

5. Environmental Analysis

5.15 RECREATION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential for implementation of the Proposed Project to impact recreation in the Project Area. The potential for adverse impacts on accessibility of recreational facilities to existing and proposed residential neighborhoods and impacts resulting from the construction of additional recreational facilities are evaluated based on existing facilities and adopted and proposed parkland standards.

5.15.1 Environmental Setting

5.15.1.1 REGULATORY SETTING

State Regulations

The Quimby Act

Since the passage of the 1975 Quimby Act (California Government Code Section 66477), cities and counties have been authorized to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities (Westrup 2002). A 1982 amendment (AB 1600) requires agencies to clearly show a reasonable relationship between the public's need for the recreation facility or parkland, and the type of development project upon which the fee is imposed. Cities and counties with a high ratio of park space to inhabitants can set a standard of up to five acres per 1,000 people for new development. Cities and counties with a lower ratio can only require the provision of up to three acres of park space per 1,000 people. The calculation of a city or county's park space to population ratio is based on a comparison of the population count of the last federal census to the amount of city/county-owned parkland.

The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982

The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act provides an alternative method of financing certain public capital facilities and services, especially in developing areas and areas undergoing rehabilitation. This state law empowers local agencies to establish Community Facilities Districts as a means of obtaining community funding.

Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972, California Streets and Highway Code Section 22500–22509

The California Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972 authorizes local legislative bodies to establish benefit related assessment districts, or Landscaping and Lighting Districts (LLADs) and to levy assessments for the construction, installation, and maintenance of certain public landscaping and lighting improvements. LLADs may be established to maintain local public parks.

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Local Regulations

Los Angeles County Code

In addition to containing regulations on the operation of park facilities, the County Code contains provisions that regulate the provision of parklands for new subdivisions, in accordance with the Quimby Act. County Code Section 21.24.340 (Residential Subdivisions, Local Park Space Obligation, Formula) contains the methodology used to determine the amount of parkland required to be dedicated by the subdivider as a part of the subdivision map approval process. In accordance with Section 21.28.140, the developer may also choose to pay a fee in lieu of the provision of parkland. Additionally, the developer may choose to provide less than the required amount of parkland, but develop it with amenities equal to the value of what the in-lieu fee would be. In order to determine the local park space obligation for a subdivision, a formula is used, which considers the number of dwelling units in the subdivision, the average household size by Park Planning Area (PPA) (which differs for single family, multifamily, and mobile home developments as well as by PPA), and the adopted ratio of three acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, per the Quimby Act. However, it should be noted that, as provided in the Adopted General Plan, as a condition of zone change approval, General Plan amendment, specific plan approval, or development agreement, the County may require a subdivider to dedicate land according to the General Plan goal of four acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents and six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents.

Once the local park space obligation is determined, County Code Section 21.24.350 (Residential Subdivisions, Provision or Local Park Sites) contains regulations pertaining to the siting of park facilities as well as provisions that give the option to subdividers of 50 units or less to choose to provide the obligatory amount of parkland, any excess of which would be credited to the subdivision, or otherwise allow any remaining obligation to be satisfied by the payment of park fees in accordance with the provisions of Section 21.28.140. Additionally, since only the portions of the land dedicated for parkland that are suitable for park use can be counted against the obligation of the subdivider, attributes of the park space, including the slope of the site are used to determine the amount of land which can be counted against the subdivider's obligation. For example, for the portions of the site in excess of 20 percent slope, only 10 percent of the acreage will be counted against the subdivider's obligation, whereas all of the land that is less than 3 percent slope can be counted toward the obligation.

Section 21.28.140 (Park Fees Required When, Computation and Use) contains provisions regarding the payment of in-lieu fees for any portion of the dedication obligation not satisfied by the subdivider. These fees would be enforced as a condition of approval on the final approval of the subdivision. The in-lieu fee is determined by multiplying the amount of park space not satisfied by the representative land value for the appropriate PPA. This section also makes it the responsibility of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to develop a schedule specifying how, when, and where it will use the land or fees or both from each subdivision to develop park or recreational facilities within the applicable PPA.

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Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1992, 1996, Proposition A

Proposition A created the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District. The District's boundaries are coterminous with the boundaries of Los Angeles County. The proposition authorized an annual assessment on nearly all of the 2.25 million parcels of real property in Los Angeles County. Proposition A funded \$540 million for the acquisition, restoration, or rehabilitation of real property for parks and park safety, senior recreation facilities, gang prevention, beaches, recreation, community or cultural facilities, trails, wildlife habitats, or natural lands, and maintenance and servicing of those projects. In 1996, voters approved another Proposition A to fund an additional \$319 million for parks and recreation projects, and additional funds for maintenance and to service those projects. Proposition A funds may be used to fund the development, acquisition, improvement, restoration, and maintenance of parks; recreational, cultural and community facilities; and open space lands.

