castaic at 31770 Ridge Route Road, Castaic, CA 91384, provides fire and rescue services and safe haven services for unincorporated Los Angeles County and for cities in the County which contract with it, including forest areas.<sup>109</sup> Station #76 is located at 27223 Henry Mayo Drive, Valencia, CA 91355. Four fire stations are proposed in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan that are located within the Castaic project area on Chiquito Canyon Road, along Hasley Canyon Road (#143), near Avenida Rancho Tesoro (#138), and on Copper Hill Drive (#156).<sup>110</sup> The LACoFD has adopted the State Fire Code standards for new development in hazardous fire areas. Fire prevention requirements include provision of access roads, adequate road width, and clearance of brush around structures located in hillside areas. In addition, proof of adequate water supply for fire flow is required within a designated distance for new construction in fire hazard areas.

The LACoFD operates an approximately 0.25-mile training facility in the southwestern corner of the Castaic project area, near Chiquito Canyon Road. During coordination with LACoFD in the agency/community outreach planning phase for the proposed project, LACoFD asked that trails be designed to not interfere with training at LACoFD's Del Valle training center. LACoFD also asked about providing specific quarter-mile trail markers to be used and GIS shapefiles of trails to be provided to LACoFD upon development of trails with trail marker locations to facilitate emergency response and evacuation. This feedback has been integrated into the scope of the proposed project.

The proposed project involves planning for the construction and maintenance of approximately 100 miles of new trails, up to 45 acres of bike skills parks, and related facilities. Trails would be up to 12 feet wide to support bicyclists, equestrians, and hikers. The proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth because it involves no new homes or businesses, and it does not propose the extension of roads or other infrastructure to support new trails and related facilities. However, the proposed project would be expected to serve as a regional recreation facility in the County of Los Angeles that would be

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<sup>106</sup> CAL FIRE. 2007-2012. Accessed 5 January 2016. Los Angeles County & Ventura County Fire Hazard Severity Map. Available at: [http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire\\_prevention/fire\\_prevention\\_wildland\\_zones\\_maps](http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones_maps)

<sup>107</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>. Chapter 5: Safety. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2012-ch\\_05\\_safety.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2012-ch_05_safety.pdf)

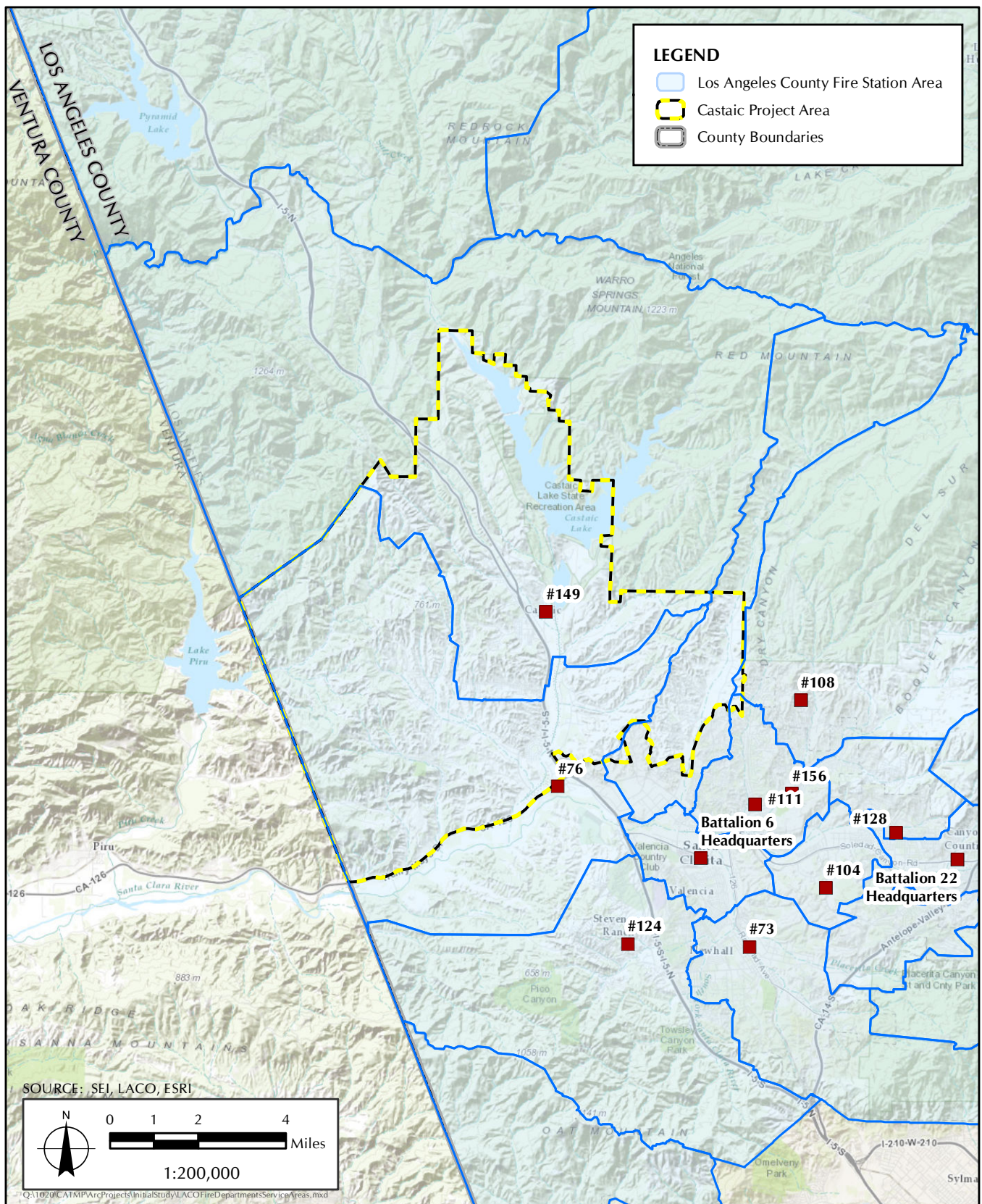
<sup>108</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>

<sup>109</sup> County of Los Angeles Fire Department. Accessed 4 March 2016. Find Services in Los Angeles County. Available at: <http://www.fire.lacounty.gov/fire-station-listings/>

<sup>110</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>







expected to generate day use from local residents and from throughout the area, which has the potential to result in a very minor increase in emergency response, search and rescue, and other fire protection services if any injuries, missing persons, or fire incidents occur. Consistent with Section 4.3.6, *Way-finding Signs*, of the County Trails Manual, the proposed project would include reassurance marker signs at every quarter (0.25) mile of trail that identify the name of the trail and quarter milepost number in order to orient search and rescue services in the case of an emergency. The County Department of Parks and Recreation would be responsible for providing updated data to LACoFD marking the location of each quarter milepost along the trail for emergency response purposes.

Consistent with the County Trails Manual, landscaping around trailheads and along trails would be designed to balance fire mitigation with habitat conservation and slope preservation.<sup>111</sup> In accordance with County Code, fires are only permitted in signed and designated areas of County Parkland (County Code 17.04.590), fireworks or other combustible materials are not permitted along any trail (County Code 17.04.520 and 17.04.610), and firearms are not permitted on County trails except in designated areas (County Code 17.04.620 and 17.08.300).<sup>112</sup> Structures and parking lots would be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the County of Los Angeles Fire Code (Title 32).<sup>113</sup> Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection services, and no mitigation would be required.

#### Sheriff protection?

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to public services in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for sheriff protection services. Sheriff protection services in unincorporated Los Angeles County are provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. According to the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, the Santa Clarita Valley Station of the Sheriff's Department oversees general law and traffic enforcement within the City of Santa Clarita, while the California Highway Patrol (CHP) has jurisdiction over traffic on State highways and in unincorporated County areas. According to the 2012 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, the Santa Clarita Sheriff's Station has insufficient space to meet current staffing and future needs.<sup>114</sup> The Sheriff's Department also operates two storefront substations, one in Newhall and the other in Canyon Country. The Department provides helicopter air support, search and rescue coordination, and the Career Offenders Burglary Robbery (COBRA) unit, which handles juvenile and gang-related crimes. The Sheriff's Department is planning for the expansion of the main station, and is also planning to expand staffing levels to meet the needs of the Santa Clarita Valley's growing population. The Castaic project area is located within the service area of the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff Station, an approximately 648-square mile service area that includes portions of the Angeles National Forest. The Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff Station is located approximately 2.0 miles southeast of the Castaic project area, at 23740 Magic Mountain Parkway, Santa Clarita, CA 91355 (Figure 2.15-3, *Los Angeles County Sheriff Stations*).

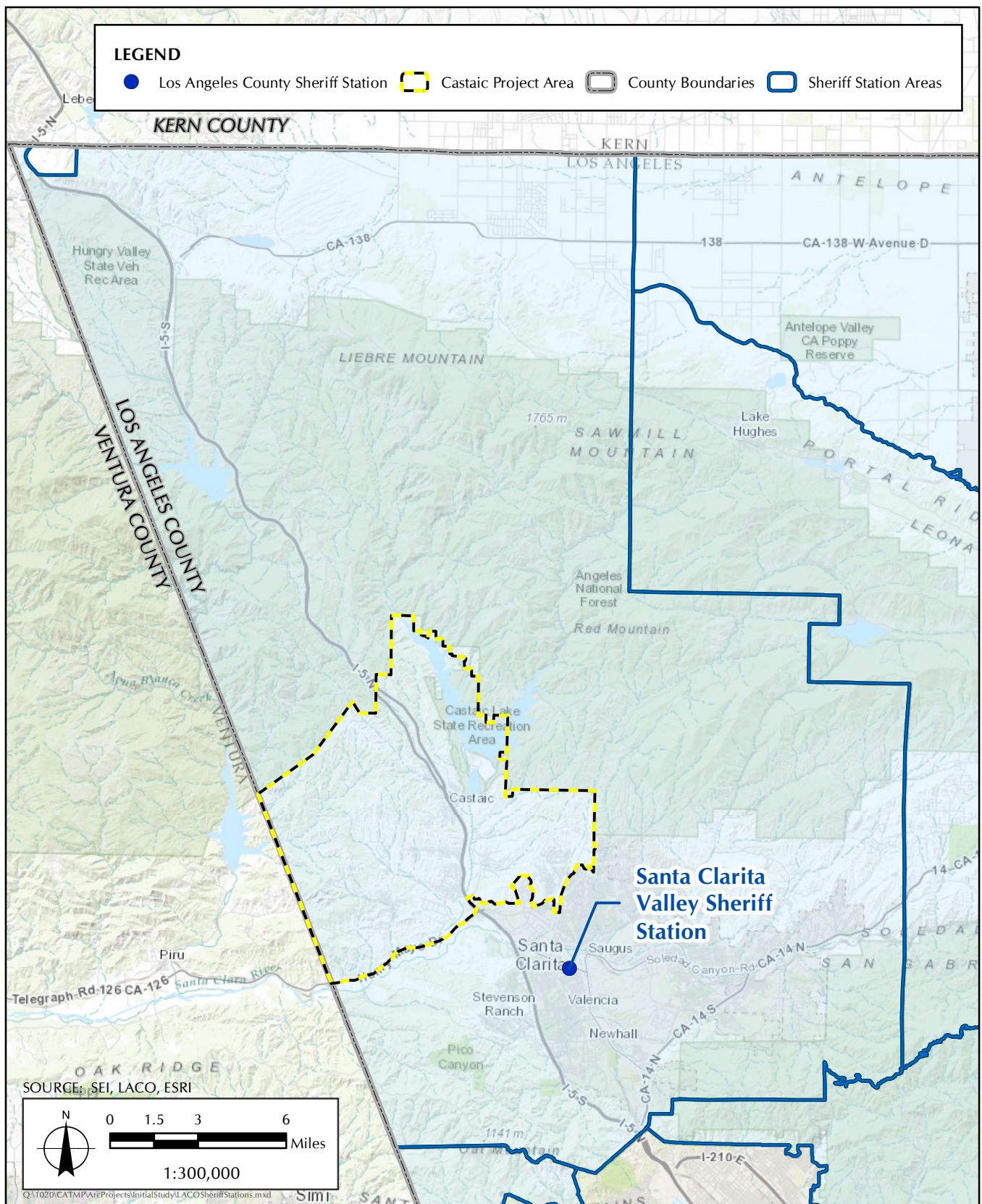
<sup>111</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>112</sup> Municode Library. Accessed 13 March 2016. Los Angeles County, CA: Part 3 – Park Rules and Regulations. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT17PABEOTPUAR\\_CH17.04PAREAR\\_PT3PARURE](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT17PABEOTPUAR_CH17.04PAREAR_PT3PARURE)

<sup>113</sup> Municode Library. Accessed 13 March 2016. Los Angeles County, CA: Title 32 – Fire Code. Available at: [https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TTT32FICO](https://www.municode.com/library/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TTT32FICO)

<sup>114</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>





**FIGURE 2.15-3**  
Los Angeles County Sheriff Stations

The Safety Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 establishes that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) requires a staff level of one deputy sheriff per each 1,000 population to effectively and efficiently fulfill all of its functions.<sup>115</sup> The proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth because it involves no new homes or businesses, and it does not propose the extension of roads or other infrastructure to support new trails and related facilities. However, the proposed project would be expected to serve as a regional recreation facility that would be expected to generate day use from throughout the area, which has the potential to result in a very minor increase in emergency response, search and rescue, and other sheriff services if any injuries or crime incidents occur as a result of local recreational users and additional one-day recreation users from the region. Multiple studies have shown that adopted trails tend to result in a negligible increase, neutral effect, or reduction in crimes including vandalism, theft, and trespassing, in the area through regular use and high visibility of users.<sup>116,117,118</sup> The proposed project avoids Pitchess Detention Center, which is located in the southern portion of the Castaic project area. During coordination with LASD in the agency/community outreach planning phase for the proposed project, LASD asked that trails be designed to not interfere with operations at Pitchess Detention Center. LASD also asked about providing specific quarter-mile trail markers to be used and GIS shapefiles of trails to be provided to LASD upon development of trails with trail marker locations to facilitate emergency response and evacuation. This feedback has been integrated into the scope of the proposed project. The proposed project was designed to ensure that trails are not located within the vicinity of correctional facilities within Pitchess Detention Center to maintain safety and security for recreation users and residents.

