

FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT

NorthLake
SPECIFIC PLAN

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING

County Case No.	87172
State Clearinghouse No.	88071329

October 1992

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the NorthLake Specific Plan was prepared for the County of Los Angeles in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended, and state and county guidelines for the implementation of CEQA. More specifically, the county has relied on Section 15084 d3 of the state Guidelines which allows acceptance of DEIRs prepared by the applicant, consultants retained by the applicant, or any other person. The Department of Regional Planning, acting as lead agency for the county, reviewed and edited the DEIR to reflect its own independent judgement to the extent of its ability including reliance on concerned county technical personnel from other county departments.

The DEIR was published in June 1992. Pursuant to Sections 15200 - 15205 of the state CEQA Guidelines, the DEIR was circulated for public and agency review between July 27, 1992, and September 11, 1992. A Los Angeles County Planning Commission hearing was held on September 16, 1992, to review the proposed NorthLake Specific Plan project and DEIR, and to provide an opportunity for public testimony. A copy of the county's Notice of Completion and Notice of Public Hearing for this project are included as Appendix A.

During the hearing the County of Los Angeles Planning Commission recommended approval of Sub-Plan Amendment 87-172-(5) to amend the Land Use Policy Map of the Los Angeles County General Plan from residential categories, commercial, industrial, open space, and public facilities to Specific Plan and to amend the land use policy map of the Santa Clarita Valley Areawide Plan from urban and non-urban residential, hillside management, manufacturing, commercial and public facilities to Specific Plan; and Zoning Case 87-172-(5) to change the zoning from agriculture, light manufacturing, unlimited commercial, open space, and water shed to Specific plan, and instructed the County Department of Regional Planning to prepare the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) and Conditions of Approval.

This Final EIR, together with the DEIR, technical appendices and other written documentation prepared during the EIR process constitutes the EIR for the NorthLake Specific Plan as defined in state EIR Guidelines, Section 15132.

2.0 PROJECT SUMMARY

The NorthLake Specific Plan defines the land use concepts for a master-planned, mixed use community on approximately 1,330 acres in the Castaic area of Los Angeles County. The NorthLake Specific Plan site is located in the community of Castaic, California, in the unincorporated area of the County of Los Angeles. Regional access to the NorthLake Specific Plan site is provided via the Golden State Freeway (I-5). Primary site access from the south is provided off I-5 from the Parker Road and Lake Hughes Road exits. Northerly access to the site is provided from I-5 at Templin Highway, east to Old Ridge Road, then south to the northerly intersection of NorthLake Boulevard and Ridge Route Road.

The NorthLake Specific Plan site has been used as open cattle range land since the early 1800s. The project site lies along a United States Geological Survey (USGS)-designated feature known as Grasshopper Canyon. Grasshopper Canyon contains an intermittent stream that is a USGS-designated intermittent "blueline" watercourse. Site topography consists of a ridgeline running northwest to southeast along the western boundary of the site adjacent to I-5. Easterly of the canyon, slopes gradually rise to a ridge on the site's easterly boundary. Onsite elevations range from approximately 2,300 feet mean sea level (msl) along the ridge lines to 1,250 feet msl within Grasshopper Canyon in the southern portion of the site. Vegetation on the NorthLake site is composed of three primary plant communities: coastal sage scrub; valley grassland; and riparian woodland. No rare, endangered or threatened species have been identified on the Specific Plan site.

The NorthLake Specific Plan land use concept incorporates a variety of residential, commercial, and light industrial uses. Implementation of the NorthLake Specific Plan would provide 2,337 single-family dwelling units, 1,286 multi-family dwelling units, 13.2 acres of commercial uses, and 50.1 acres of industrial property. A breakdown of the proposed land uses by planning area is provided in Table 2-1 Land Use Concept. To respond to project and areawide demands, the NorthLake Specific Plan incorporates two school/park sites, a public library site, and a fire station site. Active and passive recreational opportunities are integrated into the NorthLake Specific Plan in the form of an 18-hole golf course and clubhouse facilities, tennis and swimming complex, and a network of biking, jogging and equestrian trails.

Development of the NorthLake site is anticipated in four phases commencing in 1994. Ultimate site buildout is scheduled for the year 2000. Site modification (cut and fill grading) will be balanced onsite, and construction will be tied to development phasing schedules.

The land use concept outlined in the NorthLake Specific Plan is in conformance with the land use policies of the County of Los Angeles General Plan and the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, amended on December 6, 1990. The NorthLake Specific Plan will be implemented through the tentative tract map and conditional use permit process.

Table 2-1

LAND USE CONCEPT				
PROPOSED LAND USES				
<u>Planning Area</u>	<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Planned Units</u>	<u>Planned Square Feet (F.A.R.)</u>
1	Highway Commercial	4.0	—	69,696 (0.50)
2	Light Industrial	14.1	—	153,549 (0.35)
3	Light Industrial	3.4	—	37,026 (0.35)
4	Light Industrial	10.7	—	116,523 (0.35)
5	Light Industrial	3.1	—	33,759 (0.35)
6	Light Industrial	2.5	—	27,225 (0.35)
7	Light Industrial	6.4	—	69,696 (0.35)
8	Light Industrial	9.9	—	107,811 (0.35)
9	Community Commercial	9.2	—	100,188 (0.35)
10	Multi-Family	15.5	223	—
11	Multi-Family/Golf	33.0	184	—
12	Multi-Family/Golf	55.6	249	—
13	Multi-Family/Golf	26.4	394	—
14	Golf Clubs/Tennis Facility	13.2	—	—
15	Multi-Family/Golf	25.1	236	—
16	Single-Family/Golf	195.3	644	—
17	Single Family	49.5	274	—
18	Single Family	45.5	209	—
19	Single Family	48.9	224	—
20	Single Family	13.5	64	—
21	Single Family	26.0	147	—
22	Single Family	71.8	413	—
23	Single Family	21.3	167	—
24	School/Park Site	11.9	—	—
25	School/Park Site	11.2	—	—
26	Single-Family Low Density	23.1	66	—
27	Single-Family Low Density	16.5	42	—
28	Estate	48.0	48	—
29	Estate	16.0	16	—
30	Estate	12.0	12	—
31	Estate	11.0	11	—
Summary				
Single-Family		504.8	2,337	—
Multi-Family		95.5	1,286	—
Commercial		13.2	—	169,884 (0.42)
Industrial		50.1	—	545,589 (0.35)
Recreation/Open Space		643.3		
School/Park Facilities		23.1		
Total		1,330.0		

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the NorthLake Specific Plan examined the potential project related impact for the following environmental issue areas:

- o Geotechnical
- o Fire hazard
- o Air quality
- o Visual resources
- o Sewage disposal
- o Fire and Sheriff services
- o Library services
- o Public safety
- o Flood hazard
- o Water quality
- o Biota
- o Traffic and access
- o Education
- o Water supply
- o Solid waste

Data for the DEIR were obtained from onsite field observations, discussions with affected agencies, and specialized environmental studies. Based on the analyses contained in the DEIR, significant impacts were identified in the areas of air quality, biota, and traffic and circulation. However, with the incorporation of all available and appropriate mitigation measures, impacts to biota and traffic and circulation would be considered mitigatable. As identified in the DEIR, impacts to air quality would require the county to adopt a Statement of Overriding Consideration per CEQA Section 15093.

3.0 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment letters on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) were submitted during the public review period between July 27, and September 11, 1992. Fourteen comment letters were submitted on the DEIR:

- Letter 1 County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, August 13, 1992
- Letter 2 County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, September 10, 1992
- Letter 3 County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Land Development Division, Drainage and Grading Section, August 18, 1992
- Letter 4 County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Land Development Division, Road, Sewer & Water Section, August 10, 1992
- Letter 5 County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Materials Engineering Section, Geology and Soils, August 6, 1992
- Letter 6 County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Traffic and Lighting Division, August 19, 1992
- Letter 7 County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Transportation Planning, August 19, 1992
- Letter 8 County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Waste Management Division, August 4, 1992
- Letter 9 County of Los Angeles Fire Department, July 31, 1992
- Letter 10 County of Los Angeles Public Library, August 19, 1992
- Letter 11 City of Santa Clarita, September 10, 1992
- Letter 12 Southern California Gas Company, August 11, 1992
- Letter 13 State of California Department of Transportation, September 17, 1992
- Letter 14 South Coast Air Quality Management District, September 28, 1992

Each letter has been assigned a number that appears in the upper center of each page of the letters as listed above. Each substantive comment contained in the letters has been assigned

a comment number. Comment numbers are found in the margin of each letter adjacent to the comment raised. Responses to each comment follow the last page of that communication. Responses are numbered to correspond to the letter and comment that is addressed. For example, "Response to Comment 2-3" indicated a response to comment number 3 of letter 2.

The response "comment acknowledged" is used as a response to indicate that a comment has been made and duly noted, or to indicate that the substance of the comment has been accepted

such as an acknowledgement of minor corrections to the DEIR text or data. The response "comment noted" is used in cases where the comment does not raise a substantive issue relevant to the review of the environmental analysis. Such points are usually statements of opinion or preference regarding a project's design or its presence as opposed to points within the purview of an EIR: environmental impact or mitigation.

No substantive comments on the DEIR or testimony in opposition to the NorthLake Specific Plan was presented during the public Planning Commission hearing on September 16, 1992.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

433 South Vermont Avenue - Los Angeles, California 90020-1975 - (213) 738-2961

Rodney E. Cooper . . . Director

August 13, 1992

John Schwarze, AICP, Administrator
Current Planning Branch
Department of Regional Planning
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attention: Don Culbertson, Zone Change

Dear Mr. Schwarze:

NORTHLAKE SPECIFIC PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT
PROJECT #87-172

The Department has reviewed the documents noted above and submits the following comments.

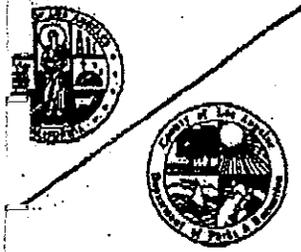
SPECIFIC PLAN

Local Parks - The issue of park and recreational services and facilities should be added to the "Summary of Environmental Impacts". Upon buildout of all phases, the Northlake residents would create a demand for additional local park and recreational services and facilities that would amount to a minimum of approximately 33 acres. If the Regional Planning Commission applies the General Plan local park standard of four acres of local park land per 1,000 population, the park land obligation would be approximately 44 acres.

