

## Carnegie SVRA General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report

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### Project and Document Overview

Following the public review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Carnegie General Plan from January 16 through March 1, 2024, California State Parks staff made minor changes to the Preliminary General Plan in response to comments received. In addition, the planning team prepared a Final EIR (FEIR) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including copies of all comments received and responses to these comments. The proposed changes to the Preliminary General Plan are reflected in the documents provided to you for review (Carnegie SVRA Draft General Plan Update and Final EIR). To capture any additional changes that may be initiated by staff or directed by Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Commissioners at the October 24, 2024, hearing, the final General Plan will not be produced until after the adoption of the resolutions by the Commission to approve the General Plan and certify the EIR. This document summarizes the existing documents, revisions to the General Plan, and where to find a description of these revisions in the Draft Final General Plan and Final EIR.

### Project Location and Background

Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) is a 1,533-acre off-highway vehicle (OHV) park managed by the Diablo Range District of California State Parks. The SVRA is located within unincorporated Alameda and San Joaquin Counties, approximately 15 miles east of Livermore and 12 miles west of Tracy in a rural area. The original 1,533-acre site had been used by OHVs since the 1940s and was operated as a private motorcycle park from 1970 to 1979. Carnegie SVRA has been operating as an SVRA since around 1980 when California State Parks purchased the property. The first General Plan for Carnegie SVRA was approved in 1981. Substantial improvements have been made to Carnegie SVRA since that time.

California State Parks previously prepared a General Plan Revision and associated Program EIR for the original Carnegie SVRA and the adjacent 3,100-acre Alameda and Tesla Expansion Area. While the General Plan Revision was approved and the EIR certified by the OHMVR Commission in 2016, the Commission rescinded these decisions in 2021 due to several lawsuits. The lawsuits and subsequent legislation requiring that the Alameda and Tesla Expansion Area not be designated as an SVRA resulted in the Department electing to prepare a standalone General Plan Update for the Carnegie SVRA. The Department is conducting a separate planning effort for the Alameda and Tesla Expansion Area to determine a suitable classification and future use of these properties. Since OHV funds were used to purchase that property, the legislature included money to purchase new OHV property. Therefore, this proposed General Plan Update and EIR is limited to the original 1,533-acre Carnegie SVRA, specifically excluding the Expansion Area.

## Carnegie SVRA General Plan and EIR Timeline

The following is the timeline for the preparation of the General Plan and EIR:

- The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the EIR was circulated to the appropriate federal, state, and local agencies from March 31 through April 30, 2022. A virtual public meeting was held on April 19, 2022, from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m.
- The Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR were published for public review from January 16 to March 1, 2024.
- The Department held a public tour of Carnegie SVRA with the OHMVR Commission on April 17, 2024. A second public tour of the SVRA will be held on October 23, 2024.
- The Final EIR was prepared between March and September 2024. It was made available on October 2, 2024, on the [Carnegie SVRA General Plan Update project page](#) and the OHMVR Commission Meetings page for review.
- The OHMVR Commission hearing to consider the approval of the General Plan and certify the Final EIR is scheduled for October 24, 2024.
- The Final General Plan Update and Final EIR will be published after the Commission hearing and the adoption of the associated resolutions.
- A Notice of Determination will be filed on October 14, 2024 with State Clearinghouse following the certification of the Final EIR at the October commission hearing

## Content of the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR (January 2024)

This Carnegie SVRA General Plan is organized into five chapters:

Chapter 1, “Introduction,” introduces Carnegie SVRA and the General Plan.

Chapter 2, “Existing Conditions,” describes existing conditions, facilities, and important resources.

Chapter 3, “Issues and Analysis,” summarizes and analyzes key issues identified during the planning process.

Chapter 4, “The Plan,” contains the proposed General Plan components: SVRA classification, purpose, vision, goals and guidelines, and proposed land use management.

Chapter 5, “References,” lists references cited in Chapters 1 through 4.

The Final EIR (FEIR) consists of the following sections:

**Chapter 1, “Introduction,”** provides a brief overview of the public review process of the Preliminary General Plan and DEIR and describes the organization of the FEIR.

