

**Cuyamaca Rancho State Park
Equestrian Facilities Project
Historic Land Use Study and Analysis**

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide historical background and analysis of three areas located in Rancho Cuyamaca State Park that are being considered for possible new equestrian facility improvements: the Descanso Area Development; the Paso Picacho Staging Area; and the Green Valley Loop Alternative.

Executive Order W-26-92, California Public Resources Code (PRC) 5024, CA State Parks Resource Management Directives, as well as an operational Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) directs CA State Parks to preserve and protect cultural resources within its purview by avoiding adverse effects during their management. The Department's Resource Management Directives state that "cultural resources in the State Park System shall be protected against damaging or degrading influences, including deterioration. The Department's Operational Manual [DOM] states that California State Parks is responsible for finding a balance between the preservation of culturally significant buildings, their adaptive reuse, and removal if they serve no useful purpose, are unsafe or hazardous, or have become financially impractical to maintain. The purpose of this report is to verify if the proposed project is consistent with these management directives to preserve historic resources that are potentially eligible for listing on the California and National registers on their own merit or as contributors to potential historic thematic districts.

Descanso Area Development

The first project location, the Descanso Area Development, is located in the park's southern portion adjacent to the unincorporated community of Descanso. Proposed site improvements include a campground, day-use amenities, and equestrian staging area. Within the latter will be approximately fifteen individual campsites, a host site, shade ramadas, picnic areas, landscape and shade tree plantings, and a comfort station. Other equestrian-related improvements include hitching rails, horse corrals, round pens, arena, day use equestrian staging, and associated amenities, utilities, and other infrastructure.

Descanso: Early History

The history of the project site is tied to the surrounding Descanso Valley's transition from a ranching settlement to a mountain resort community. It is located at the confluence of three streams: the Sweetwater, Descanso, and Samugantua. They form natural corridors that connected coastal Kumeyaay Indians with Yuma tribes on the Colorado and Gila rivers via the Cuyamaca Mountains and the Carrizo Corridor in what is now the Anza-Borrego Desert.

Early Exploration Period

The project site's earliest historic use dates back to the early 1770s, when Spanish soldiers and settlers based at the San Diego presidio and mission come in contact with the

area's indigenous Kumeyaay tribal group. The latter, which never came under Mission suzerainty, had used the valley as a summer camp and nexus for mountain trails connecting the coast and desert regions. In 1772, and again 10 years later, Spanish military governor Pedro Fages followed the Kumeyaay trails linking San Diego to Spanish settlements along the Colorado River and Sonora. In 1825, 15 years after California became a Mexican territory, Alférez (Second Lieutenant) Santiago Argüello of the San Diego Presidio reaffirmed the Fages Trail, which became the official overland mail and immigrant route between San Diego and Mexico City. The trail, which basically follows the present Viejas Grade Road and SR-79 to Green Valley before veering northeast toward Oriflamme Canyon, continued this important function when California became part of the United States after the 1846-1848 Mexican-American War. Between 1857 and 1860 it was part of the *San Antonio* and *San Diego* mail line, the first federally subsidized overland mail route connecting San Diego to the east coast.

Mexican Rancho Period

Alta California eventually came under the influence of the new Mexican Republic after the latter won its independence from Spain in 1821. While the Kumeyaay living in the Descanso-Green Valley area had remained relatively autonomous during Spanish Colonial times, this ceased under Mexican rule. Threatened by the steady encroachment into their traditional hunting/gathering areas by Mexican ranching activities, in 1837 a band of Indians attacked Pio Pico's Rancho Jamul. The marauding Indians killed the ranch's majordomo, and carried off Pico's two young daughters. In retaliation, a small force of soldiers and Indian allies spent four months pursuing the recalcitrant Indians through San Diego's backcountry. The Indians chose to make a last stand at the village of *Ah-ha-kwe-ah-mac* (or Cuyamaca). Located within the present State Park's boundary, the village location was slightly north of Stonewall Peak. After several Indians were killed, the rest surrendered and agreed to submit to Mexican authority. As a result of the "Battle of Cuyamaca," the Cuyamacas were "pacified", opening the area for exploitation.

Eight years later, in 1845, Governor Pío Pico granted a "tract known as Cuyamaca [consisting] of 11 leagues, more or less" to his nephew by marriage, Augustín Olvera. Don Olvera, who never resided at his Rancho Cuyamaca, was more interested in exploiting the area's timber. He sent his agent, Cesario Walker, to manage his affairs at the ranch. Walker lived in an adobe near the Indian village of Mitaragui, on the south side of Green Valley. Although Walker had begun lumbering operations, the local Indians managed to drive him away. Olvera, who would become a prominent figure in Los Angeles (Olvera Street in Downtown Los Angeles is named in his honor), allowed others to graze their cattle in the ranch's meadows, which was known for its rich pasturage.

In 1846, Governor Pico also granted four leagues of neighboring land to Ramón Osuna, son of San Diego's Alcalde, Don Juan María Osuna. Located due west of Olvera's rancho, Rancho Valle de las Viejas, was a broad valley between present-day Alpine and

Descanso. However, he was never able to substantiate his claim to the United States Land Commission after California became part of the United States of America.

American Homesteading/Ranching Period

Olvera too began to have difficulty defending his claim. In 1856 James Ruler Lassator and his stepson, John Mulkins, “purchased” 160 acres of land in Green Valley from a local Indian. The land included the site of Cesario Walker’s adobe at the former Mitaragui Indian ranchería. To hedge off further squatters, in 1869, Olvera began selling off parcels himself. One third of what was left of his 35,501-acre ranch he sold to Isaac Hartman, while he sold the remainder to Samuel Stewart. Stewart later sold one-half of his portion to Robert Allison, one quarter to John Treat, and one-quarter jointly to Allison and Juan Luco. Treat, who homesteaded just south of present-day Cuyamaca Lake, between Middle and Cuyamaca peaks, established the Milk Cattle Ranch, where he raised prized Durham cattle and horses. Together, Treat and Allison operated a sawmill on South Cuyamaca Peak.