1-1

Based on a local park obligation ranging from 33-44 acres, the Specific Plan does not adequately provide for these facilities. Although the Introduction (pages I-4,5) mentions two shared, school/park sites of 11.9 and 11.2 acres each, these facilities would only yield two-five acre local parks. These park sites have not been approved in concept by the Department nor do they meet the Department's current requirement for an eight acre minimum site.

Please note that the development of local park land and the creation of open space are two distinct issues with different purposes and



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John Schwarze
August 13, 1992
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1-2 requirements. The Open Space/Recreation Area Policy ii (page II-8) implies that some of the open space area will be designated as public, active park land. These areas should be identified on the conceptual plan (Exhibit II-14).

1-2 In the section on "OPEN SPACE/RECREATION PLAN" (page II-51) the following statement needs to be added directly after the third sentence; "All park and recreational facilities will be located and designed to the satisfaction of the Parks and Recreation Department". This statement clarifies the Department's role in review and approval of the system of park and recreational facilities associated with the project.

1-3 Hiking and Equestrian Trails - The Open Space/Recreation Area Policy ib (page II-8) of providing trails should be shown on the conceptual plan (Exhibit II-14). The county master plan of trails shows Castaic Lake Trail aligned parallel to the eastern boundary of the project. The Specific Plan must commit the developer to providing trail easements for the Castaic Lake Trail as it traverses the property. If Castaic Lake Trail lies outside of the subject property, then the proposed network of trails must provide linkages to the Castaic Lake Trail. All trail easements must be done to the satisfaction of the Department.

1-4 Environmental - The conceptual land use plan, (Exhibit II-1) shows single family housing, presumably high density, in Area #20 which appears to be visible from Castaic Lake. The proposed project should not have any visual impact to Castaic Lake.

1-4 Although the subject property does not lie within a Significant Ecological Area, the Department will submit detailed comments on other environmental aspects of the project in it's review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

1-5 Any arrangements pertaining to the satisfaction of the local park land obligation (Quimby) will be handled through the conditions of approval of each tract map. Therefore, any references to park and recreational facilities and the Department of Parks and Recreation should be deleted.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me at (213) 738-2960.

Sincerely,



Joan A. Rupert
Departmental Facilities Planner I

cc: John Weber, Tom Reilly, North Region

Response to Comment Letter 1

- 1-1 The NorthLake development is committed to meeting the park requirements as indicated in comment 1-1. As outlined in the September 15, 1992, letter between the NorthLake applicants and the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (included in Appendix B), the NorthLake development will provide 52-acres of combined park land and in-lieu fees to meet the Quimby requirements for this project. Development of the park sites will be planned through cooperation with the County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- 1-2 Comment acknowledged.
- 1-3 A series of hiking and equestrian trails are proposed for the NorthLake development. The alignment of these trails is conceptual at this time and will be dependent upon the ultimate layout of the onsite development plan. During the phase specific land use planning the alignment of the onsite trails system will be finalized. The onsite trails systems will be developed in cooperation with the County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- 1-4 Due to the topographic setbacks, planned buffer areas, viewing distances, and line-of-site angles from Castaic Lake, a significant impact to the scenic viewshed from Castaic Lake is not anticipated with the development of the proposed single-family residential homes in Planning Area 20.
- 1-5 Comment acknowledged.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

433 South Vermont Avenue - Los Angeles, California 90020-1975 - (213) 738-2961

Rodney E. Cooper . . . Director

September 10, 1992

Mr. Paul McCarthy
Assistant Section Head, Impact Analysis Section
Department of Regional Planning
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90010

PROJECT # 87172
NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Dear Mr. McCarthy:

The Department of Parks and Recreation has reviewed the above named document and has the following general comments and concerns about the proposed NorthLake development.

Specific Plan DEIR

Approval of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) at the conceptual level of the Specific Plan stage presents limitations for adequate evaluation on some issues. Without full disclosure of the details of a site plan, potential impacts cannot be fully known or evaluated. Thus, predicting impacts or prescribing mitigation measures for future impacts is impossible.

2-1

One example, is the traffic impacts described by the Department of Public Works and the State Department of Transportation, (see letters, Appendix C). The proximity of the Northlake development to the Castaic Lake Recreation Area presents significant impacts to traffic and circulation in the area. Other issues needing consideration on a tract by tract basis would be: scenic or visual impacts, topographic alterations, impacts to blue-line streams and plans for replacement of riparian habitat.



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PARKS ARE FOR
PEOPLE

2-2 An adequate analysis of visual impacts requires review of actual grading and building heights which are not available at this level of review. It is essential that the specific design of the golf course be evaluated in relationship to the open space and wildlife corridors.

2-3 In addition, approving a DEIR for the Specific Plan does not provide the CEQA required review of "alternatives" to the project.

The DEIR does not mention specific impacts to local and regional parks and recreation facilities, as mandated by CEQA. The following information should be addressed in the DEIR.

Local Park Obligation

Upon buildout of all phases, the NorthLake project will add approximately 10,456 residents to the area, creating a demand for additional local park and recreational services and facilities that would amount to a minimum of approximately 33 acres. Determination as to the actual amount of land or in-lieu fees will depend on whether the minimum requirement of three acres per thousand population, under the Quimby Act, or four acres per thousand park obligation requirement, as established in the County's General Plan, is used. The Department has established a policy of recommending the four - acre requirement which would require 42 acres of land, or an equivalent combination of land and in-lieu fees.

2-4 The developer has offered to donate 10 acres of land (graded, with utility stub-outs) over and above the ultimate park requirement. Therefore a range of 43 - 52 acres of land or combination of land and in-lieu fees will be included in the project. It is anticipated that this will result in two separate public parks of eight and 15 acres each, with the balance of the acreage provided by in-lieu fees and/or amenities.

The document does not clearly distinguish between private and public park land, and the land use concept is unclear as to park land uses and locations. (Page 2-3, Table 2-1) In " Mitigation Measures for Scenic Quality", Page 4.78 of the DEIR, 35 acres of parks are mentioned. Table 2-1, page 2-3 shows two school/park sites for a total of 23 acres; these facilities would only yield two five-acre local parks. These park sites have not been approved in concept by the Department, nor do they meet the Department's current requirement for an eight acre minimum site. (see Department's review of NorthLake Specific Plan, letter dated September 14, 1992).

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
MATERIALS ENGINEERING DIVISION

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SECTION
ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS REVIEW

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION 87132 - North Lake Specific Plan

LOCATION Castaic

DATE RECEIVED 9-28-92 DEADLINE 8-17-92

DATA REVIEWED DEIR dated June 1992

Frank J. Schmitt
GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER

John P. [Signature]
ENGINEERING GEOLOGIST

The proposed project has no significant effects on the checked environmental factor(s) from a geology and soils standpoint provided the appropriate ordinances and codes are followed.	X	X
Review of the initial study/geotechnical report indicates that the proposed project will have significant effects on the checked environmental factor(s) from a geology and/or soils standpoint. See discussion.		
The environmental document is inadequate from a geology and soils standpoint. See discussion.		
DATE REVIEW COMPLETED	8/6/92	8-3-92

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS AND/OR REPORT INADEQUACIES

Geology The report identifies geologic and geotechnical issues and provides recommendations for mitigation that appear feasible.

Soils

Original to: Planning Division or
LDMA/Processing Center Section
cc: Development Review Section File

1:E.1

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All references to dedicated parklands within the EIR document must reflect park requirements and decisions as determined by the Department. The following statement needs to be added to the EIR for the Specific Plan: "All park and recreational facilities will be located and designed to the satisfaction of the Parks and Recreation Department".

Regional Parks

There are four regional parks within the Santa Clarita Valley Regional Planning area which also includes the project area. Castaic Lake Recreation Area (8,700 acres), William S. Hart Regional Park (224 acres), Placerita Canyon Nature Center and Park (341 acres), and Vasquez Rocks Natural Park (745 acres)-provide a total of 10,086 acres. Additionally, Phase I construction of the Castaic Sports Complex will be completed in the Spring of 1993, providing an additional 16 acres of an ultimately 50 acre community regional park.

2-4 The County considers that the Regional parks and facilities serve the entire county not just the Regional Planning areas they are within. It has been determined in the Department's Strategic Plan for 2010 that the County is currently deficient 13, 296.4 acres of regional parkland. The proposed project would add an additional 63 acres to that deficiency.

Trails

"...A network of biking, jogging and equestrian trails" is referred to in the Project Description on page 2-4. A conceptual plan of the equestrian trails should be included in the Specific Plan EIR, perhaps on the Circulation Diagram. This planning (and future details) of the the trails will need to be coordinated with the County Trails Coordinator, David Palma. He can be reached at (213) 738-2973.

Traffic Impacts

As shown in letters included in the DEIR, the State Department of Transportation and the County Department of Public Works have commented on the anticipated traffic impacts to the area resulting from this project; a detailed traffic study has been included (Appendix F); and it has been concluded that a "phase specific traffic analysis shall determine the timing of improvements, upgrades and buildout configuration requirements,...associated with required roadway improvements." (see Summary s-6)

Mr. Paul McCarthy
September 10, 1992
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The Department agrees with this conclusion, and suggests that the phase specific traffic analysis be a part of Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Reports submitted for each tract map.

In addition, review of Section 4.8 - Traffic, Access and Circulation of the DEIR showed that numerous diagrams and statements are incorrect. For example:

Within Figure 4.8 - 1, turning lanes shown for the following intersections are not accurate:

Castaic Rd. and Lake Hughes Rd. NW and SE corners;
Parker Rd. and The Old Rd. NW and SE corners;
Lake Hughes and The Old Rd. NE corner.

Page 4.8-14 is out of sequence, making it difficult to determine the location of adjoining text (located between page 4.15-4 and 5-1)

2-5

Appendix F - page 6, The correct number of vehicles generated by Castaic Lake, based on entrance fee collection and daily statistics, is approximately 250,000 - not 210,000. (per Brian Roney, Regional Park Superintendent at Castaic Lake)

Appendix F reference indicates a sign improvement has been made by CalTrans; the improvement has not yet taken place. This installation and additional signage for directing traffic during periods of congestion or peak use of the area should be included as a traffic mitigation measure in the DEIR.

The intersection and roadways of Lake Hughes Road and Ridge Route Road are critical to the safe and efficient operation of Castaic Lake Recreation facilities. Therefore, it is imperative that traffic mitigation with regard to this intersection be conducted during the first phase of development.

The Department recommends a secondary access to the NorthLake development. The proposed mitigation measure of upgrading Ridge Route Road to a major highway from the project to Lake Hughes Road, will not accommodate the traffic generated by both the development and the Castaic Lake Recreation facility. Reliance on a single major intersection such as this will cause significant traffic congestion and emergency access problems.