Consistent with Section 4.3.6, *Way-finding Signs*, of the County Trails Manual, the proposed project would include reassurance marker signs at every quarter (0.25) mile of trail that identify the name of the trail and quarter milepost number in order to orient search and rescue services in the case of an emergency. The County Department of Parks and Recreation would be responsible for providing updated data to LASD marking the location of each quarter milepost along the trail to facilitate emergency search and rescue efforts. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for sheriff protection services, and no mitigation would be required.

## Schools?



The proposed project would result in no impacts to public services in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for school services. The Castaic project area is served by one existing public high school, two existing public middle schools, five existing public elementary schools, and five private

<sup>115</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 12: Safety Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch12.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch12.pdf)

<sup>116</sup> Donald L. Greer, Ph.D., University of Nebraska at Omaha. October 2001. Nebraska Rural Trails: Three Studies of Trail Impact. Available at [http://headwaterseconomics.org/wphw/wp-content/uploads/Trail\\_Study\\_5-nebraska-rural-trails.pdf](http://headwaterseconomics.org/wphw/wp-content/uploads/Trail_Study_5-nebraska-rural-trails.pdf)

<sup>117</sup> Seattle Engineering Department. May 1987. Evaluation of the Burke-Gilman Trail's Effect on Property Values and Crime. Available at: [http://headwaterseconomics.org/wphw/wp-content/uploads/Trail\\_Study\\_82-burke-gilman-trail-property-values.pdf](http://headwaterseconomics.org/wphw/wp-content/uploads/Trail_Study_82-burke-gilman-trail-property-values.pdf)

<sup>118</sup> National Park Service. January 2008. Benefits of Trails & Greenways. Available at: <http://www.cdlandtrust.org/sites/default/files/publications/Benefits%20of%20Trails-NPS.pdf>



schools located within a quarter-mile radius of the Castaic project area (Figure 2.15-4, *Public Schools*). The proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth because it involves no new homes or businesses, and it does not propose the extension of roads or other infrastructure to support new trails and related facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios for school services, and no mitigation would be required.

## Parks?

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to public services in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for park services. As established by the Parks and Recreation Element of the County General Plan, the standard for parklands is four acres of local parkland and six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 County residents in unincorporated areas.<sup>119</sup> Based on the standards established by the County General Plan, the Parks and Recreation Element determined that, although the Santa Clarita Valley Plan Area had a surplus of approximately 12,798 acres in regional parkland to support its population in 2010, the demand for local parkland (neighborhood and community parks) in unincorporated Los Angeles County exceeds the supply, including the Castaic project area. The Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area had a local parkland deficit of approximately 308 acres to support its population in 2010, with approximately 0.7 acres of local parkland per 1,000 persons.<sup>120</sup> There are no park nodes or pocket parks within a quarter-mile radius of the Castaic project area. Existing local recreation resources are concentrated in the southeastern portion of the Castaic project area, consisting of four neighborhood parks (approximately 20.8 acres) within a half-mile service area radius of the Castaic project area and five community parks (approximately 72.2 acres) within a two-mile service area radius of the Castaic project area (see Section 2.16, *Recreation*).

The proposed project would provide approximately 100 miles of new trails and over 45 acres of recreational facilities, including up to 45 acres of bike skills parks, five simple trailheads, four equestrian amenities, and six general staging areas and trail amenities. Based on the County's goals of providing 1 mile of trails per population of 1,000, and providing approximately 4 acres of local parkland per population of 1,000, the proposed project would serve 107,250 persons, thus reducing the demand for parkland in the Castaic project area.<sup>121,122</sup> Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios for park services, and no mitigation would be required.

## Libraries?

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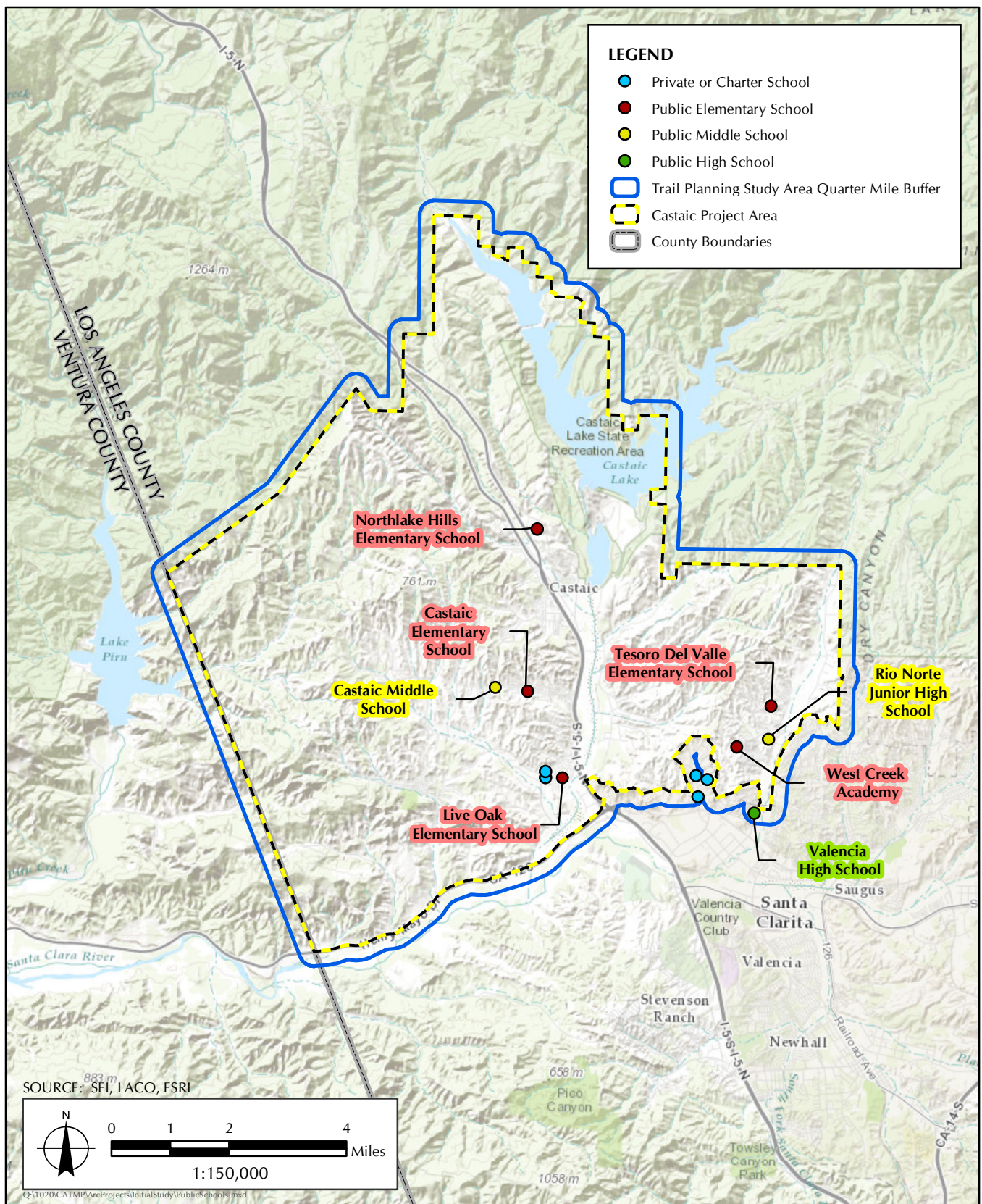
The proposed project would result in no impacts to public services in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or

<sup>119</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)

<sup>120</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)

<sup>121</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>122</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)



physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for library services. The Los Angeles County Public Library (County Library) provides library services to over 3.5 million residents living in unincorporated Los Angeles County and within 50 of the 88 incorporated cities of the County within a service area of 3,032 square miles.<sup>123,124</sup> The County's Castaic Library and two bookmobile stops are located within the Castaic project area (Figure 2.15-5, *Public Libraries*). The proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth because it involves no new homes or businesses, and it does not propose the extension of roads or other infrastructure to support new trails and related facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios for library services, and no mitigation would be required.

#### Other public facilities?

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to public services in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for other public facilities. The proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth because it involves no new homes or businesses, and it does not propose the extension of roads or other infrastructure to support new trails and related facilities. However, the proposed project would be expected to serve as a regional recreation facility in the County of Los Angeles that would be expected to generate day use from throughout the area, which has the potential to result in a very minor increase in emergency response service facilities beyond the local population if any injuries occur to one-day recreation users from the region. The proposed project involves planning for the construction and maintenance of approximately 100 miles of new trails, up to 45 acres of bike skills parks, and related facilities. As at the existing Valmont Bike Park in Boulder, Colorado, the potential for bodily injury exists when engaging in off-road cycling even when riders do take personal responsibility for their own safety and actions at the parks.<sup>125</sup> According to the City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department, who tracked accidents at the park immediately after it opened on June 11, 2011, through reports from staff, volunteers, and emergency calls, Valmont Bike Park accidents including scrapes, bruises, cuts, and a few broken collarbones and broken wrists dramatically dropped after the first month since the park opened.<sup>126</sup> Thus, there would be expected to be some increase in emergency response calls.

The Castaic project area is served by the Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, which is located at 23845 McBean Parkway, Valencia, CA 91355, approximately 3.3 miles southeast of the Castaic project area (Figure 2.15-6, *Hospitals*). This hospital is a 238-bed acute care hospital in need of expansion, with a long-term plan for up to 120 new beds.<sup>127</sup> The Safety Element of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan establishes that Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital (HMNMH) is one of the 13 designated Disaster Resource Centers (DRCs) in Los Angeles County.<sup>128</sup> As the designated DRC site, HMNMH is the lead for 11 other hospitals.

<sup>123</sup> County of Los Angeles Public Library. 2015. County of Los Angeles Public Library: About Us. Available online at: <http://www.colapublib.org/aboutus/>

<sup>124</sup> County of Los Angeles Public Library. 30 June 2015. County of Los Angeles Public Library: Statistics. Available online at: <http://www.colapublib.org/aboutus/info.html>

