
5.14 RECREATION

This section addresses potential impacts on public access and recreational resources that could result from implementation of the proposed Plan.

5.14.1 Setting

The Plan focuses on a coastal area in Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains located along the southern California coastline. The Plan site includes public recreation areas (parklands and trail corridors) starting on the west at the east edge of Kanan Dume Road. The Plan site extends easterly to the Malibu Bluffs Conservancy Property (Malibu Bluffs). It extends southerly to Pacific Coast Highway at Corral Canyon Park and to Malibu Road by Malibu Bluffs. It extends northerly beyond the City of Malibu/Unincorporated Los Angeles County Boundary to the Santa Monica Mountains "ridgeline" in Malibu Creek State Park in Corral Canyon. (see Figure 2-2). Public lands addressed in the Plan include Ramirez Canyon Park, Escondido Canyon Park, the Latigo Trailhead property, Solstice Canyon Park, Corral Canyon Park, Malibu Bluffs, National Park Service-owned land in Ramirez Canyon, Los Angeles County-owned land, City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power property, and State Parks-owned and National Park Service-owned land in upper Corral Canyon.

With the exception of priority trail linkages, there are no physical improvements proposed at parklands that are owned and maintained by the National Park Service (Ramirez Canyon site/Solstice Canyon Park/Corral Canyon) and those owned and maintained by California State Parks (Malibu Creek State Park). These park areas, or portions thereof, are included in the Plan area where trail connections are proposed between the State parklands included as part of the Plan.

The Plan includes park-specific improvements at four existing parks owned and managed by the Conservancy/ MRCA—Ramirez Canyon Park, Escondido Canyon Park, Corral Canyon Park, and Malibu Bluffs. Each park currently provides public access and recreational opportunities to residents of Malibu and surrounding communities. The Plan also includes improvements at the proposed Latigo Trailhead property, a MRCA property. A description of each park and the Latigo Trailhead property and associated public recreational amenities is provided below; related trail improvements are also discussed.

Ramirez Canyon Park

Ramirez Canyon Park consists of approximately 22-acres of land located in Ramirez Canyon

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near the Malibu coastline (see Figure 2-2). As a result of its use formerly as a residential estate compound, the park is largely developed and contains five primary structures. The park provides a range of diverse environmental, cultural, and educational opportunities for both passive and active recreation activities. The more developed nature of the park facilitates its current use for special, pre-arranged activities, events, and functions for the benefit of the local community and outside visitors. Ramirez Canyon Park is bisected by the City of Malibu/County of Los Angeles jurisdictional boundary. Access to the property is provided by vehicular access from Pacific Coast Highway via Ramirez Canyon Road, or by Pacific Coast Highway via West Winding Way and Delaplane Road, through a gated entrance at the terminus of Ramirez Canyon Road.

Escondido Canyon Park

Escondido Canyon Park is located approximately one mile east of Kanan Dume Road in Malibu (see Figure 2-2). The park is approximately 140 acres in size and consists of open space land heavily vegetated with a variety of native and nonnative plant and tree species. There are presently very few support facilities at Escondido Canyon Park, with the exception of one picnic table at the park entrance. The primary public amenity at the park is the trail system through the Escondido Canyon Natural Area that leads hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians along a 4.2-mile trail through oak woodland, riparian woodland, and coastal sage scrub habitat to the base of the spectacular, multi-tiered 150-foot Escondido Falls—the highest in the Santa Monica Mountains. The park is currently only accessible to the public via pedestrian access along the road shoulder of East Winding Way; a related public parking lot is located on Winding Way at Pacific Coast Highway, approximately 1-mile south of the park boundary. From the northern terminus of Winding Way, the road shoulder access transitions to a dirt trail leading visitors onto the Escondido Canyon Park property.

Latigo Trailhead

The Latigo Trailhead is located directly adjacent to Latigo Canyon Road, approximately one mile northwest of the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Latigo Canyon Road (see Figure 2-2). The site is approximately 2.4 acres in size. Latigo Canyon Creek runs along the property's northern and eastern borders. The site is varied in topography with two relatively flat areas. Broad views looking southward of Latigo and Escondido Canyons in the foreground and the Pacific Ocean in the background are available from the site. The property was once developed with a single family residence and continues to exhibit remnant evidence of this past use. An historic informal and unmaintained trail exists along the southern extent of the property which extends to Escondido Canyon Park. The site is

accessed via an existing driveway at Latigo Canyon Road. There are currently no support facilities at the Latigo Trailhead property.

Corral Canyon Park

Corral Canyon Park is regionally significant in that it encompasses 772-acres of coastal land in the City of Malibu and County of Los Angeles and contains the last undeveloped coastal canyon in Los Angeles County that flows freely to the ocean (see Figure 2-2). The park consists of open land heavily vegetated with a variety of native and non-native plant and tree species. The Corral Canyon Park trailhead contains a number of support facilities including public parking, picnic areas, restrooms, educational displays, sitting benches, and a hiking trail. The park contains a 2.5 mile loop trail that climbs through pristine wilderness to the Puerco Canyon watershed divide and provides spectacular ocean and mountain views along coastal bluffs and hillsides. The trailhead also provides seasonal access underneath Pacific Coast Highway to Dan Blocker State Beach.