Robert Allison and his family homesteaded the eastern half of the “Big Guatay Valley” along the Samagatuma Creek, while his son homesteaded the neighboring Samagatuma Valley. Allison, who also raised “a lot of fancy stock” on his ranch, reportedly planted the first ornamental poplar trees in the Guatay/Descanso area. He would go on to become a major land owner in San Diego County, owning most of what is now La Mesa, Spring Valley, and parts of Encanto. Between 1870 and 1884 he and his fellow ranchers Hartmann, Treat, and Luco, were co-defendants in a legal claim against their property. They had allegedly “floated” the boundaries of their land to include the nearby Julian Mining District to claim royalties on gold taken out of their property. The resulting court decision led in favor of the mining district. Only Juan Luco was ordered to disclaim his “right title” and interest to his one quarter section.

A man identified only as Chase reportedly owned the homestead ranch west of Allison in the Descanso Valley, which was then known as “Little Guatay Valley.” It is not known if his ranch encompassed the proposed Descanso Area Development. Chase may have been neighbors with or parceled out his ranch to subsequent homestead families, who by 1890 had supplanted the local Kumeyaay. The latter had been reduced from fifty to eight families due to a smallpox epidemic and other factors. Among the new homesteaders were Trinidad Rodriguez, Julian Sandoval, Moses Manasse, James Flinn, and Gavino Aguilar. The Sandovals raised barley and grazed horses, mules, and cows. Their adobe ranch house was an important stopover for mail and coach runs between Guatay Valley and San Diego, and was often used as an election polling place of which his neighbor, Gavino Aguilar officiated. Moses Manasse raised mules, hogs, and cattle on his ranch in the western part of Guatay Valley.

Road Development

As more and more homesteaders established small ranches and farms, by 1900 the Big and Little Guatay valleys were developing into a small rural mountain community. Besides the soil's fecundity, the community's success lay in its geographical location as the nexus of two important backcountry roads: the "Alternate-Eastern" San Diego-Yuma Road and the Descanso-Julian Road. The current Viejas Grade Road that borders the Descanso Area Development project southern boundary roughly follows the historic east-west route's original right-of-way. From the early 1870s to 1913 passenger coach and freight wagons traveling east up the Viejas Grade Road continued along this route, which was known variously as Viejas Boulevard or County Route 8, to the Samagatuma Creek crossing. Here, they could veer northeast through Green Valley, then up over the circuitous Paso Picacho (Sp. The Pass through the Peak). Also known as "Stonewall Gap" after the nearby peak, Paso Picacho connected Green Valley to the Old San Diego-Cuyamaca Stage Route to Cuyamaca City on the south shore of Cuyamaca Lake. Continuing on to the mining town of Julian to the northeast, the road connected the Cuyamaca area east to Vallecito in the Anza-Borrego Desert via the Banner Grade. Returning to the Descanso Area, the Old San Diego-Cuyamaca Stage Route also connected the Paso Picacho pass east along Samagatuma Creek to the Yuma Road (or County Highway 8). Past Guatay Mountain, the road continued in a southeasterly direction to Buckman Springs, where it then traveled south to Campo. Here, the road splits east to El Centro and Yuma, or west to the communities of Potrero, Dulzura, and National City.

By 1913 automobile traffic slowly began to supplant horse-drawn stages and freight wagons along the road. As a result of a 1909 bond issue, existing winding wagons roads were straightened out and graded, or abandoned in favor of less hazardous routes. One of these was the road from Julian south through Cuyamaca City to Descanso. In addition, the Viejas Grade Road was discontinued in 1926 in favor of a new alignment of the old Yuma Road a mile south to Descanso Junction. The new concrete-paved highway continued west at Los Terrenitos in favor of a less precipitous route south of Viejas Valley. Part of the transcontinental Lee Highway, it linked San Diego to the East Coast via the Imperial Valley until 1970, when the multi-lane Freeway 80 supplanted it.

Continuing road and highway improvements attracted another sort of visitor to the Descanso area. For an 85 cent bus ticket, a day tripper could travel the 42.6 miles from San Diego to Descanso in a few hours. At Descanso, the traveler could buy a picnic basket at the local general store or café and walk a short distance to any number of scenic locations to enjoy a picnic lunch before taking the return bus back to San Diego. The visitor could also avail himself to an overnight stay in a mountain cabin near the general store or at Hulburd Grove, just west of the study site.

Descanso Area Development as a Mountain Resort

The Descanso area had been promoted as a mountain retreat as early as 1884. Originally known as “Guatay”, its oak-shaded glen offered a Descanso or Place of Rest (Spanish) for travelers making the long, hot, and dry thousand-foot climb along the Viejas Grade Road. The valley was officially changed to “Descanso” in 1877. Seven years later, a group of four Spiritualists, among them Ebenezer W. Hulburd, came to Descanso. Each filed for a 160-acre homestead, built small cottages and began to farm and raise stock. They soon added adjacent parcels by preemption and timber claims. The group eventually owned some 2,200 acres in partnership and named it the Mountain View Ranch. The group also built a number of additional cottages and promoted the ranch as a retreat for Spiritualists. Many came to attend séances held by Justin Robinson, a well-known spiritualist medium at the time. Although built for utility and economy, the cabins’ stone and timber construction had a certain rustic charm that set the standard of building in the area. By the 1920s, the Hulburd Grove Resort [as it was now known] was a major tourist destination, with a hotel, small store, swimming pool (water was pumped out of the Sweetwater River bed), and riding stable. In addition, a large number of “artistic and commodious homes” were built on the surrounding hillsides and “along the streams”. Many of these homes were built as second homes or vacation rentals for families from San Diego, El Centro, and Los Angeles who were taking advantage of the improved automobile access via the Imperial Valley and Cuyamaca highways.

Also vying for the weekend or summer vacationer was the Descanso Park Addition. Developed in 1926 by Peter Jacobs, a construction engineer who, through the Jacobs Brothers Development Company, was also developing desert properties in Ocotillo, its boundaries encompass the study site as related in a 1930 San Diego Union article:

The natural beauty of the place is set off by the background of Guatay Mountain, eastward, and by Cuyamaca Mountain and the Cuyamaca Range to the north and east. At the west of Descanso Park runs the Sweetwater River, flooded in the winter season. A smaller stream, which is said never to run dry, Agua Blanca (now known as Descanso Creek), traverses the Park through ravines of granite boulders, shaded by old oaks and pines.

