

Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan Revision Information

Video Script

<Different scenes of park landscape>

120 miles north of Los Angeles and 25 miles northeast of Mojave, lies Red Rock Canyon State Park, managed and operated by California State Parks. The Department's mission is to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by preserving the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.

This beautiful desert landscape has evolved over millions of years. This area once consisted of dense forest. Rivers washed down sediments and formed layers of sandstone which locked fossils, volcanic ash, and pre-historic life forms. About 10,000 years ago, this area began to dry and ultimately became the desert we see today.

<Ruins of stone building>

Difficult to believe, Red Rock Canyon has been home to generations of humans. Starting in pre-historic times with the people of the Great Basin Cultural Area, to the Native Americans such as the Kawaiisu or Nuooah people, to the Euro-American explorers, and finally miners and settlers, humans have all passed through or made this place home.

<View of dirt roads in the distance, zoom closer>

In 1915, the movement to establish Red Rock Canyon as a State Park began with interested citizens desiring to preserve this unique area. In 1929, Red Rock Canyon was in the initial group of outstanding areas in California recommended for acquisition into the State Park System in a report authored by Frederick Law Olmsted, one of the greatest landscape architects of our time.

<Ranger holding plastic bag pointing out features>

Red Rock Canyon State Park was established as a State Park to preserve its historic and ancient resources. The place offers a glimpse into the Golden State's rich natural, cultural, geological and ecological heritage. It offers special places like scenic desert cliffs, buttes and spectacular rock formations built on the canyon's distinct and dramatic forms and unique natural habitats.

<Still black and white photo of wagon train with cliffs behind>

Red Rock Canyon has also become one of the most recognizable images of the American West thanks to the motion picture industry.

<Man jumping off cliff toward two men>

This portrait of Red Rock Canyon is globally known

<Three men riding below cliff>

and has served as the filming site for over a hundred movies and countless commercials.

<Highway map, fading into cliff image>

Located in the Mojave Desert, Red Rock Canyon State Park occupies the western half of Kern County's El Paso Mountains. The geologic activity and subsequent weathering over time have resulted in a complex topographic landscape revealing some of California's most strikingly beautiful formations.

<View of wash and hills with green brush>

Among its most unique features are Last Chance Canyon,

<Red and white cliff with vehicle in front>

Red Rock Canyon,

<Closer view of a red cliff with lighter cliff behind, zooming out>

Hagen Canyon with its sheer colorful cliffs,

<Pastel cliffs with saguaro cactus in foreground>

Scenic Canyon and Nightmare Gulch

<grey gravel leading up canyon to pink cliffs with green bushes on right side>

which are characterized by a narrow wash and steep cliffs.

<Landscape with Joshua trees and scrub, yellowish hills in rear.>

The ecology of this park is highly significant and widely recognized as unique by the scientific community. Visitors might encounter Golden Eagles and other raptors that soar and nest within the cliffs and canyons of the park.

<Red canyon and wash>

<Riparian area: streambed and green plants. Panning down stream, then different view of riparian corridor>

The Park's riparian areas are of extreme importance to local wildlife as this habitat type is extremely rare in the desert. Riparian areas provide much needed surface water for the park's wildlife as well as structure for shelter, nesting and foraging. Riparian habitats also serve as important migration and dispersal corridors.

<Yellow composite flower close-up (Red Rock Tarplant)>

The Park is characterized by great plant diversity with hundreds of different species present. Some of these species such as the Red Rock Tar Plant and

<Yellow-orange four-petaled flower (Red Rock Poppy)>

Red Rock Poppy are endemic to the area which means they are found nowhere else in the world. Wildflower displays after winter rains attract many visitors to the park.

<squirrel eating plant>

The varied landscapes and terrain provide habitat for animals such as the Mojave ground squirrel,

<tortoise>

Desert Tortoise,

<jackrabbit>

Black tailed jackrabbit, and

<kit fox>

desert kit fox just to name a few.

<Petroglyphs on red rock, two views>

Humans have also influenced this terrain.

The remnants of human habitation in this harsh desert environment are well documented throughout the Park. Archaeologists have recorded several prehistoric and historic sites.

<View of low hills covered with desert scrub; mountains in background>

A 1,487 acre portion of the Park is included within the Last Chance Canyon Archaeological District that was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

<Wash in canyon with green trees on right; building foundations and evidence of mines.>

In the late 1800's, a number of historic individuals and groups passed through the area seeking routes between the Mojave Basin and the High Sierras as well as miners looking for gold. The mines and abandoned equipment are valuable examples of early industrial mineral-mining techniques and technology.