Malibu Bluffs Conservancy Property

The Conservancy-owned Malibu Bluffs property encompasses 84-acres of blufftop land in the City of Malibu and contains a large expanse of undeveloped open space directly adjacent to Pacific Coast Highway, immediately south of Pepperdine University (see Figure 2-2). The property lies immediately adjacent to and west of the City of Malibu's Malibu Bluffs Park site, which contains several ball fields, playground equipment, and grassy picnic areas. Malibu Bluffs contains very few support facilities with the exception of limited trailhead improvements (signs, trash receptacles) at key entry locations into the park property and picnic areas. The park contains several informal trails that traverse the bluff providing ocean views both north and south. The informal trails descend to Malibu Road, where a number of vertical beach access easements exist across the road and are open to the public, providing year-round access to the beach. The park is accessible from Pacific Coast Highway where an existing parking lot supports shared access to the open space area and the City of Malibu's adjacent six-acre Malibu Bluffs Park. The park may also be accessed via public transit as Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) bus stops are located near the property on Pacific Coast Highway and Malibu Road (both directions). Pedestrian access points to the park are available from the existing parking lot at the City's Malibu Bluffs Park, located at 24250 Pacific Coast Highway, and along Pacific Coast Highway and Malibu Road.

Trail System Improvements

The Plan would construct major components of an expansive trail system planned for the

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Malibu coastal area and the larger Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA), thus connecting a number of federal and state-owned parklands in the Plan area, including the National Park Service’s Ramirez Canyon property, Ramirez Canyon Park, Escondido Canyon Park, the Latigo Trailhead property, Solstice Canyon Park, Corral Canyon Park, and Malibu Creek State Park (see Figure 2-19). The proposed trail improvements would facilitate the ultimate completion of the Coastal Slope Trail and its ultimate connection to the Beach to Backbone Trail (in Corral Canyon), which will provide access to and between adjacent urban areas of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, the larger SMMNRA, and to the shoreline within the City of Malibu (see Figure 2-20). Additional parkland and shoreline access would be provided with the Beach to Bluffs trail improvements proposed at the Conservancy-owned Malibu Bluffs site.

City of Malibu Parks and Recreational Facilities

The City of Malibu Parks and Recreation Department provides programs and facilities to meet the recreation and leisure needs of the community. The department administers the use of and maintains several park and athletic facilities in the City and provides programs for all ages in a wide range of interests and activities.

The City Parks and Recreation Department currently owns and/or leases a variety of park and recreational facilities. The facilities provided by the City of Malibu are listed below in Table 5.14-1.

Table 5.14-1 City of Malibu Park and Recreation Facilities

| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Malibu Bluffs Park | 6-acre Community Park (Leased) | 2 baseball diamonds, soccer/multi-use field, jogging course, picnic tables, whale watching stand, community center |
| Las Flores Creek Park | 4.4-acre Neighborhood Park | Play and picnic areas |
| Charmlee Wilderness Park | 532-acre Open Space area | 8 miles of hiking trails, native plant display, nature center |
| Trancas Canyon Park | 13-acre Community Park (Proposed) | Multi-use area for sports, children’s play area, dog park, picnic area, walking paths |
| Malibu Community Pool | Swimming Pool (Leased) | Non-school hour recreation programs and activities |
| Malibu Equestrian Center | 10.13 acre Horse Riding Facility (Leased) | Two riding rings, a judges stand, tie bars, picnic tables |

| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Papa Jack's Skate Park | 10,000 square foot skate facility (Leased) | Skate park with ramps and obstacles |

The City of Malibu Open Space and Recreation Element and the May 2000 City of Malibu Parks & Recreation Master Plan both note that existing City of Malibu park and recreation facilities are inadequate to meet demand. The documents identified deficiencies in both public parkland and recreational facilities. The City of Malibu is currently in the planning and design process for a planned 13-acre community park, called Trancas Canyon Park. In addition, the City of Malibu has entitled and plans to construct the 17-acre Malibu Legacy Park Project, bordered by Pacific Coast Highway on the south, Cross Creek Road on the east, Webb Way on the west, and Civic Center Way on the north. However, even with the addition of these parks and the planned active and passive recreational activities, the city will still experience a shortage of sufficient park lands to meet active recreational demand.¹

City, County, State, and Federal Park and Recreational Facilities

A number of City, County, State, and Federal park and recreational facilities are located within or in close proximity to the City of Malibu that provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Table 5.14-2 below provides a list of those recreational facilities provided by City, County, State, and Federal agencies.

¹ Based on the City of Malibu's 2009 Department of Finance population estimate of 13,712 persons, Dudek utilized the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards of 2.5 acres/1,000 persons for neighborhood parks and 2.5 acres/1,000 persons for community parks to assess active recreational demand. The NRPA standards were utilized by the City of Malibu to assess its park and recreational needs within its *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (Malibu, 2000).

**Table 5.14-2 City, County, State, & Federal
Park and Recreation Facilities**

| CITY OF LOS ANGELES | | |
|--|---|---|
| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
| Decker Canyon Camp | 38-acre Regional Park (year-round overnight tent camping) | Maximum 150 people, flush toilets, showers, picnic areas, volleyball, trails, campfire circles, parking |
| COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES | | |
| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
| Malibu Surfrider County Beach | County Beach | Surfing, swimming, volleyball, fishing, showers, restrooms, 90-parking spaces (3 disabled) |
| Nicholas Canyon Beach | County Beach | Fishing, handicap accessways, picnicking, surfing, swimming, restrooms, showers, 151- parking spaces (6 disabled) |
| Dan Blocker Beach | County Beach | Swimming, surfing, fishing, diving, portable restrooms (No designated parking) |
| COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES | | |
| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
| Las Tunas Beach | County Beach | Swimming, diving, fishing (No designated parking) |
| Zuma Beach | County Beach | Swimming, fishing, surfing, diving, volleyball, restrooms, showers, 2025 parking spaces (43 disabled) |
| STATE OF CALIFORNIA | | |
| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
| Point Dume State Beach | State Beach | Swimming, fishing, surfing, diving, viewpoint, tidepools, whale watching, picnic tables, restrooms, showers, 373 parking spaces (8 disabled) |
| Malibu Lagoon State Beach | State Beach | Malibu Pier, Picnicking, walking/hiking trails, bird watching, portable restrooms, 75 standard parking spaces and 2 accessible spaces |

| STATE OF CALIFORNIA | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
| Malibu Creek State Park | State Park 4,000 acres | Hiking, equestrian, camping, bird watching, picnicking, fire rings, restrooms, showers, 465 standard parking spaces and 18 accessible spaces |
| NATIONAL PARK SERVICE | | |
| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
| Solstice Canyon Park | National Park | Hiking, biking, picnicking, education shelter, small amphitheater, 30 standard parking and 2 accessible spaces, and one bus space at the inner lot, with 7 standard spaces in the outer lot |
| Santa Monica National Recreation Area | National Recreation Area | Hiking, biking, equestrian |