Jacobs and his sons reportedly designed and built between fifteen to twenty cottages within the tract to “fit in with the natural contour and scenic beauty of the surrounding hills”. One of these cottages, located a half mile to the east of the study site at 25133 Oak Lane, was listed on the San Diego County Register of Historic Places in August 2006.

Both Jacobs, and Hulburd before him, were motivated to develop Descanso into a mountain resort by real estate speculation during economic boom times. The first, between 1887 and 1915, had been stimulated by hopes of San Diego becoming an entrepot for transcontinental shipping. The second, between 1920 and 1930, was in response to an increase in the area’s economy due to military and tourist-oriented

development. This was especially true regarding the latter, which offered greater profits for rural landowners than agriculture.

The decade of the 1920s represented a period of phenomenal growth throughout Southern California. As more and more motorists came to rely on the automobile as their means of primary transportation, they demanded new and improved paved roads and highways. The result was a network of county and state highways branching out from urban centers into nearby mountain communities like Topanga, Lake Arrowhead, Idyllwild, and Descanso. Expecting an increase in automobile-oriented tourism, real estate speculators purchased and subdivided agricultural land into smaller lots on which they built rustic rental cottages. Others, like Los Angeles industrialist Ralph M. Dyar, who purchased the majority of the adjacent Rancho Cuyamaca in 1924, hoped to build mountain or lakefront resort lodges with rental cottages amid golf courses, equestrian trails, polo fields, and private airports. Here, they would entice tourists to buy lots in nearby tracts so that they could “realize the delights of a whole summer spent in the mountains or the advantages of having a place to run out to for weekends . . . [by building] rustic cottages of their own”.

Allen T. Hawley Ranch

One San Diego urbanite who was attracted to Descanso’s natural beauty was Allen T. Hawley, who purchased over 2,200 acres of land in a portion of Lot L of Rancho Cuyamaca on November 29, 1929. The scion of a pioneer ranching family, Hawley’s family first came to the El Cajon Valley from Nebraska in 1884. His father helped organize and finance the San Diego Flume Company, which brought water from Lake Cuyamaca to El Cajon Valley in 1886. He was also one of the first to grow oranges commercially in the valley. His son Allen and his wife Annie L. Hawley moved to San Diego in 1906 where he became a financier and real estate broker. He is recognized as the founder of Hillcrest, a suburban community north of downtown San Diego. Although involved in San Diego’s suburban development, Hawley and his family also invested in San Diego’s rural backcountry. He was the first president of the Cuyamaca State Bank, owned and sold farmland in the El Cajon Valley, and his son Forrest L. Hawley owned and operated a ranch at Flynn Springs.

It is not known if Allen T. Hawley commissioned someone to build or moved into an already built stone cabin on his Descanso ranch. Located at 24910 Viejas Boulevard, the property’s Residential Building Record states that it was built in 1929. It does not state if it was built before or after he bought the property from Jacobs. There is, however, a concrete retaining walled garden terrace in the backyard with the date “11 1 30” etched into the concrete wall’s upper surface, which indicates that the wall was constructed during Hawley’s ownership. While it is likely that the Jacobs built Hawley’s cabin (and a smaller automobile garage), there were two other local stone masons who might have been responsible. Harry McCoy and his son Austin “Ott” McCoy were also responsible for building a number of stone cabins in the Descanso area at the time that were also

noted for the artistry of their stonework. Two existing cabins that can be used for comparison purposes are the McCoy family cabins at 24978 Viejas Boulevard.

The Allen Ranch's one-story, 57-foot by 18-foot cottage's singular distinguishing architectural feature is its rustic fieldstone and rock rubble exterior wall-construction. On closer inspection, the cabin's battened stone-faced walls yield important information regarding early 20th century stone masonry building practices. The uncoursed battened stone walls consist of river cobbles and rough coarse stone rubble gathered on-site and set in concrete mortar. Prior to the walls' construction, workers would erect a temporary wooden falsework of upright wooden planks laid vertically on either side of the wall. Braced by upright sleepers, light diagonal braces, and alignment trusses, the planks formed a sort of trough. Stonemasons simply filled the trough with stone, set in concrete mortar, leaving a space between the stones and the wooden panel for the concrete. As the wall rose, they merely slid the vertical planks higher up the falsework and continued the process. After the cement and mortar hardened, they removed the falsework and applied a finish to the interior walls' surface. All in all, the stone/concrete walls above the poured concrete slab are approximately between ten to fourteen inches thick.

As stated previously, the use of natural building materials, including native stone, together with cedar slab wood and half-timbered construction, reflects local and regional building traditions that date back to the 1880s. While most, like the Allen cabin, were simple, comfortable, inexpensive homes, some of multi-room "cabins" were worth as much as \$20,000 (or \$234,770.29 at the present rate of inflation). The Allen T. Hawley two-bedroom cabin would have been adequate for Hawley and his wife, as well as a guest or two. At fifty-nine and fifty-eight years old, respectively, at the time of its purchase, Hawley may have bought it as a retirement cabin where he could live out the rest of his life as a "gentleman rancher" who raised horses and other livestock on his property as an avocation. Besides a front porch, the cabin contains another interesting exterior feature: a wood-fired stone masonry and iron stove/oven in back of the kitchen. Known as a "summer kitchen", it would be used to bake bread and slow-cook meals outside the house during hot summer months. The only other improvement was a 12-foot by 8-foot frame addition off the kitchen around 1940. An 8-foot by 10-foot and a 16-foot by 7-foot chicken coop exist on the property; however it is not known if Hawley raised any other livestock on the ranch. Hawley and his wife sold the property in 1941 to Lawrence and Mary Oliver. Poor health may have played a role; Allen Hawley passed away three years later in 1944.