<Still photograph of man on motorcycle, fading to still photo of early car camping, then to scene of cliffs, car, and people>

In 1908, a railroad built through Red Rock Canyon facilitated the construction of the first Los Angeles aqueduct which is located about four miles from the Park.

<View out windshield of vehicle driving down dirt road>

Today, the Park attracts many visitors with diverse interests.

<Still photo of travel trailers>

Many of them come to enjoy activities such as hiking, camping, horseback riding,

<View out side window of vehicle traveling down dirt road>

and dirt road driving exploring the primitive roads of the region.

<Man looking through binoculars, with colored hills below>

Others come to explore its geology.

<Telescope with people and cars behind>

Astronomers make use of its clear night skies. Geocachers come in search of their own treasures,

<Mine tunnel entrance>

and some mining claims are still active.

<Beginning of Desert View Nature Trail>

In 1973, Red Rock Canyon was originally classified as a State Recreation Area by the State Park Commission primarily because of the type of recreational uses historically occurring in the area.

<Map showing boundaries of Red Cliffs and Hagen Canyon Natural Preserves.>

This classification also reflected the biological and cultural significance found in two preserves. California State Parks acknowledged the natural and scenic values found in Hagen Canyon Natural Preserve and Red Cliffs Natural Preserve.

<Pan down canyon into riparian area of wash>

Red Rock Canyon State Recreation Area grew through the purchases of private parcels and occasional land transfer from the federal government.

<Close-up of wetland plants>

In 1980, the department recommended and formally requested that the State Park Commission reclassify it to a State Park. The State Park Commission agreed on February 8, 1980.

<View of red-tan cliffs>

In 1982, following public input, a General Plan was created to provide management guidelines for the park. These management directions

targeted approximately 10,000 acres of then current and anticipated parklands.

<Map showing addition to park>

In 1994, when the California Desert Protection Act passed; certain Federal lands within the California Desert Conservation Area were transferred to California State Parks and Red Rock Canyon State Park. This included the Last Chance Canyon Addition, tripling the size of the Park to almost 27,000 acres.

<Montage of black-and-white meeting photos>

In 2003, the Department began a process to amend the 1982 General Plan to address management of the new land holdings. This looked only at the Last Chance Canyon Addition. The Department collected data, performed inventories and assessments, met with stakeholders and held public meetings. The effort was however suspended due to budget constraints.

<Sign: "Red Rock Canyon Ricardo Campground $\frac{3}{4}$ mile">

The California Public Resources Code (Section 5019.53) states the purpose of any State Park is to preserve outstanding natural, scenic and cultural values and the most significant examples of such ecological regions of California as the desert and desert mountains.

The General Plan Revision is a long-range comprehensive planning document that will provide the California State Parks a framework for action and the direction in which to focus that action.

<Graphic: General Plan Revision and EIR Timeline>

This current General Plan Revision effort was kicked off by State Parks in the Fall 2008.

The General Plan Revision effort will now include Red Rock Canyon State Park in its entirety. The General Plan Revision addresses the conservation of both natural and cultural resources as well as desired

visitor experiences. This planning process will be based on rigorous scientific analysis, data, research, and extensive public input. This approach allows managers the opportunity to apply new resource information, emerging technology and improved management concepts for resolving current issues and provide them the flexibility to address future needs.

<Motor home by dump station>

It will also provide adequate direction for resolving issues that may affect the park and adjacent lands.

<Beginning of nature trail again>

The General Plan Revision will enable Red Rock Canyon State Park to appropriately be managed as a State Park, and reinforce its purpose for resource protection and public recreational, educational and cultural opportunities.

<Graphic: For more information>

Public input is important and will play a significant role in the planning process. Meetings with stakeholder groups are expected to begin November 2008. A series of public workshops will also be held, starting on December 13, 2008. The Department hopes to present a completed general plan document to the State Park and Recreation Commission for their approval in the Spring of 2010.

Public workshops dates, times, and locations will be posted on the California State Parks website when they are finalized. Newsletters will also be mailed or emailed to interested parties. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, email your mailing address to rdingman@parks.ca.gov, or write to the Tehachapi District office, attention Russ Dingman, located at 43779 15th Street West, Lancaster CA 93534.

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