School Facilities

In addition to dedicated park and recreation facilities, the City of Malibu and the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District have historically partnered to develop and share recreation facilities such as the swimming pool and ball fields at Malibu High School. The City continues to participate in joint partnerships with the District to provide access to recreational facilities on school grounds during non-school hours. The schools located in the City of Malibu where the City has a joint-use agreement with the District are identified below in Table 5.14-3.

Table 5.14-3 Joint Use School Facilities

| Name | Type of Facility | Activities |
|---|------------------|---|
| John L. Webster Elementary | School | Facility rental (after school hours) |
| Juan Cabrillo Elementary | School | Facility rental (after school hours) |
| Point Dume Marine Science School | School | Ball fields, basketball, children’s play area, picnic area, restrooms, and walking/hiking path (after school hours) |
| Malibu High School | School | Ball fields, basketball, facility rental, restrooms, soccer fields, swimming pool, tennis courts, and walking/hiking path (after school hours) |

Private Park and Recreational Facilities

In addition, a few private park and recreational facilities are located within the City which provides limited access to recreational opportunities through memberships to tennis, equestrian, beach, and yacht clubs. These facilities include the Malibu Racquet Club, the Malibu Riding and Tennis Club, and Pepperdine University.

Regulatory Setting

State

California Coastal Act

The State of California Legislature adopted the California Coastal Act in 1976 to implement the federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. The California Coastal Act is the foundation of the California Coastal Management Program (CCMP), which includes the basic policies for managing and balancing the use of resources for state and national interests in the California Coastal Zone. The enforceable policies of the CCMP are the Chapter 3 policies of the California Coastal Act. These policies address critical coastal resource issues including public coastline access, coastal and inland recreation, low-cost visitor activities, protection and enhancement of sensitive habitat and species, water quality, agricultural and visual resources, and natural hazards. A discussion of consistency with

pertinent goals contained in the Coastal Act is addressed in Section 4.0 *Consistency with Plans and Policies*.

Local

City of Malibu Local Coastal Program

The City of Malibu lies entirely within the California Coastal Zone, as defined by the California Coastal Act. The Coastal Act requires that its goals and policies be implemented by the City of Malibu through the Local Coastal Program (LCP) process. The LCP is composed of two parts: the Land Use Plan (LUP) and the Local Implementation Plan (LIP); both were adopted by the California Coastal Commission on September 13, 2002. The policies and implementation measures of the LUP and LIP pertaining to land use and planning are addressed under Section 4.0, *Consistency with Plans and Policies*.

Non-Regulatory Reference Planning Documents

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area General Management Plan

The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) General Management Plan provides the general framework for the management of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The management plan provides a number of goals to protect the resources of the SMMNRA and meet future recreation demand of its sites and uses.

Draft Interagency Regional Trail Management Plan (TMP)

The National Park Service, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy have jointly prepared an interagency regional TMP that establishes an overall direction for future development and completion of the trail network throughout the national recreation area. The Draft TMP includes policies guiding future development of the planned trail network.

County of Los Angeles Malibu Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan for the Malibu and Santa Monica Mountains Area

The County's Coastal LUP provides a framework for future development and establishes policies that focus on local issues and concerns for the unincorporated areas located within the Coastal Zone. The County's Coastal LUP contains recreation and coastal access policies that encourage the provision of recreational opportunities to meet the variety of

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recreation demands that include passive, educational, and active uses. A discussion of consistency with pertinent goals contained in the County's Coastal LUP is addressed in Section 4.0 *Consistency with Plans and Policies*.

County of Los Angeles Parks and Recreation Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2020

In April 2004, the Department of Parks and Recreation developed the Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2020 (SAMP). The SAMP inventoried county park and recreation needs, made recommendations for meeting park and recreational needs, and provided a policy guide for park development throughout the County. The SAMP provides a detailed analysis of parkland and open space issues on a district level, and recommends policy direction for where the county should implement resources to prevent future deficiencies in parks and open space.

Currently, there are eleven new parks being planned within Los Angeles County, which together total 233 acres of active park space and 2,692 acres of open space (County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks & Recreation, 11-18-09). There are also 18 parks under construction, either under expansion or development space (County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks & Recreation, 11-19-09). The completion of the development of the new parks and construction projects would add additional park acreage for regional recreational service. However, information from the Los Angeles County General Plan indicates that the SAMP report found that by 2020 the county would be approximately 4,600 acres short of the desired four acres of local parkland per 1,000 county residents.

City of Malibu General Plan, Open Space and Recreation Element

The Open Space and Recreation Element of the City of Malibu General Plan list goals, objectives and policies for the provision of open space, parks and recreational facilities in the City of Malibu. The main goal of the Open Space and Recreation Element is to provide a variety of quality recreation facilities and resources for Malibu residents.