The Oliver Ranch

Arguably the most important historical figures associated with the study property are Lawrence and Mary Emily Oliver. An innovative entrepreneur, businessman, rancher, community leader, and philanthropist, Lawrence Oliver was another gentleman rancher who contributed to San Diego's economic and social history. A naturalized United States citizen, Oliver had emigrated from the Azores in 1903. Eventually settling in San Diego,

he worked his way up from delivery boy, laborer, and fish peddler to president of one of the largest fish meal processing plants in California. Founded in 1922, the Oliver Meal and Oil Company, which later became the American Processing Company, was one of the most successful businesses of its kind on the Pacific Coast. Under Oliver's management, the company shifted from salting dried fish to processing the byproducts of San Diego's tuna canning industry into fish meal and oil sold under the Oliver Brand Fish Meal trademark. Local ranchers bought and used it for citrus tree fertilizer or stock feed. Another product, tuna oil, which was high in Vitamin D, was bottled and sold as a food supplement. During its peak, the company's Beardsley Street plant could produce from 1,000 to 2,000 tons of fish meal a month. However, when San Diego's tuna canning industry began phasing out after World War II, American Processing shifted to processing meat byproducts from slaughterhouses into poultry feed. Oliver took an active role in the company's operations until June 22, 1962, when he sold it to the Peterson Manufacturing Company of Los Angeles. Instead of retiring, the then 75-year-old business executive formed another company, the Circle L Investment Corporation, to manage his three deep-sea tuna fishing boats, two downtown San Diego office buildings, and the El Rancho Verde Country Club near Rialto, California.

Oliver's success garnered him the attention of San Diego's business elite. On June 16, 1934, C. Arnhold Smith, chairman of United States National Bank of San Diego's Board of Directors, announced that Oliver had been elected as a fellow board member. Smith described Oliver as "a man of integrity and of recognized business ability"; and as a "self-made man, having reached his present high standing among the business men of San Diego only through his own effort and initiative." Smith also recognized Oliver as a key member of numerous civic and fraternal organizations, particularly the San Diego Chamber of Commerce's Industrial and Harbor committees, Rotary, and Elks clubs. Thirteen years later, Lawrence Klauber, vice president of the San Diego Gas & Electric Company, asked Oliver to serve on the company's Board of Directors, as well as that of the San Diego Zoo. He served on both boards for almost twenty years.

Besides his active role in San Diego's business affairs for over forty years, Lawrence Oliver and his wife made important contributions to San Diego's cultural development, particularly to the local Portuguese and Roman Catholic communities. Lawrence Oliver held positions of honor in two Portuguese-American fraternal organizations: the Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo and the União Portuguesa do Estado de California. Between the two organizations, he served as secretary, president, conventional delegate, and Supreme Director. His wife, Mary Oliver, was also active in the local Portuguese community, being a member of the Portuguesa Rainha Santa Izabel and the União Portuguesa Protectora do Estado de California, serving as the latter's Grand President from 1946 to 1947. Together, the Olivers volunteered to maintain the House of Portugal during the 1935-1936 California Pacific Exposition in Balboa Park; and also helped organize the local Portuguese-American League, and the Portuguese-American Social and Civic Club in 1936 and 1940, respectively. Both served as officers for the next twenty years. For his work in promoting the interests of San Diego and California's Portuguese-American community, during the 1950s the government of Portugal awarded

Lawrence Oliver, along with fellow Azorean emigrants Manuel G. Rosa, and M. O. Medina, medals of Honor. Likewise, the Brazilian government awarded Lawrence a medal and title of Comandadore.

Lawrence and Mary Oliver also served with distinction as members of the St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church parish, which was located in the heart of San Diego's Portuguese-American fishing community on Point Loma. His beneficence extended out into the Descanso area. During the late 1940s he donated twenty-two acres of his ranch south of Highway 79 east of Descanso Junction to the Sisters of Social Service as a camp for underprivileged children. During the camp's 1954 dedication ceremonies, to the Olivers' surprise, the Sisters named it "Camp Oliver" in their honor. The camp continues to function to this day as a non-denominational all-year non-profit group campground.

Because of his work within the local parish and the community in general, on August 22, 1954 Lawrence Oliver received one of the greatest honors that could be bestowed upon a Roman Catholic: investiture as a Papal Knight of the Order of Saint Gregory. He regarded this honor, the highest that the Catholic Church can give a layman of "unblemished character and [who displayed] a history of promoting the interests of both society in general and the Catholic Church," as the high point of his career. Equally active in Catholic charities, Mary Oliver also received papal recognition when Pope Paul VI awarded her the Order of Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice, the highest medal that the Vatican can bestow to the laity for distinguished service to the church.

The Olivers' near-fanatical zeal in preserving San Diego's Portuguese-American heritage resulted in an opera buffa-like escapade in which they and a fellow accomplice were involved in the "theft" and "hijacking" of the iconic statue of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo (João Rodrigues Cabrilho in Portuguese). A gift from the Portuguese government to California, the statue of the allegedly Portuguese-born Cabrillo was supposed to be on display at the 1940 San Francisco Exposition. However, it languished in its original packing crate in an undisclosed location in want of \$600,000 worth of unpaid custom fees. The Olivers, who had been involved in organizing the Exposition's House of Portugal, located the statue in a San Francisco friend's garage. They immediately contacted fellow San Diegan and State Senator Ed Fletcher. Fletcher, who arrived at the house with a crane and flatbed truck, presented a "permit" that allowed him to take possession of the 14-foot high, 14,000 pound statue, which he immediately shipped by rail to San Diego. Governor Olsen, who had promised to give the statue to the City of Oakland, threatened to have Fletcher arrested; however, he never followed through. After Fletcher and the Olivers paid for the statue's assembly, it was erected near the mouth of San Diego Harbor in time for the 400th anniversary celebration of Cabrillo's 1542 landing. San Diego newspapers had a field day reporting how Oliver and Fletcher had "taken [the statue] from under the noses of Oakland officials." And that, "Historically speaking, it is likely that the Olivers' role in the midnight banditry of the 12-foot [sic] statue of Juan Cabrillo will be remembered longest". In his 1972 autobiography,

Lawrence Oliver stated that “For many years the story behind the statue was kept secret because of the hard feelings, but that’s all over now. The statue is where it belongs.”

Like Hawley before him, 54-year-old Lawrence Oliver hoped to live the life of a semi-retired gentleman rancher on his Descanso ranch. His various businesses were prospering under capable managers, so he could afford to spend some time away from them. Prior to his purchase, Oliver had been involved in a hog and cattle raising ranch on the site of Camp Kearny, a former World War I army training center [now USMC Air Station Miramar]. In 1941 the U. S. government acquired the 360-acre ranch via eminent domain. Oliver, however, refused to accept the government’s \$14,000 offer and sued the federal government. Oliver eventually won his case, receiving over \$50,000. While the case was pending, he sold his hogs and moved the cattle and some horses to his new Descanso ranch.