Scenic and Visual Impacts

In Section 4.7, "Scenic Quality", Grasshopper Canyon is described as "The predominant scenic element of the site...". The

Department would agree with this assessment, and therefore questions the outcome of the conceptual site plan which completely fills the canyon, rather than incorporating the site's natural features as an amenity, adding to the scenic quality and potentially enhancing the property value. Additional comments on this issue are included below in the discussion on Biotic Resources.

Several conceptual sight line analyses are given in Section 4.7; Figure 4.7-2, View D is described as the view from "the waters of the central portion of Castaic Lake" (pg. 4.7-3), but the sight line is drawn only 100 feet out from shore. A recent site visit by our Department staff revealed that portions of the development will be visible from several locations on Castaic Lake, even as close as 100 feet from shore.

2-6

The proposed conceptual plans for placing housing pads behind the undeveloped ridges adjacent to Castaic Lake will still permit portions of the residences to be seen. Also, portions of ridges near Interstate 5 are visible from the lake.

The Department believes that the viewshed of Castaic Lake, which presently has no visible development, should be preserved. To adequately assess the potential visual impacts, accurate simulations of the built development should be generated. This would not be possible at the conceptual level, but is more appropriate when a final site plan is established. This information should be provided in Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Reports which should be submitted with each tract map.

Drainage Plan

The Department is very concerned with changes to stream flow and run-off that will occur with build-out of the development. The conceptual plan calls for filling Grasshopper Canyon and several tributaries which drain directly into Castaic Lagoon at the County's Castaic Lake Recreation Area. This popular facility provides swimming, boating, fishing, windsurfing, picnicking, and other activities for the public.

2-7

In the DEIR, discussion and proposed mitigation relating to water quality, drainage and hydrology fail to fully address the potential impacts on recreational use of the area. Further analysis in the DEIR will be necessary for adequate Departmental review of the potential impacts. It is suggested that this information be expanded in the DEIR, and that it be included in Supplemental DEIR's with development of design alternatives.

Biotic Resources - Open Space and Grasshopper Canyon

In addition to the Department's concerns stated above with regard to the proposal to fill Grasshopper Canyon, this action will also cause significant impacts to the biotic resources of the site. As mentioned in the Scenic Quality discussion of the DEIR, Grasshopper Canyon "...traverses the central portion of the property. Intermittent stream channels, arroyos, sage scrub and grassland areas and a trace amount of riparian woodland characterize the site." (page 4.7-1) According to the Biota Study (Appendix E) "a wildlife corridor exists up the major drainage of Grasshopper Canyon..."(see Biota Study Summary Item 11.)

Both the Biota Study (page 12, Mitigation #1.) and a 1988 comment letter from the State Department of Fish & Game (Appendix C) suggest establishment of a wildlife corridor within the main drainage course of the development. CEQA defines interference with resident wildlife routes as a significant impact which requires mitigation. (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G [d]) However, within the DEIR, the only mention of a wildlife corridor mitigation is: "The proposed golf course, running through the central portion of the project site, may provide a wildlife corridor among adjacent habitats." (page 6 of Summary)

2-8

The Department has two major concerns with the the golf serving as the sole mitigation for the wildlife corridor. First, according to CEQA, the mitigation must occur in the form of establishment of a corridor; and second, a golf course does not constitute "open space" in the same usable sense as natural areas for wildlife purposes. A conceptual plan that will provide a wildlife corridor, separate and distinct from the golf course, should be included in the DEIR for the Specific Plan.

Section 4.6, Biota Impacts states that the 476 acres of dedicated open space "will continue to provide habitat value for the biotic resources they represent." It is the opinion of the Department that, if the open space is surrounded by golf course, residences, and streets, there will be little remaining habitat value. Disruption of the contiguous aspect of these open spaces may render them unusable by some resident animals, and at best only remnant populations of some species will be able to persist.

This same Section indicates that: "...the golf course will provide a great expanse of open space that may be used by wildlife..." As mentioned above, a golf course does not provide the same wildlife resource as natural open space. Many factors such as human use, changes in vegetation, alterations to the

Mr. Paul McCarthy
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natural grade, and chemical applications play a part in determining an areas usability by different species.

2-8
The Specific Plan DEIR should include: plans for contiguous dedicated open spaces in addition to the golf course; a conceptual diagram of a wildlife corridor; and a discussion of the mitigation measure of "project alteration to avoid impacting the onsite riparian habitat". (page 4.6-5)

The Department asks that the issues raised here be represented at the conceptual level, within the Specific Plan DEIR. As each tentative tract map is submitted for approval, a Supplemental DEIR should also be submitted. This will provide the detailed information necessary to adequately evaluate the potentially significant impacts of the project.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to review this document. If you have any questions, I can be reached at (213) 738-2372.

Sincerely,



Cynthia K. D'Agosta
Park Planning Assistant

cc: Jim Park
John Weber

ckd

Response to Comment Letter 2

- 2-1 Comment acknowledged. The intent of the NorthLake Specific Plan is to provide a mechanism for the comprehensive development of a mixed-use master planned community. Specific design details such as building layouts, grading, roadway alignments, etc., will be developed during the subsequent phase specific tentative tract map processing. At such time as the tentative and final subdivision maps are submitted, the project will be reviewed to determine if additional discipline specific environmental evaluation will be prepared. With regards to traffic and circulation, phased specific traffic analysis will be conducted at the time of the tentative tract map submittals.
- 2-2 Comment acknowledged.
- 2-3 Two alternatives to the NorthLake Specific Plan were included in the previous EIR and incorporated in the revised Draft EIR: the No Project Alternative and an Existing General Plan Alternative. The emphases on alternative analyses as outlined in the state CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126(d) should be to focus on alternative capable of eliminating any significant adverse environmental effects or reducing them to a level of insignificance. Also, as stated in this section, alternative should be selected "which attain the basic objectives of the project..." In reviewing the potential impacts associated with the NorthLake Specific Plan, and in light of the fact that the specific plan provides for flexibility for subsequent onsite design, it was determined that adequate evaluation had been conducted to identify potential project related impacts and to establish mechanisms to mitigate such impacts to a level of insignificance.
- 2-4 Comment acknowledged. See response to Comment Letter 1.
- 2-5 Comment acknowledged. The phase specific traffic reports will consider project related impacts to the local traffic and circulation patterns in light of the existing roadway configurations, baseline traffic from surrounding developments and Castaic Lake recreational use, and project proposed transportation systems.
- 2-6 A sensitivity to the viewshed along Interstate 5 and from Castaic Lake has been incorporated into the NorthLake Specific Plan conceptual design. Very limited views of the project development would be visible from the I-5 corridor and Castaic Lake. The predominate visual feature of the site, the ridgeline adjacent to I-5, has been preserved to block motorists views of the interior of the site, and thus the areas proposed for development. Development in the higher elevations of the eastern portion of the site has been planned in acknowledgement of the concern for line-of-site impacts from Castaic Lake. The integrity of these ridgelines have also been retained to act as a natural visual buffer to undeveloped lands offsite. Subsequent visual resource evaluations may be conducted when phase specific design details are available during the tentative tract map process.
-

- 2-7 The primary sources of water for Castaic Lake are from the California State Water Project and natural runoff from Elizabeth Lake, Castaic, and Fish creeks. Grasshopper Canyon and the other onsite tributary drainages are classified as intermittent streams, i.e., streams which flow only part of the time, primarily during wet weather. Contributions to Castaic Lake from these onsite resources would not be considered major. Implementation of the required drainage plan for the NorthLake development should not result in deleterious affects to the recreational opportunities of Castaic Lake. Diversion of watershed runoff is not permitted under the requirements of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (see Comment Letter 3). Some reduction in total post development discharge is anticipated primarily from the reduction in the amount of sediment load in storm water runoff (bulked verses debulked discharge values).

Implementation of the NorthLake Specific Plan is not expected to impact water quality in Castaic Lake or Castaic Lagoon. Development of the NorthLake community will remove the cattle grazing onsite which is a potential source for fecal coliform bacteria. Water quality standards of post-development discharge will be ensured through the implementation of the County NPDES requirements. In addition, a proposal under consideration would convey reclaimed water from the County Sanitation Districts Valencia Water Reclamation Plan north through Castaic Valley to the Castaic Lake Afterbay. If implemented, this additional water will provide groundwater recharge, flushing and diluting benefits in Castaic Lagoon, as well as maintaining water levels in Castaic Lake for recreational purposes.

- 2-8 Three primary habitat communities were identified on the NorthLake site: coastal sage scrub; valley grassland; and riparian woodland. No rare, endangered, or threatened species were identified on the project site. Because riparian woodlands are a diminishing habitat type in southern California, impacts to the 13 acres of onsite riparian woodland is considered a significant impact. The riparian woodland vegetation is found within Grasshopper Canyon and other onsite tributary drainages. Because of the topographic constraints of the site and to meet the requirements of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, a storm drain system will be incorporated into the NorthLake design to regulate onsite runoff and reduce potential flood and erosion related impacts. Installation of the required drainage plan will result in impacts to the onsite riparian woodlands. Mitigation for the impacts to riparian habitats as required by the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other resource agencies, as appropriate, will reduce the potential impacts to biotic resources to a level of insignificance. Mitigation for habitat loss may include one or a combination of the following measures: 1) project alteration to avoid impacting the onsite riparian habitat; 2) the onsite creation of at least an equal amount of equal quality habitat; 3) enhancement of poor quality onsite habitat, usually greater than 1:1 habitat lost to habitat enhanced ratio; and 4) creation of offsite habitat where none currently exists.

While golf courses do not provide the same type of habitat value as natural open space areas, they can be designed to provide usable habitats and wildlife movement corridors. With the proper consideration of the placement of the golf greens, use of water features, and the incorporation of natural vegetation types the proposed NorthLake golf course can provide usable areas for wildlife communities. And, although approximately 65% of the NorthLake site is proposed for development, the vast areas of land surrounding the NorthLake property belonging to the Angeles National Forest, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and Castaic Lake Recreation Area are likely to remain undeveloped and will continue to provide natural habitat and movement opportunities for wildlife resources.

