



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 222
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Department of Parks and Recreation
Tehachapi District
15101 Lancaster Road
Lancaster, CA 93536

PROJECT TITLE: Protection and Enhancement of the Riparian Corridor – Last Chance Canyon

LOCATION: Red Rock Canyon State Park

COUNTY: Kern

DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) is proposing to implement a protection and enhancement project to protect a significant riparian corridor within Last Chance Canyon of Red Rock Canyon State Park. The project will close a portion of Last Chance Canyon to all vehicle traffic. This closure will be pursuant to the State of California, Public Resources Code Section 5003, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 4300 and 4326. This project is critical to the ecological health of the region to provide maximum protection to sensitive species and will allow the regions biodiversity to grow and recover. Areas that will be closed to vehicle traffic will include but not limited to the Cudahy Camp area, Cudahy Creek Road and the primitive route known as Pinnacles.

The footprint for this project will encompass the following areas:

Last Chance Canyon

A series of wooden fences will be installed above and below the riparian corridor within Last Chance Canyon. The fence will be created by using 8' peeler post poles. Each post will be counter sunk approximately 4' into the ground and cemented. Bags of concrete will be transported to the location and mixed on site. A power auger will be used to drill the post holes. The fence will be connected and tied together using 3", 3/8 inch steel rods and peeler post poles set 6' apart. Pedestrian access areas will be installed within the fence line to allow park visitors to access the area, but prevent vehicle from entering the area.

An administrative gate approximately 6' wide will install at the lower portion of the riparian corridor to provide administrative access for ongoing restoration projects and public safety access.

Designated parking areas will established at both ends of the riparian corridor to allow park visitors to park and access the area.

The primitive route within the riparian corridor will be reconfigured by doing a route to trail conversion, which will allow park visitors to access the area without impacting sensitive natural or cultural resources. The proposed work will be completed by hand.

Interpretive signage and displays will place throughout the area to interpret the unique natural and cultural resources of the area. Interpretive display locations will include the Overlook at the upper end of riparian corridor, historic Cudahy Camp in the middle of the riparian corridor and at the lower end of the riparian corridor.

Signage and map displays will be placed within Last Chance Canyon to advised park visitors of the closure and advise them of alternatives routes of travel within or around the area.

Cudahy Creek Road

Approximately 5 miles of fence will be constructed along El Paseo Canyon, north and south of Cudahy Creek Road, using t-posts and three strands of barbless wire. Bracing will be installed at 0.1 mile intervals or as needed, using galvanized steel posts and/or 8' peeler post poles set in concrete. T-posts will be installed using hand-held t-post drivers. If needed, post holes will be dug with a power auger, rock hammer, or by hand with post-hole diggers and shovels. Fence materials will be delivered to staging areas next to the primitive route.

Pedestrian access will be installed at the junction Cudahy Creek Road and El Paseo Canyon to allow park visitors to access the area, but prevent vehicle from entering the area.

Interpretive signage and informational signage will be installed at the junction Cudahy Creek Road and El Paseo Canyon advising park visitors of the closure and advise them of an alternatives route of travel within or around the area.

Pinnacles

The primitive route known as Pinnacles will be permanently closed at the junction El Paseo Canyon. Pinnacles is a non –system primitive route that was created by park visitors.

Approximately 200 feet of fence will be constructed along El Paseo Canyon, north and south of Pinnacles, using t-posts and three strands of barbless wire. Bracing will be installed at as needed, using galvanized steel posts and/or 8' peeler post poles set in concrete. T-posts will be installed using hand-held t-post drivers. If needed, post holes will be dug with a power auger, rock hammer, or by hand with post-hole diggers and shovels.

DPR-approved standard project requirements have been incorporated into this project. A copy of these requirements may be obtained by submitting a request to the project Environmental Coordinator listed below.

PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING THE PROJECT: California Department of Parks and Recreation

NAME OF DIVISION OR DISTRICT CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT: Tehachapi

EXEMPT STATUS:

- Declared Emergency (Section 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (Section 15269(b) and (c))
- Statutory Exemption (Section)
- Categorical Exemption
Class: 1, 3, 4 Section(s): 15301 15303 15304

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT:

No potential for significant impacts to the environment is anticipated in compliance with Section 15300.2. If the project is implemented as indicated within the CDPR Project Evaluation Form including measures provided by CDPR staff, then it is exempt under CEQA §15301 – Existing Facilities, §15303 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, and §15304 – Minor Alterations to Land. The actions fall under the Departmental List of Exempt activities as established according to CEQA §15300.4 as:

- “Trail or road repairs” (Class 1, Section 15301);
- “Construction or installation of park facilities such as interpretive signing or panels... and fencing” (Class 3, Section 15303);
- “Trail construction or realignment” and “Resource management projects” (Class 4, Section 15304);

- "Temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment" (Class 4, Section 15304e); and
- "Surface restoration" (Class 4, Section 15304f)

The project does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. The project will result in the improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources (Class 4).

CONTACT: Russ Dingman, District Environmental Coordinator **PHONE NO.:** (661) 369-1141
California Department of Parks & Recreation **EMAIL:** Russ.Dingman@parks.ca.gov
Tehachapi District Headquarters
15101 Lancaster Road
Lancaster, CA 93536



Norbert Ruhmke
District Superintendent, Tehachapi District (ACTING)

1/11/15
Date