Oliver Ranch Improvements

Between 1941 and 1958, Oliver made improvements to the Descanso ranch including the addition of several buildings and structures. Among these was a 22-foot by 20-foot rectangular, board-sided wood-framed gable-roofed cabin. Set upon a poured-in-place concrete slab, the single-story cabin was built on a flat sandy terrace behind the stone cabin. In 1950, two separate room additions were built on this cabin, measuring 12 feet by 8 feet and 14 feet by 12 feet. Another 54-foot by 28-foot single-story wood-frame, board-sheathed gable-roofed cabin was built on a poured concrete pad in 1952. Because of its size, the Olivers may have used this cabin as their main residence while staying at the ranch.

Besides the original 1929-built stone cabin and two new wood-frame cabins, the Oliver Ranch contained four additional structures: 1) an 80-foot by 48-foot wood-frame barn, clad in 1-inch by 12-inch vertical board-n-batten planks, built on a concrete foundation; 2) an 18-foot by 20-foot 1-inch by 12-inch vertical board-clad shed; 3) a 20-foot by 70-foot closed workshop and open-bay storage shed, with only its 10-foot by 20-foot western section built on a poured concrete foundation; with 4) an attached 18-foot by 100-foot open-bay implement shed extending south from its southeast corner. The Oliver-built barn and workshop also featured concrete foundations and corrugated iron-covered gable roofs. The ranch complex also contained two electric generators, and a 550 gallon above ground gasoline storage tank next to the workshop. Except for the original 1929-built stone masonry cabin, all of the other buildings and structures have been removed. The current visitor parking lot southeast of the stone cabin is the site of the L-shaped implement shed, while the area north and northwest of the stone cabin is where the majority of the other structures were built. A short curving dirt road that branches off the study area’s southeast to north dirt access road dates back to the Oliver Ranch era.

In his autobiography, Oliver wrote that he and his family, including his grand-children, loved the ranch, which they visited on weekends. “The place was lovely,” he wrote. “We

planted flowering trees and pines which grew tall. We [also] imported lilac from the east.” “Two lakes,” he continued, “were made for irrigation.”

As mentioned, previously, Oliver regarded raising and breeding cattle as “an interesting and successful hobby”. He initially crossed his original herd of English Devon cattle with White Face Herefords. However, the result was not of his liking, so he sold them and bred White Face Herefords alone. Satisfied with the result, he began entering his stock in cattle shows across the nation. During one such show, he was offered \$50,000 for an eighteen-month-old bull. He refused and kept the bull for seven years. Named Baca Duke, the nationally recognized award-winning bull later sired two champions; one of which, a heifer, Oliver sold for \$12,000. In 1956, the last year he attended stock competitions, he owned the number one undefeated prize heifer of the Pacific Northwest. His wife, May remarked: “I became interested in the cattle and enjoyed the cattle shows. The cattle people are different and intriguing. I even learned to ride a horse.”

Oliver may have called his Descanso ranch and marked his cattle with the “Circle R” brand. The 1940 issue of the California Bureau of Livestock Identification Brand Book indicated that Lawrence Oliver had a cattle brand consisting of an R within a circle. There is no corroborating evidence at this time that indicates whether or not Oliver referred to his Camp Kearny or Descanso ranches as the “Circle R Ranch”. There is also no direct evidence suggesting that the ranch was named the “Circle L”, a name which he later used for his investment corporation. Subsequent research may reveal the answer.

During Oliver’s 1941 to 1958 ownership, he kept his stock numbers below 250 head. Once a year he would employ local cowboys to roundup and cull the herd; the surplus being sold for beef. Coincidentally, Oliver employed Austin “Ott” McCoy as ranch foreman during the 1940s. McCoy also served as a fireman at the Camp Lockett army base near Campo during World War II. After the war he joined the County Road Department, and served as an officer of the State Livestock Commission.

By the late 1950s Oliver found the demands of raising cattle and attending stock shows no longer enjoyable. His advancing age also made it more difficult to travel and oversee the ranch’s activities. Besides, according to Oliver, “Good help was hard to get.” In 1958 he sold the ranch to Dr. Haig C. Merigan, a San Diego dentist, and his wife Joann M. Merigan. The Merigans owned and operated the former Hawley/Oliver ranch until September 26, 1977, when they sold 1,823 acres north of the County Highway to the DPR. At the time, this parcel contained “one duplex, three single family residences, one barn, and various out buildings”. Eighteen months later, the Merigans sold two additional unimproved parcels to DPR.

Historic Resources Summary

Hawley/Oliver Ranch House

Despite the property's protracted history, there is only one recorded historic resource on-site: the Hawley/Oliver Ranch House. It may be eligible for listing on the California Register as an excellent local example of a hand-built, stone-veneer cabin typical of the area. For example, a nearby rock cabin located at 25121 Oak Lane was designated as a San Diego County historic resource in August 2006. It too was built in 1929 on property developed by Peter Jacobs. Like the Hawley/Oliver Ranch House, "it is an example of the original mountain retreats in [the area] in the late 1920s and into the 1930s. The artistry and ingenuity of this time and the use of native materials is evident throughout the structure." A cursory windshield survey of the area between Descanso and Guatay shows at least twenty or more small to mid-size stone masonry cabins similar to these two. At present, there has not been a formal survey and inventory of these resources to determine if there are enough to form a discontinuous historic thematic district.

Oliver Ranch House and Outbuildings

Another potentially eligible historic resource is the site of the Oliver Ranch House and Outbuildings. Since the owners prior to DPR's acquisition removed the former Oliver ranch house and other structures associated with the ranch's operation, the resource is to be considered a potential historic site, with possible historic archaeological building and/or cultural remains.