**Chapter 2, “List of Commenters,”** provides a list of agencies, tribes, organizations, and individuals that submitted comments during the public review period.

**Chapters 3, “Individual Comments and Responses,”** provides complete copies of and responses to all written comments on the Carnegie SVRA Preliminary General Plan Update

and DEIR received during the public review period. Each section provides all written comments received on the General Plan and DEIR.

Chapter 3.1, “State, Local, and Regional Agency Comments and Responses”

Chapter 3.2, “Tribal Comments and Responses”

Chapter 3.3, “Organizations Comments and Responses”

Chapter 3.4, “Individuals Comments and Responses”

**Chapter 4, “Revisions to the General Plan,”** provides a reproduction of portions of the Preliminary General Plan Update with proposed revisions to text made by State Parks and in response to comments. These changes will be incorporated in the Draft General Plan to be submitted to the State Parks and Recreation Commission for approval.

**Chapter 5, “Revisions to the DEIR,”** provides a reproduction of portions of the DEIR with proposed revisions to text made by State Parks and in response to comments.

**Chapter 6, “List of Preparers,”** identifies all preparers of and contributors to the FEIR.

**Chapter 7, “References,”** lists all references used during the preparation of this FEIR, as well as citations for personal communications.

Per CEQA, a Final EIR was prepared to respond to comments on the Preliminary General Plan and DEIR to present corrections, revisions, and other clarifications in response to these comments and as a result of the ongoing planning effort. California State Parks received 16 comment letters on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR, including letters from public agencies (4), a California Native American Tribe (1), organizations (3), and individuals (8). The response to comments focuses on the disposition of environmental issues raised in the comments, as specified by CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(b).

Chapter 3 of the Final EIR includes the comment letters and written responses to the letters. The responses to comments resulted in minor changes and corrections to the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR. These revisions are included in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively. It is recommended that commissioners read through the comment letters to learn more about public support and concerns for the General Plan.

To understand the differences between the Preliminary and Final General Plan, read the Final EIR Chapter 4, “Revisions to the General Plan.” In Chapter 4, changes in the text are signified by strikeouts where text is removed and underlining where text is added.

Chapter 5 includes revised text for the General Plan.

## Carnegie SVRA General Plan Proposed Changes

### Declaration of Purpose

The Declaration of Purpose describes the purpose of Carnegie SVRA and is the broadest statement of management goals designed to fulfill the vision of the SVRA. A Declaration of Purpose is required by California PRC Section 5002.2(b). The previous Declaration of Purpose for Carnegie SVRA, adopted in December 1981, was updated during this General Plan process:

The purpose of Carnegie SVRA is to provide effectively managed, responsible off-highway vehicle and related recreational opportunities while protecting and interpreting the SVRA's valued cultural and natural resources.

### SVRA Vision

The vision for Carnegie SVRA describes the SVRA in future years when State Parks' OHMVR Division has achieved its General Plan objectives. The following vision was developed for Carnegie SVRA during the General Plan planning process:

Carnegie SVRA will be a regional destination where children and adults of all skill levels can ride, play, and learn in an outdoor recreational setting. Carnegie SVRA will continue to be an affordable location where visitors can enjoy a wide variety of OHV recreation. Carnegie SVRA will be a model of exciting and well-managed OHV recreation as well as excellent environmental stewardship. Visitors will be able to learn about and contribute to the long-term sustainability of diverse cultural and natural resources present within the SVRA.

### Proposed Projects

The General Plan proposes projects that include new and improved visitor experiences and operations facilities, which would be planned under the General Plan. Chapter 4, sections 4.3.1.3 through 4.3.1.5, provides a detailed description of each project.

Facilities improvements include a campground remodel, a new group campsite, a new recreational vehicle dump station, a new campfire center, a concession store upgrade and relocation, SVRA maintenance area improvements, ranger station expansion, emergency helicopter pad relocation, volunteer training area enhancements, campground host sites, new greenhouse, SVRA headquarters area improvements, water treatment facility upgrade, and other miscellaneous projects.