City of Malibu Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2000)

The City of Malibu prepared a Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2000) (the "Master Plan") that evaluated the existing park and recreational facilities and programs to determine City future foreseeable recreational needs. The study looked at both incorporated land and unincorporated land within the City's Sphere of Influence. The Master Plan contains a number of recommendations that strive to improve, enhance, and expand recreational facilities within the City of Malibu.

City of Malibu Trails Master Plan Maps

The City of Malibu adopted new Trails Master Plan Maps on March 8, 2004 and amended the City's LCP to incorporate the revised maps. The revised maps indicate the location of the Malibu Pacific Trail (Coastal Slope Trail), established (existing) trails, and neighborhood trails throughout the City of Malibu.

5.14.2 Impact Analysis

Methodology and Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, as amended, identifies a significant impact upon recreational opportunities if a project:

- REC-1:** Would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- REC-2:** Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

As each section of the EIR addresses the construction and/or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment, no further discussion relative to the REC-2 threshold identified above is enumerated within the Recreation Impacts analysis below. The analysis of recreation impacts below, therefore, is focused on the REC-1 threshold.

For purposes of full disclosure of potential environmental impacts associated with recreation, the analysis for impacts associated with the use of Ramirez Canyon Park has been analyzed using two different environmental baseline scenarios—Recreation/Administration and Vacant Residential (refer to Section 3.0, *Environmental Setting*).

Project Impacts

The environmental impact discussion below summarizes the impacts of the Plan implemented in its entirety, followed by a more concise identification of impacts associated with individual Plan components.

Impact REC-1: Implementation of the proposed Plan would create a less than significant impact on existing park and recreational facilities.

The primary purpose of the proposed Plan is to enhance public access and recreational resources within the Plan area by creating an interconnected system of trails and public parklands and by constructing park-specific improvements to maximize access opportunities. As described in greater detail in Section 2.0, Project Description, the proposed Plan includes improvement of existing trail corridors and development of a number of new coastal trails and support facilities which would substantially enhance public access and recreational opportunities within the Plan area. The Plan identifies new public access, recreational facility and program improvements for Ramirez Canyon Park, Escondido Canyon Park, Latigo Trailhead, Corral Canyon Park, and Malibu Bluffs which would serve to maximize public access opportunities for visitors with diverse backgrounds, interests, ages, and abilities. The proposed improvements include public parking, camp areas within existing park boundaries, and trail improvements to support existing recreational demand and to facilitate an increased level of accessibility for visitors with disabilities, including the unique opportunity for fully accessible overnight camping. The proposed camping facilities would provide a rare opportunity for low impact, low cost walk-in overnight camping in the Plan area.

Although the proposed improvements may result in some increase in the use of other existing recreational facilities within the Plan site area, the increase is not expected to be large enough to cause a substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities in the Plan site area. In fact, the Plan would accommodate at least some of the existing demand for recreational facilities in the area, and, to that extent, would result in a beneficial impact and would at least offset any such increase. Furthermore, the Plan contains the following policies applicable to both the existing recreational facilities within the Plan site area and the proposed camping, parking and public restroom facilities at the MRCA/ Conservancy park areas to ensure public access to the parks is enhanced, while at the same time protecting and preserving existing recreational resources within the Plan area:

Trails Policy 1: *The parklands and trails located within the Plan area provide a wide range of recreational opportunities in unique settings which include hiking, equestrian activities, mountain biking, picnicking, camping, coastal access, and educational and nature study for visitors of diverse backgrounds, interests, ages, and abilities. These recreational opportunities shall be protected, and where feasible, expanded or enhanced as a resource of regional, state and*

national importance

Trails Policy 2: *The Conservancy/MRCA should coordinate with the Coastal Commission and City of Malibu to 1) identify the location and acceptance status of trail OTDs to prioritize for immediate acceptance and 2) prioritize for immediate acceptance Open Space OTDs for the protection of important scenic resources, park views and habitat areas and any Open Space OTDs that may allow for trail access.*

As the proposed park improvements will increase 1) accessibility, 2) public access, and 3) recreational opportunities at each park (where support facilities are currently limited), the proposed Plan would have a beneficial impact on coastal public access and recreational opportunities for all people and would provide new low-cost overnight camping facilities in the Plan site area.

It should be noted that the proposed Plan includes park and trail improvements (e.g., camping, expanded trail network, increased access) and maintenance measures (e.g., restoration of degraded areas, trail design guidelines to minimize maintenance needs and existing erosion problems) to maintain and improve the Park areas over time. The Plan's maintenance measures are more specifically discussed below and in Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*, and in Section 5.7, *Geology, Soils, and Seismic Hazards*.

The Plan area serves as a local and regional recreational resource for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. Implementation of the Plan would result in an increase in trail maintenance and trail use monitoring due to the expanded park and trail system. However, the Plan includes provisions for restoration of areas that have been severely degraded as the result of overuse or lack of maintenance, through utilizing techniques such as revegetation with native plants, trail consolidation and improvement, and provision of support facilities such as parking, defined trail systems, trash receptacles, restrooms, and picnic areas. The following Plan policy and implementation measures are designed to ensure that trails and park facilities are designed to minimize trail maintenance needs and address existing erosion problems.

Facilities Policy 2: *Public park areas that may be subject to degradation as the result of intense and/or unrestricted use should be curtailed and addressed by 1) revegetating degraded areas with native plants, 2) trail consolidation and improvement, 3) provision of support facilities such as defined parking areas and trail corridors, trash*

receptacles, self contained chemical/composting restrooms, picnic areas, and 4) provision of limited support facilities necessary for park operations and maintenance personnel and associated maintenance equipment.