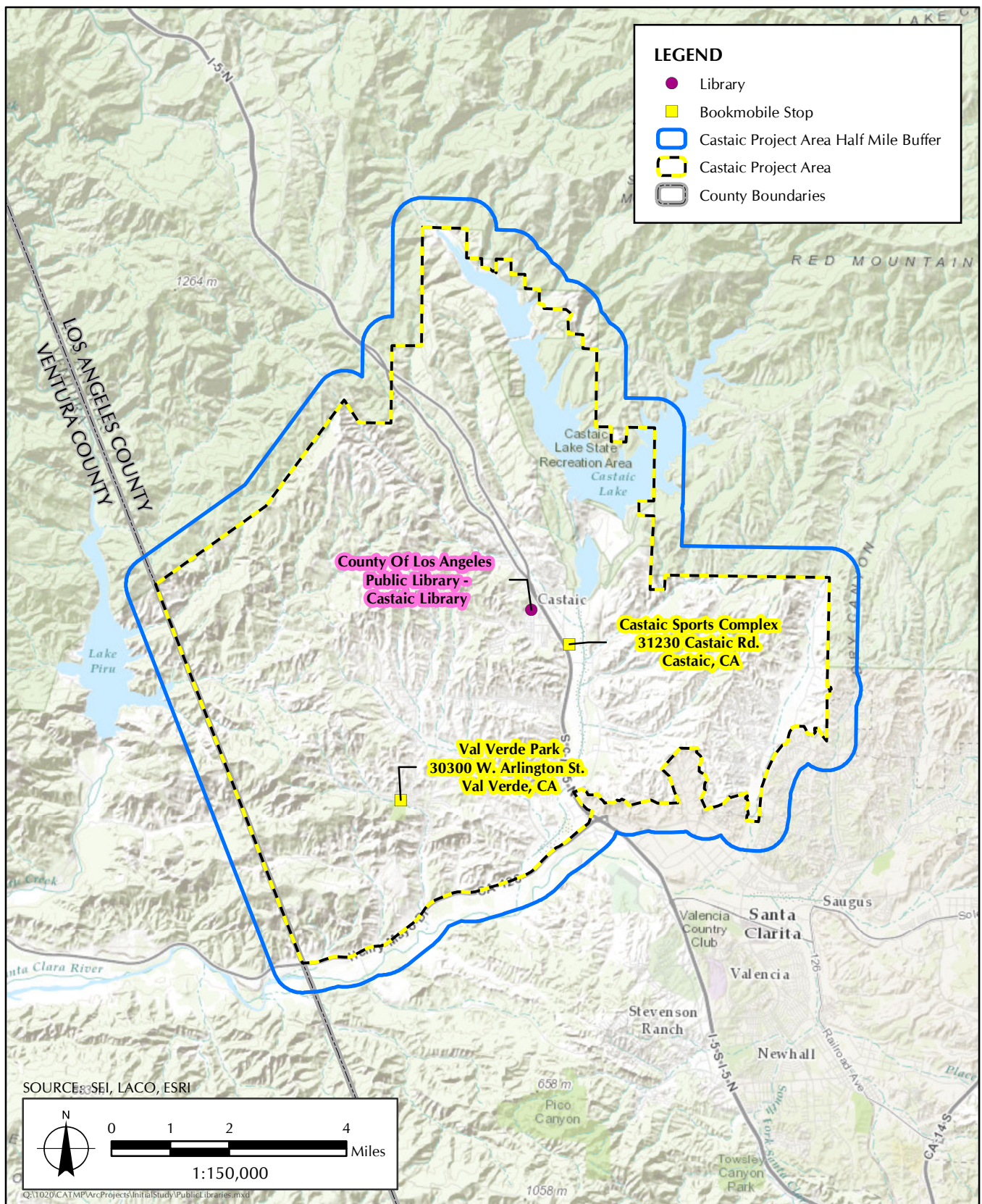
<sup>125</sup> City of Boulder, CO. 2016. Inquire Boulder: Valmont Bike Park Frequently Asked Questions. Available at: <http://user.govoutreach.com/boulder/faq.php?cid=23426>

<sup>126</sup> Fields, Jenn. Daily Camera News. 19 July 2011. Official: Boulder's Valmont Bike Park Accidents are Down. Available at: [http://www.dailycamera.com/news/ci\\_18510137](http://www.dailycamera.com/news/ci_18510137)

<sup>127</sup> Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital. 2013. Community Health Needs Assessment 2013. PDF available online at: [http://henrymayo.com/sites/henrymayo.com/files/uploaded\\_files/community-health-needs-assessment-and-plan-fy-14-16.pdf](http://henrymayo.com/sites/henrymayo.com/files/uploaded_files/community-health-needs-assessment-and-plan-fy-14-16.pdf)

<sup>128</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>





**FIGURE 2.15-5**  
Public Libraries





DRCs are hospitals that address surge capacity in a disaster through procurement, storage, maintenance, and security of extra medical equipment, supplies, and pharmaceuticals. As with Valmont Bike Park and skate parks, it is anticipated that the proposed project would result in a few broken collarbones and broken wrists immediately after the opening of the bike skills parks, a temporary increase in the need for emergency response services is anticipated until users are familiar with their skill levels. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating capacity or service level problems, or resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for other public facilities, and no mitigation would be required.

## 16. RECREATION

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to recreation, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Recreation at the Castaic project area was evaluated with regard to the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan One Valley One Vision,<sup>129</sup> the County Trails Manual,<sup>130</sup> and the Parks and Recreation Element of the County General Plan.<sup>131,132</sup> The analysis presented in this section is also based on the Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Aesthetics Assessment (Appendix B).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to recreation in regard to increasing the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. Although the proposed project would facilitate increased access to existing local parkland in an area that lacks adequate access to local parkland, it would also provide additional local recreation opportunities, including bike skills parks, that would be expected to divert a substantial portion of the additional recreation use in the area from existing local parkland. Additionally, the proposed project, through the provision of trails, would increase access to regional parkland in an area that has a surplus of regional parkland and a deficit of local parkland access. As the Castaic project area is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, this analysis uses the park terminology for neighborhood, community, and regional parks pursuant to the Parks and Recreation Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 (Table 2.16-1, *Los Angeles County Park Service Area Definitions*).<sup>133</sup> Los Angeles County also treats trails as linear parks that provide community access to increased health and fitness activities in the increasingly urbanized region. The Castaic project area is located within the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>129</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available online at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>

<sup>130</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>131</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)

<sup>132</sup> County of Los Angeles Public Library. 30 June 2015. County of Los Angeles Public Library: Statistics. Available online at: <http://www.colapublib.org/aboutus/info.html>

<sup>133</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)

<sup>134</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted November 27, 2012. Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision. Available at: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>. Chapter 4: Conservation and Open Space Element. Available at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov\\_2012-ch\\_04\\_os.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/ovov_2012-ch_04_os.pdf)

**TABLE 2.16-1**  
**LOS ANGELES COUNTY PARK SERVICE AREA DEFINITIONS**

Regional/Local	Service Standards	Recreational Facility	Suggested Park Size	Service Area
Regional	6 acres per 1,000 County residents	Regional Park	Greater than 100 acres	25+ miles
		Community Regional Park	20 to 100 acres	Up to 20 miles
		Special Use Facility	No size criteria	None
Local	4 acres per 1,000 County residents	Community Park	10 to 20 acres	1 to 2 miles
		Neighborhood Park	3 to 10 acres	1/2 mile
		Pocket Park	1/4 to 3 acres	1/4 mile
		Park Node	0 to 1/4 acre	None

**SOURCE:** Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)

In regard to regional recreation, the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area had a surplus of approximately 12,798 acres to support its population in 2010, with approximately 53 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 persons.<sup>135</sup> A total of 784,983.5 acres of regional parkland facilities are located within the regional service area vicinity of the Castaic project area. Val Verde Community Regional Park and Castaic Sports Complex are the two community regional parks within the Castaic project area (Figure 2.16-1, *Regional Recreational Resources*). Within the Castaic project area, special use facilities include Tesoro Adobe Historic Park and BLM lands. Castaic Lake State Recreation Area is the only regional park in the Castaic project area; other nearby regional parks include the Los Padres National Forest and Angeles National Forest to the north, Central Park in the City of Santa Clarita to the southeast, Santa Clarita Woodlands Park to the south, and Lake Piru to the west. The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) is located approximately 8.5 miles northwest of the Castaic project area. The proposed project would increase recreational access to Val Verde Community Regional Park by providing the Val Verde Trail that would transverse the northern edge of the park. The proposed project would facilitate recreational access to Castaic Sports Complex by providing the Castaic Creek Trail that would transverse the southern and eastern portions of the complex property. Castaic Lake State Recreation Area would become more accessible by trail users through the proposed Sloan Canyon Trail, Castaic Dam Trail, Lake West Trail, and Elderberry Forebay Trail; however, several of these proposed routes are already used as de facto trails or maintained as trail segments within the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area (see Appendix B).<sup>136</sup> The existing Cliffie Stone Trail is adjacent to the southern edge of Tesoro Adobe Historic Park, which would experience additional use as a result of new trails at the northwestern side of the existing trail. The proposed project would provide trail access to the Angeles National Forest through the Cliffie Stone East Trail, San Francisquito Trail, Elderberry Forebay Trail, and Santa Felicia Trail.

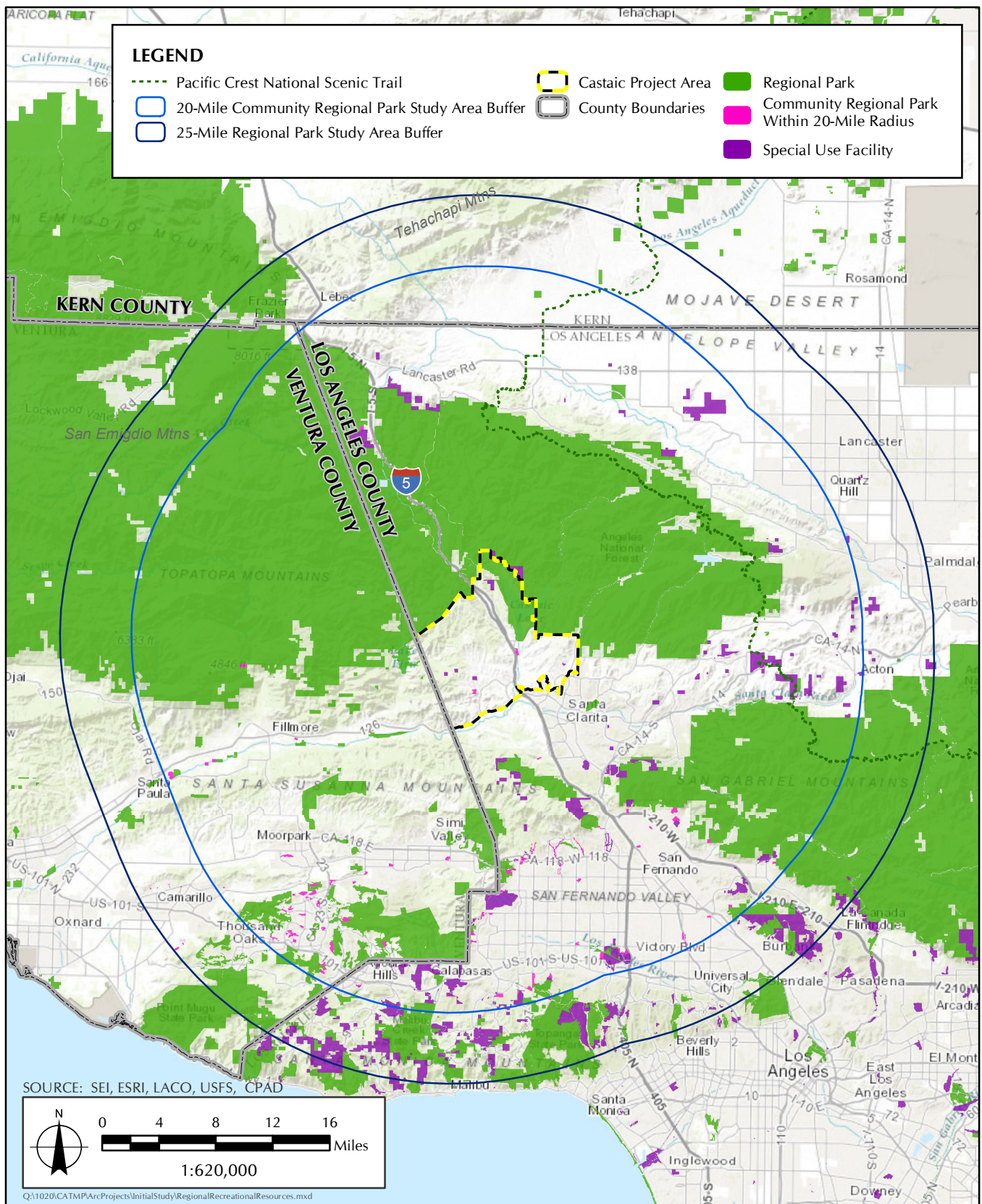
In regard to local recreation, the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area had a deficit of approximately 308 acres to support its population in 2010, with approximately 0.7 acres of local parkland per 1,000 persons.<sup>137</sup> A total of 93 acres of local parkland facilities are located within the local park service area of the Castaic project area. There are no park nodes or pocket parks within a quarter-mile radius of the Castaic project area. Existing local recreation resources are concentrated in the southeastern portion of the Castaic project area. There are four neighborhood parks (approximately 20.8 acres) within a half-mile service area radius of the Castaic project area and five community parks (approximately 72.2 acres) within a two-mile service area

<sup>135</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)

<sup>136</sup> Friends of Castaic. Accessed 4 March 2016. Castaic Lake – Trail Map. Available at: [http://castaiclake.com/map\\_trails.html](http://castaiclake.com/map_trails.html) Black and white hard copy of trail map available upon request at Castaic Lake State Recreation Area entrance kiosks.

<sup>137</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. Adopted 6 October 2015. Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element. Available online at: [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_final-general-plan-ch10.pdf)





**FIGURE 2.16-1**  
Regional Recreational Resources

radius of the Castaic project area (Table 2.16-2, *Existing Local Parks and Trails*; Figure 2.16-2, *Local Recreational Resources*).

