

State of California – The Resources Agency

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, and Interested Individuals

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan Revision/Environmental Impact Report

LEAD AGENCY: California Department of Parks and Recreation
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The California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), as the Lead Agency, will prepare a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Rock Canyon State Park General Plan Revision/EIR. We would like to know the views of interested persons, organizations, and agencies as to the scope and content of the information to be included and analyzed in the EIR. Agencies should comment on the elements of the environmental information that are relevant to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

The project description, location, and potential environmental effects of the proposed project (to the extent known) are contained in this Notice of Preparation (NOP).

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response to this NOP should be sent by January 5, 2009 to EDAW, Inc., to the attention of Pete Choi, at the address, fax, or email shown above. Responses should include the name of a contact person and mailing address.

A dual-purpose public meeting, consisting of a planning workshop and an EIR scoping meeting, will be held on December 13, 2008 to solicit input from interested parties on the General Plan Revision and the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting will be held at the Springhill Suites by Marriott, Maturango Conference Room (113 East Sydnor Avenue, Ridgecrest, CA 93555) from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

In the late 1990s, CDPR decided to address the addition of the new lands acquired for the Park by preparing an amendment to the Park's 1982 General Plan. This amendment looked only at the Last Chance Canyon addition, which was acquired in 1994. CDPR collected data, performed inventories and assessments, met with stakeholders, and held public meetings; however, the effort was suspended in 2003 due to budget constraints.

When CDPR identified new funding for this General Plan process, the decision was made to take a broader view and adopt a strategy of pursuing an entirely new general plan. This General Plan Revision/EIR effort was kicked off by CDPR in fall 2008.

The General Plan Revision/EIR effort will now include Red Rock Canyon State Park as a whole, tying the entire Park together within a comprehensive management document providing the CDPR a framework for action and the direction in which to focus that action.

PROJECT TITLE: Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan Revision/EIR

PROJECT LOCATION: Red Rock Canyon State Park is an approximately 27,000-acre park within the Mojave Sector of the Tehachapi District of the California State Park System. The Park is located along State Highway 14 in Kern County, approximately 25 miles northeast of Mojave and 80 miles east of Bakersfield (see attached Regional and Vicinity Maps).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Red Rock Canyon State Park provides magnificent views of the scenic desert landscape, including the spectacular rock formations for which the Park is named. The Park includes two natural preserves, and offers, among other recreation activities, camping, sightseeing, equestrian activities, hiking, and opportunities for reflection and solitude.

CDPR's General Plan Section, in conjunction with its Tehachapi District office, is in the process of developing a General Plan Revision for Red Rock Canyon State Park in accordance with Public Resources Code §5002.2 referencing General Plan guidelines and §21000 et seq. concerning the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of the General Plan Revision/EIR is to guide future development activities and management objectives within the Park. Because the current General Plan (adopted in 1982) only covers an 8,180-acre portion of

the Park, the General Plan Revision would include the entire 27,000-acre area park boundary (including the Last Chance Canyon addition) providing a framework of consistent management guidelines for the entire Park. Preparation of the General Plan Revision/EIR is in its early stages, so ultimate land use and resources management provisions have not yet been determined. CDPR is currently in the process of evaluating existing resources, management opportunities, and constraints at the Park that will aid in the development of the General Plan Revision/EIR.

CDPR proposes to take the following actions for Red Rock Canyon State Park, which will provide clear and current guidelines on management issues:

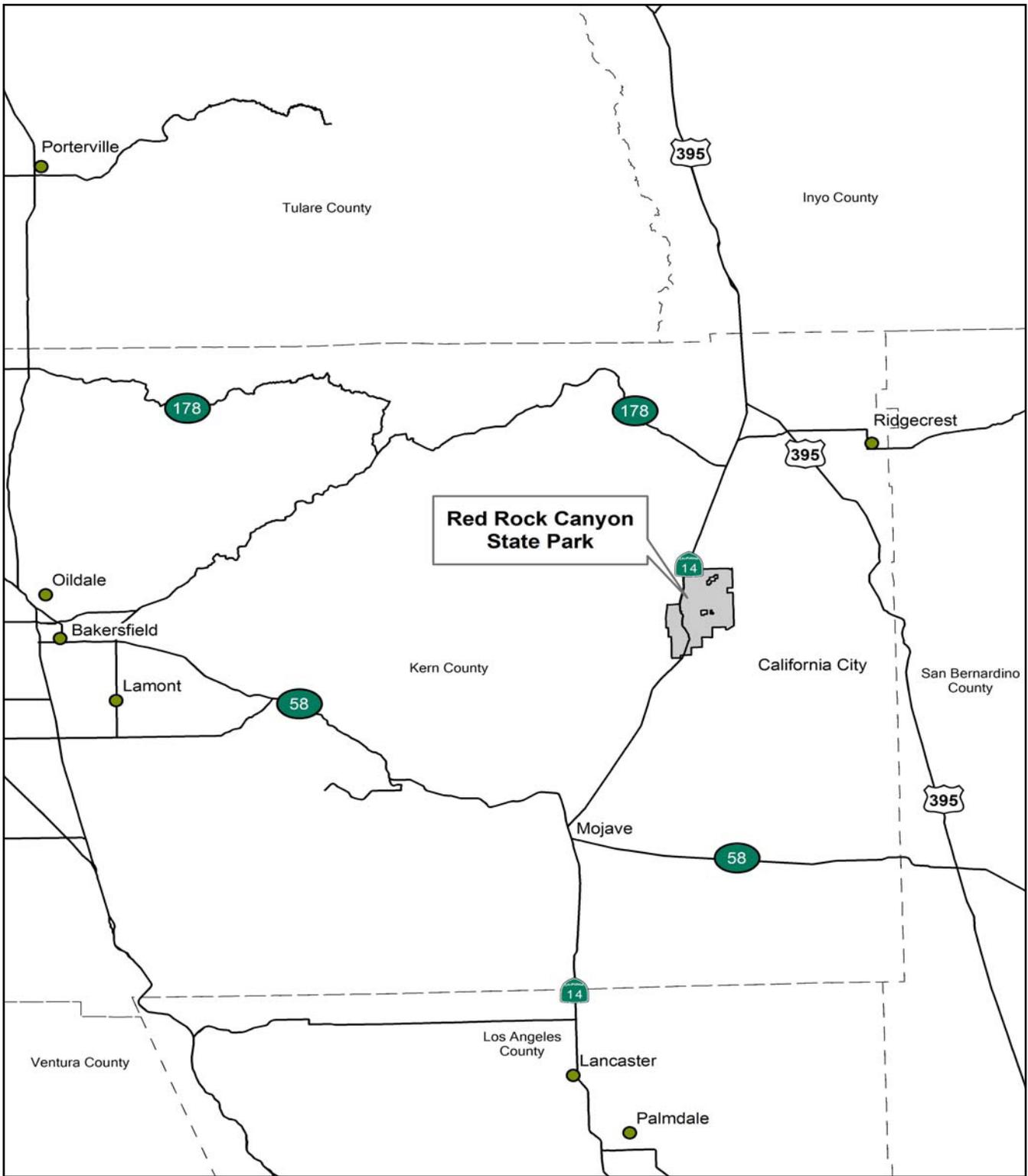
- Revise the General Plan to include a Statement of Management Intent for the entire Park which is consistent with the California Desert Protection Act, redefine the existing Declaration of Purpose for Red Rock Canyon State Park, and further define an appropriate purpose and vision for the Last Chance Canyon addition.
- Amend the Park boundaries to reflect land acquisitions since the 1982 General Plan.
- Identify legal precedents and rights in connection with past and present land uses.
- Develop broad management goals and guidelines consistent with the new Declaration of Purpose for Red Rock Canyon State Park.
- Identify and evaluate all resources; giving priority to significant physical and cultural features, and rare or endangered species that are critical to the Park's and the region's ecosystems.
- Develop goals and guidelines for resource protection, including but not limited to significant resources which require special protection. This may include recommendations for the designation of preserves or special districts within the Park.
- Develop goals and guidelines that address public safety associated with the remote location of the Park, mines, roads, and trails.
- Establish "Use Zones" for the entire Park, and identify constraints/criteria for determining appropriate activities.
- Identify desirable facilities/recreation activities, and suitable locations for such activities/facilities.
- Identify interpretive opportunities for the development of Park wide interpretive programs.

Potential Environmental Effects:

Although ultimate land use and resources management provisions of the General Plan Revision/EIR have not yet been determined, implementation of the General Plan Revision/EIR may cause a variety of environmental effects that can be anticipated. Based on the resource characteristics of the Park and generally anticipated Park uses, potential environmental effects that will be addressed in the EIR, include: potential effects on the natural environment, wildlife, water quality, erosion, recreation, aesthetics, transportation, mineral resources, and historical, archaeological and paleontological resources. By establishing management zones, goals and guidelines, the General Plan Revision/EIR will strive to identify broad level avoidance and mitigation measures as well as policies to reduce the potential impacts of future projects and activities to a level below significance whenever possible. These potential environmental effects will be addressed at a first tier or programmatic level and additional environmental review will be conducted when specific projects/activities are proposed for implementation.

