



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report

Date: June 7, 2018
To: State Clearinghouse, Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties
Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report
for the Puerco Canyon Camp and Trailhead Project

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to notify agencies and interested parties that the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA), as the Lead Agency, is beginning preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed Puerco Canyon Camp and Trailhead Project (proposed Project).

The MRCA is soliciting input from reviewing agencies and the public regarding the scope and content of the EIR. In accordance with CEQA, the MRCA requests that agencies review the description of the proposed Project provided in this NOP and provide comments on environmental issues related to the statutory responsibilities of the Lead Agency. The EIR will be used by the MRCA when considering approval of the proposed Project and by other Responsible and Trustee Agencies to support their discretionary actions related to the proposed Project, as applicable. MRCA is also seeking comments from residents, property owners, and concerned citizens regarding issues that should be addressed in the EIR.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are included in the attached materials.

A Scoping Meeting has been scheduled for **June 27, 2018 at 6:00pm**. For the convenience of property owners and residents in the Project area, the scoping meeting will be held at Temescal Gateway Park, in the Elizabeth A. Cheadle Hall, located at 15601 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. The Scoping Meeting discussion will be limited to understanding the proposed Project and any associated environmental concerns by soliciting input on the scope and content of the EIR, including potential mitigation measures and possible alternatives to the proposed Project.

The 30-day public scoping period, triggered by the issuance of this NOP, begins on **June 7, 2018** and ends on **July 9, 2018**. Comments may be sent any time during the 30-day public scoping period. Please focus your comments on issues related to the scope and content of the environmental analysis that will be included in the EIR. All public and agency scoping comments must be received or postmarked by **July 9, 2018**. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but no later than 30 days (July 9, 2018) after receipt of this notice. Please include the name of a contact person for your agency, if applicable. All comments should be directed to:

Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority
RE: Puerco Canyon Camp and Trailhead Project
Attn: Mario Sandoval, Project Analyst
570 West Avenue 26, Suite 100
Los Angeles, CA 90065

Comments may also be emailed to mario.sandoval@mrca.ca.gov

Puerco Canyon Camp and Trailhead Project Description

Project Location

The proposed Project is located at 3501 Puerco Canyon Road, at the end of Puerco Canyon Road, just north of the City of Malibu, on unincorporated Los Angeles County lands within the Santa Monica Mountains (see Figure 1). The 703-acre property is bounded by Corral Canyon Park to the west, Pepperdine University to the east, Malibu Creek State Park to the north and Pacific Coast Highway to the south. It is currently owned and managed by the MRCA and is open to the public as park lands.

Project Overview

The proposed Puerco Canyon Camp and Trailhead Project includes the following:

- Construction and operation of a regional hiking trail system;
- Construction and operation of recreational facilities for day-use visitors as well as individual and organized group camping; and
- Enhancement of the region's fire protection services.

Site History. The property was an operating pig farm during the 1950s and '60s and is currently owned and managed by the MRCA. The property contains three areas that were previously disturbed and graded with fill material. The majority of the fill material in Puerco Canyon is believed to have been sourced during the construction of extensions to Pacific Coast Highway. The site previously had electrical service, but Southern California Edison removed the poles in 2015.

Proposed Project. In 2017, the MRCA completed an infrastructure feasibility study to determine the physical opportunities and constraints for constructing a trailhead and camp facility on the property. The feasibility study examined options for road access, potable and fire water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste management, power supply, evaluated conditions of existing structures, and provided recommendations for implementation. Concept design plans for MRCA's preferred proposed Project have been completed and are located on the property's three already disturbed areas (referred to as Sites A, B, and C; see Figure 2). The proposed Project includes the following elements:

- **Site A (4.9 acres):** Up to 90-space parking lot, public restrooms, group seating area, landscaped areas and open space, walking trails, and trailhead amenities (drinking water, signs, equestrian hook-ups, picnic tables, etc.).
- **Site B (5.2 acres):** Approximately 25 tent pad sites, covered dining and kitchen area(s), covered group gathering area, storage space, restrooms, walking paths, and amenities including drinking water and seating. Optional improvements include shower facilities and an enclosed cooking facility.
- **Site C:** Passive recreation area for hiking, picnicking, etc., but no covered structures are proposed and no camping would be allowed. MRCA is assessing the potential for riparian habitat restoration at this site.
- **Other Areas:** Caretaker residence(s), water storage tanks, parking areas for maintenance trucks and firefighting vehicles, improvements to existing roads to support wildland firefighting vehicle access, enclosures for trash and storage, and vehicular gates.

- **Infrastructure:** Onsite wastewater tanks or treatment, reestablished electrical grid service, small solar system, access roads, water well, and water storage tanks. Existing structures on site would be reused for the proposed project to the extent feasible.