**TABLE 2.16-2  
EXISTING LOCAL PARKS AND TRAILS**

Type of Local Recreation Facility	Name of Facility	Distance from Castaic Project Area	Facility Size (Area/Length)	Management Agency
Neighborhood Park	Del Valle Park <sup>1</sup>	Within Castaic project area	5.5 acres	County of Los Angeles
Neighborhood Park	Hasley Canyon Park <sup>1</sup>	Within Castaic project area	5.4 acres	County of Los Angeles
Neighborhood Park	Chesebrough Park <sup>2</sup>	0.3 mile southeast	6.0 acres	City of Santa Clarita
Neighborhood Park	Northbridge Park (County-managed portion) <sup>2</sup>	0.4 mile southeast	3.9 acres	County of Los Angeles
Community Park	West Creek Park <sup>1</sup>	Within Castaic project area	17.7 acres	County of Los Angeles
Community Park	Valencia Heritage Park <sup>2</sup>	0.5 miles south	15.6 acres	City of Santa Clarita
Community Park	Northbridge Park (City of Santa Clarita-managed portion) <sup>2</sup>	0.4 mile southeast	13.6 acres	City of Santa Clarita
Community Park	Bridgeport Park <sup>2</sup>	1.2 miles south	14.7 acres	City of Santa Clarita
Community Park	Bouquet Canyon Park <sup>2</sup>	1.9 miles southeast	10.6 acres	City of Santa Clarita
<b>Total Local Park Area within 2 Miles of Castaic project area</b>			<b>93 acres</b>	
Multi-Use Trail	Cliffie Stone Trail <sup>3</sup>	Within Castaic project area	2.9 miles	County of Los Angeles
Multi-Use Trail	Hasley Canyon Trail <sup>3</sup>	Within Castaic project area	1.7 miles	County of Los Angeles
Multi-Use Trail	North Park Trail <sup>3</sup>	Within Castaic project area	0.3 miles	County of Los Angeles
Multi-Purpose Trail	Santa Clara River Trail <sup>4</sup>	1.2 miles south	1.5 miles	City of Santa Clarita
Multi-Purpose Trail	South Fork River Trail <sup>4</sup>	1.2 miles south	1.9 miles	City of Santa Clarita
Multi-Purpose Trail	Bouquet Creek Trail <sup>4</sup>	1.4 miles south-southeast	0.3 miles	City of Santa Clarita
Multi-Purpose Trail	San Francisquito Creek Trail <sup>4</sup>	Adjacent to southern portion	1.3 miles	City of Santa Clarita
Multi-Purpose Trail	Unnamed <sup>4</sup>	1.5 mile east	3.5 miles within 2-mile radius of Castaic project area	City of Santa Clarita
Cross Country Trail	Cross Country Trail <sup>4</sup>	1.9 miles southeast	0.8 miles within 2-mile radius of Castaic project area	City of Santa Clarita
<b>Total Trail Length within 2 Miles of Castaic project area</b>			<b>14.2 miles</b>	

**SOURCES:**

<sup>1</sup> Email from Mr. John Diaz, Planning Division – Trails Section. Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. November 16, 2015. Los Angeles County Parks. GIS layer file. Also available at: <http://parks.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dpr>

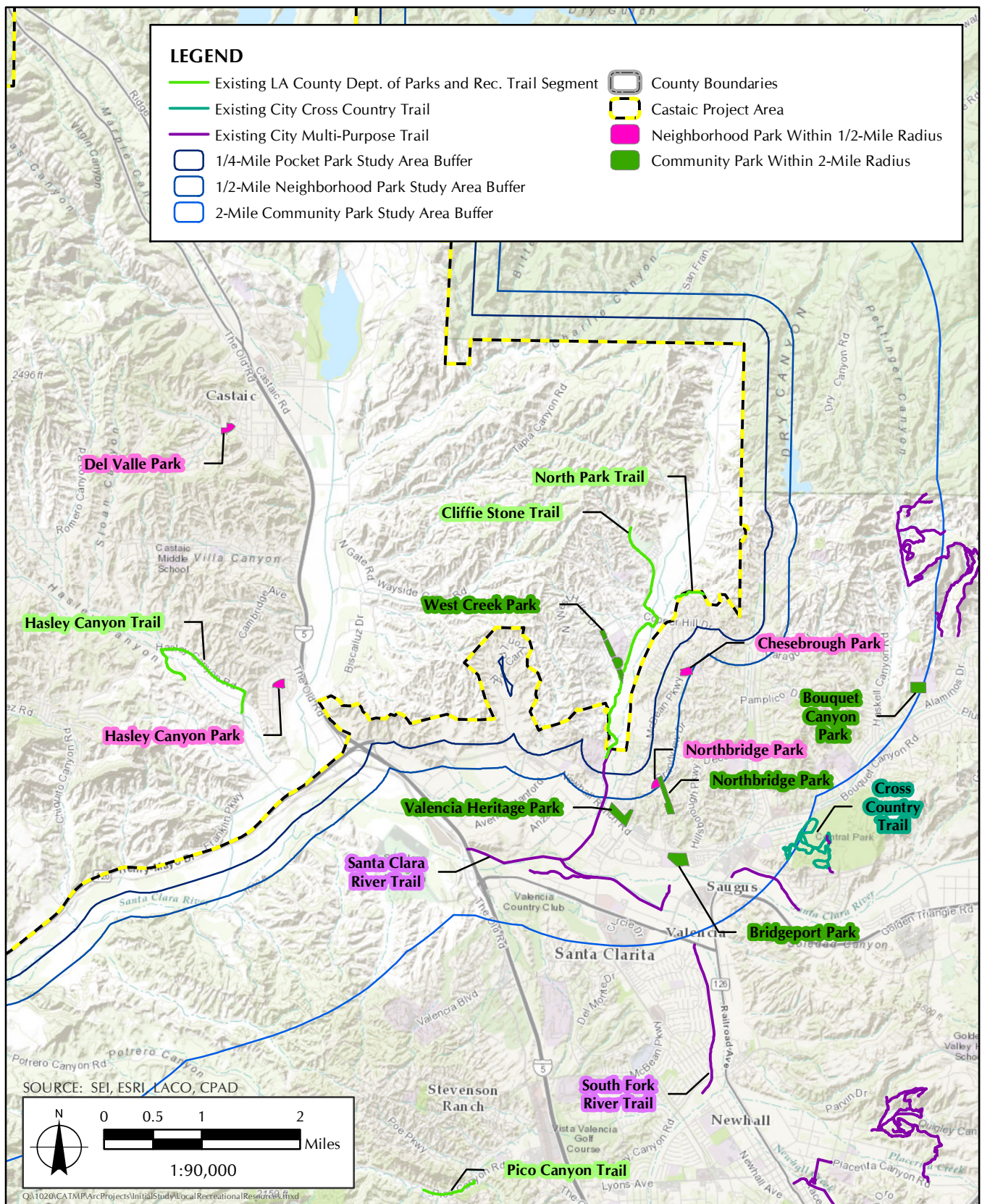
<sup>2</sup> GreenInfo Network. Accessed 1 April 2016. *California Protected Areas Data Portal*. Available at: <http://www.calands.org/> Also available at: <http://www.santa-clarita.com/index.aspx?page=186>

<sup>3</sup> Email from Mr. John Diaz, Planning Division – Trails Section. Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. November 12, 2015. Los Angeles County Regional Trail System. GIS layer file. Also available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/>

<sup>4</sup> City of Santa Clarita. Accessed 1 April 2016. *City of Santa Clarita Trails: Trails/Paseo Maps*. Available at: <http://www.santa-clarita.com/city-hall/departments/parks-recreation-and-community-services/parks-division/trails>

Section 2.2.3 of the County Trails Manual establishes (through the 2004–2020 Strategic Asset Management Plan) the goal of providing 1 mile per population of 1,000 (approximately 50 feet of trail for each trail user), with an assumption that approximately 11 percent of the population will engage in trail use, as specified by





**FIGURE 2.16-2**  
Local Recreational Resources

the National Recreation and Park Association.<sup>138</sup> Based on this goal and approximately 14.2 miles of existing trails within a two-mile radius of the Castaic project area, existing trails provide local recreation opportunities to serve (and decrease the local parkland deficit) 13,632 persons (see Table 2.16-2). There are three existing County multi-use trails, four named and a small network of unnamed existing City multi-purpose trails, and the existing City Cross Country trail within a two-mile radius of the Castaic project area. According to the 2012 Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California:

- 60.2% respondents utilized unpaved multi-use trails during their last park visit
- 34.7% respondents reported utilizing an unpaved trail for hiking, biking, or horseback riding at least once or twice a month during the last 12 months. At the same time, 31% of respondents reported never using an unpaved trail.<sup>139</sup>

The proposed project would increase recreational access to Del Valle Park by providing the Sloan Canyon Trail that would transverse the southern edge of the park. The proposed project would not directly facilitate recreational access to Hasley Canyon Park, as it would be located approximately 0.1 mile from the nearest trail (Castaic Creek). The existing Cliffie Stone Trail transverses West Creek Park, which would experience additional use as a result of new trails at the northern side of the existing trail providing connections through Cliffie Stone Trail to the existing San Francisquito Creek Trail in the City of Santa Clarita. However, the proposed project would also provide additional trailheads, resting areas, bike skills parks, and related facilities that would be expected to accommodate a substantial amount of increased recreational use in the area as a result of the proposed project. The proposed project would provide approximately 100 miles of new trails and over 45 acres of recreational facilities, including up to 45 acres of bike skills parks, five (5) simple trailheads, four (4) equestrian amenities, and six (6) general staging areas and trail amenities. Based on the County's goals of providing 1 mile of trails per population of 1,000 (approximately 50 feet of trail for each trail user) and providing approximately 4 acres of local parkland per population of 1,000, the proposed project would serve 107,250 persons (96,000 through proposed trails and 11,250 through other proposed recreational facilities). Therefore, impacts to recreation in regard to increasing the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Does the project include neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of such facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to recreation in regard to including neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities or requiring the construction or expansion of such facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. that would be reduced to below the level of significance with mitigation measures. The proposed project includes trails and related recreational facilities that would through the southern edge of Del Valle Park (proposed trail segment SC3 and Sloan Canyon trailhead) and through the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area (proposed Castaic Dam, Elderberry Forebay, Lake West and Sloan Canyon trail routes). The proposed project involves planning for the construction and maintenance of approximately 100 miles of new trails, up to 45 acres of bike skills parks, and related facilities which have the potential to result in adverse physical effects on the environment as a result of extensive grading for the bike skills parks and potential impacts to biological resources, cultural

<sup>138</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>139</sup> California State Parks, Natural Resources Agency. January 2014. Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2012: Complete Findings. Available at: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/2012%20spoa.pdf>



resources, and geology and soils. During the construction of trails, small portions of Del Valle Park, Castaic Lake State Recreation Area, and public right-of-ways would not be available for public use; trail obstructions would be temporary and only constrain trail use along finite segments of the trail during short-term construction on each segment. This is not considered a significant impact to recreation. In the long term, the proposed project would provide improved trail access and encourage greater use of existing trails and adjacent parks, recreational facilities, and open space. The proposed project would have beneficial impacts on recreation, while short-term impacts of project construction in regard to biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, as analyzed in this Initial Study, would be less than significant after mitigation. The proposed project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities because it would not directly result in population growth. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to having adverse physical effects on the environment as a result of construction or expansion of recreational facilities, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Would the project interfere with regional open space connectivity?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts to recreation in regard to interfering with regional open space connectivity (Figure 2.16-3, *Regional Open Space*). The Castaic project area is predominantly rural, with National Forest open space to the north of the Castaic project area, generally rural land in unincorporated Ventura County to the west of the Castaic project area, the predominantly undeveloped Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Area to the south-southwest, and the developed City of Santa Clarita to the south-southeast. Two community regional parks (Val Verde Community Regional Park and Castaic Sports Complex), two regional special use facilities (Tesoro Adobe Historic Park and BLM lands), and one regional park (Castaic Lake State Recreation Area) are located within the Castaic project area (see Figure 2.16-1). Additionally, the Los Padres National Forest and Angeles National Forest are adjacent to the northern boundary of the Castaic project area, Central Park in the City of Santa Clarita is located approximately 2.0 miles to the southeast, Santa Clarita Woodlands Park is located approximately 6.0 miles to the south, and Lake Piru is located approximately 0.9 mile to the west of the Castaic project area. The PCT is located approximately 8.5 miles northwest of the Castaic project area, within the Angeles National Forest. As the proposed project is a Trails Plan for providing a more extensive regional trail system and supporting facilities, it would increase regional open space connectivity as the Castaic Area is being developed. The proposed project would increase recreational access to Val Verde Community Regional Park by providing the Val Verde Trail that would transverse the northern edge of the park. The proposed project would facilitate recreational access to Castaic Sports Complex by providing the Castaic Creek Trail that would transverse the southern and eastern portions of the complex property. Castaic Lake State Recreation Area would become more accessible by trail users through the proposed Sloan Canyon Trail, Castaic Dam Trail, Lake West Trail, and Elderberry Forebay Trail. The existing Cliffie Stone Trail is adjacent to the southern edge of Tesoro Adobe Historic Park, which would experience additional use as a result of new trails providing recreational access at the northwestern side of the existing trail. The proposed project would provide trail access to the Angeles National Forest through the Cliffie Stone East Trail, San Francisquito Trail, Elderberry Forebay Trail, and Santa Felicia Trail. The proposed project would improve regional open space connectivity by increasing recreational access, through a trail system, to regional recreation resources, including Val Verde Community Regional Park, Castaic Sports Complex, Castaic Lake State Recreation Area, Tesoro Adobe Historic Park, and the Angeles National Forest. The proposed project would increase the amount of linear open space within the Castaic project area by up to 0.2 square miles and would not inhibit existing open space connectivity because it would not involve the planning of any large structures or barriers to open spaces. Therefore, the proposed project result in no impacts to recreation in regard to interfering with regional open space connectivity, and no mitigation would be required.