Trails Implementation

Measure 9: *Trail development and maintenance shall be designed to accommodate multiple uses including hiking, mountain biking and equestrian uses wherever feasible.*

ESHA Implementation

Measure 14: *Trail or park areas that have been severely degraded as the result of overuse or lack of maintenance shall be restored by such techniques as revegetation with native plants, trail consolidation and improvement, and through the provision of support facilities such as parking, defined trail systems, raised walkways, trash receptacles, restrooms, and picnic areas. Fencing and signs, designed and located consistent with other applicable provisions of this Plan, shall be installed around restoration areas for purposes of identifying sensitive habitats and educating visitors of ESHA occurrence and/or restoration efforts. All park fencing shall be designed to allow for wildlife passage. In severely degraded areas, controlled and limited public access may be allowed during the recovery period and in consultation with appropriate public agencies and/or resource specialists. Any limitation of public use shall be evaluated periodically to determine the need for continued use restrictions and the limitation shall be removed at the termination of the recovery period.*

New trail markers and interpretive displays would also require maintenance. The Plan states that maintenance activities would be managed and/or performed directly by maintenance staff of MRCA or National Park Service staff.

Implementation of the Plan's proposed improvements would provide additional recreational opportunities in the area, while enhancing existing recreational uses, creating a beneficial impact on recreational resources. As a result, potential impacts on existing recreational facilities would be *less than significant*.

Ramirez Canyon Park: The proposed Plan provides for specialized park programs and use of existing and proposed facilities at Ramirez Canyon Park to facilitate unique access opportunities for visitors with disabilities, a variety of recreational and educational opportunities for persons of all ability levels, and to provide for essential administrative support facilities. The proposed improvements include the development of a trail linkage from Kanan Dume Road to Ramirez Canyon Park, accessible day-use and multi-purpose use areas, and 5 campsites (including 2 accessible sites) (see Figures 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, and 2-9). An existing 10-space parking lot located at the southern entrance to the park would also be improved.

The Plan contemplates the continuation of existing administrative and recreational uses of the Ramirez Canyon Park. Established amenities include several habitable structures, picnic areas, restrooms, sitting benches, gardens, easily accessible terrain, and a riparian area interpretive trail.

For purposes of full disclosure of potential environmental impacts associated with recreation, the analysis for impacts associated with the use of Ramirez Canyon Park has been analyzed using the following two baseline scenarios, as described in Section 3.0, Environmental Setting:

- 1) **Recreation/ Administration:** The environmental setting assumes an environmental baseline of existing recreation and administrative uses and related improvements associated with the Ramirez Canyon Park site as of the date of the Notice of Preparation.
- 2) **Residential:** The environmental setting assumes an environmental baseline of vacant residential uses and improvements historically associated with the Ramirez Canyon Park site prior to acquisition by the Conservancy.

Impact Analysis Using the Existing Recreation/ Administration Baseline

Existing Uses

Ramirez Canyon Park contains a variety of facilities available to support the types of programs and special events currently and proposed to be conducted on-site. The primary buildings at Ramirez Canyon Park have all been used as recreational facilities and as a location to conduct or manage recreation uses at the Park and other Conservancy/MRCA sites. The offices at Ramirez Canyon Park are also used to conduct the administrative responsibilities associated with open space acquisitions, planning, research, the management

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of conservation and recreation activities at Conservancy/MRCA holdings, and support for onsite park maintenance and public outreach programs.

The Barwood building is approximately 3,500 sq. ft. and is used for meetings, staff offices small conferences and serves as the Western Area Emergency Operations Center for the MRCA, with full computer and radio dispatch capabilities in the event of any emergency. Barwood also houses the Conservancy studies resource library (approximately 1,000 volumes).

The Peach House (4,900 sq. ft.) contains (non-urban) Natural Resources and Planning Division staff offices. The Art Deco building (4,600 sq. ft.) is currently utilized for storage.

The Barn is a 3,370 sq. ft. structure that serves as the headquarters for the Conservancy/MRCA (non urban) Natural Resources and Planning Division with offices for staff implementing park acquisition, improvement, restoration, and management plans. The Barn serves as the main indoor venue for senior and disabled tours of the Park and its grounds. The Staff who operate and plan for outreach programs – including programs for senior citizens, disabled and disadvantaged persons, inner-city and at-risk youth, veterans, and battered women – operate out of the Barn, as do volunteer docents.

A 1,350 sq. ft. single family residence that serves as a Ranger/Maintenance Supervisor residence is occupied by MRCA staff charged with park security and other public safety duties.

In addition to the above structures/ uses, Ramirez Canyon Park contains a number of support facilities for the park's public use programs including picnic areas, restrooms, sitting benches, gardens, and a riparian area interpretive trail. Public restrooms are served by a state-of-the-art septic system. Additionally, the park has facilities to provide indoor and outdoor conference and event amenities.

Existing Special Programs include a Children's Educational Program, a Riparian Area Interpretative Trail, a Senior & Public Outreach Program Canyon and Garden Tours (docent-led), and other Special Events and Small Gatherings which have historically helped to maintain the property and to support outreach programs designed to serve disadvantaged youth, physically-challenged visitors, and seniors.

Existing daily visitation at Ramirez Canyon Park is approximately 27 persons per day (see Table 5.13-4).

Proposed Uses

In addition to the above uses, the proposed improvements include the development of a trail linkage from Kanan Dume Road to Ramirez Canyon Park, day-use and multi-purpose use areas, and 5 campsites. The proposed Plan also provides for specialized park programs and use of existing and proposed facilities (as further described with Section 2.0, *Project Description*) at Ramirez Canyon Park to facilitate unique access opportunities for visitors with disabilities, a variety of recreational and educational opportunities for persons of all ability levels, and to provide for essential administrative support facilities.

