

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

PROJECT TITLE: CUYAMACA RANCHO STATE PARK GENERAL PLAN

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) is the Lead Agency under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will be preparing a Program Level Environmental Impact Report as part of the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park General Plan. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed General Plan. A brief description of the content of the General Plan, the park unit's location and a brief description of possible environmental effects are included.

Your response must be sent to the address below not later than thirty (30) days after the receipt of this notice. We would appreciate the name of a contact person in your agency.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: To meet requirements set forth in Section 5002.2 of the Public Resources Code and Section 4332 of Title 14 of the California Administration Code, CDPR is preparing a General Plan for Cuyamaca Rancho State Park in order to plan for land uses, facilities, concessions, operations, resource management, and assess environmental impacts resulting from these changes. The General Plan will delineate a number of management areas and corridors. It will recommend goals and guidelines for specific areas of the Park, as well as for the Park as a whole. As a land-use plan, the General Plan may make recommendations for levels and types of use, capacities and visitation, and location and type of future facilities. Special designations, protections, or sub-classifications may also be proposed for specific areas within the Park. This long-range plan will be consistent with the classification of *State Park* as set forth in section 5019.53 of the Public Resources Code. Additionally, the plan will comply with CDPR Policy including Department Resource Management Directives. Future project development at the Park will be guided by, and consistent with the adopted General Plan.

Current facilities within the 24,700- acre Park include:

- Green Valley offers traditional camping, equestrian camping, RV camping, day-use facilities including the Falls Picnic Area, restrooms, showers, day-use parking, picnic tables, restrooms, and serves as a major trail hub in the southern region of the Park.

- Merrigan Fire Road's southern terminus offers day-use parking and an entrance into the park from Viejas Blvd. at the southern end of the park
- Visitor Center/Outdoor School: The Park's visitor center is located on the east side of SR-79 with parking and restrooms. Ruins of the Dyar House which was destroyed in the 2003 Cedar Fire are additionally found here along with the Cuyamaca Outdoor School which provides education for students of San Diego County schools.
- Paso Picacho includes traditional and RV camping as well as day-use picnic and parking areas, restrooms, showers and serves as a major trail hub. This area is west of SR-79 in the northern portion of the Park.
- Hual-Cu-Cuish Equestrian Staging Area serves as an equestrian staging area located southwest of Lake Cuyamaca on the west side of SR-79
- Los Vaqueros Equestrian Group Campground provides horse camping with access to the eastern half of the Park's trail network. Campgrounds include showers, restrooms, pipe corrals and other amenities
- Stonewall Mine includes day-use parking, picnic sites, restrooms and access to the site of the Stonewall Gold Mine. A reconstructed miner's cabin includes interpretive displays of historic mining operations.
- Trailheads primarily found along SR-79 and near ample highway side parking offer access to an extensive trail system as well as the Arroyo Seco and Granite Springs Trail Camps which include horse corrals, restrooms and non-potable water.

Facilities located adjacent to the Park include:

- Cleveland National Forest, operated by the United States Forest Service surrounds most of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and has numerous Land Use Zones which designate how those lands should be managed. The General Plan shall make effort to match management goals where feasible.
- Anza Borrego Desert State Park shares a border along the northwestern sides of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. It provides a dramatic change in landscape from montane to desert and the parks are linked through several trails.

The Park also contains significant cultural resources, both historical and archaeological, and significant ecological resources including wildlife corridors and sensitive riparian and upland habitats that support a variety of wildlife species, some that are considered sensitive by local, State and/or Federal agencies.

PROJECT LOCATION: The Park is located in east central San Diego County, within the Cuyamaca Mountains in the Peninsular Ranges. It is bounded on the south by the communities of Descanso and Guatay. North of the Park is the community of Julian. Lake Cuyamaca is immediately adjacent to the northern portion of the Park. The Cleveland National Forest surrounds most of the Park along with numerous private land owners and private recreation facilities.

POSSIBLE EFFECTS AND MITIGATIONS: Changes to the Park including facility development which would follow approval of the General Plan have the potential to cause significant effects on aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards, hydrology and water quality, utilities and service systems and

potentially result in cumulative impacts. See the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park General Plan Initial Study for further detail of potential impacts.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: CDPR has held the first of three public meetings. The first public meeting gave the public the opportunity to express their interests in how CRSP may be changed or improved. The conclusions and data obtained from this meeting may be found on the General Plan website at the following URL:

http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=27169

Your agency's input is welcome at the second public meeting which will be held May 23rd, 2013 from 6-8pm at the Mission Valley Marriot at 8757 Rio San Diego Drive, San Diego, CA 92108.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION CONTACT PERSON:

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