Descanso Elementary School Complex

While not on, but adjacent to the project site, the Descanso Elementary School Building may be a potentially eligible historic resource. Completed in 1935 and dedicated in 1936, it replaced an earlier schoolhouse located near Old Highway 80 (the present intersection of Wildwood Glenn Lane and Los Terrentos Road) from 1898 to 1935. The present schoolhouse is one of three known Works Progress Administration (WPA)-funded elementary and secondary schools designed by William Percy Lodge during the Great Depression. Originally known as the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, the WPA was created by Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act of June 1933. The first national peacetime effort to combat widespread unemployment, this New Deal program spent over \$6 billion on projects to improve the nation's infrastructure. Lodge had designed the other two WPA-funded schools, Julian Elementary School and the Fallbrook Union High School three years earlier in 1933. A licensed architect for many years before coming to San Diego in 1923, Lodge continued to practice architecture in San Diego until 1955. His body of work has not been scrutinized in depth to determine if he was an architect of note. His design of the Descanso Elementary School reflects elements of California Ranch Modern in its roofline, main entry, and fenestration.

Originally built with only two classrooms, a kitchen, and an auditorium, the original Descanso Elementary School building appears to have retained its historic integrity. The site, however, has undergone changes that, arguably, have impacted its historic setting. For example, a second wing of rooms was added during the 1940s. During the 1980s, modular buildings were added to accommodate a marked increase in student enrollment. While the 1940s wing's design and rear siting complement the 1935 school building, the modular buildings do not. Mature trees also obscure the school building from the main roadway.

In 1979, San Diego County Central Mountain Community Plan stated that the Community of Descanso regarded the Descanso Elementary School as having "historical interest." However, it did not state why it is significant; nor is the building listed on any County or State landmark registers. During the course of researching and writing this report, there was not enough contextual information to compare the Descanso Elementary School Complex to other buildings of its kind in San Diego's backcountry to determine its significance. However, due to its age and relative integrity (when viewed from the south), the 1935 and 1940s school buildings may qualify for potentially eligible historic resources at the local level.

Green Valley Loop A Campground

The second proposed equestrian facility improvement project area is located within Loop A of the Green Valley Campground. Also known as the "Sweetwater Loop", it is an improved 3-acre campground located approximately halfway between the Descanso Area Development site and Paso Picacho Staging Area to the north. Existing campground improvements include 22-campsites with tent pads, camp stoves or fire rings, and concrete/wood picnic tables. Existing amenities include a combination building attached to a nearby leach field, scattered hose bibs. Each campsite also features a pull-in or drive through automobile parking spur or turnout. At least half feature rustic stone retaining walls ranging in height from one to four feet. Built on surrounding slopes, they provide level surfaces for campsites or small RV camping.

The proposed Green Valley Loop equestrian improvements would provide an equestrian campground and associated amenities, as well as parking and connections to nearby existing trail systems. Proposed changes to the existing campground include eliminating campsites #1 and #19, and converted them to trailhead access. In addition, a future bridge may be constructed from the campground's northwest side across the Sweetwater River to allow direct trail access.

The camp host site will remain at its current location (Campsite #11), and will be the only site to have electrical power. The remainder of the existing campsites will be combined in groups of 2-3 to create the larger areas required for up to 15 equestrian sites. Construction work to convert the campsites include moderate grading, reconfiguring

campsites, demolishing and reconstructing the stone retaining walls, installing and repairing asphalt, installing DG surfacing, and constructing pipe corrals and an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mounting ramp.

Two campsites are proposed to be made ADA accessible with a firm surface and compliant furnishings. A route of travel will be constructed from these campsites to the comfort station. The comfort station may be remodeled to meet compliance under a separate ADA project.

Green Valley Campground: Early History

The Loop A Campground's historical period of development begins on January 10, 1933, when the California State Department of Beaches and Parks acquired and created Rancho Cuyamaca State Park. The Park's headquarters was located in the home of the acquisition's former owner, Los Angeles businessman Ralph D. Dyar. Dyar's home is near the confluence of the Sweetwater River and Cold Stream Creek in Green Valley, northeast of the campground. Due in part to the failure of his proposed El Rancho Cuyamaca development and the onset of the Great Depression, Dyar was forced to divest his San Diego holdings.

Created by the successful passage of California State Proposition 4 on November 4, 1928, the California State Park System had acquired a number of parks in addition to Rancho Cuyamaca. However, the ensuing Depression left the system land rich, but money poor. To offset this, it utilized the services of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to improve parkland. Initiated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on March 31, 1933, the CCC was a work program that employed thousands of young men and veterans through useful public work. Coordinated by the National Park Service, the CCC's work consisted primarily of conservation activities that included park development and improvements. A large part of the public and staff facilities at the Park, along with road and trail improvements, are due to the CCC's work. Camps to house the CCC crews were established at the Green Valley Falls area west of SR-79 and in the meadow immediately east of the Dyar House (at the present site of the San Diego City/County School Camp) where Dyar had built a barn and corral. Known as SP-4, and later as DSP-2, the latter was used to direct improvements and for fire protection in the Park's northern area. No doubt the former Dyar House's rustic stone and hand-hewn wood beam construction was the model for a number of CCC-built structures throughout the Park. These "Park Rustic" 1933 to 1942-built Park residences and structures at Paso Picacho and Green Valley, as well as the facilities at the Boy and Girl Scout group camps at Hual-Cu-Cuish and Tapawingo featured mortared native stone and rough-hewn beam construction.

CCC improvements at the entrance to the Green Valley Falls area included a Custodian's Residence and Entry Kiosk on SR-79's western shoulder. The CCC crews cut out and graded an oiled decomposed granite dirt road from the entrance area in a northwesterly

direction to the Sweetwater River. At this point they built a native stone masonry river crossing. They extended the road from the crossing to a junction that split northwesterly along the Arroyo Seco Trail, and southwesterly across the Arroyo Seco to the new Green Valley Falls Campground and Picnic Area. Completed around 1940, the campground consisted of several dirt lanes that twisted along the eastern flanks of 4,600-foot Pine Ridge. Situated between 3,925 and 4,000 feet, the campground's main attraction, besides affording space for at least 40 campsites, was access to the Green Valley Falls area along the Sweetwater River a few hundred yards to the south. Other Green Valley Falls campground improvements included parking spurs, camp stoves, level tent pads, and two Combination Buildings.