## 17. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to transportation/traffic, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The analysis presented in this section is based on the *Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan Traffic Assessment* (Appendix H).

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in no impacts to transportation/traffic in regards to conflicting with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit. The proposed project would be in conformance with the Transportation Element of the County General Plan and the 2016 SCAG Regional Transportation Plan. Therefore, there would be no impact, and no mitigation would be required.

The proposed project proposes 100 miles of unpaved trails and 21 new trail access sites. Proposed changes to improve convenience and safety for bicyclists, pedestrians and equestrians to access proposed trails and facilities do not conflict with multi-modal plans and policies. These changes fall into the following general categories:

- Multi-use trails identify locations for unpaved trails.
- Trail access points identify locations for major and minor access points.
- Intersection and Crossing Improvements may include focused improvements such as curb ramps, curb extensions, crosswalks, and other pedestrian related improvements.
- Bike skills parks and equestrian facilities identify potential locations for facilities for consideration and further analysis

Intersection and crossing improvements may include curb ramps, curb extensions, high visibility crosswalks, pedestrian refuge island design standards, audible signals at roadway crossings (to guide visually impaired pedestrians), advance stop bars, advance yield lines, regulatory signage, in-pavement flashers, traffic signal timing modification, and crossing beacons. The intersection and crossing improvements would improve biking, pedestrian, and equestrian conditions by improving safety and convenience at intersections and crossings. With the possible exception of traffic signal timing modifications, the recommended

improvements would not affect vehicular circulation. Traffic signal timing changes for bicycles and pedestrian improvements are exempt from CEQA per Assembly Bill 417. Therefore there would be no impact, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program (CMP), including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the CMP for designated roads or highways?**

☐☐☒☐

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts transportation/traffic in regards to conflicting with an applicable congestion management program (CMP), including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the CMP for designated roads or highways. The proposed trails are located off-street and would not change the capacity of any street for automobiles or trucks. Temporary impacts during trail construction will be mitigated following established temporary traffic control methods. Therefore, there would be less than significant impacts to traffic operations.

The existing and proposed level of service was evaluated at the proposed trail access points (see Table 6, *Existing Traffic Counts and Level of Service (LOS) Results for Proposed Trailhead Access Roads*, Table 7, *Trip Generation by Trailhead*, and Table 8, *Projected Traffic Volumes Counts Based on Assumed Trip Generation Rate and Allocation per Trailhead*, in Appendix H). Using a conservative trip generation rate, the amount of trips generated to each proposed location, derived as a percentage of total proposed trail mileage, was calculated. The resulting projected Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes are well under the Los Angeles County LOS D threshold. Furthermore, peak trail demand (weekends during mid-day) will not coincide with peak roadway demand, and so will have minimal impact on traffic conditions during the weekday AM and PM commuter peaks. Increases in roadway demand during construction of access points will be temporary and established traffic control methods shall be followed. As a result, less than impacts to traffic level of service is anticipated.

During construction, the proposed project would generate short-term vehicle trips due to worker commutes, construction equipment, and other transport of soils, resulting in minor traffic impact. During operation, maintenance of the trails would be provided by the County, generating a very small amount of additional maintenance trips from the existing amount. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and mitigation would not be required.

**c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts to transportation/traffic in regards to a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. The proposed project is not located within two miles of a public or private airport. The proposed project would not alter air traffic patterns in any way. Therefore there would be no impact, and no mitigation would be required.



**d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts transportation/traffic in regards to substantially increasing hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). All facilities would be designed in conformance with the County Trails Plan to maximize safety by adhering to established design and engineering standards. There are no roadway changes envisioned. The proposed project would designate trails with appropriate signage to protect private properties and recreation enthusiasts. During construction, contractors will provision traffic warning signs, flag persons, and other measures to maintain access for all properties and to facilitate traffic flow during construction of trails. Construction would occur in conformance with County building codes. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**e) Result in inadequate emergency access?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts to transportation/traffic in regards to resulting in inadequate emergency access. Existing County trail facilities in the area have no mile markers or trail maps, which can create difficulty with respect to timely response and rescue. Proposed trail system components would improve trail markers and therefore augment response in remote areas, taking into consideration access for emergency vehicles, as appropriate. The proposed plan would not impact existing roadways and would not impede existing emergency access. The appropriate agencies that provide emergency services would be given an opportunity to review site plans during the environmental review process for specific projects. The proposed project would conform to the County Trails Manual. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?**

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The proposed project would result in no impacts to transportation/traffic in regards to conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. The proposed project would support policies, plans, and programs related to bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian facilities by encouraging the use of alternative transportation. The County General Plan directs the implementation of regional transportation policies to support increase use of active transportation strategies, including biking, pedestrian activities, and use of public transit. The proposed project would have a beneficial impact with regards to active transportation because it encourages recreation opportunities consistent with the County General Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Therefore there would be no impact, and no mitigation would be required.

## **18. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

This analysis is undertaken to determine if the proposed project would have a significant impact to utilities and service systems, thus requiring the consideration of mitigation measures or alternatives in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines. Utilities and service systems at the Castaic project area were evaluated with regard to the County Trails Manual.<sup>140</sup>

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the project:</b>				
<b>a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of either the Los Angeles or Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Boards?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to water quality in regard to exceeding wastewater treatment requirements of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Boards. Trail amenities, such as restrooms at Bike Skills Parks, equestrian facilities, and general staging areas, that would add additional water or wastewater systems within the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District are proposed to be constructed (see Figure 1.9-2, *Proposed Trail Related Facility Locations*). The Castaic project area is located in the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles RWQCB and regulated by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health for OWTs, which sets standards for development of septic tanks and fields, as well as the use of pit toilets. Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District sets standards for a portion of the Castaic project area that is within their service area. The proposed project would follow procedures in the County Trails Manual, by incorporating restrooms into trailhead and parking locations where water lines and sewage conveyance is possible. In areas without available water, restrooms would be designed to be pit toilets as per U.S. Forest Service guidelines.<sup>141</sup> Restrooms would be designed to demonstrate compliance with the standards of the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation or the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health for OWTs, as applicable.

The Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District operates the Saugus and Valencia Water Reclamation Plants (WRPs). The Saugus WRP provides primary, secondary and tertiary treatment for 6.5 million gallons of wastewater per day. The Saugus WRP operates with the Valencia WRP as part of the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District. No facilities for solids processing are located at the Saugus WRP. Instead, all wastewater solids are conveyed by trunk sewers to the Valencia WRP for treatment.

The Valencia WRP is a tertiary treatment plant with solids processing facilities. The plant provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment for 21.6 million gallons of wastewater per day. The Valencia WRP processes all wastewater solids generated in the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (i.e. from the Saugus and Valencia WRPs). The wastewater solids are anaerobically digested, stored, and then dewatered using plate and frame filter presses. The dewatered cake, or biosolids, is hauled away for composting. Methane gas is produced during the digestion process and is utilized to generate steam to heat the digesters.

<sup>140</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

<sup>141</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

Of the up to 16 restroom facilities that would likely be developed in conjunction with the proposed project at the three bike skills parks, four equestrian amenity facilities, and six general staging areas proposed in the Castaic Area Multi-Use Trails Plan, five restroom facilities would be located within sanitation districts (Table 2.18-1, *Proposed Trail Related Restroom Facilities*). The increase in sewage generation associated with the proposed five restroom facilities within the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation district would not exceed the capacity of the wastewater treatment facilities.

**TABLE 2.18-1  
PROPOSED TRAIL RELATED RESTROOM FACILITIES**

<b>Sewer or OWTS</b>	<b>Related Facility Type with Restroom</b>	<b>Number of Restrooms</b>
Sewer – Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District	Bike Skills Park	1
	Equestrian Amenities	3
	General Staging Areas	0
Sewer – NR District	Bike Skills Park	0
	Equestrian Amenities	0
	General Staging Areas	1
	<b>TOTAL SEWER</b>	<b>5</b>
OWTS – Outside County Sanitation District	Bike Skills Park	2
	Equestrian Amenities	1
	General Staging Areas	5
	<b>TOTAL OWTS</b>	<b>8</b>

**SOURCE:** Wilt, Peter. County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Accessed 16 March 2016. *Sanitation Districts Boundaries*. Available at: <http://www.lacsd.org/aboutus/gis/default.asp>

The increase in sewage generation due to increased trail use is anticipated to be minimal. Therefore, impacts in regard to exceeding wastewater treatment requirements of either the Los Angeles or Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Boards would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**b) Create water or wastewater system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating water or wastewater system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. The project area is not currently served by public restrooms. Trail amenities such as restrooms that would add additional water or wastewater systems with in the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District are proposed to be constructed (see Figure 1.9-2). The Castaic project area is located in the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles RWQCB and regulated by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) for OWTS, which sets standards for development of septic tanks and fields, as well as the use of pit toilets. The Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District sets standards for the portion of the Castaic project area that is within their service area. The proposed project would follow procedures in the County Trails Manual by incorporating restrooms into trailhead and parking locations where water lines and sewage conveyance is possible. In areas without available water, restrooms would be designed to be pit toilets as per U.S. Forest Service guidelines. Restrooms would be designed to demonstrate compliance with the standards of the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation or DPH for OWTS, as applicable.”<sup>142</sup> The increase in sewage generation due to increased trail use

<sup>142</sup> County of Los Angeles. Adopted May 17, 2011; Revised June 2013. County of Los Angeles Trails Manual. Available at: <https://trails.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/69/LA%20County%20Trails%20Manual%20%28Revised%2006-20-13%29.compressed.pdf>

is anticipated to be minimal. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Create drainage system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

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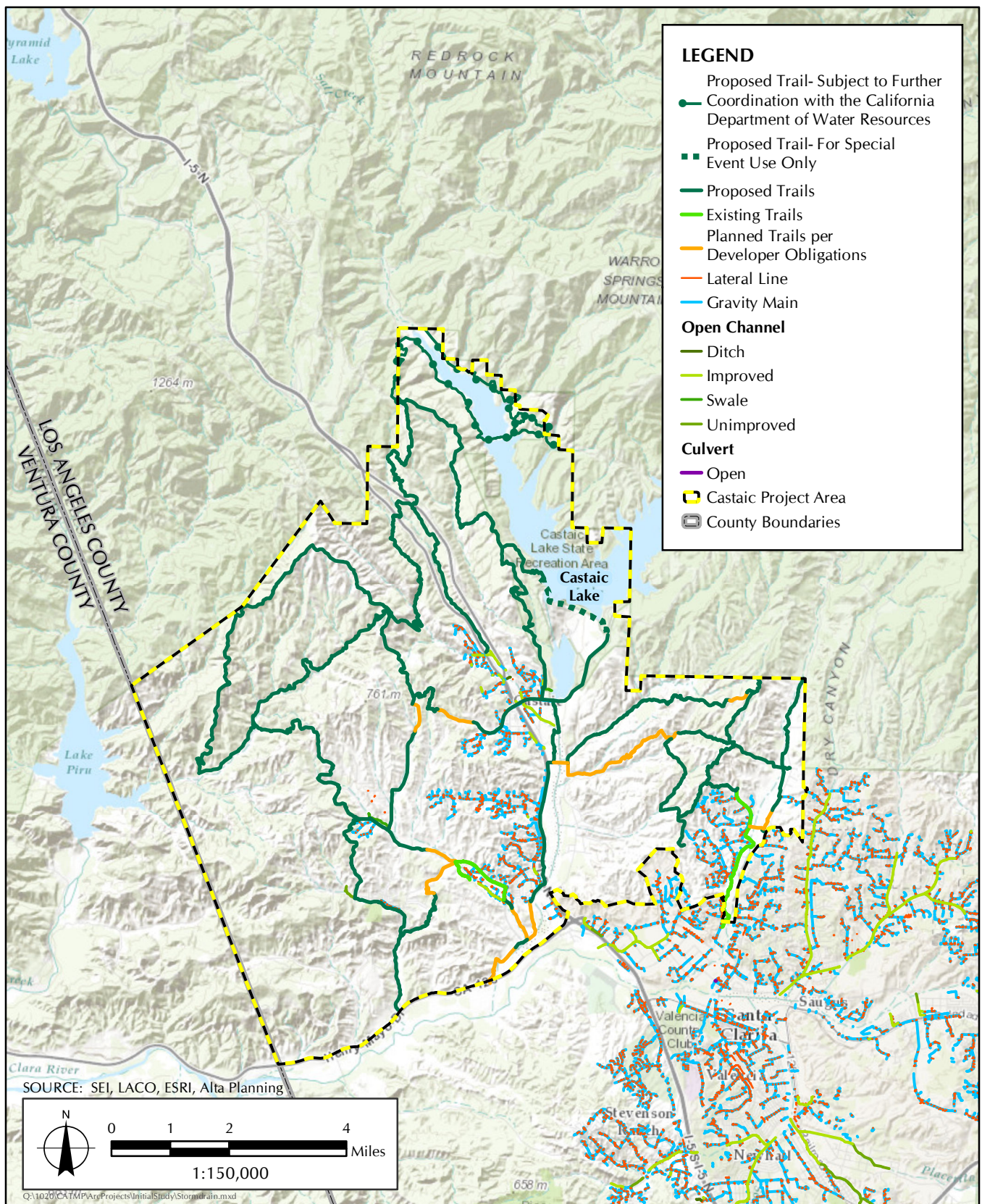
The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to creating drainage system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. There are existing drainage systems within the proposed trails plan area (Figure 2.18-1, *Storm Drain Network*). Proposed drainage systems and erosion control best management practices would be required to be designed in accordance with the recommendations of the County Trails Plan. The plan requires the use of erosion control devices. The proposed project would consist of primarily natural pervious surfaces and would not be expected to increase stormwater runoff. As part of the review of grading permits, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works requires documentation of the provisions for storm water flows to prevent erosion and sediment transport onto adjacent properties, adjacent roadways, storm drain systems and natural drainage courses during the rainy season. These provisions must be shown on a local Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP). In addition, for projects which are one acre or larger a State Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is required to be filed with the RWQCB. Thus, the project would not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff, and no mitigation would be required.