The proposed improvement sites would be located a short travel distance from the many existing support facilities in the Park, yet would be close to coastal canyon habitat and relatively close to Pacific Coast Highway (approximately one mile), which provides many access points to the beach. The existing amenities at the park (e.g., picnic areas, sitting benches, riparian area interpretative trail) would contribute to a unique camping experience, and although the new accessible overnight camp area with two accessible campsites are proposed in the existing tennis court location slated for demolition, the tennis court has been in disrepair for quite sometime and is not currently used by park visitors.

Although the proposed improvements at Ramirez Canyon Park would likely increase the use of existing recreational facilities within the Park and Plan site area, the increase is not expected to be large enough to cause a substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities in the area. Rather, the proposed improvements would provide a beneficial impact through increased public access and programs that include enhanced maintenance of existing resources. As a result, potential impacts on existing recreational facilities at Ramirez Canyon Park and surrounding recreational areas would be *less than significant*.

Impact Analysis Using the Vacant Residential Baseline

Under the Vacant Residential baseline, the Barwood Building, the Peach House, the Barn, the Art/ Deco House, and the Ranger's Residence (as well as the existing on-site improvements) are assumed to be vacant residential structures/ uses.

The proposed Plan, therefore, would provide for conversion of the site from a vacant residential estate compound to a park facility, including implementation through the proposed Plan of both the existing and the proposed park programs and uses of existing and proposed facilities at Ramirez Canyon Park.

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As the Park would be converted from residential to recreational/ administrative uses, the availability of this park resource would, in fact, result in fewer impacts to other surrounding recreational areas as pressure to accommodate recreational uses at the limited number of facilities would be reduced. As a result, potential impacts related to recreational facilities at Ramirez Canyon Park and surrounding recreational areas would likely be considered beneficial, and *less than significant*.

Escondido Canyon Park: The proposed Escondido Canyon Park improvements are intended to increase accessibility, public access and recreational opportunities at the Park, where severely limited support facilities are currently adversely affecting public use of the area. The Plan includes development of a new parking facility able to accommodate 16 vehicles (including 2 accessible spaces) and 3 trailer pull-ins to support public access opportunities for hikers and equestrians. The Plan also includes 3 camp areas in Escondido Canyon Park that would include a camp host site and total of 13 campsites. A trail is proposed from the proposed parking area to the proposed campsites by the creek (see Figures 2-12 and 2-13).

Although the proposed improvements at Escondido Canyon Park would likely result in some increase in the use of existing recreational facilities within the Plan site area, the increase is not expected to be large enough to cause a substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities in the area. Rather, the proposed improvements would provide a beneficial impact through increased public access and programs and enhanced maintenance of existing facilities, and thus would at least offset any such increase. As a result, potential impacts on existing recreational facilities at Escondido Canyon Park and surrounding recreational areas would be *less than significant*.

Latigo Trailhead: The proposed Latigo Trailhead improvements are intended to support access and recreation in Escondido Canyon and the surrounding trail network. The Plan includes development of a new parking facility for 9 vehicles, including one accessible space, two camp areas with camp host site and a total of 5 campsites, and a picnic area (see Figure 2-14).

Although the proposed improvements at the Latigo Trailhead would likely result in some increase in the use of existing recreational facilities within the Plan area, the increase is not expected to be large enough to cause a substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities in the area. Rather, the proposed improvements would provide a beneficial impact through increased public access and programs and enhanced maintenance of existing resources in the area, and thus would at least offset any such increase. As a result, potential impacts on existing recreational facilities at surrounding recreational areas

would be *less than significant*.

Corral Canyon Park: The Plan includes two camp areas in Corral Canyon Park that would include a camp host site and a total of 16 campsites, an accessible path from the parking lot across to the trail, and an accessible drop-off point opposite the existing parking lot and trailhead where an existing administrative road currently takes access from Pacific Coast Highway (see Figures 2-15, 2-16, and 2-17). The existing parking lot would be regraded/ restriped to accommodate 31 parking spaces, two of which would be accessible.

Although the proposed improvements at Corral Canyon Park would likely result in some increase in the use of existing support facilities at the Corral Canyon Park trailhead that currently facilitate public use of the park, including an existing public parking lot, chemical restroom, drinking fountain, and an accessible picnic area, the increase is not expected to be large enough to cause a substantial physical deterioration of the existing recreational facilities at the park or in the area. Rather, the proposed improvements would provide a beneficial impact through increased public access and programs and enhanced maintenance of existing resources in the area, and thus would at least offset any such increase. As a result, potential impacts on existing recreational facilities at Corral Canyon Park and surrounding recreational areas would be *less than significant*.

Malibu Bluffs: The Plan includes development of 4 new public parking areas on the Bluffs property, three of which are accessed from, and adjacent to, Pacific Coast Highway, and one that would be accessed from and adjacent to Malibu Road. The proposed Malibu Bluffs parking improvements are intended to increase accessibility, public access and recreational opportunities to the open space area. The proposed improvements include a new day-use area on the Bluffs with picnic amenities and would be accessed from Malibu Road or the upper east bluff via an existing trail. The Plan also includes 3 camp host sites and 3 camps areas for the Malibu Bluffs area that would include a total of 32 campsites, four of which would be designed as tent cabins (see Figures 2-18 a thru e).

Although the proposed improvements at Malibu Bluffs would likely result in some increase in the use of existing recreational facilities within the open space area and adjacent Malibu Bluffs City Park, the increase is not expected to be large enough to cause a substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities in the area. Rather, the proposed improvements would provide a beneficial impact through increased public access and recreational activities, including enhanced maintenance of the existing open space area, and thus would at least offset any such increase. As a result, potential impacts on existing recreational facilities at the Malibu Bluffs area, Malibu Bluffs City Park, and surrounding recreational areas would be *less than significant*.