Fire Protection and Response. MRCA has been working with the Los Angeles County Fire Department to develop the proposed Project to meet or exceed stringent fire safety standards for the Santa Monica Mountains. The approach to fire prevention and defense includes both facility design and planned operational activities. Camping at Site B would be by reservation only, and MRCA staff would be onsite to supervise all camping activities. MRCA firefighters and firefighting equipment would be stationed onsite during group camping events, as needed, and the site would be equipped with sufficient water tank capacity to ensure prompt firefighting response. Fuel management would occur regularly, and MRCA rangers would patrol to ensure group camping and day use visitors are adhering to all posted requirements.

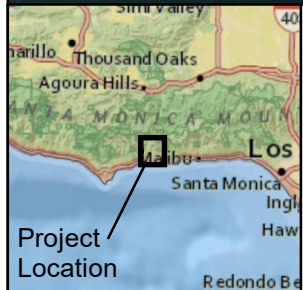
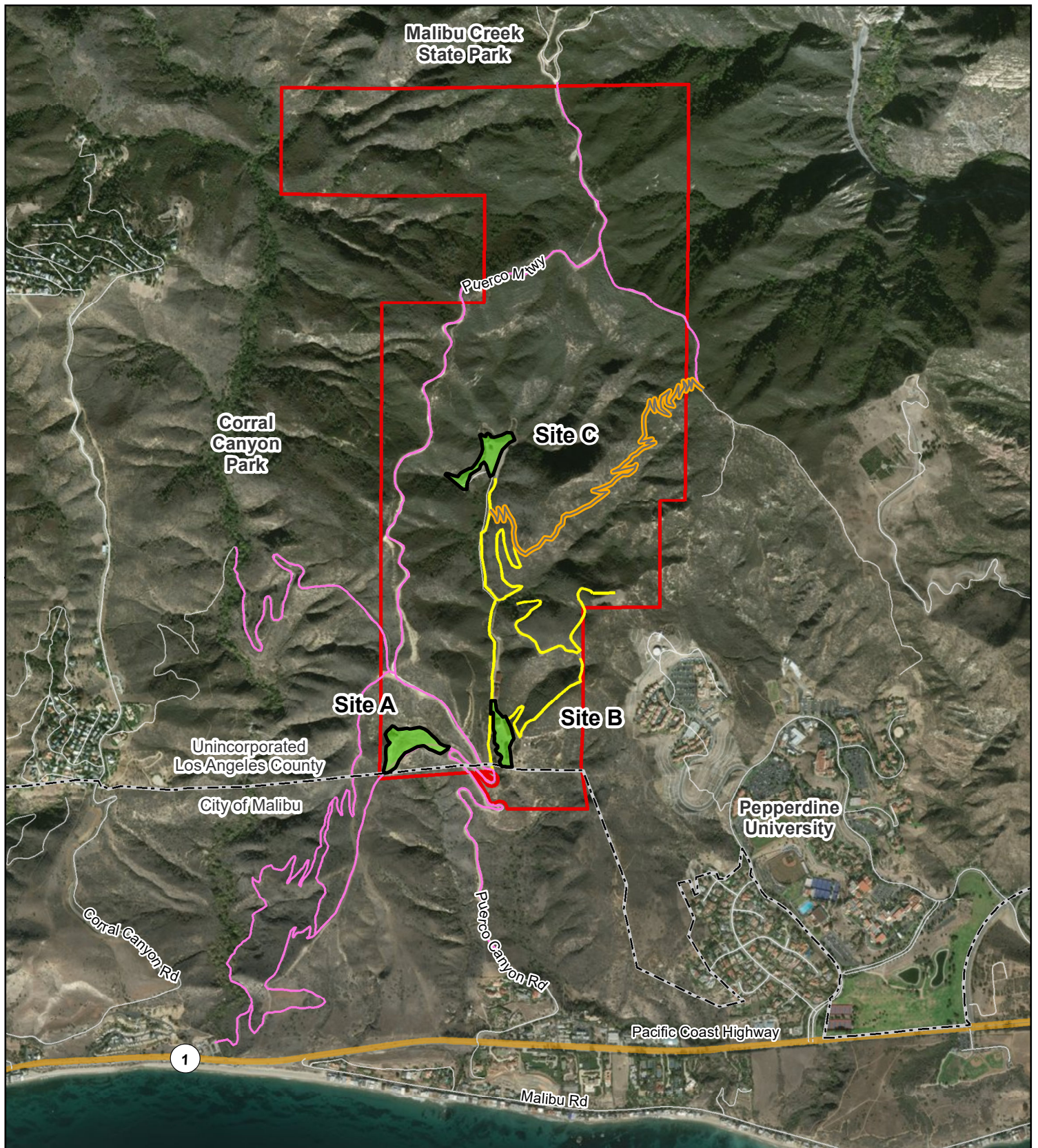
Potential Environmental Impacts

In accordance with Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will assess the physical changes to the environment that would likely result from construction and operation of the Puerco Canyon Camp and Trailhead Project, including direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts, as well as growth-inducing effects.