LETTER 3



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
LAND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

- FINAL MAP REPORT
- LAND USE REPORT

Files Nos. 2-15.311 2-15.313 1.21

Review of DEIR # 87172
NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN

TO: PLANNING DIVISION

Map or Transmittal Letter Date

7-27-92

Assignment No. _____

ATTN: CLARICE NASH

- _____ 1. The Drainage and Grading Section has no requirements for this subdivision/application.
- _____ 2. The subdivision/site is reasonably free of flood hazard.
- _____ 3. Portions of the property are subject to sheet overflow, (and) ponding, () and mudflows from steep hillsides.
- _____ 4. Portions of the subdivision/site lying in and adjacent to () steep hillsides, () natural watercourses, () _____ are subject to flood hazard because of () tidal/wave action, () overflow, () erosion, () mudflow and/or deposition of debris.
- _____ 5. This project will not significantly affect the environment as far as the Section's interests are concerned, provided the appropriate ordinances and codes are followed.
- _____ 6. Place a note of flood hazard on the final map/grant of waiver and submit engineering documentation to support those limits.
- _____ 7. Dedicate to the City/County the right to restrict the erection of buildings in the flood hazard areas.
- _____ 8. Adequate engineering documentation must be submitted showing that building sites are available and are free of flood hazard.
- _____ 9. Provide a drainage concept prior to approval of the tentative map. Sufficient information must be submitted to the Department showing the extent of the drainage problem and proposed solution.
- _____ 10. Provide improvements to eliminate the flood hazard. Improvements may include () storm drains and/or channels, () debris control facilities, () vehicular access to structures, () _____
- _____ 11. Dedicate fee title/an easement/future easement to the District/County of Los Angeles/City of _____ providing adequate right of way for _____
- _____ 12. Show on the final map the Flood Control District's right of way for _____ A permit will be required for any construction affecting the District's right of way or facilities.
- _____ 13. Approval of the _____ is recommended subject to conditions noted herein or shown on the returned map.
- _____ 14. The recordation of this map will not unreasonably interfere with the free and complete exercise of the easement held by the District/County.
- _____ 15. The _____ is unsatisfactory. Note the reasons stated herein or shown on returned map.
- _____ 16. Proposed grading must be in compliance with Chapter 70 of the County Building Code.

Comments:

3-1

- 1. Final design of the storm drains and debris basins must be based on the Capital Flood Q50. Runoff figures in the DEIR are based on Q25.
- 2. Debris basins will be required for any closed conduits proposed under Phases 1 and 2.
- 3. Diversions are not acceptable. Graded areas may be adjusted so that net watershed areas after grading are equivalent to the before grading areas.

Information relative to the above comments may be obtained by contacting:

Engineering Investigator _____

Telephone (818) 458-4920

Approved by Q. Guredot

Date of Report 8-18-92

Response to Comment Letter 3

- 3-1** Comment acknowledged. The NorthLake storm drain system will be designed in accordance with the requirements of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works.

August 10, 1992

TO: M. H. Nagao
Environmental/Special Studies
Planning Division

Attention Clarice Nash

FROM: T. W. Hoagland *HW/for*
Road/Sewer & Water Section
Land Development Division

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
PROJECT NUMBER 87-172
NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN

4-1
As requested, we reviewed the subject report dated June 1992 and have no comments.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call Mr. Henry Wong at (818) 458-4910.

HW:gp
L-2/DISK1/DEIR

cc: Sewer Unit
Water Unit

Response to Comment Letter 4

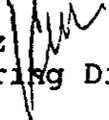
4-1 Comment acknowledged.

LETTER 5

August 6, 1992

TO: Carl L. Blum
Planning Division

Attention Clarice Nash

FROM: Victor C. Martinez 
Materials Engineering Division

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS

The attached documents for the Castaic Project, No. 87172, have been reviewed by the Materials Engineering Division.

Comments are attached.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Frederick Gharib at (818) 458-4925.

VCM:sm
ME-0/ME:EIR.8

Attach.

Response to Comment Letter 5

5-1 Comment acknowledged.

August 19, 1992

TO: Carl L. Blum
Planning Division

FROM: Ken E. Weary
Traffic and Lighting Division

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
PROJECT NUMBER 87172
NORTHLAKE SPECIFIC PLAN
CASTAIC AREA

6-1
As requested, we reviewed the subject document for the Northlake Specific Plan consisting of 2,337 single-family dwelling units, 1,286 multi-family units, 169,884 square feet of mixed highway and community commercial uses, 545,589 square feet of light industrial uses, an 18-hole championship golf course, and a clubhouse with a tennis/swimming facility and approximately 476 acres of open space. The Northlake Specific Plan also provides for a public library site, two public elementary school/park sites, and a fire station site. The 1,330-acre project site is located northeast of Lake Hughes Road and the Golden State (5) Freeway. The total project would generate approximately 49,000 vehicle trips per day.

Our comments dated May 28, 1992 (copy attached) regarding the October 1991 Traffic Impact Study are still valid and applicable. As discussed in our previous response, we recommend the developer identify as quickly as possible whether or not a new access road will be constructed connecting Castaic Road and Ridge Route Road, as well as roadway lane requirements and interchange configuration so that right of way can be protected and development phasing more suitably coordinated.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Emiko Kanayama of our Traffic Investigations and Studies Section at Extension 5909.

EAK:jeb
T-2/NORTHLAKE

Attach.

cc: Donald Y. Milne
Land Development

May 28, 1992

T-2

Mr. James E. Hartl, Director
Department of Regional Planning
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street

Attention Mr. Paul McCarthy
Impact Analysis Section

Dear Mr. Hartl:

TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY (OCTOBER 1991)
PROJECT NUMBER 87172
NORTHLAKE SPECIFIC PLAN
CASTAIC AREA

As requested, we have reviewed the subject traffic impact study for a specific plan consisting of 2,337 single-family residential units, 1,286 multi-family residential units, 545,589 square feet industrial, 169,884 square feet retail, and two 600-student elementary schools. The total project would generate approximately 49,000 daily trips. The project would utilize Ridge Route Road as its major access and is located about one mile north of Lake Hughes Road.

We believe that a project of this magnitude would have a significant impact on the area circulation system and extensive mitigation measures would be needed. The existing circulation system, depicted by the County Highway Plan, would not be adequate and must be upgraded to adequately handle the cumulative traffic volumes generated by this project and all other related projects.

This project is proposed to be constructed in phases. However, the report does not provide sufficient information to adequately address any specific mitigation measures for each phase of the total project. Therefore, as discussed with Mr. Dirk Gosda, the developer's representative, each stage of the project's development will require a traffic study prior to approval of the tentative tract map submitted for that phase. The study would be required to show, to the satisfaction of this Department, the improvements to the upgraded circulation system that must be in place to provide adequate capacity for that phase of the project being evaluated and other nearby related projects. The study must also propose appropriate measures that would mitigate impacts due to each stage of the development.

10007

T & L DIVISION

Mr. James E. Hartl
May 28, 1992
Page 2

This specific plan can be approved provided the circulation system in this area is upgraded to the satisfaction of this Department. The following roadway improvements in this upgraded circulation system must be in place to accommodate the traffic at project build out unless a traffic study shows adequate capacity can be provided with alternate project access/circulation to the satisfaction of this Department.

- Modernize the Lake Hughes Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange.
- Modernize the Parker Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange.
- Construct a new access road from this project to Castaic Road with a minimum of two lanes in each direction. If this access road cannot be constructed, then Ridge Route Road must be upgraded and improved from its present classification of Secondary highway to Major highway standards from this project to Lake Hughes Road.
- If the second access to this project is provided, upgrade and improve Ridge Route Road to Secondary highway standards from this project to Lake Hughes Road.
- Improve Castaic Road from the new project access road to Lake Hughes Road with a minimum of two lanes in each direction.
- Improve Ridge Route Road/Parker Road to Secondary highway standards from Lake Hughes Road to the Parker Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange. This improvement would require widening the bridge over Violin Creek.

We recommend the project be conditioned to contribute to the Parker Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange improvements to the satisfaction of this Department.

We also recommend the developer identify as quickly as possible whether or not a new access road will be constructed connecting Castaic Road and Ridge Route Road, as well as roadway lane requirements, and interchange configuration so that right of way can be protected and development phasing more suitably coordinated.

Mr. James E. Hartl
May 28, 1992
Page 3

We recommend Caltrans and Castaic Lake State Park also review this project for impacts/mitigations in their jurisdictions.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Joe Banales of our Traffic and Lighting Division, Traffic Investigations and Studies Section, at (818) 458-5909.

Very truly yours,

T. A. TIDEMANSON
Director of Public Works


DONALD L. WOLFE
Deputy Director

JB:dg
87172

bc: Land Development
Planning
Traffic and Lighting (Traffic Design)

Handwritten notes:
off 5-28
10:30
CR

Response to Comment Letter 6

- 6-1** In accordance with the agreement between the NorthLake applicant and the County of Los Angeles, phase specific traffic analysis will be conducted during the subsequent tentative tract map processing. The phase specific analysis provides a mechanism to evaluate potential traffic and circulation impacts based on the traffic conditions at the time of the analysis, and will allow the incorporation of mitigation measures that address changes in baseline conditions, surrounding development patterns or updated mitigation methodologies. The phase specific traffic evaluations will be coordinated through the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Traffic and Lighting Division.

August 19, 1992

TO: Michael H. Nagao
Drainage Planning/Environmental

FROM: Bruce E. Whitehead
Transportation Planning

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN

As requested, we have reviewed the DEIR for the proposal project and offer the following comments:

Traffic/Circulation

Page 4.8-3: The report described Castaic Road as being unclassified on the Los Angeles County Highway Plan. The applicant should note that Castaic Road is classified as a major highway on the Highway Plan between Lake Hughes Road and Parker Road and as a secondary highway south of Parker Road. All improvements being proposed for Castaic Road should conform to standard appropriate for the particular classification.

Page 4.8-1: For clarification, the applicant should note that Ridge Route Road is classified as a secondary highway on the Los Angeles County Highway Plan between Castaic Road and the Castaic Core boundary as shown in the Castaic Corridor Area Plan. It becomes a limited secondary highway north of the Castaic Core boundary. This highway is also designated as a scenic highway and its qualities as a scenic corridor should be retained as much as possible by the applicant. The applicant should indicate what impact, if any, the project has on the scenic corridor and then indicate any appropriate mitigation measures.

If project mitigation measures require upgrading any segments of Ridge Route Road (north of the Castaic Core boundary) from a limited secondary to a secondary highway, the applicant must process a highway plan amendment with the Department of Regional Planning.

The County's circulation network in the area was developed to carry anticipated traffic at buildout of the existing Land Use Plan. Any increases in density beyond the level allowed by the existing Land Use Plan could impair the ability of the circulation network, including local and State highways, to carry traffic at acceptable levels of service. The applicant's traffic study should evaluate traffic conditions at buildout of the proposed Land Use Plan and base all mitigation measures on this scenario.