5.14 Recreation

Trail System Improvements: The proposed Plan would construct major components of an expansive trail system planned for the Malibu coastal area and the larger Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, thus connecting a number of federal and state-owned parklands in the Plan area including the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Ramirez Canyon Park, Escondido Canyon Park, Latigo Trailhead, Solstice Canyon Park, Corral Canyon Park and Malibu Creek State Park. The proposed trail improvements would facilitate the ultimate completion of trail connections for the Coastal Slope Trail and its ultimate connection to the Beach to Backbone Trail (in Corral Canyon); this would provide access to and between adjacent urban areas of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, the larger Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and to the shoreline within the City of Malibu (see Figures 2-19, 2-20, 2-20a, and 2-21).

The proposed Plan includes trails proposed in accordance with current accessibility guidelines and technical requirements. Proposed accessible trails connect with other proposed accessible facilities, including campsites, restrooms, and parking areas.

Many of the proposed trail alignments are consistent with the approximate alignments identified in other planning documents, including City of Malibu-Malibu Trails System (2004), City of Malibu Local Coastal Program, and the Draft Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) Interagency Regional Trail Management Plan

In designing the trail alignments, the project civil engineer for the Plan referenced the June 2006 *Park and Trail Accessibility Design Guidelines*, prepared by Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. and the *United States Forest Service Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Trails (1996)* to supplement specific design criteria commonly used by the National Park Service, California State Parks, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for new trail construction. The trail design is intended to minimize trail maintenance needs and address existing erosion problems associated with existing trails. As discussed in detail in Section 5.7, *Geology, Soils, and Seismic Hazards*, the trail improvements have been specifically located to avoid geotechnical constraints and designed to minimize trail maintenance needs and improve existing erosion concerns. See Section 5.7 for a more complete discussion of trail design.

Although the proposed trail improvements would likely result in an increase in the use of existing recreational facilities within Plan area, it is not expected to be large enough to cause a substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities in the area. Rather, the proposed trail improvements would provide a beneficial impact through increased public access and recreational activities and enhanced maintenance of existing trails, and thus would at least offset any such increase. As a result, potential impacts on

existing recreational facilities in the area would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

As impacts on existing recreational facilities would not be significant, no mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

The proposed Plan would have a beneficial impact on public access and recreational opportunities. Therefore, impacts to existing recreational facilities would be ***less than significant (Class III)***.

Analysis of Impacts Post-Mitigation

Impact REC-2: Implementation of mitigation measures intended to reduce impacts associated with the proposed Plan's improvements would result in less than significant impacts on existing park and recreational facilities.

In addition to analysis of the project (as proposed), CEQA requires that an EIR discuss the environmental impacts associated with the implementation of any required mitigation. This section, therefore, evaluates how mitigation measures required in other sections of this EIR would affect existing recreational resources.

Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in all environmental impact analysis sections would have a less than significant impact on existing recreational resources as the use and function of existing recreational areas would not be substantially altered.

Therefore, implementation of the proposed mitigations would have a less than significant impact on existing recreational resources.

Residual Impacts

Implementation of mitigation measures intended to reduce impacts associated with the proposed Plan's improvements would improve the use and function of existing recreational resources and would have a beneficial impact on public access and recreational

opportunities. Therefore, associated impacts to existing recreational facilities would be **less than significant (Class III)**.

5.14.3 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative projects are shown in Table 3-1 of Section 3.6, *Projects Considered for Cumulative Analysis*. The Plan's contribution to cumulative recreation impacts is evaluated below. Where necessary, mitigation is identified to reduce the Plan Area's "cumulatively considerable" contribution to a less than "cumulatively considerable" level. The *Area of Influence*, or geographic region for the respective environmental resource for which cumulative projects are assessed, is identified below and forms the basis of the cumulative impact analysis for this section.

Area of Influence: Although the proposed project is intended as a regional recreational resource for the greater Los Angeles area, the greatest demand is anticipated to be associated with visitors drawing from the immediately surrounding communities. Therefore, the Area of Influence for assessing cumulative impacts on recreation is the Las Virgenes-Malibu area, and to a lesser extent, the greater Los Angeles area, including northern and western Los Angeles County as well as eastern Ventura County.

Cumulative demand for recreational resources is based upon cumulative development within the Las Virgenes-Malibu area that includes the development of 38 single-family dwellings, 2 condominiums, 216,793 square feet of commercial development, and 146 hotel rooms, along with development of parks, trails, and open space at Trancas Canyon Park, Legacy Park, Lechuza Beach, and King Gillette Ranch. Demand is anticipated to grow at an approximate 2 percent average annual growth rate for the unincorporated area of western Los Angeles County (SCAG, IGF 2008).

Many of the surrounding jurisdictions to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, as described below, have an existing deficit in park and recreation facilities to meet demand within their local boundaries.

City of Malibu

The Open Space and Recreation Element of the City of Malibu's General Plan and the City's Park and Recreation Master Plan (2000) both identified a deficiency in park and recreational facilities in the City of Malibu to meet the needs of the population. This deficiency is based on standards set by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). Development

projects in the City of Malibu and unincorporated area of the County would further increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities, potentially causing a deterioration of existing facilities.

City of Calabasas

The City of Calabasas owns and operates a total of 56.6 acres of parkland. This includes two mini-parks, two neighborhood parks, one community park, five special use areas, and one undesignated/undeveloped park site. The City also operates recreational facilities that include tennis and swim center, a community center, and a roller hockey/basketball court. Based on the City of Calabasas Park & Recreation Masterplan (MIG, 2004), the City is currently deficient in community park, open space, and sport field needs. This deficiency is based on standards set by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and a Participation Level Analysis. Due to topographic constraints and the limited availability of suitable land, finding additional sites for active recreation facilities and sports fields would likely be difficult.