The MRCA has determined that an EIR will be required to satisfy environmental review for the Puerco Canyon Camp and Trailhead Project. Therefore, as allowed under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15063(a), the MRCA has not prepared an Initial Study and will instead begin work directly on the EIR, as allowed under CEQA Guidelines Section 15081. The EIR will focus on the potentially significant effects of the Project. In addition, the EIR will provide a discussion of any effects found not to be significant pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15128. At this time, the MRCA anticipates the environmental effects of the following to be analyzed within the EIR in detail:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (particularly wildfire)
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Noise
- Transportation and Traffic

However, this list will be finalized at the end of the 30-day public scoping period for the EIR. Mitigation measures will be developed as necessary to avoid or reduce potential significant effects of the Project. The EIR will also discuss alternatives to the proposed Project, including a no project alternative (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 (e)). The alternatives discussion in the EIR will evaluate alternatives considered as a means for lessening or avoiding any potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed Project.



- Future Trail Alignment
- Existing Site Trails
- Existing Regional Trails
- Project Area
- City Limits



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Figure 1.

Project Location

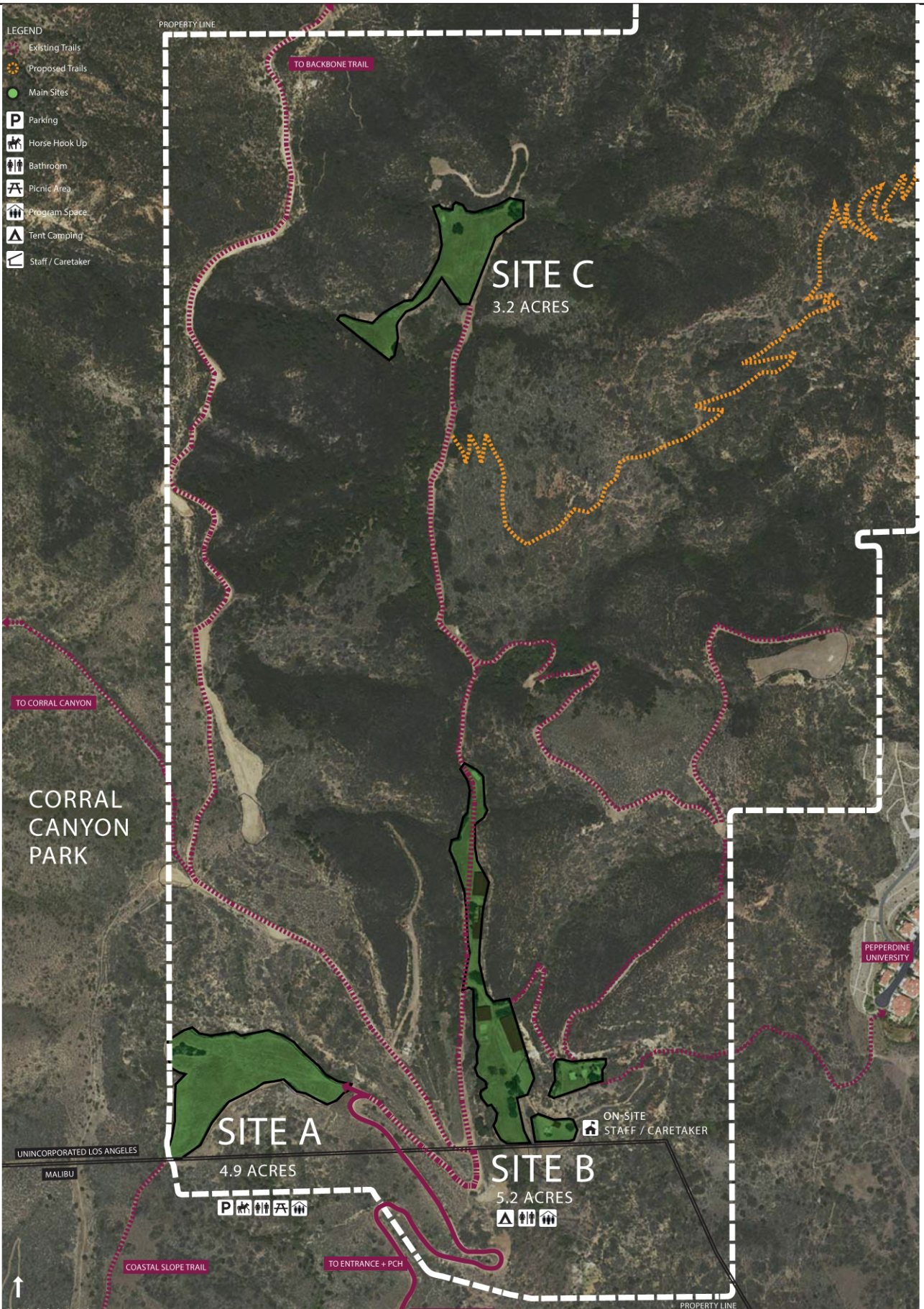


Figure 2.

Conceptual Site Development