Green Valley Campground: Loop A

Except for a dirt road leading up an unnamed, tree-covered rocky knoll, which contains a 50,000 gallon concrete reservoir, there were no other CCC-built improvements in the Study Area. Loop A's development occurred after World War II, when, responding for a need for more public camping throughout the Park, DPR chose to add 21 new improved campsites in a grassy meadow between the Sweetwater River and the northeast slope of the knoll where the CCC-built reservoir stands. Between 1948 and 1950, 21 campsites were constructed around both sides of a D-shaped dirt road that followed the campground's perimeter. Originally known as the "Sweetwater Loop" campground, all of the new campsites featured a graded parking spur, concrete and wood picnic table, and cement-mortared stone rubble masonry camp stoves. Near the middle of the meadow was a small, rectangular, gable-roofed, wood-frame Combination Building.

According to an uncorroborated 1987 statement by John E. Walstrom, manger of the Southern Region's Technical Services Center in San Diego, he, along with local stone mason Charley Sour and another individual named George Foot, built "the existing Diablo style stoves . . . at Cuyamaca. . . from 1958 and 1960". There are only three of these stoves remaining. They can be found at campsites 1, 2, and 5. A rubble pile southeast of campsite #10 near SR-79 may contain the broken remains of some of the original camp stoves. An additional fragment may have been utilized as one of the rock bollards running along the circulation road south of the entrance to the Camp Host campsite (the original Campsite #11).

The Combination Building was one of many new staff and public-use buildings erected at Green Valley Falls, as well as other campgrounds and day use facilities within the Park. They are associated with a comprehensive expansion of California State Parks after World War II. In addition to the existing CCC-built improvements, DPR added numerous landscape improvements during the 1948 to 1960 postwar period. These included staff residences and garages; comfort stations and combo buildings; and hardscape improvements such as stone camp stoves, concrete and wood plank picnic tables, and wooden food lockers.

Inspired by a design concept that originated as early as 1944, the California State Division of Architecture had produced a series of new standardized building plans for State Parks between 1947 and 1954. While similar to their CCC-built predecessors, these new buildings and structures reflected a simpler, "stripped-down" standardized version of the Park Rustic style.

For example, during the CCC-era, a combination building's design normally reflected a site-specific adaptation with regards to the availability of local building materials and skilled masons assisted by a large, unskilled labor force. A solid, massive-looking structure built of heavy field stones and hand-hewn timbers, it reflected permanence and hope for the future. On the other hand, a late 1940s "Mountain Type" combination building like the one built at Loop A displayed a more austere minimalist approach to cope with post-war material, labor, and funding shortages. Its character-defining features included a rectangular "boxcar-like" shape with a simple asphalt shingle covered gable roof, bands of small wood-frame windows, inexpensive standardized fixtures, and straight-forward design devoid of architectural elaboration. Their simple, box-like utilitarian style, in deference to high construction material and labor costs, mirrors the economic realities of the time. While standardized, there was an effort by Park staff to use building materials and paint schemes that complemented rather than stood out within the surrounding landscape.

Some of the Study Area's most character-defining landscape features—cement-mortared coarse stone rubble masonry retaining walls and steps—were not built during the campground's 1948 to 1960 period of historic significance. John E. Walstrom also stated that "Rock work in the Sweetwater Loop Camps 1 to 22 was installed by La Cima inmates under the direction of Lyle Watson in 1970-71". In addition, he goes on to state that the La Cima inmate construction crew also installed the "rock work at the [Green Valley] Falls comfort station" at the same time. All attempts to contact Walstrom's contemporaries to corroborate his statements have proven fruitless.

Finally, while the campground's "D"-shaped circulation road, as well as the campsites' parking spurs and turnouts are original, the composition asphalt gravel pavement, which dates to the mid-1970s, is not. All of these alterations and post-1960 improvements combine to reduce Loop A's historic significance and eligibility for designation as a thematic post-war Rustic historic district.

Historic Resources Summary

CCC Reservoir and Access Road

Located along the campground's southeastern perimeter, the single-lane-wide dirt road begins at a gated entrance between campsites 10 and 12 and curves up the southeastern and southern ridgeline of an unnamed rocky knoll to a point overlooking the knoll's western flank. At this location sits a 40-foot by 24-foot poured-in-place above-ground

concrete reservoir. Approximately 6 feet of the reservoir's 10-foot-high side walls are above ground. Constructed by the CCC in 1934, it is one of three concrete water-storage reservoirs that the CCC built throughout the Park during the 1930s. Despite some modifications to a chlorination shed at its base, the structure has maintained its historic integrity in regards to location, setting, materials, workmanship, and design. The dirt road originally looped to the top of the knoll and back down its northeastern flank to the campground. No longer used as a vehicle access road, the northeast loop road has been converted into a hiking trail. The latter still maintains its historic integrity in regards to location, setting, and materials: there are several large stone boulders that form a retaining wall along its upper section's southeast-facing shoulder.

Loop A Campground Historic Landscape District

The D-shaped campground dates to the Park's postwar improvement period. Its character-defining features include wood plank-topped concrete picnic tables with graded tent pads and metal fire rings. At least 11 campsites (1-10 and 12) contain cement-mortared coarse stone rubble masonry retaining walls and steps; with three of these (1-2, and 5) containing "Diablo" style cement-mortared coarse stone rubble masonry camp stoves. Rocky outcroppings, terraced campsites, mature trees and shrubs, surrounding an open, grassy meadow, along a flowing stream, are contributors to its historic setting.

While the campground has maintained its original location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, there have been cumulative changes to its historic fabric that lessen its historic significance. For example, the 1948-built Comfort Station's original exterior horizontal wood clapboard wall cladding and awning-style wood windows have been replaced with non-compliant modern style horizontal wood siding and sliding metal windows, reducing the structure's historic integrity.

In addition, some of the campgrounds' most distinctive landscape features, the stone masonry retaining walls and stairways, are less than 50 years old, and are not eligible for consideration as contributors to a postwar landscape. A better example of a historic Park Rustic campground within the Park, with character-defining Park Rustic landscape features from the 1930s to 1960s, can be found at the Paso Picacho Campground and Administrative Center.

While they will not be eligible for consideration as contributing historic landscape features until 2020, Loop A's 1970-1971 stone masonry landscape features may be eligible for special consideration. The stone work reflects the area's 100+ year building history (including the Park) of using indigenous stone to construct rustic buildings, structures, walls, culverts, and other landscape features. Because of this, they should be given special consideration during the project's planning, design, and construction phases.