City of Agoura Hills

The City of Agoura Hills owns and operates a total of 37 acres of parkland. This includes four neighborhood parks and two community (special use) parks. The City also operates the Agoura Hills Recreation Center that provides programs for all residents. The City standard service level for parks is 8 acres of parks and open space per 1,000 persons. Of this, 3 acres per 1,000 persons includes local parks and recreation space, with the remaining 5 acres per 1,000 persons designated for open space. Based on the 1992 City of Agoura Hills Park and Recreation Element, the City had a shortfall of 24 acres of developed parkland to meet demand. The Park and Recreation Element also stated that at buildout of the General Plan, a deficit of parklands would still occur due to a lack of available suitable land for the development of active type park facilities.

City of Westlake Village

The City of Westlake Parks and Recreation Department own and operate a total of 17.84 acres of public parkland. This includes three neighborhood parks and one undeveloped neighborhood park site. Based on the City's park level of service standard, the City is currently not adequately meeting park demand based on the City's population. However, the availability of park and recreational resources provided by adjacent agencies helps alleviate the actual shortage in facilities provided by the City (Scott Wolfe, Senior Planner, City of Westlake Village, 2008).

5.14 Recreation

City of Hidden Hills

The City of Hidden Hills has a total of 22 acres designated as Community Use. This designation is for public facilities owned and/or leased by the City or other public service providers. Many of the community uses are recreational; however, the uses do not include neighborhood or community parks. The uses do include a community pool, riding rings, and tennis courts, as well as, an extensive network of trails, but they are controlled and maintained by the Community Association. According to city staff, the city is built out with a population of approximately 2,000 persons and the City does not anticipate developing a neighborhood or community park on any of the remaining lands designated as Community Use (Dirk Lovett, Planner, City of Hidden Hills, 2008).

City of Thousand Oaks

The City of Thousand Oaks park and recreational facilities are provided through the Conejo Recreation and Park District (CRPD) - please see CRPD discussion below. The CRPD owns, operates and maintains the park and recreational facilities within the City. While a majority of the designated parkland is open space, the CRPD does operate over 500 acres of park type facilities that serve the City and portions of Westlake Village. Although information on the population served and parkland to population ratio used by the City of Thousand Oaks was not readily available from the City, given the deficit of parkland facilities in the region, it is likely that many neighboring residents take advantage of the City's facilities, which could impact the City's ability to meet park and recreation demand of their residents. Revenue is generated through the CRPD special district via a tax on all properties within its jurisdiction to fund its operation (Tom Hare, Administrator, CRPD, 2009).

Conejo Recreation and Park District

The Conejo Recreation and Park District (CRPD) was created in 1963 to provide a separate governmental entity responsible for meeting the park and recreational needs of the local communities within the District's boundaries, which provide services to and consist of, the park and recreation services in the entire city of Thousand Oaks and portions of Westlake Village. The type of park and recreational services provided, include sports, aquatics, outdoors, cultural and therapeutic activities. The District currently has 1,126 acres of parkland, of which, 531 acres are developed with some kind of facilities (e.g., turf, trails, fields, etc.). The CRPD is funded through a special district property tax (Tom Hare, Administrator, CRPD, 2009).

County of Los Angeles

The County of Los Angeles has 65,528 acres of park and recreational resources that are administered by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). The facilities include 67 local parks, 17 community parks, 10 regional parks, 14 lakes and lagoons, 6 natural areas, and numerous specialized facilities. In 2004, the County DPR prepared a Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2020 (SAMP) that inventoried County park and recreation needs and made recommendations for meeting current and future needs. The SAMP report found that by 2020 the County would be approximately 4,600 acres short of providing adequate parklands to meet demand. The deficit was based on the County standard of 4.0 acres of public parkland per 1,000 residents and results of local surveys conducted by the County.

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) is a U.S. National Recreation Area, administered by the National Park Service. Most of the area lies in Los Angeles County, with the western third and a small northern portion within Ventura County. SMMNRA contains 154,095 acres, California State Parks owns 42,000 acres, the National Park Service controls 21,500 acres, and the rest are local park lands and private property. Recreational opportunities include biking, birding, camping, hiking, and horseback riding.

California State Parks located within SMMNRA include Topanga State Park, Leo Carrillo State Park, Malibu Creek State Park, Point Mugu State Park, Will Rogers State Historic Park, and Point Dume State Reserve. Each of the parklands provides opportunities for walking/hiking, picnicking, and biking, with some providing opportunities for overnight camping. Developed campground facilities are provided at Point Mugu, Leo Carrillo, and Malibu Creek State Parks. Backcountry campgrounds are provided within Point Mugu and Topanga State Parks.

According to California State Park's, the demand for all campsites at State Parks grew by approximately 13% between the years 2000 and 2005, resulting in most campsites being at or near capacity during the spring, summer and fall months (California State Parks, *Parks and Recreation Trends in California*, 2005).

5.14 Recreation

Impact REC-3: Implementation of the proposed Plan, on a cumulative basis, would reduce demand on existing park and recreational facilities within the region; associated impacts would likely be beneficial, and less than significant.

As discussed above, implementation of the proposed Plan and associated park and recreation improvements would help offset the need for recreation facilities through increased public access and recreational opportunities in the City of Malibu, the unincorporated County of Los Angeles, and surrounding communities. Cumulative impacts associated the proposed Plan's incremental increase in the supply of recreational facilities would create a beneficial impact on existing park and recreational facilities within the region, and would therefore, result in *less than significant* cumulative impacts to existing recreational facilities.

Mitigation Measures

As no significant cumulative impacts relating to existing park and recreational facilities are identified, no mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts

The proposed Plan's contribution to cumulative impacts on existing park and recreational facilities would be ***less than significant (Class III)***.