**d) Have sufficient reliable water supplies available to serve the project demands from existing entitlements and resources, considering existing and projected water demands from other land uses?**

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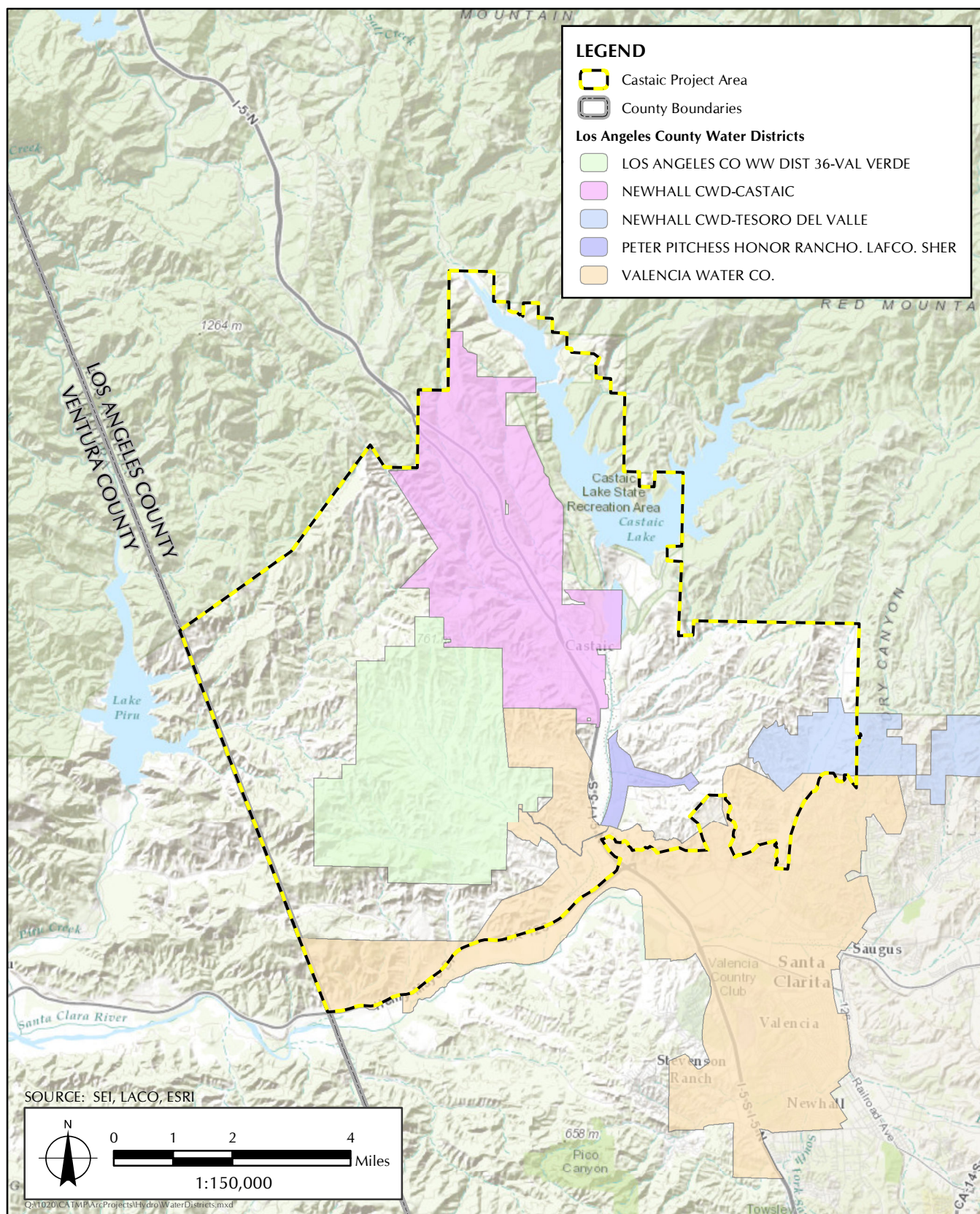
The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to having sufficient reliable water supplies available to serve the project demands from existing entitlements and resources, considering existing and projected water demands from other land uses. The proposed project is proposed to construct a maximum of 16 restrooms. The Castaic project area is serviced by the following water districts within Los Angeles County: Los Angeles County Water District 36 Val Verde, Newhall, Peter Pitchess Honor Rancho, and Valencia Water Company, and the Castaic Lake Water Agency (Figure 2.18-2, *Los Angeles County Water Districts*). The proposed project would need water for dust control and cleaning during the construction phase and for irrigation of trees and other landscaping in the long term. Water use for dust control and incidental cleaning during the construction phase would be limited and temporary. Long-term water demand for plant irrigation would be minimal as the project would utilize native and drought-tolerant plants. Water demand for restroom faucets, urinals, and toilets would be adequately serviced by the Los Angeles County Water District, and the Castaic Lake Water Agency. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.





**FIGURE 2.18-1**  
Storm Drain Network





**e) Create energy utility (electricity, natural gas, propane) system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new energy facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to creating energy utility (electricity, natural gas, propane) system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new energy facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) and Southern California Edison provide natural gas and electrical service for the Castaic project area. The proposed project would utilize minimal energy in the operations of the up to 16 anticipated restroom facilities. The facilities would serve existing and proposed residents; therefore, there would be no anticipated significant increase in per capita Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Thus, there would be less than significant impacts to creating energy utility (electricity, natural gas, propane) system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new energy facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, and mitigation would not be required.

**f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?**

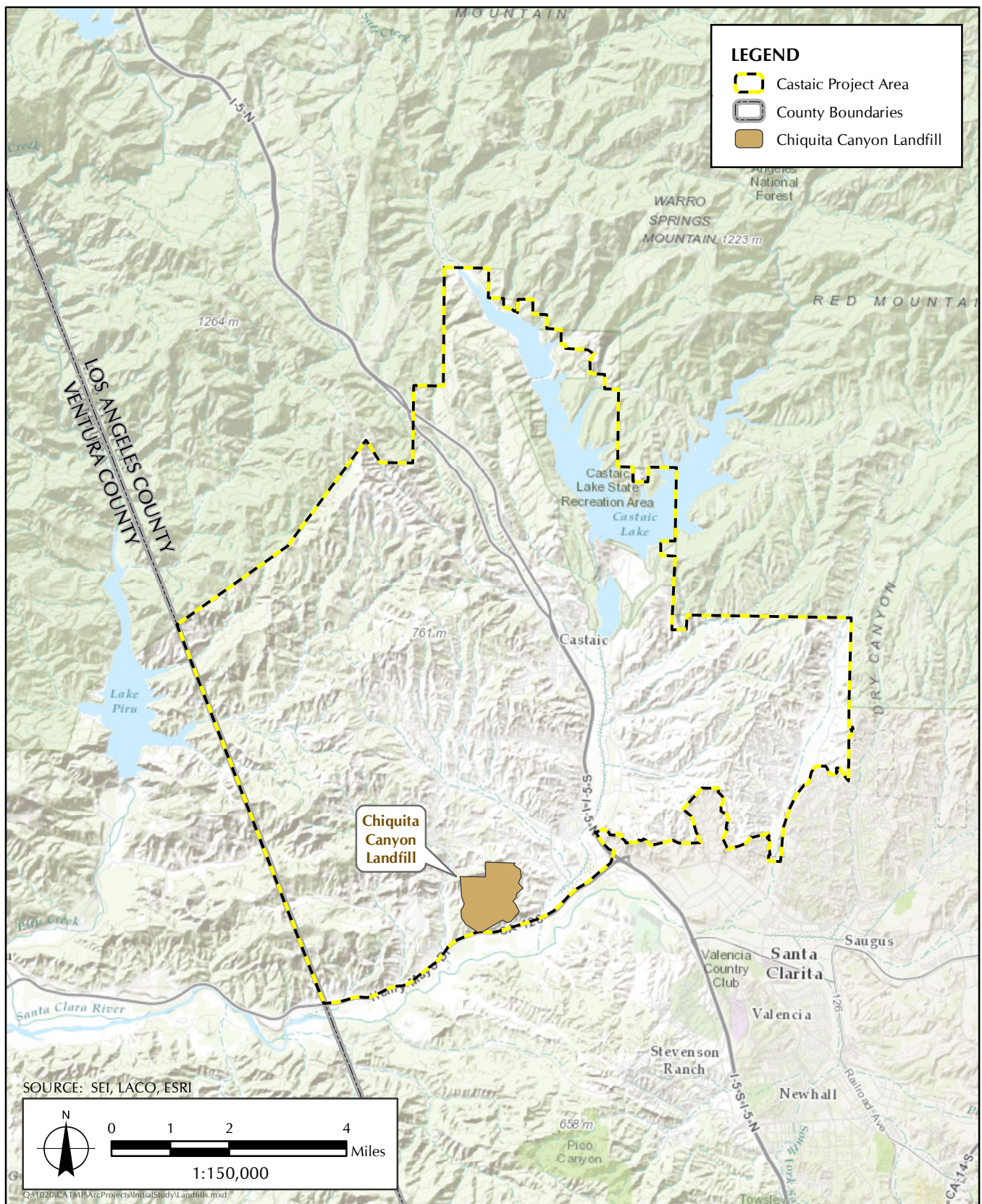
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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to being served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs (Figure 2.18-3, *Landfills*). The Chiquita Canyon Landfill is located within the Castaic project area. The Chiquita Canyon Landfill is a 639-acre landfill which has been in continuous operation for more than 40 years and is owned and operated by Waste Connections, an integrated solid waste services company. The permitted maximum daily disposal tonnage is currently 6,000 tons as specified in the current conditional use permit (CUP), the "disposal" tonnage refers to the waste disposed only and does not include materials that are diverted from disposal or beneficially re-used. The permitted maximum weekly disposal tonnage is 30,000 tons.

Construction and maintenance activities for the proposed project would generate solid wastes requiring disposal to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill. The construction and maintenance waste that would be generated by the project would be limited to vegetation debris from site clearing; soil export from excavation and grading; construction wastes from construction of amenities. The County of Los Angeles Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Ordinance (Chapter 20.87 of the Los Angeles County Code) requires that a least 50 percent of all construction and demolition (C&D) debris, soil, rock, and gravel removed from a project site be recycled or reused unless a lower percentage is approved by the County of Los Angeles Director of Public Works. The County's Green Building Standards Code (Title 31 of the Los Angeles County Code) was amended in 2013 to require at least 65 percent of non-hazardous construction and demolition debris be recycled or salvaged.

Trail related facilities, such as bike skills parks and general staging areas, would be equipped with trash and recycling receptacles to collect waste during the operations phase of the proposed project. By adhering to the County of Los Angeles Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Ordinance, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to being served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs, and no mitigation would be required.





**FIGURE 2.18-3**  
Landfills



**g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

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The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to complying with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Construction and maintenance activities for the proposed trails plan would generate solid waste requiring disposal to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill. The construction and maintenance waste that would be generated by the project would be limited to vegetation debris from site clearing; soil export from excavation and grading; construction wastes from construction of amenities. The County of Los Angeles Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Ordinance (Chapter 20.87 of the Los Angeles County Code) requires that a least 50 percent of all construction and demolition (C&D) debris, soil, rock, and gravel removed from a project site be recycled or reused unless a lower percentage is approved by the Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. The County's Green Building Standards Code (Title 31 of the Los Angeles County Code) was amended in 2013 to require at least 65 percent of non-hazardous construction and demolition debris be recycled or salvaged.

Trail related facilities, such as bike skills parks and general staging areas, would be equipped with trash and recycling receptacles to collect waste during the operations phase of the proposed project. By adhering to the County of Los Angeles Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Ordinance, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to complying with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste, and no mitigation would be required.