County of Los Angeles Park Design Guidelines and Standards

The Park Design Guidelines and Standards document is intended to give design professionals, County staff, and other agencies guidance on how to design and develop parks that meet County standards and expectations. It incorporates input from DPR staff, other County departments as well as outside partners such as non-profit organizations and private developers which have an interest in park design. This manual addresses topics such as: spatial organization, buildings, circulation, recreational facilities, landscaping, stormwater management, utilities, preferred manufactured products to be used at the parks, and preferred plant lists for both potable and recycled water.

County of Los Angeles Trails Manual

In May 2011, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the County of Los Angeles Trails manual, which provides guidelines and sources of information for trail planning, design, development, and maintenance of County trails. The Trails Manual is intended to be used by County Departments, primarily DPR, and agencies associated with, or working in conjunction with DPR, or engaged in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of multi-use (equestrian, hiking, and mountain bicycling) trails within the County.

5.15.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Los Angeles County Park System

The County Park System has a total of 169 parks and recreational facilities. These facilities are owned, operated, and maintained by the County and total 69,595 acres. An additional 541 acres have been dedicated, but have not yet been developed as parkland. The following section describes the types of recreational facilities within the Project Area that are operated by DPR. Parks are classified based on their size, use, and physical characteristics.

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Local Park System

Parks in the local park system are intended to serve the daily recreation needs of the communities in which they are located. Community parks, neighborhood parks, pocket parks, and park nodes are all included in this classification. Table 5.15-1 provides a summary of the different categories within the local park system.

Table 5.15-1 Local Park System Summary

Facility	Typical Park Features and Amenities
Community Park Suggested Acreage: 10 to 20 acres Service Area: 1 to 2 miles	Passive park amenities, including but not limited to: informal open play areas, children's play apparatus, family and group picnic areas with overhead shelters, barbecues. Active sports activities, including but not limited to: lighted sports fields, basketball courts and tennis courts. Additional amenities may include aquatics complex, skate park, arena soccer, roller hockey, community gardens, and dog parks. Park facilities, including but not limited to: public restrooms, concession building, community buildings, maintenance building and onsite parking and information kiosks.
Neighborhood Park Suggested Acreage: 3 to 10 acres Service Area: 1/2 mile	Passive park amenities, including but not limited to: informal open play areas, children's play apparatus, group picnic areas with overhead shelters, barbecues. Active park amenities, including but not limited to: practice sports fields, basketball, tennis, and volleyball courts. Park facilities, including but not limited to: public restroom, onsite parking and information kiosks.
Pocket Park Suggested Acreage: less than 3 acres Service Area: 1/4 mile	Passive park amenities, including but not limited to: picnic areas and seating areas. Active park amenities, including but not limited to: children's play apparatus.
Park Node Suggested Acreage: 1/4 acre or less No service radius area	Varies; can include: plazas, rest areas, playgrounds, landmarks and public art installations.

Source: Los Angeles County Draft General Plan 2014

Because residential areas are generally not located within urbanized neighborhoods, the Project Area contains few local parks.

Regional Park System

Parks in the regional park system are intended to serve the recreation needs of residents and visitors throughout Los Angeles County. Community regional parks, regional parks, and special use facilities are all included in this classification. Table 5.15-2 provides a summary of the different categories within the regional park system.

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Table 5.15-2 Regional Park System Summary

Facility	Typical Park Features and Amenities
Community Regional Park Suggested Acreage: 20 to 100 acres Service Area: Up to 20 miles	Passive park amenities, including but not limited to: informal open play areas, children's play apparatus, group picnic areas with overhead shelters, barbecues. Active sports activities, including but not limited to: lighted sports fields, basketball courts and tennis courts. Additional amenities may include one or more of the following features: multiple sports facilities, aquatics center, fishing lake, community building and gymnasium, and scenic views and vistas. Park facilities, including but not limited to: public restrooms, concession building, community buildings, maintenance building and onsite parking and information kiosks.
Regional Park Suggested Acreage: Greater than 100 acres Service Area: 25+ miles	Passive park amenities, including but not limited to: group picnic areas with overhead shelters, barbecues. Additional amenities may include one or more of the following features: lakes, wetlands, auditoriums, water bodies for swimming, fishing and boating, and sports fields.
Special Use Facility No size criteria No assigned service radius area	Generally, single purpose facilities. Can include passive features such as: wilderness parks, nature preserves, botanical gardens and nature centers. Active uses can include: performing arts, water parks, aquatic facilities, skate parks, golf driving ranges and golf courses.
Source: Los Angeles County Draft General Plan 2014	

Table 5.15-3, *Existing Parkland in the Project Area*, provides a summary of the amount of local and regional parkland in the Project Area. The County goal for the provision of parkland is four acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents of the population in the Project Area and six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents of the total population of Los Angeles County.

Table 5.15-3 Existing Parkland in the Project Area

Local Parkland Goal 4 Acres/1,000 Population				Regional Parkland Goal 6 Acres/1,000 Population ¹			
Project Area Population	Parkland Acreage	Existing Parkland Ratio	Surplus/ Deficit Acreage	Population of Project Area and Adjacent Cities	Parkland Acreage	Existing Parkland Ratio	Surplus/ Deficit Acreage
93,490	50	0.54	-324	382,868	3,870	10.11	+1,573

Source: Los Angeles County Draft General Plan, 2014.