The Lake Hughes/I-5 interchange improvement required by the project will have no locally sponsored funding source. If the proposed project is dependent on this improvement, it must address the funding source if it is to proceed.

AHN:nr
P-3:wp/62

cc: Planning (Whitehead)

Response to Comment Letter 7

7-1 Comment acknowledged. See Response to Comment Letter 6.

LETTER 8

August 4, 1992

TO: Carl L. Blum
Planning Division

Attention Clarice Nash

FROM: Thomas Brachko *TB*
MB Waste Management Division

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN
CASTAIC**

We have reviewed the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed 1,330 acre, 2,337 single-family, 1,286 multi-family unit, commercial, industrial, recreational, and institutional North Lake Specific Plan in unincorporated Castaic and provide the following comments:

- 8-1
1. Los Angeles County is facing an estimated shortfall in solid waste landfill capacity of 10,000 tons per day by 1993. As such, the proposal may adversely impact the solid waste management system in this County. The draft EIR must identify what measures the project proponent will implement to mitigate the impact of project replacement in addition to existing mitigation programs in effect. These measures may include, but are not limited to, development of new or expansion of existing landfill sites, as well as implementation of waste reduction, recycling and composting programs.

The draft EIR should identify development standards to provide adequate "waste storage areas" for collecting recyclable materials.

- 8-2
2. Sunshine Canyon Landfill closed as of September 21, 1991, due to the expiration of the Land Use Permit issued by the City of Los Angeles. Expansion plans have not been completed as all permits have not been obtained. The environmental document must state this fact along with its impact on the project.

- 8-3
3. The document should reference the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit #CA 0061654 issued to the County and local agencies by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the document to indicate compliance of all stormwater quality management requirements of the County upon adoption of such regulations. This document should incorporate project design which will enforce the quality of stormwater/urban runoff and eliminate non-storm flow to the drainage system.

- 8-4
4. Any underground storage tank modification removal or installation requires the Department of Public Works, Waste Management Division permits/approval.

Carl Blum
August 4, 1992
Page 2

- 3-5
5. Any industrial/commercial waste construction requires Industrial Waste Section approval.
- 3-6
6. Any mitigation measure monitoring program performed by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Waste Management Division will require a funding account to be established by the project proponent to pay for the required services. The amount of necessary funds will be determined at the time monitoring will be performed. Department of Public Works, Waste Management Division, must be contacted to establish this funding account.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Mr. Brachko at Extension 5185.

TSB:jk
jkwp4/BLUM2.TSB
WM-2

Response to Comment Letter 8

- 8-1 In addition to compliance with the waste reduction methods to be implemented by the County as required by the State of California Solid Waste Management Act of 1989 (A.B. 939, Sher) the NorthLake Specific Plan provided for measures to reduce the amount of project generated solid waste requiring disposal. As outlined in the Draft EIR these measures include the establishment of a curb side recycling program for NorthLake and inclusion of collection/storage facilities for recyclables in all buildings and/or the establishment of local recycling areas onsite for the use by future residents and commercial/industrial uses.
- 8-2 Comment acknowledged. Operations at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill have been suspended due to legal challenges to the expansion plans for that facility.
- 8-3 With the adoption of the NPDES requirement by the County of Los Angeles, the NorthLake storm drain plan would incorporate a plan for the treatment of urban storm water runoff.
- 8-4 Comment acknowledged.
- 8-5 Comment acknowledged.
- 8-6 Comment acknowledged.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294

(213) 881-2481

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

July 31, 1992

Mr. John Schwarze, AICP, Administrator
Department of Regional Planning
Current Planning Branch
320 West Temple Street, Room #1390
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Schwarze:

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT -- (CASTAIC)
NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN, PROJECT #87172
STATE CLEARING HOUSE #88071329 (1330 ACRES)

We have reviewed the DEIR for the North Lake Specific Plan in the undeveloped Castaic area of Los Angeles County.

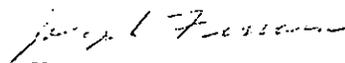
9-1

The areas germane to the statutory responsibilities of the Forestry Division have been addressed in this document.

If you have additional questions, please contact this office at the phone number shown above.

Very truly yours,

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN



BY
JOSEPH FERRARA, CHIEF, FORESTRY DIVISION
PREVENTION BUREAU

JF:lc

cc: Mr. Paul McCarthy
Department of Regional Planning
Impact Analysis Section
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

AGOURA HILLS
ARTESIA
AZUSA
LADWIN PARK
LL
LILFLOWER
BELL GARDENS

BRADBURY
CALABASAS
CARSON
CERRITOS
CLAREMONT
COMMERCE
CUDAHY

DIAMOND BAR
DUARTE
GLENDDORA
HAWAIIAN GARDENS
HIDDEN HILLS
HUNTINGTON PARK
INDUSTRY

IRVINDALE
LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
LAKEWOOD
LA MIRADA
LANCASTER
LA PUENTE
LAWNDALE

LOMITA
MALIBU
MAYWOOD
NORWALK
PALMDALE
PALOS VERDES ESTATES
PARAMOUNT

PICO RIVERA
RANCHO PALOS VERDES
ROLLING HILLS
ROLLING HILLS ESTATES
ROSEMEAD
SAN DIMAS
SANTA CLARITA

SIGNAL HILL
SOUTH EL MONTE
SOUTH GATE
TEMPLE CITY
WALNUT
WEST HOLLYWOOD
WESTLAKE VILLAGES

Response to Comment Letter 9

9-1 Comment acknowledged.

County of Los Angeles Public Library
7400 East Imperial Hwy., P.O. Box 7011, Downey, CA 90241-7011
(213) 940-8461, TELEFAX (213) 803-3032



SANDRA F. REUBEN
COUNTY LIBRARIAN

PLEASE NOTE NEW
AREA CODE 310

August 19, 1992

Mr. Paul D. McCarthy
Assistant Section Head
Impact Analysis Section
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. McCarthy:

**NOTICE OF COMPLETION
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
NORTHLAKE SPECIFIC PLAN
PROJECT NO. 87172**

This is in response to your memorandum dated July 15, 1992, which forwarded a Draft Environmental Impact Report on the project listed above. We have reviewed this report and provide the following current assessment of the project with regard to increased library service in the project area. Subsequent to information provided by Library staff in January 1991, the Public Library is using the latest Regional Planning figure for average persons per household which is reflected in this impact statement and updates the information initially provided.

As previously advised, the nearest library available to serve the proposed development area is the Valencia Library, located at 23710 West Magic Mountain Parkway, Valencia, approximately seven miles from the project site. This library now houses approximately 127,000 items. Also, the Santa Clarita Valley Bookmobile makes three stops per month within the Castaic area and maintains a rotating stock of approximately 4,500 items.

Currently the square feet per capita and items per capita in the Santa Clarita Valley service area are below the Public Library's planning standards and will fall even further below the Public Library's standards by the year 2010.

As noted above, the NorthLake development alone will generate a substantial population increase of 10,434. Based on the latest Regional Planning figure of an average of 2.88 persons per household (based on the 1990 Census population and housing units) for the Santa Clarita Valley, the construction of 3,623 dwelling units will result in an estimated population increase of 10,434 residents.

Serving the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and the cities of: Agoura Hills • Artesia • Avalon • Baldwin Park • Bell • Bell Gardens • Bellflower • Bradbury • Carson • Claremont • Compton • Cudahy • Culver City • Diamond Bar • Duarte • El Monte • Gardena • Hawaiian Gardens • Hawthorne • Hermosa Beach • Hidden Hills • Huntington Park • La Canada Flintridge • La Habra Heights • Lakewood • La Mirada • Lancaster • La Puente • La Verne • Lawndale • Lomita • Lynwood • Malibu • Manhattan Beach • Maywood • Montebello • Norwalk • Paramount • Pico Rivera • Rosemead • San Dimas • San Fernando • San Gabriel • Santa Clarita • South El Monte • South Gate • Temple City • Walnut • West Covina • West Hollywood • Westlake Village

10-1

Paul D. McCarthy
August 19, 1992
Page 2

The proposed NorthLake development is located in Census Tract 9201.02. Population of this tract, based on 1990 Census information, is 10,703 and is projected to increase to 20,640 by the year 2010. This development would increase the total population of the Castaic area to over 30,000 in less than 20 years.

The NorthLake development project is located in a geographically isolated area and creates a significant negative impact and the need for additional support staff, materials, and library services in the area. The substantial population increase associated with this development, when combined with the general population increase projected for the Castaic area, will require a full-service library of at least 10,000 square feet. This required library size is based on the current Public Library planning guideline of 0.35 square feet per capita. In addition, the Public Library's planning standard requires a four-to-one land-to-building ratio. Therefore, this library will require a one-acre site.

9-2
The County Public Library system does not have the necessary funds to provide the required capital facilities and improvements in the growing Castaic area. Efforts to secure funding provided by the Library Construction and Renovation Act of 1988 were unsuccessful. Despite the lack of its own resources, the Public Library must do all that it can to obtain the necessary funding to ensure that the citizens of emerging communities receive the library services to which they are entitled.

It is noted that Phase 2 of the NorthLake Specific Plan provides for a library site of at least one-half acre to be deeded to the County Public Library. This contribution is insufficient to mitigate the significant negative impact that this project will have on library service in the Castaic area. The Public Library believes that the developer of the NorthLake project should be required to convey a one-acre library site and fund construction of a 10,000-square-foot library during Phase 2. In lieu of the library construction, the Public Library will accept the equivalent cash contribution of \$2,200,000 which represents our current construction estimate of \$220 per square foot (includes design, construction, equipment and furnishings).

If you have any questions or require additional information, please call me at (310) 940-8450.

Very truly yours,



Fred Hungerford
Head, Staff Services

FH:SH:jam/16

c: David Flint
Evelyn MacMorres

Response to Comment Letter 10

10-1 Comment acknowledged.

10-2 Currently no development based fee requirement has been established to provide funding for the development or operation of library facilities. In order to help alleviate the current and project shortfall in library services in the Castaic area, the NorthLake Specific Plan has included a one-half acre library site to be dedicated to the County Public Library. The increase in property taxes associated with the proposed development of the NorthLake Specific Plan site will contribute to the County-wide library operations account through the General Fund. If at such time as a development fee is established throughout the county for library services, the NorthLake development shall contribute its required share for all subsequent site development efforts.