Paso Picacho Day Use Area

The third proposed project area is east of State Highway 79 across from the west entrance into the Paso Picacho Administration/Campground area. This site would create a day-use staging area that includes space for approximately eight vehicle and equestrian trailer rigs with pull-through parking and amenities. Site improvements include the removal or thinning out of some standing trees within the project area. The project also includes constructing new and/or connections to existing trails, particularly to the California Riding and Hiking Trail. Depending on site conditions, restrooms would be on septic and/or a contained vault system. The project may also involve providing access to gas, water and electricity.

The proposed Paso Picacho Day Use Area's A.P.E., which is limited to the area being developed east of the SR-79 shoulder, does not contain any recorded historic resources. However, there are two potentially eligible historic resources within the project's A.P.E.: the route of the Old San Diego-Cuyamaca Stage and the Stonewall Jackson Peak Trail. The first is an important historic transportation corridor dating back to the 1870s. The second is associated with the celebrated CCC work in developing the Park's infrastructure during its infancy.

There are also several potentially eligible historic resources immediately west of the project area dating to the park's creation. They include the route of SR-79, the entrance to the Paso Picacho Administrative and Campground Complex, and the Cuyamaca Forest Fire Suppression Station. The first is another important transportation route, while the others are associated with the CCC and later post-World War II statewide improvements to State Parks' infrastructure.

Historic Resources Summary

Old San Diego-Cuyamaca Stage Route

Located just east of SR-79, the Old San Diego-Cuyamaca Stage Route is a historic transportation route that extended along the western base of Stonewall Peak through the Stonewall Gap. Native Americans, Spanish, and later Mexican and Anglo-Americans may have used this route connecting Green Valley to what is now Lake Cuyamaca via Paso Picacho. However, its primary historical use began in the early 1870s as a graded dirt freight wagon and passenger coach road linking San Diego with the newly discovered Julian and Cuyamaca gold mines. After the mines played out during the early part of the 20th century, the road continued to carry freight, passenger, and mail coaches between San Diego and its mountainous backcountry and desert areas. It was also an important route for local farmers and ranchers moving crops and animal herds to market. After 1910, as gasoline-powered cars and automobiles supplanted horse-drawn wagons and coaches, the road's importance decreased due to the construction of the present highway. While the road is no longer extant, historic maps suggest that during the 1930s

the route was incorporated into an equestrian trail (the Park's current Cold Stream and Minshall trails).

Stonewall Jackson Peak Trail

This trail is associated with Park improvements made by the CCC during the Great Depression, and provides a tangible link to a cooperative federal and state park development program that served to improve accessibility to visitors and park personnel in federal and state parks and forests nationwide. More important, the program provided jobs and hope to out-of-work young men and older military veterans during one of the greatest economic crises in the nation's history. The Park's history is inexorably linked to this program, which played an important role in the Park's initial development. From the main base camp just east of the Dyar Lodge (a.k.a. Stonewall Lodge), supervised CCC enrollees built roads, trails, campgrounds, buildings, and other structures throughout the Cuyamaca Rancho, as well as at Palomar and Anza-Borrego Desert State Parks. While the trail has experienced some modifications, particularly some rockwork near its junction with the Cold Stream Trail, the route up to the Stonewall Peak lookout is essentially intact.

Green Valley-Cuyamaca Valley Segment of SR-79

The scenic SR-79 transportation corridor has served as a key transportation and communication route between the mountain communities of Descanso and Julian, and by extension San Diego to Borrego Springs. Besides providing southern access from San Diego to Lake Cuyamaca and Julian as early as the 1910s, the road contributed to the development of the Park from the 1930s through today. During this time, it provided access to the Park's northern section via Paso Picacho for CCC crews traveling from their camp near the Stonewall Lodge to various construction sites, including the nearby Paso Picacho Campground, and two new Boy and Girl Scout camps near Cuyamaca Lake. It was also the route they took to work camps outside the Park at Palomar Mountain and Anza-Borrego Desert State Parks. After World War II, the road continued to contribute to the Park's development, as well as turn the Descanso/Julian area into a highly visited mountain vacation destination.

Although the highway's route has not changed appreciably since the 1930s, the current roadbed appears to have been widened and paved over since the 1970s to accommodate modern highway safety standards. While this has reduced its historic integrity, like the Torrey Pines Grade Road at Torrey Pines State Reserve, the route itself may be an eligible historic resource. The Paso Picacho Day Use Area Project would not impact the route's historic integrity.

Residence #7 at Paso Picacho

This building is associated with California State Park's earliest development of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park from the mid-to late 1930s. Built by CCC members, it is

an excellent example of the Park Rustic style. Despite alterations in order to adapt it for use as the Park Unit's Sector Office after the disastrous 2003 Cedar Fire, the building, along with the neighboring Cuyamaca Forest Fire Suppression Station to the south, has maintained its historic integrity.

Cuyamaca Forest Fire Suppression Station

Completed in 1934, it is also a good representation of a CCC-built utilitarian structure in the Park Rustic style. Its historic significance lies in its Park Rustic architecture and its 74-year continuous use as a California Division of Forestry (CDF) fire suppression station.

Paso Picacho Campground Entry Kiosk

One of two public contact points for campers (the other being the identical Green Valley Campground Entry Kiosk), its rustic style represents the trend towards standardization of State Parks' architecture during post-World War II.

Paso Picacho Campground Gift Shop

The Gift Shop is another postwar design. It also represents the trend towards standardization of State Parks' architecture. The Gift Shop, along with the rest of the CCC and California State Parks-built Park Rustic Style buildings constructed between 1930 and 1960 are contributors to a potentially eligible discontinuous Park Rustic Thematic Historic District at the Park.

The proposed equestrian trailhead's built improvements do not appear to pose adverse effects to the potentially eligible historic resources within or immediately adjacent to the proposed project's A.P.E.--the historic resources within the A.P.E. have already been altered or impacted through past activities. Likewise, the trailhead improvements' compatible design, scale, and use of building materials, in addition to existing trees and shrubs, will reduce any visual impacts.

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