## **19. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory, but mitigation has been provided to reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

As stated in Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*, the proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts to the quality of the environment in regard to substantially damaging scenic resources within a state scenic highway. The proposed project would be located within the scenic highway corridor of the nearest eligible state scenic highways, Henry Mayo Drive (State Route 126) and the Golden State Highway (Interstate 5). Implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

As stated in Sections 2.7, *Geology and Soils*, 2.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, and 2.13, *Noise*, the proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts to the quality of the environment in regard to exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving seismic and landslide risks, being located on expansive soil, having soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems, substantially altering the existing drainage pattern of the area, exposing people or structures to significant risk involving the failure of a dam, exposing persons to excessive noise levels, and creating a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, GEO-1, HYD-1, and NOISE-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

As stated in Section 2.4, *Biological Resources*, the proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts in regard to degrading the quality of the environment, substantially reducing the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, and substantially reducing the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or threatening to eliminate a plant or animal community. The Castaic project area contains USFWS designated critical habitat for the federally endangered Arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*), the federally and state endangered southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), and the federally and state endangered least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and it is assumed that these species are present within the Castaic project area (see Figure 6, *Critical Habitat Present within the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C). In addition, there are 15 federally and/or state-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate

species listed under protection of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or California ESA that are known from the region and have a moderate to very high likelihood to be present in the Castaic project area (see Figure 5, *Listed Plant and Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur in the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C). There are 35 other sensitive wildlife species and 33 rare and locally important plant species with a moderate to very high likelihood to occur within the Castaic project area based on CNDDDB records, California Native Plant Society (CNPS) records, and an evaluation of suitable habitat (see Figure 7, *Sensitive Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur in the Castaic project area*, and Figure 8, *California Natural Diversity Database Rare and Locally Important Plant Species with the Potential to Occur in the Castaic project area*, in Appendix C). There are CNDDDB records and suitable habitat for the federally and state-listed endangered unarmored threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*), the CNPS rare plant slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*), and sensitive wildlife species including western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) within 250 feet of the planned trail activities that may be disturbed through trail development and associated construction activities.

Construction activities associated with trail development would include excavation, grading, and construction of trails and small structures at trailheads and trail staging areas. These construction activities have the potential to occur within areas of potentially suitable and occupied habitat for listed and special-status species. Direct impacts would occur during trail construction and would include direct loss of sensitive plant and/or wildlife species resulting from injury, death, or disturbance of these species. Additionally, direct impacts may occur through the direct habitat loss and fragmentation during construction of the trails and associated structures; introduction of non-native plants; and introduction of lighting, dust, and noise during construction. Indirect impacts resulting from the development of trails projects in the proposed project could occur as a result of increased human interaction with sensitive plants and wildlife. This analysis of impacts of trails projects included in the proposed project to sensitive plant and wildlife species and their habitats and designated critical habitat presented here is programmatic, and conservatively assumes that all species with critical habitat and/or CNDDDB records in the Castaic project area are present. The level of impact of subsequent projects would be subject to verification at the project-level of environmental review pursuant to CEQA. Trail development projects would be subject to the provisions of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts, as well as Sections 1900–1913, 3511, 4150, 4700, 5050, 5515 of the State Fish and Game Code and Sections 80071–80075 of the State Food and Agriculture Code. Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts to biological resources in regard to degrading the quality of the environment, substantially reducing the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, substantially reducing the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or threatening to eliminate a plant or animal community, and implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be required.

As stated in Section 2.5, *Cultural Resources*, the proposed project would have the potential to eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. As approximately 42 percent of the Castaic project area has been previously surveyed, the majority of the Castaic project area has not been subject to a Phase I pedestrian survey (see Table 2.5-1, *Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within the Immediate Impact Area*). The proposed Elderberry Forebay trail route (EF1, EF4) would pass through the Angeles National Forest, which is State Historical Landmark No. 717. As State Historical Landmark No. 717 was designated prior to January 1998, it needs to be reevaluated using current standards. The general vicinity of the trail alignment has a moderate to high sensitivity to contain historical resources as defined pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Eligible resources would be avoided to the greatest extent feasible. Although previous development in the area may have disturbed historical resources, undeveloped areas could still support resources. Therefore, the potential to encounter resources identified in either the Phase I pedestrian surveys and/or later activities during construction, operation, and maintenance of trails, the three bike skills areas, and related appurtenant facilities exists.

While the NAHC Search of the Sacred Lands File did not identify the presence of Native American cultural resources along the Castaic project area, consultation with local Native American groups and individuals was conducted. The Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians stated that the project area to be of extreme risk to cultural and tribal resources and that they would like to consult with the Lead Agency regarding project mitigation. The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) met with representatives of the Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians to discuss the characterization of baseline conditions, potential impacts, and mitigation measures. Although previous development in the area may have disturbed archaeological resources, undeveloped areas could still support resources. Field surveys should be undertaken first to assess the presence or likelihood of archaeological or tribal resources, followed by an evaluation of those resources and data recovery if avoidance is not possible. Since there haven't been any surveys and a Native American group has recommended monitoring, a pedestrian survey and a mitigation measure (MM CULTURAL-1 and MM CULTURAL-2) have been proposed to mitigate the potential substantial adverse change to archaeological resources. MM CULTURAL-1 has been developed to describe the procedures for monitoring and the protocols to be followed during construction and in the event that cultural resources are discovered during grading, excavation, and ground disturbance. Implementation of MM CULTURAL-1 and MM CULTURAL-2 would reduce potentially significant adverse impacts to less than significant levels.

The proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts to unique paleontological resources or unique geologic features that would be mitigated to a less than significant level with the consideration of mitigation measures. As a result of the records search with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, the surficial geology of Castaic Lake and surrounding areas revealed that the following rock formations have the potential to yield significant paleontological resources based on previous collections and/or age and lithology and are given high paleontological sensitivity: the Saugus Formation (non-marine Pliocene and Pleistocene); Pico Formation (marine Pliocene); Towsley Formation (marine late Miocene to early Pliocene); the Sisquoc Formation (marine late Miocene); the Castaic Formation (marine late Miocene); the Monterey Formation; the Mint Canyon Formation (non-marine Miocene); and the San Francisquito Formation (marine Paleocene). Igneous and metamorphic rocks have a low potential for yielding significant paleontological resources, and are therefore assigned low paleontological sensitivity within the Castaic project area. The Castaic project area would have the potential to result in impacts to paleontological resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature. As most of the Castaic project area has geological units that could contain significant paleontological resources, the potential for the Castaic project area to impact paleontological resources (known and unknown) does exist, and constitutes a significant impact requiring implementation of Mitigation Measures CULTURAL-1, CULTURAL-2, CULTURAL-3, and CULTURAL-4 to avoid or reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

The proposed project would have the potential to result in significant impacts to human remains that would be mitigated to a less than significant level with the implementation of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-4. As a result of the records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center and the Sacred Lands File with the NAHC, and a review of historic topographic maps revealed known areas with historic and prehistoric burials (see Table 5.2), burial grounds are not located in the immediate impact area; however, they are located within the quarter-mile buffer zone along the trails. One of the burial grounds (P-19-000324) is a prehistoric cemetery; however, it was inundated during the construction of the Castaic reservoir. The other one (P-19-001448H) is an early-twentieth-century cemetery for victims of the 1928 St. Francis Dam Disaster. In addition, not all areas of the proposed trail alignment and areas proposed for the three bike skills areas and appurtenant recreational facilities have been subject to a Phase I pedestrian survey for cultural resources. Therefore, there is a possibility to encounter human remains during the construction, operation, and maintenance phases of the proposed project. As such the potential for the Castaic project



area to impact human remains (known and unknown) does exist, and constitutes a significant impact requiring the consideration of mitigation measures and alternatives to avoid or reduce impacts to below the level of significance. However, should grading and excavation for construction of the trails and other trail elements unearth unknown human remains or unknown burials, compliance with existing regulatory requirements under the California Health and Safety Code and the California Public Resources Code would ensure that potential impacts to human remains would be less than significant.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in significant impacts in regard to degrading the quality of the environment, substantially reducing the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, causing a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threatening to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reducing the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminating important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory, requiring implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1, AES-2, BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, BIO-4, CULTURAL-1, CULTURAL-2, CULTURAL-3, CULTURAL-4, GEO-1, HYD-1, and NOISE-1 to reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

**b) Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?**

☐☐☐☒

The proposed project would not have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals. The proposed project would ensure that trails and other recreational facilities are developed in the Castaic Area concurrently with the development of the Castaic project area. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to potentially achieving short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals, and no mitigation would be required.

**c) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?**

☐☐☒☐

("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. Aside from the project, 16 related private and public projects are proposed or planned in the Castaic project area. The proposed project involves the planned development of recreational trails and trail related facilities as trail easements and open space properties are acquired by County Parks, in some instances in combination with the related projects listed in Table 1.12-1, *List of Related Projects*, of Section 1, *Project Description*. Of the 16 related projects listed in Table 1.12-1, 11 projects (Projects B, C, D, E, F, H, K, L, M, O, and P) would include proposed trail alignments, and four projects (Projects C, D, K, and P) would include Planned Trails per Developer Trail Obligations within the Castaic project area. The environmental impacts of these projects would add to the impacts of the proposed project on a cumulative basis. However, the impacts of the proposed project would be limited in scope and intensity due to the scattered locations, small scale, extended time frame for construction of all segments, and type of trail improvements proposed. As project impacts would be less than significant after mitigation, impacts associated with the proposed project are not expected to be cumulatively considerable when added to the impacts of related projects in the vicinity of the Castaic project area.

The County is responsible for review of all projects within the Castaic Area through the CEQA process to ensure that these related projects would reduce impacts to below the level of significance through best management practices, project design features, and mitigation measures, where feasible. As stated in Section 2.3, *Air Quality*, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to resulting in cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is in non-attainment. The County portion of the South Coast Air Basin is a Federal and State nonattainment area for 1-hour ozone, 8-hour ozone, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> (state), and lead (federal) for near-source monitors. The project would generate these pollutants during the construction of trail improvements. It is not expected for the operations and maintenance phases of the project to cause a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant as the proposed project is a recreational trail generating minimal new vehicle trips and requiring minimal equipment for trail maintenance. Short-term cumulative impacts related to air quality could occur if project construction and nearby construction activities were to occur simultaneously. In particular, with respect to local impacts, cumulative construction particulate matter (i.e., fugitive dust) impacts are considered when projects are located within a few hundred yards of each other. Many of the related projects located within the Castaic project area are residential subdivisions with the potential to create significant air quality impacts cumulatively during the construction phase. However, the proposed project is a trails plan, which provides recreational opportunities close to areas where people live and work. This is consistent with the strategies in the 2016 RTP/SCS for reducing VMT and enhancing public health. Therefore, the proposed project's emissions would not be cumulatively considerable.

As stated in Section 2.14, *Population and Housing*, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to cumulatively exceeding official regional or local population projections. The proposed project involves proposed multi-use trails and related facilities that would be designed and constructed per trail easements or open space dedications that accommodate trails, including developer trail and recreation obligations. As the proposed project would not induce population growth, it would not affect regional or local population projections. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to cumulatively exceeding regional or local population projections.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in regard to having impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable, and no mitigation would be required.

**d) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**      ☐      ☐      ☐      ☒

The proposed project would not have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project in regard to human health and safety during construction, operations, and maintenance would be less than significant through consistency with the Best Management Practices and guidelines of the County Trails Manual. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in regard to having environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, and no mitigation would be required.

## **Section 3**

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### Mitigation Measures

Based on the findings and associated environmental discussion and analysis provided in Section 2.0, *Environmental Checklist*, it has been determined that the proposed project has the potential to result in significant impacts to Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Noise.

Implementation of the specified mitigation measures would reduce all impacts to below the level of significance.

## **AESTHETICS**

**Mitigation Measure AES-1:** Trails and supporting facilities within a one-mile radius of officially designated and eligible state scenic highways shall be designed, constructed, and maintained (where construction equipment is involved) to avoid damaging or removal of scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within the scenic highway corridor.

**Mitigation Measure AES-2:** Trails and supporting facilities shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid the drip line of any coast live oak trees and other protected trees that are located along the proposed trail alignments, in order to maintain the visual character of the area. Best Management Practices shall be used during construction and trails maintenance activities to protect the root structures of protected trees:

- A Worker Education and Awareness Program shall inform all construction workers of County Ordinances protecting oak trees and the sensitivity of roots to damage from compaction or excessive water.
- Drip line of oak trees shall be designated as off-limits during construction on all construction drawings and diagrams.
- Fencing and/or flagging shall be used to delineate the drip line of the trees as off-limits during trail construction.
- On-site monitors shall be utilized for periods when trail construction will be undertaken within 100 feet of the drip line of the oak trees.
- If a protected tree must be removed, the same species shall be replaced at a minimum of a 1:1 ratio.

## **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

**Mitigation Measure BIO-1:** To mitigate potential impacts on listed, sensitive, and locally important species and their habitats, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation shall require that a habitat assessment by a qualified biologist take place using approved U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protocols to identify suitable habitat for any listed, sensitive, and locally important species on-site. Where suitable and/or occupied habitat is determined to be present, mitigation shall be implemented such that there is no net loss of habitat functions or values. Opportunities for achieving this performance standard, consistent with the provisions of the federal and state Endangered Species Acts (ESAs), may include:

- Demonstration that trail segment projects have been and will be designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid disturbance of any occupied habitat, potentially



suitable habitat, and designated critical habitat for any listed, sensitive, or locally important species and to minimize impacts to native plant communities, wherever practicable and feasible.