Intended Use of the EIR:

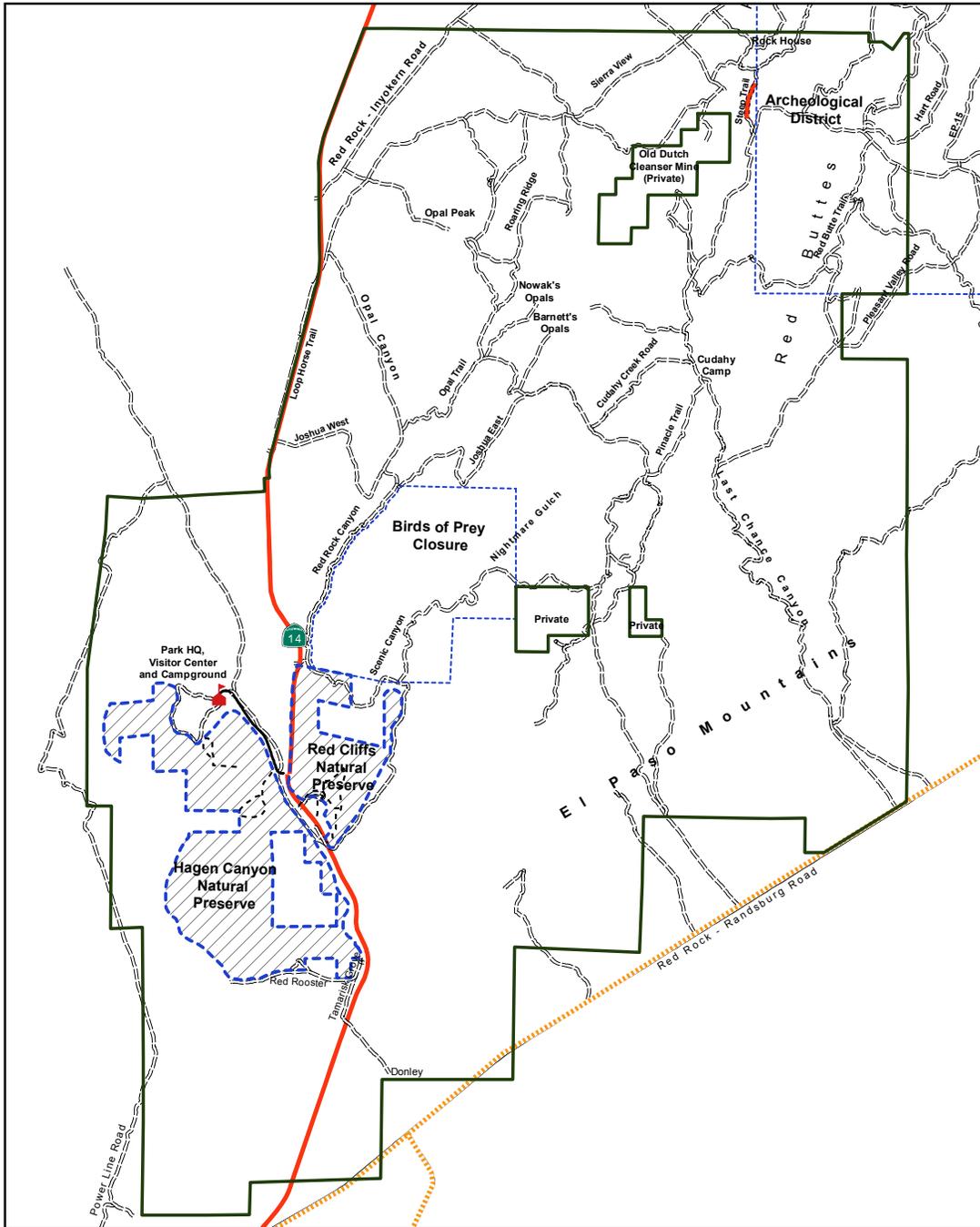
CDPR will submit the proposed General Plan Revision/Final EIR to the State Park and Recreation Commission (the Commission). Use of the EIR component of the General Plan Revision allows for consideration of the environmental effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives when reviewing the proposed General Plan for approval by the Commission. The EIR will serve as the California Environmental Quality Act compliance document for adoption of the General Plan. It will also serve as the programmatic environmental document to be referenced for implementation of future actions included in the General Plan.



Source: California Department of Parks and Recreation, Updated by EDAW in 2008



Regional Map



Source: California Department of Parks and Recreation, Updated by EDAW in 2008

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|--|--------------------------|
| Red Rock General Plan Revision Boundary | Highway |
| Natural Preserves | Major Paved Road |
| Birds of Prey Closure and Archeological District | Paved Road |
| | Closed to Motor Vehicles |
| | Unpaved Road or Trail |
| | Hiking Trail |



3/4 Inch equals 1 Mile



Vicinity Map