23920 Valencia Blvd.
Suite 300
City of Santa Clarita
California 91355

Phone
(805) 259-2489
Fax
(805) 259-8125



City of
Santa Clarita

September 10, 1992

Mr. James Hartl
Director of Regional Planning
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

ATTENTION: MR. FRANK MENESES, IMPACT ANALYSIS SECTION

Re: Conditional support for Project No. 87-172: Cook Ranch
Associates "Northlake Specific Plan", Sub-Plan Amendment;
Rezoning; Development Agreement # 87-172.
Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report (SCH 88071329)

Dear Mr. Hartl:

The City of Santa Clarita has reviewed the Draft Environmental
Impact Report (DEIR) for Project No. 87-172. With minor project
modifications the City of Santa Clarita can conditionally support
this proposed project. This project presents an opportunity for the
applicant to develop the project site while providing the County
with much needed infrastructure improvements.

It is our understanding from the DEIR that this is a proposal for a
Specific Plan and Development Agreement to allow the development of
1330 acres with 3623 dwelling units; 169,884 square feet of
highway/community commercial; 545,589 square feet of light
industrial; golf/tennis/swimming facility; 476 acres of open space.
The project site is located easterly of Interstate 5 (Golden State
Freeway) and westerly of Castaic Lake extending along Grasshopper
Canyon.

This proposed project includes a mix of uses which can provide a
variety of opportunities in the areas of jobs, housing, recreation,
and open space conservation. The associated development agreement
emphasizes several improvements which can provide benefit to the
residents in the immediate vicinity and in adjacent communities.
These improvements include two school/park sites, a library site, a
fire station site, road widening and signalization improvements, and
a public golf course (Section 3, Proposed Development Agreement).
The City of Santa Clarita supports projects which provide
infrastructure improvements that benefit the community as well as
the project site. (Santa Clarita General Plan Elements' Goals and
Policies: Land Use; Housing; Public Services, Facilities, and
Utilities; Open Space and Conservation). The City intends to
provide further testimony on the project at the Regional Planning
Commission's public hearing on September 16, 1992.

11-1

Klajic
Director
Heldt
Pro-Tem
Boyer
Councilmember
Darcy
Councilmember
Pederson
Councilmember

We also consider that the environmental impacts of all multiple-use projects must be carefully examined, even when the project is designed to satisfy the needs of the project developer and the surrounding community. In our review of the DEIR, we have read of several substantial impacts associated with the project that should be addressed prior to certification of the EIR, and approval of the project. The following issues are of primary concern:

HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT:

The project DEIR indicates that the range of allowable dwelling units for all residential designations (under the amended County plan) would be a low threshold of 2,088.5 dwelling units and a high threshold of 4,594.8 dwelling units. As proposed, this project would include the development of 3623 dwelling units. According to County Hillside Management policies, density reductions would apply to the N1, N2, and HM designations (total area of 720.6 acres). Table 3-1 shows the following slope ranges as they apply to these designations:

Slope (%)	Acreage
0-25	238.5
25-50	327.8
50+	154.3

For comparison, we would like to know what the total allowable number of units would be if the hillside management density reduction is applied to the entire project site (including all land use designations). Slope ranges and their respective areas were not given for the Urban designations (U1, U2, U3), Industrial (M), Commercial (C), or the Public/Semi-public (P) designations. We recommend that these uses be located on the "flattest" areas available, and in close proximity to adjacent access routes. The clustering of residential units can also allow proposed project development while minimizing grading (for roads, driveways, and building pads) upon slopes. As such, net densities can increase but the overall density would remain the same for the total 3,623 dwelling units.

TRAFFIC IMPACTS:

The Northlake development is anticipated in four phases commencing in 1994; the ultimate build-out is scheduled for the year 2000. The DEIR indicates that 100 percent of the trips generated in Phases 1 and 2 will have destinations outside of the project area, with no internal trips.

11-2

11-3

Project	AM	PM	SUNDAY
End of Phase 1 (1994)	725	745	625
End of Phase 2 (1996)	<u>1405</u>	<u>1630</u>	<u>1385</u>
	2130	2375	2010

Traffic generated from the project site will be required to use the Golden State Freeway (I-5) and the Old Road. Due to the close proximity of this development to the City of Santa Clarita, it would be reasonable to assume that most of this traffic (80% to 90%) would consider traveling to and from the City of Santa Clarita.

The DEIR should consider and expand the traffic analysis to include a study of the intersections of Rye Canyon Road/The Old Road, The Old Road/Magic Mountain Parkway (within the County), Rye Canyon Road/Avenue Scott, and Magic Mountain Parkway/McBean Parkway (within the City). We agree with the assessment that total project vehicle trips will be reduced by the end of Phases 3 and 4, due to the mix of uses and internal trips generated as shown below:

(End of)	Phase 3	Phase 4
Residential trip	5%	10%
Industrial trip	10%	10%
Retail trip	40%	40%
School trip	80%	80%

With the project trip reductions due to internal trips shown above, the total combined project generated trips that impacts the outside of the project area are summarized below:

	AM	PM	SUNDAY
End of Phase 3 (1998)	1925	2635	2180
End of Phase 4 (2000)	2330	3200	2600

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS:

In addition to conditions of approval required by the County, the Developer has agreed to contribute the following through a Development Agreement:

- * 11.9-acre school site (with 5-acre park) for planning area No. 24; 11.2 acre-school site (with 5-acre park) for planning area No. 25. We feel that the 5-acre portions of the sites for park use should be dedicated to, operated, and maintained by the County of Los Angeles.

- 11-4
- * School administration site in or near planning area No. 2-9, or outside of the project area. We concur with this provision of the development agreement.
 - * School and park sites will be in addition to school fees to the Castaic Union School District and the William S. Hart Union School District, and in addition to parkland dedication and/or in-lieu fees (per Government Code Section 66477). In-lieu fees shall be expended by the County within the project site. We concur with this provision of the development agreement.
 - * Library site, of at least one-half acre, in or near Planning Area No. 2-9, within the project site area. We concur with this provision of the development agreement.
 - * Fire Station site at a location on-site or off-site which is mutually acceptable to the Developer and the Fire Department. We concur with this provision of the development agreement.
 - * Freeway landscaping per an agreement acceptable in form to the Developer and between Caltrans and the Castaic Chamber of Commerce and/or Castaic Town Council. It is anticipated that the landscaping contribution will be approximately \$234,461 over four years (by 1996). We concur with this provision of the development agreement.
 - * 18-Hole Public Golf Course open to the general public. This portion of the Development Agreement provides an option to the developer, after the issuance of 2,000 certificates of occupancies for dwelling units, to remove the golf course from public use and convert it to a private facility. We recommend that the option to remove the golf course from public availability be deleted from the development agreement. The proposed swimming and tennis facility should also be made available for use by the General Public. Considering the lack of recreational opportunities for the existing number of residents in the Castaic area (and Santa Clarita Valley), the perpetual availability of this golf course to the general public would provide optimum benefit to the community.

11-5

WATER RECLAMATION

The project also includes water reclamation plans to provide for tertiary treatment at an on-site wastewater treatment, or

treatment at the Valencia wastewater treatment plant for irrigation of the project golf course and open space greenbelt areas. Because the project site is located in a high desert region, we are pleased to see this kind of progressive conservation measure included in this project. We encourage the use of reclaimed water for irrigation in all projects of this size and scope.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

11-6 Public transit opportunities should also be provided to the project site, in addition to the development of a rideshare program for area residents. Facilities to accommodate shuttle service and bus turn-outs should be incorporated into the project design.

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

The DEIR considers the "no project" alternative, in which the project site would remain disturbed and undeveloped. This would result in no adverse environmental impacts, but would also preclude the many infrastructure improvements associated with the proposed project.

11-7 One other alternative is considered in the DEIR which is in compliance with the existing County General Plan and consist of 893 single-family dwelling units only. While this alternative would result in reductions to several impact areas, it does not include some of the additional on-site and off-site improvements and developer contributions that would provide substantial benefit to the community. A project of this reduced density and limited use may not motivate the developer to enter into a development agreement to provide for these extra improvements and contributions.

The suitability of alternatives to this project should be influenced by existing development in the project vicinity. Improvements and additions to infrastructure and public service facilities is a criteria that should be considered when evaluating alternatives to this project. Please consider an alternative of the same intensity but with a different site design (i.e. 50% single-family units and 50% multi-family units, or "clustering" and reduced grading for hillside and ridgeline preservation) which include these infrastructure improvements.

If approved, these improvements will benefit the project site and adjacent community in the areas of schools, jobs, housing, recreation, traffic circulation, water reclamation, fire protection and library services. This project would also help to change the

11-8
perception of Castaic from being a "truck-stop" to being a balanced and versatile community. We support the County's efforts in providing needed infrastructure by encouraging this type of development.

With the minor project modifications previously recommended, we feel that the City of Santa Clarita can support this proposed project. This project presents an opportunity for the applicant to develop the project site while providing the County with much needed infrastructure improvements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We intend to provide further testimony as appropriate at the public hearing on September 16, 1992. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please call me at (805) 255-4345.

Sincerely,



Lynn M. Harris
Deputy City Manager
Community Development

LMH:MJC:684

cc: Dave Vannatta, Planning Deputy
Don Culbertson, Zone Change Section
Jerry Thompson, Public Works: Land Development Section

Response to Comment Letter 11

- 11-1 Comment acknowledged.
- 11-2 Grading for the NorthLake development is anticipated over approximately 65% of the project site. While this represents a substantial number of acres, it is important to note that only slightly less than one-half of the site will be retained in its natural condition. The predominate topographic feature of the site is the ridgeline traversing northwest to southeast along the western border of the site. This ridgeline will be retained to provide a visual and noise buffer for the interior of the site. As stated in Comment 11-2, the allowable number of dwellings for the NorthLake site range from approximately 2,088 to 4,595 under the existing planning policies for this site. The land use concept contained in the NorthLake Specific Plan provides for housing at approximately the mid-range density. As shown on Figure 2-2 of the Draft EIR, the proposed commercial and industrial uses would be located in the southern portion of the site in proximity to existing roadways and the community of Castaic.
- 11-3 As part of the subsequent tentative tract map process for the NorthLake development, phase specific traffic reports will be prepared. The purpose of these reports is to evaluate potential traffic and circulation impacts in light of the surrounding traffic conditions at the current stage of the NorthLake development. This will provide for more accurate analysis since it will allow for changes in baseline traffic conditions, changes in surrounding development patterns, and will allow for the flexibility in mitigation strategies to address current traffic problems. The traffic reports to be prepared for each phase of the NorthLake development will consider those intersection and roadway segment that can reasonably be assumed to be impacted by NorthLake related traffic. The requirements for the traffic analysis will be coordinated through the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Traffic and Lighting Division.
- 11-4 Comment acknowledged.
- 11-5 Comment acknowledged.
- 11-6 The traffic and circulation analysis for the NorthLake development will evaluate a variety of mitigation strategies including incorporation of public transit systems.
- 11-7 The NorthLake Specific Plan allows for flexibility in the final land use concept. If appropriate, clustering and/or modification to the proposed housing types can be accommodated with the subsequent onsite designs.
- 11-8 Comment acknowledged.
-

LETTER 12

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  GAS COMPANY

22245 PLACERITA CANYON ROAD, NEWHALL, CALIFORNIA • (805) 259-4600

NORTH BASIN TRANSMISSION DIVISION

MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. BOX 640, NEWHALL, CALIFORNIA 91322

August 11, 1992

Los Angeles County Department of
Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, Ca 90012

Attention: Paul McCarthy

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Report for North Lake Development
Castaic - Project 87172 Plan File 84-88-N

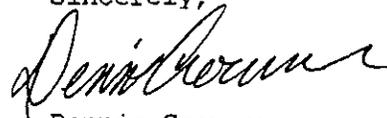
12-1 We have completed our review of the subject draft EIR. Northern Region Transmission Department is responsible for operating and maintaining the 34-inch natural gas pipeline identified on page 4.15-1 of the report. We also have an additional 26-inch active pipeline and two abandoned pipelines in the vicinity of this proposed development. Further details of this proposal are needed before we can ascertain which of our facilities will be involved and to what extent they will be impacted.