Recreational Projects and Improvements include a new kid's minibike track, new pedestrian interpretive loop trails, a new Creekside pedestrian trail, a new Front Hills single motorbike trail, an additional visitor recreation area, reopening the Waterfall Canyon area to non-motorized trail use, and rehabilitation of the Franciscan riding area.

These facilities will require, prior to construction, the provision of management plans, project plans, and subsequent CEQA compliance.

## Revisions after the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR

Public comments were received following the release of the Draft Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR in January 2024. Staff carefully considered all comments received when formulating the final Draft General Plan. Throughout the planning process, some changes were made in consideration of the comments received, which are listed below. The revisions to the General Plan have been made for clarification purposes or, where needed, to add information or correct minor errors.

- Chapter 2, “Existing Conditions” Section 2.3.3.4 on pages 2-95 and 2-96
  - Updated this section to describe the cultural resources survey by the Anthropological Studies Center at Sonoma State University from July through September 2024.
  - Updated the California Native American tribal consultation and process for the General Plan Update.
  - Updated historic archaeological resources section and Native American Tribal cultural resources section.
- Chapter 4, “The Plan” Section 4.4.6.2 on page 4-23:
  - Added clarification to note that additional environmental analysis may be required in the event disturbing a sensitive biological resource is unavoidable.
- Chapter 4, “The Plan” Section 4.4.6.2 on page 4-24:
  - Added information about the Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WHPP), a statutorily required document unique to SVRAs that must conserve and improve wildlife habitats over time, per Public Resources Code (Section 5090.35 et seq) relating to resource management at SVRAs. District staff in the process of updating the SVRA’s WHPP.
- Chapter 4 “The Plan” Section 4.4.6.2 on page 4-26:
  - Updated Wildlife Guideline 1.7 to perform a preconstruction survey for special-status herpetofauna (California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander, western pond turtle, or western spadefoot). The guideline also clarified avoidance and minimization measures, permits and consultation with regulatory agencies.
- Chapter 5 Revisions:
  - Added a reference to the State Office of Historic Preservation’s California Historic Landmark webpage by County, including landmark #740 for Carnegie.

## Environmental Impact Report Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This EIR provides a detailed analysis of the potentially significant environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the Carnegie SVRA General Plan. The environmental analysis found that with the incorporation of project design features, implementation of goals and guidelines as directed by the General Plan, and adherence to regulatory requirements (e.g., State Parks and the OHMVR Division requirements and guidelines, and requirements from regulatory agencies and state and federal regulations), implementation of the General Plan would result in less-than-significant environmental impacts in the following issue areas:

Aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology, soils, and paleontological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, minerals, noise, population and housing, public services and utilities, recreation, transportation and traffic, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire.

No mitigation measures are required for the impacts identified for these resource areas because the impacts were found to be less than significant or have no impact. However, as identified in Section 3.3, “Air Quality,” of this EIR, the following impacts would be significant and unavoidable during General Plan operations only because no feasible mitigation measures currently exist to reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level (the corresponding construction-related impacts would be less than significant with implementation of General Plan goals and guidelines that include avoidance and minimization measures that would reduce impacts during project construction):

- Impact 3.3-1, “Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.”
- Impact 3.2-2, “Cumulatively Considerable Net Increase of Any Criteria Pollutant for Which the Project Region is Nonattainment Under an Applicable Federal or State Ambient Air Quality Standard. “The following impacts would be significant and unavoidable during General Plan operations only because no feasible mitigation measures currently exist to reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level.

### Next Steps

The Final EIR and the Draft EIR constitute the EIR, which the Commission will consider for certification before deciding whether to adopt the General Plan. California State Parks are required by the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15090) to certify that the EIR was completed in compliance with CEQA, was reviewed and considered by decision-makers, and reflects its independent judgment and analysis before approving the General Plan. California State Parks would adopt CEQA findings of fact on the disposition of each significant environmental impact if any were determined to occur, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a).

### Content of the Final General Plan Revision

This document will include a revised reprint of the Preliminary General Plan (January 2024) along with a copy of the Resolutions approving the General Plan and certifying the FEIR inserted into the front of the document.