- Consultation with USFWS and CDFW with regards to trail building activities within critical habitat and suitable habitat.
- Implementation of pre-construction habitat surveys to delineate occupied or suitable sensitive species' habitat to facilitate avoidance.
- Formal consultation with the USFWS will be required if a species afforded protection pursuant to the federal ESA is determined to be present as a result of focused protocol surveys. Formal consultation with the CDFW will be required if a species afforded protection pursuant to the state ESA is determined to be present as a result of focused protocol surveys.
- Altering the timing of construction to avoid seasons when sensitive species may be present (i.e., nesting bird season).
- Worker Education and Awareness Program to inform all construction workers of their responsibilities in regards to avoiding and minimizing impacts on sensitive biological resources.
- Designation of suitable habitat as off-limits during construction on all construction drawings and diagrams.
- Use of fencing and/or flagging to delineate environmentally sensitive areas as off-limits during trail construction.
- Use of on-site monitors for periods when trail construction will be undertaken within 250 feet of environmentally sensitive areas.
- Where temporary impacts to critical habitat may occur, the development and implementation of a habitat restoration plan shall be required.
- Where permanent impacts to critical habitat may occur, compensatory mitigation such as purchasing credits at a mitigation bank, purchasing off-site lands, or similar shall be required.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-2:** To mitigate potential impacts on riparian, state-sensitive plant communities, state protected wetlands, and federally protected wetlands and waters of the United States, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation shall require that plant community mapping be conducted by a qualified biologist with experience classifying plant communities in Southern California and/or a formal jurisdictional delineation be conducted by a certified wetland delineator to identify any state or federally protected wetlands, riparian areas, and state-sensitive plant communities on-site. Where state designated sensitive plant communities, riparian habitat, state or federally protected wetlands, or waters of the United States are determined to be present, mitigation measures shall be implemented such that there is no net loss of habitat functions or values. Opportunities for achieving this performance standard, consistent with the provisions of Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code and Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act, may include:

- Demonstration that trail segment projects have been and will be designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid disturbance of any state-sensitive plant communities or riparian habitat, or any state or federally protected wetlands or waters of the United States wherever practicable and feasible.

- Conduct pre-construction habitat surveys to delineate sensitive plant communities and riparian habitats to facilitate avoidance.
- Consult with CDFW with regards to trail building activities within state-sensitive plant communities.
- Use of on-site monitors for periods when trail construction will be undertaken within 250 feet of oak woodlands, native woodlands, and 100 feet of the dripline of native trees.
- Where temporary impacts may occur to sensitive plant communities, the development and implementation of a habitat enhancement and restoration plan shall be required.
- Where permanent impacts may occur to sensitive plant communities, compensatory mitigation such as purchasing credits at mitigation bank, purchasing off-site lands, or similar shall be required.
- Where impacts are located in areas subject to the jurisdiction of the CDFW pursuant to Section 1600 of the State Fish and Game Code, obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement prior to commencing ground-disturbing activities or any other alternation of a lake or stream.
- Where impacts are located in areas subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act, obtain authorization to complete the required work pursuant to a Nationwide or individual permit.
- Where impacts are subject to the jurisdiction of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, obtain a Waiver of Water Quality Certification or Notice of Applicability of Waste Discharge Requirement permit.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-3:** To avoid impacts to nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), trail construction should take place outside of the nesting bird season, which generally occurs between February 15 and September 1. If trail construction activities cannot avoid the nesting bird season, pre-construction nesting bird surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist a maximum of three days prior to the start of construction. Should nesting birds be discovered within or adjacent to the construction footprint during these surveys, a non-disturbance buffer shall be placed on the active nest as determined by the biologist to prevent impacts to nesting birds. Construction shall be halted within the non-disturbance buffer of 250 feet of songbirds and 500 feet for raptors until the biologist has determined that the young have fledged and are flying well enough to avoid the proposed construction activities.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-4:** To mitigate potential impacts on oak and other native woodlands, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) shall require that for every protected tree that must be removed, the same species shall be replaced at a minimum of a 1:1 ratio. Compensatory mitigation for protected trees in the jurisdiction of County Parks may include replacement at a 3:1 ratio for trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of eight inches or more at an appropriate mitigation site, and replacement at a 10:1 ratio for heritage oaks. Monitoring for at least one year would be required to meet success criteria.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1:** *Archaeological and Historic Resources – Avoidance and Monitoring.* Completion of a Worker Education and Awareness Program for all personnel who will be engaged in ground-disturbing activities shall be required prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities. This shall include training that provides an overview of cultural resources that might potentially be found and the appropriate procedures to follow if cultural resources are identified. This requirement extends to any new staff prior to engaging in ground disturbing activities.

Prior to the initiation of ground-disturbing activities, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) shall review the construction plans to ensure that any known cultural resources sites that are required to be avoided have been marked as “off-limits” areas for construction and construction staging. In addition, County Parks shall require monitoring of all ground disturbing activities by a qualified archaeologist within 100 feet of a known extant unique archaeological resources, significant historical resources, or tribal cultural resource. In addition, consultation shall be undertaken with the Most Likely Descendants designated by Native American Heritage Commission to determine if a Native American monitor shall also be present during all or a portion of the ground-disturbing activities.

In the event that previously unknown unique archaeological resources, significant historical resources, or tribal cultural resources are encountered during construction, the resources shall either be left in situ and avoided through realignment of the trail, or the resources shall be salvaged, recorded, and repositied consistent with the provisions of a Phase III data recovery program consistent with the provisions of a Cultural Resource Management Plan. Data recovery is not required by law or regulation. It is, though, the most commonly agreed-upon measure to mitigate adverse effects to archaeological sites eligible or listed under Section 106 Criterion D, as it preserves important information that will otherwise be lost.

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-2:** *Pre-Construction Surveys* At the time that any new segment of trail is proposed for development that would require ground-disturbing activities in soils that have been predominantly *in situ* during the past 50 years, records and archival information shall be reviewed to determine if there are any recorded unique archaeological resources, significant historical resources as defined in Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines, or tribal cultural resources as defined in AB52 in the Area of Potential Effects. At a minimum, the records and archival review will include a search of the South Central Coastal Information Center, a request for Sacred Lands File from the Native American Heritage Commission, and a request for information regarding tribal cultural resources from the Most Likely Descendants designated by Native American Heritage Commission. The appropriate course of action will be undertaken in light of the results of the records search:

- (A) Where the Area of Potential Effect has been subject to a Phase I Walkover Survey within two years of the proposed activity and no unique archaeological resources, significant cultural resources, or tribal cultural resources are known from the Area of Potential Effect, work shall proceed per the provision of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1.
- (B) Where all or a portion of the Area of Potential Effect has not been surveyed for cultural resources within two years of a proposed ground-disturbing activity, a qualified archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s professional qualification standards for archaeology

and shall conduct a Phase I Walkover Survey to ascertain the presence or absence of unique archaeological and/or significant historic resources, as defined in Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

- a. If the survey determines no unique archaeological resources or significant historical resources, including potential tribal cultural, then the work shall proceed consistent with the provisions of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1.
- b. If the survey determines potential unique archaeological resources or significant historical resources, including potential tribal cultural resources, then one of two courses of action shall be employed:
  - i. Where avoidance is feasible, the trail alignments shall be realigned to avoid the potentially significant resource, and the work shall then proceed consistent with the provisions of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1. The new alignment will be surveyed by a qualified archaeologist. An archaeological monitor shall be present during ground-disturbing activities. In addition, consultation shall be undertaken with the Most Likely Descendants designated by Native American Heritage Commission to determine if a Native American monitor shall also be present during all or a portion of the ground-disturbing activities.
  - ii. Where avoidance is not feasible, a Phase II evaluation of the cultural resources shall be undertaken to determine the significance of the cultural resource. If the Phase II investigation identifies a unique/eligible cultural resource within the area proposed for ground-disturbing work, the County shall determine whether to avoid the resource through redesign or to proceed with a Phase III data recovery program consistent with the provisions of a Cultural Resource Management Plan. The work shall then proceed consistent with the provisions of Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-1.

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-3: *Paleontological Resources – Paleontological Monitoring.*** Impacts to cultural resources related directly or indirectly to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource from the proposed project shall be reduced to below the level of significance by monitoring, salvage, and curation of unanticipated paleontological resources discovered during ground-disturbing activities in previously undisturbed native soils located five or more feet below the ground surface that would have the potential to contact geologic units with a high to moderate potential to yield unique paleontological resources. Ground-disturbing activities include, but are not limited to, drilling, excavation, trenching, and grading. If paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) shall require and be responsible for salvage and recovery of those resources consistent with standards for such recovery established by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.

Paleontological Resources Sensitivity Training shall be required for all project personnel prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities in geologic units with a moderate to high potential to yield unique paleontological resources. This shall include a brief field training that provides an overview of fossils that might potentially be found, and the appropriate procedures to follow if fossils are identified. This requirement extends to any new staff that joins the project.



Construction monitoring by a qualified monitor (archaeologist cross-trained in paleontology or paleontologist) shall be implemented during all ground-disturbing activities that affect previously undisturbed geologic units 12 or more inches below the ground surface and have the potential to encounter geologic units with a moderate to high potential to yield unique paleontological resources. In the event that a paleontological resource is encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing activity within 100 feet of the find shall be halted until a qualified paleontologist can evaluate the significance of the discovery. Additional monitoring recommendations may be required. If the resource is found to be significant, the paleontologist shall determine the most appropriate treatment and method for removing and stabilizing the specimen. Curation of the any significant paleontological finds shall be required with a qualified repository, such as the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (LACM).

Within 90 days of the completion of any salvage operation or monitoring activities, a mitigation report shall be submitted to County Parks with an appended, itemized inventory of specimens. The report and inventory, when submitted to County Parks, shall signify the completion of the program to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources. A copy of the report/inventory shall be filed with the County of Los Angeles Planning and Development Agency.

**Mitigation Measure CULTURAL-4: *Regulatory Requirements – Human Remains.*** In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are encountered during excavation activities, the County Coroner shall be notified within 24 hours of the discovery. No further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby areas reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the County Coroner has determined, within two working days of notification of the discovery, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains.

If the County Coroner determines that the remains are or are believed to be Native American, s/he shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in Sacramento within 24 hours. In accordance with Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code, the NAHC shall immediately notify the person(s) it believes to be the most likely descendant (MLD) of the deceased Native American. The descendants shall complete their inspection and make a recommendation within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated Native American representative would then determine, in consultation with the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks), the disposition of the human remains. The MLD's recommendation shall be followed if feasible, and may include scientific removal and non-destructive analysis of the human remains and any items associated with Native American burials. If County Parks rejects the MLD's recommendations, the agency shall rebury the remains with appropriate dignity on the property in a location that will not be subject to further subsurface disturbance (14 California Code of Regulations §15064.5(e)).

## **GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

**Mitigation Measure GEO-1:** A geotechnical and engineering geology investigation shall be conducted for the Proposed Project, based on preliminary design plans (showing trail and restroom locations), by a licensed geotechnical engineer and a licensed engineering geologist in the State of California. The resulting Geotechnical and Engineering Geology Report and Erosion Control Plan shall summarize the results of field investigations, laboratory testing, and geotechnical/geologic analysis regarding: (1) active and potentially active faults, (2) seismic ground shaking, (3) seismic related ground failure, (4) landslides, (5) soil erosion, (6) unstable geologic and soil units, (7) expansive soils,

(8) wastewater disposal characteristics, and (9) the effects of hillside ground slope on trail/restroom design and construction. The technical data, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations shall be considered and adopted in the design and construction of the project facilities based on the review and approval by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works and County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Adherence to the approved design and construction recommendations shall be verified by review and approval of the final design. Construction site inspections shall be conducted by, and in coordination with, the project geotechnical engineer and engineering geologist. All activities shall be consistent with the County of Los Angeles Trails Manual, and shall adhere to the standards and requirements in the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24), Los Angeles County Building Code, Title 26, and/or professional engineering standards appropriate for such construction within the County. The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division, shall enforce conformance with these design standards through plan review and approval, prior to the issuance of building permits for any facility.

## **HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

**Mitigation Measure HYD-1:** The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation shall:

- Coordinate with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to ensure that State Water Project critical infrastructure (water intake tower, spillway, and the Castaic Dam) is protected if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.
- Coordinate with the DWR to ensure that the use of dam crest roads for recreational trail use is according to design intent if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.
- Install emergency call-boxes and first-responder emergency vehicle access if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.
- Coordinate with the DWR to ensure DWR access roads at the base of the Castaic Dam are compatible with recreational use if recreational trails are constructed at the dam crest roads for Castaic Dam and the Elderberry Forebay Dam.

## **NOISE**

**Mitigation Measure NOISE-1:** Noise-attenuating barriers, baffles, or blankets shall be installed to reduce noise levels to a maximum of 75 dBA for mobile construction equipment and 60 dBA for stationary construction equipment for potential sensitive receptors within 251 feet. Furthermore, construction equipment shall not operate between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday, or at any time on Sunday or holidays.

## **Section 4**

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