Depending on proximity, the increase in population density resulting from this development may require a change in the operating status of our pipelines in the area. A change in the operating status, location class, may require replacement or other means necessary to qualify our pipeline(s) for operation within the new location class.

The cost for requalifying, relocating, or altering our facilities to accommodate the subject development will be 100% collectable to the developer.

Please keep us informed on the progress of this development. If further details are needed or if you have any questions I can be reached at 805-253-7065.

Sincerely,



Dennis Crossover
Pipeline Planner

DC/sr
cc: G. S. Rohrer

Response to Comment Letter 12

12-1 Comment acknowledged.

Memorandum

Mr. Tom Loftus
 State Clearinghouse
 1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Date: September 17, 1992

File No.: IGR/CEQA
 DEIR
 County of Los Angeles
 I-5/Lake Hughes Rd.
 Northlake Specific
 Plan, Project 87172
 Vic. LA-5-59.49

Robert Goodell - District 7

From : DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Subject: Project Review Comments

SCH# 88071329

Caltrans has reviewed the above-referenced document. Based on the information received, we have the following comments:

13-1 Because this project is located adjacent to the I-5 and will generate over 46,000 daily trips, we request that the applicant provide improvements to the mainline freeway. We request that the developer contribute to mitigation measures for an I-5 HOV lane up to SR-126 and a truck lane to Lake Hughes Road to the extent that the development proportionately adds trips to I-5 on these segments.

Also, the Northlake development will adversely impact all the intersections adjacent to the site, especially the interchanges of Lake Hughes Road and Castaic Road with I-5. The existing LOS within the area is presently at Level "F" during peak travel periods (Summer weekend travel). Because the Northlake project is anticipated to generate high volumes of traffic, we suggest that a traffic report be developed addressing the existing and Year 2010 impacts at the I-5/Lake Hughes Road and at the I-5/Parker Road interchanges. Considerations should be given to improving the Parker Road/I-5 interchange and the Lake Hughes/I-5 interchange prior to or concurrent with the Northlake development.

13-2 Proposed residential developments built adjacent to a freeway will require noise attenuation measures in both the architectural design and construction, as well as site design considerations. Caltrans policy does not provide funds for construction of soundwalls for residential dwelling units built adjacent to existing freeways.

Any mitigation proposed should be fully discussed. These discussions should include, but not be limited to, the following: implementation responsibilities, scheduling considerations, financing, and monitoring plan

Mr. Tom Loftus
September 17, 1992
Page Two

Any encroachment onto State right-of-way will require an Encroachment Permit. Projects which cost over \$300,000 will require a Project Studies Report.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please call Wilford Melton at (213) 897-1338.

ROBERT GOODELL, CHIEF
Advance Planning Branch

cc: Paul McCarthy, County Of Los Angeles Dept. of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street Los Angeles, CA 90012

Response to Comment Letter 13

- 13-1** Mitigation requirements to offset project related impacts to traffic and circulation patterns around the NorthLake development will be determined during the phase specific traffic analyses. The NorthLake development will contribute its fare share portion of all mitigation requirements to the local and regional roadway network. All mitigation requirements to I-5, or encroachment onto state right-of-way property will be coordinated through Caltrans - District 7.
- 13-2** Noise generated from traffic along I-5 is not anticipated to create a significant impact on residential uses within the NorthLake Specific Plan site. The predominate ridgeline parallel to I-5 at the western project border will provide a natural noise buffer for the residential areas proposed in the interior of the site.



**South Coast
AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**

21865 E. Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4182 (714) 396-2000

October 1, 1992

Mr. Paul McCarthy
Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. McCarthy:

RE: The Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Northlake Specific Plan Amendments

SCAQMD #LAC920717-01

The revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (revised Draft EIR) is intended to reflect environmental impacts from changes made to the previously planned 1,330-acre project site in the Castaic area of Los Angeles County. The proposed changes to the original Northlake Specific Plan include the addition of industrial uses, and associated reduction of residential uses. The revised Draft EIR, however, does not clearly establish the changes.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has reviewed the revised Draft EIR. The construction and operation of the project have the potential to create adverse air quality impacts at both the project-specific and the cumulative level. The Draft EIR does not contain adequate or sufficient information on the potential detrimental air quality effects of the project upon which to base an informed decision. The revised Draft EIR should include an air quality analysis which establishes that construction and operation related emissions would not result in concentrations that would exceed the state and federal standards. The Final EIR should, at a minimum, include the following information:

- o 1991 air quality data;
- o Site characteristics such as past uses of the site, e.g., presence of storage tanks, structures, oil stains, etc. at the site;
- o Demolition and remediation emissions, if applicable;
- o Differences in construction and operation emissions due to increased industrial uses and decreased residential uses;
- o Construction schedule and associated emissions from construction activities;
- o A best estimate of operational emissions from secondary sources, such as generators, boilers, etc.;
- o Microscale CO analysis;

- o A discussion of consistency with regional plans, such as the 1991 Air Quality Management Plan, local adopted Congestion Management Plan, General Plan, or any other applicable regional plans;
- o Cumulative emissions;
- o Additional feasible mitigation measures which would ensure that the total daily emissions from construction and operation (project-specific and cumulative) related activities and vehicles do not exceed the recommended level of significance; and
- o Post-mitigation emissions.

4-3 Based upon our review, the additional analysis and mitigation measures discussed in this letter should be incorporated in the Final EIR and conditions of approval to reduce air quality impacts to the greatest extent feasible. For additional information, please refer to the SCAQMD's 1987 revision of the Air Quality Handbook For Preparing Environmental Impact Reports. The SCAQMD is in process of revising its air quality impact handbook. If you desire, a copy of the draft document (September 1992 revision) can be made available to you.

4 SCAQMD recognizes that parts of the Northlake Specific Plan are speculative at this time. Future construction and operations within the Northlake Specific Plan may require separate environmental review. SCAQMD recommends that all new projects within the scope of the Northlake Specific Plan be required to comply with the air quality mitigation measures proposed in the revised Draft EIR. Additionally, before the Final EIR is certified, the revised Draft EIR should be corrected for the deficiencies and inadequacies described in this letter. The SCAQMD staff would be happy to assist you further during the revisions to the air quality section of the Draft EIR.

The SCAQMD appreciates the opportunity to comment on the revised Draft EIR. If you have questions regarding our comments, please contact Connie Day, Program Supervisor, at (714) 396-3055.

Sincerely,

Steve Smith for CSG

Cindy S. Greenwald
Planning Manager

CSG:CAD:SRG
(SG09NLS1.DOC)

Response to Comment Letter 14

14-1 The NorthLake Specific Plan was revised to reflect amendments to the Santa Clarita Valley Areawide Plan (SCVAP) approved by the County Board of Supervisors in December 1990. The land use policies contained in the NorthLake Specific Plan are in conformance with the amended SCVAP. Table 2-1 of the Draft EIR (pages 2-3 and 2-4) outlines the changes in the NorthLake land use concepts.

14-2 The Draft EIR provided a plan level analysis of the potential impact to air quality for implementation of the NorthLake Specific Plan. As identified in the Draft EIR because the project site is within an air quality monitoring area that exceeds the state and federal standards for ozone, the addition of project related emissions was considered a significant impact. Phase specific air quality assessments will be conducted during the tentative tract map process for the NorthLake development. These phase specific assessments will provide for more accurate evaluation of potential air quality impact because of the following considerations:

1. current air quality monitoring data can be used for the comparison of project emissions with ambient air quality levels,
2. mobile source emissions will be evaluated based on updated traffic counts for both the proposed development and existing traffic volumes,
3. cumulative impact assessment can address updated approved and pending projects,
4. mitigation strategies can be developed that reflect improvements in best available technologies and improvements to regional transit systems,
5. current policies within the Air Quality Management Plan, local Congestion Management Plans or other applicable regional plan can be considered within the phase specific analysis.

The phase specific air quality assessments will be submitted to the South Coast Air Quality Management District for review and approval. It is anticipated that the air quality reports will contain at a minimum the following analysis: estimates of emissions from construction, vehicles, operations, and secondary sources; microscale CO analysis; mitigation efficiency calculations; plan and policy consistency; and cumulative impacts assessment.

14-3 See response to Comment 14-1. A listing of current recommended air quality mitigation measures is included in Appendix C. These measures and others identified

at the time of the phase specific analysis will be evaluated and implemented as appropriate.

14-4 See response to Comment 14-2.

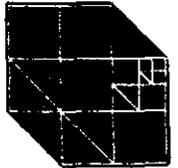
APPENDIX A

FILE COPY

Los Angeles County
DEPARTMENT OF
REGIONAL PLANNING
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles
California 90012
974-6411
James E. Hart, AICP
Planning Director

CORRECTED INFORMATION

July 27, 1992



TO: All Interested Agencies and Organizations

FROM: Paul McCarthy
Assistant Section Head
Impact Analysis Section

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF COMPLETION
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS
PROJECT 87172
NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN
SCH NO 88071329

The attached Draft EIR has been prepared for the above project located on approximately 1330 acres of currently vacant ranch land easterly of Interstate 5 (Golden State Freeway) and westerly of Castaic Lake along Grasshopper Canyon in the Castaic area of Los Angeles County.

We request your comments on the enclosed document for consideration by the Regional Planning Commission. Any suggestions for mitigating measures should be included in your reply.

It is requested that your office respond by September 11, 1992. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Paul McCarthy, Assistant Section Head, Impact Analysis Section at (213) 974-6461.

JEH:PM:pr

Enclosure DEIR 87-172

THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Los Angeles, California 90012

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING
SUB-PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 87-172-(5)
ZONING CASE NO. 87-172-(5)
DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT NO. 87-172-(5)
[NORTHLAKE SPECIFIC PLAN]

Notice is hereby given that the Regional Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing concerning this land use proposal on Wednesday, September 16, 1992 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 150, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. Interested persons will be given an opportunity to testify. The Environmental Impact Report associated with this proposal will also be considered.

General description of proposal: Phased development of a maximum of 3,623 dwelling units, 13.2 acres of commercial, 50.1 acres of industrial, 643.3 acres of recreation/open space and 23.1 acres of school and park facilities.

SUB-PLAN AMENDMENT REQUEST: To amend the Land Use Policy Map of the Los Angeles County General Plan from residential categories "1", "2", and "3", C (Commercial), R (Non Urban), I (Industrial), O (Open Space) and P (Public and Semi-Public Facilities) to Specific Plan; and

To amend the Land Use Policy Map of the Santa Clarita Valley Areawide Plan from U1 (1.1-3.3 dwelling units per acre), U2 (3.4-6.6 dwelling units per acre), U3 (6.7-15 dwelling units per acre), N1 (Maximum 5 dwelling units per acre), N2 (.5 dwelling unit per acre), HM (Hillside Management), M (Manufacturing), C (Commercial), and P (Public Facilities) to Specific Plan.

The Commission may recommend such other amendments to either the written or mapped policies of the General Plans as it may deem appropriate.

ZONE CHANGE REQUEST: From A-2-2 (Heavy Agriculture-2 acres required area), M-1 (Light Manufacturing), C-3 (Unlimited Commercial), O-S (Open Space) and W (Watershed) to Specific Plan.

The Commission may recommend a change of zone from A-2-2, M-1, C-3, O-S, and W to Specific Plan or such other zone, whether more intense or less, as it deems appropriate.

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT: A bilateral contract by and between the County of Los Angeles and Cook Ranch Associates relative to the development of the subject property. The proposed agreement would obligate the County to approve the discretionary permits necessary to implement the project and obligate the developer to reserve certain portions of the site for public use and construct infrastructure improvements to serve the project.

LOCATION: The subject property is an irregularly shaped parcel of 1,330+ acres located easterly of Interstate 5 (Golden State Freeway) and westerly of Castaic Lake extending along Grasshopper Canyon in the Castaic Zoned District (all measurements are approximate).

These cases do not affect the zoning of surrounding property. If you are unable to attend the public hearing but wish to send written comments, please write to the Regional Planning Commission, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. You may also obtain additional information concerning this case by phoning Ms. Manzanara at (213) 974-6443 between 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Callers from North County areas may dial (805) 272-0964 (Antelope Valley) or (805) 253-0111 (Santa Clarita) toll free and then request a connection to 974-6443.

SI NO ENTIENDE ESTA NOTICIA O NECESITA MAS INFORMACION POR FAVOR
LLAME ESTE NUMERO (213) 974-6466.

Case materials, including the environmental documentation, are available for review between 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday in the offices of the Department of Regional Planning, Hall of Records, Room 1348, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. These materials will also be available for review beginning August 3, 1992 at the following locations:

Department of Regional Planning
Santa Clarita Branch Office
23757 Valencia Boulevard
Valencia, California 91355

Valencia County Library
23743 West Valencia Boulevard
Valencia, California 91355

APPENDIX B



NorthLake

14352 Chandler Boulevard
Van Nuys, California 91401
(818) 905-1454 · Fax (818) 784-5059

September 15, 1992

Mr. Tom Reilly
Los Angeles County
Department of Parks & Recreation
31320 Castaic Road
Castaic, CA 91310

Re: Letter dated September 14, 1992 from your department to Regional Planning Department and our meeting on September 11, 1992.

Dear Mr. Reilly:

Thank you for meeting with me to discuss your concerns about the NorthLake Specific Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Report and Development Agreement. As we agreed, I am sending you this letter to acknowledge and clarify issues regarding parks and recreation facilities in Northlake. Accordingly, Cook Ranch Associates agrees that:

1. NorthLake's obligation with regard to Quimby requirements shall be four acres per 1,000 people, plus an additional ten acres to be donated by developer. This totals approximately 52 acres.
2. Of the 52 acre requirement, twenty three to twenty six acres of the obligation shall be met by dedication of land to the County of Los Angeles.
3. The balance of the requirement shall be met by payment of in-lieu fees which today are approximately \$105,000 per acre.
4. It is the intent of both Cook Ranch Associates and the County of Los Angeles that a portion of the Quimby requirement will be land and a portion will be fee so that parks are constructed and improved as the project is built.

Mr. Tom Reilly

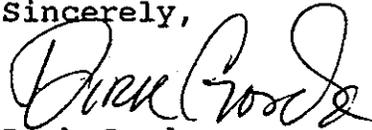
Page 2

September 15, 1992

5. This letter shall serve as an understanding of both parties to allow both of us to plan accordingly. However, prior to submittal of the first tentative map for the project, the Los Angeles County Department of Parks & Recreation and Cook Ranch Associates shall either:
 - a. Execute an agreement which defines the specific obligations for Cook Ranch Associates for the entire project.
 - b. Execute a letter which defines the specific conditions for the tentative maps being submitted.
6. We agree to your concerns regarding Hiking and Equestrian Trails.

I believe this covers everything we agreed to. If not, please contact me at your convenience and we can discuss this further. Once again, thank you.

Sincerely,



Dirk Gosda
General Partner

DG:db

cc: Mr. John Schwarze
Mr. Steve Teller

APPENDIX C

ATTACHMENT

POTENTIAL POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR A SPECIFIC PLAN

POLICY 1

To reduce particulate emissions from paved and unpaved roads, construction activities, and agriculture operations:

STRATEGIES

- o Use low emission mobile construction equipment (e.g., tractor, scraper, dozer etc.).
- o Develop trip reduction plan to achieve 1.5 AVR for construction employees.
- o Water site and clean equipment morning and evening.
- o Spread soil binders on site, unpaved roads and parking areas.
- o Apply District approved chemical soil stabilizers according to manufacturers specifications, to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas which remain inactive for 96 hours).
- o Reestablish ground cover on construction site through seeding and watering.
- o Implement or contribute to an urban tree planting program to off-set the loss of existing trees at the construction site.
- o Employ construction activity management techniques, such as: extending the construction period; reducing the number of pieces of equipment used simultaneously; increasing the distance between the emission sources; reducing or changing the hours of construction; and scheduling activity during off-peak-hours.
- o Pave construction roads, and sweep streets if silt is carried over to adjacent public thoroughfares.
- o Reduce traffic speeds on all unpaved road surfaces to 15 miles per hour or less.
- o Require a phased-schedule for construction activities to minimize emissions.
- o Suspend grading operations during first and second stage smog alerts.
- o Suspend all grading operations when wind speeds (as instantaneous gusts) exceed 25 miles per hour.
- o Wash off trucks leaving the site.
- o Maintain construction equipment engines by keeping them tuned.
- o Use low sulfur fuel for stationary construction equipment.
- o Utilize existing power sources (e.g., power poles) or clean fuel generators rather than temporary power generators.
- o Use low emission on-site stationary equipment.

POLICY 2

To reduce automobile emissions by reducing the number of vehicles driven to a work site on a daily basis:

STRATEGIES

- o Provide local shuttle and regional transit systems and transit shelters.
- o Provide bicycle lanes, storage areas, and amenities.
- o Ensure efficient parking management.
- o Provide dedicated parking spaces with electrical outlets for electric vehicles.
- o Provide peripheral park-n-ride lots.
- o Provide preferential parking to high occupancy vehicles and shuttle services.
- o Charge parking lot fees to low occupancy vehicles.

POLICY 3

To reduce automobile emissions by reducing the number of persons who must drive to a work site on a daily basis:

STRATEGIES

- o Promote Transportation Management Associations (TMAs).
- o Establish telecommuting programs, alternative work schedules, and satellite work centers.
- o Work with cities/developers/citizens in the region to implement TDM goals.

POLICY 4

To reduce vehicular emissions through traffic flow improvements:

STRATEGIES

- o Configure parking to minimize traffic interference.
- o Minimize obstruction of through-traffic lanes.
- o Provide a flagperson to guide traffic properly and ensure safety at construction sites.
- o Schedule operations affecting traffic for off-peak hours.
- o Develop a traffic plan to minimize traffic flow interference from construction activities. Plan may include advance public notice of routing, use of public transportation, and satellite parking areas with a shuttle service.
- o Schedule goods movements for off-peak traffic hours.
- o Synchronize traffic signals.
- o Provide adequate ingress and egress at all entrances to public facilities to minimize vehicle idling at curbsides.
- o Provide dedicated turn lanes as appropriate.

POLICY 5

To reduce the length of work trips while expanding the supply of affordable housing and creating an urban form that efficiently utilizes urban infrastructure and services:

STRATEGIES

- o Achieve a job/housing balance compatible with the Regional Growth Management Plan.
- o Encourage growth in and around activity centers, transportation nodes and corridors.
- o Promote future patterns of urban development and land use, making better use of existing facilities, and promoting mixed use development involving commercial and residential uses.

POLICY 6

To reduce stationary emissions of operation related activities:

STRATEGIES

- o Require development practices which maximize energy conservation as a prerequisite to permit approval.
- o Improve the thermal integrity of buildings, and reduce the thermal load with automated time clocks or occupant sensors.
- o Introduce window glazing, wall insulation, and efficient ventilation methods.
- o Introduce efficient heating and other appliances, such as water heaters, cooking equipment, refrigerators, furnaces and boiler units.
- o Incorporate appropriate passive solar design, and solar heaters.
- o Use devices that minimize the combustion of fossil fuels.
- o Capture waste heat and reemploy it in nonresidential buildings.
- o Landscape with native drought-resistant species to reduce water consumption and to provide passive solar benefits.

POLICY 7

To protect sensitive land uses from major sources of air pollution:

STRATEGIES

- o Integrate additional mitigation measures into site design such as the creation of buffer zones between a potential sensitive receptor's boundary and potential pollution source.
- o Require design features, operating procedures, preventive maintenance, operator training, and emergency response planning to prevent the release of toxic pollutants.