¹ Existing population and parkland acreage shown for the regional parkland goal includes parkland in the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale.

The acreage goal identified for local parks in the Adopted General Plan and in Policy PS 8.3 of the Proposed Area Plan is four acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The regional parkland goal under the Adopted General Plan is six acres per 1,000 countywide residents. As shown in Table 5.15-3, *Existing Parkland in the Project Area*, there are a total of 50 acres of local parkland in the Project Area and 3,870 acres of regional parkland in the Project Area and adjacent cities (Lancaster and Palmdale). Using DPR population estimates, there is a 324-acre deficit of local parkland, but a surplus of 1,573 acres of regional parkland in the Project

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Area and adjacent cities. Therefore, while the existing regional parkland acreage surpasses the County's goal of six acres per 1,000 residents, the existing local parkland acreage does not meet the County or the Proposed Area Plan's standard for recreational facilities.

Table 5.15-4, *Parks and Recreation Inventory for the Project Area*, shows a complete inventory of DPR parks located in the Project Area.

Table 5.15-4 Parks and Recreation Inventory for the Project Area

Park	Park Classification	Type	Acres
Local Parks			
Acton Park	Community	Local	14
George Lane Park	Community	Local	14
Everett Martin Park	Neighborhood	Local	6
Pearblossom Park	Neighborhood	Local	8
Jackie Robinson Park	Neighborhood	Local	9
Subtotal (Local Parks)¹			50
Regional Parks			
Acton Wash Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	75
Alpine Butte Wildlife Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	323
Apollo Community Regional Park	Community Regional	Regional	54
Big Rock Creek Wildlife Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	161
Blalock Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	140
Butte Valley Wildflower Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	351
Desert Pines Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	99
Devil's Punchbowl Natural Area	Special Use	Regional	1,300
Carl O. Gerhardy Wildlife Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	547
Jackrabbit Flats Wildlife Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	114
Mescal Wildlife Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	99
Stephen Sorenson Park	Community Regional	Regional	108
Theodore Payne Wildlife Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	157
Phacelia Wildlife Sanctuary	Special Use	Regional	160
Subtotal (Regional Parks)¹			3,647
TOTAL			3,697

Source: Los Angeles County Draft General Plan, 2014.

¹ Discrepancy between sum of individual local parks and total for local parks is due to rounding.

Trails

The Project Area features several mountain ranges, including a majority of the San Gabriel Mountains, which separate the Antelope Valley from the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley basins. Accordingly, the Project

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Area offers a variety of trails and trail types to residents. The County is responsible for providing parks and recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents and visitors of Los Angeles County, and strives to make all trails multiuse and accessible to all non-motorized users including: hikers, equestrians, and mountain bicyclists, where appropriate.

Figure 5.15-1, *Regional Trail System Map*, depicts the County's regional trail system. Within the Project Area, there are a number of federal/national forest multi-use (equestrian, hiking, and mountain bicycling) trails including the Pacific Crest Trail (dual-use: equestrian and hiking) that runs through the Angeles National Forest (ANF). In addition, there are existing County trails and many proposed County Trails (from the adopted 2007 Trails Map) throughout the northern portion of the Project Area northeast of the ANF.

The Regional Trail System Map serves as a long-range planning tool to guide future trail development to meet the recreational needs of the County. In an effort to provide an interconnected regional trail network, DPR consults and collaborates with public, non-profit and private organizations to: 1) identify and pursue trail opportunities connecting state, federal and local parks and greenways; 2) integrate trailheads and feeder trails that are capable of linking residential communities to recreational facilities and nature-oriented destinations; and 3) obtain easements or license agreements for trails through the County's land subdivision and development project approvals process.

State Parks

The Project Area includes several notable recreational amenities that are administered by the State of California. These include:

- Antelope Valley Indian Museum State Historic Park
- Antelope Valley California Poppy State Natural Preserve
- Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland State Park
- Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area
- Saddleback Butte State Park

Other Recreational Facilities

In addition to the facilities discussed above, several other categories of recreation facilities exist throughout the Project Area and serve the needs of residents. These facilities include school district facilities and private recreational facilities.

School District Facilities

The County coordinates with local school districts to organize, promote, and conduct joint recreational and educational programs. These community recreation agreements are a form of joint-use agreement, where either a school or park facility may be put to some recreational use by the other party in exchange for some facility improvement and/or maintenance. A park does not have to be adjacent to a school (i.e., share a common boundary) for an agreement to be viable.

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City Parks and Facilities

Parks and facilities in the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale that are located close to the borders of the unincorporated areas are enjoyed by city and county residents alike. Similarly, local County parks that are located within or close to the borders of cities provide recreational amenities for both populations. This overlap in local park service radius is an important factor to consider in the placement of new local parks.

Private Recreational Facilities

Private recreational facilities play an important role in meeting recreational needs. The network of private recreational facilities consists of churches, health and fitness clubs, and other organizations that offer a variety of programs and facilities. As the County does not control, maintain, or program private recreational facilities, these resources are not credited toward the County's acreage goals for public parks.

Recreation Programs

In addition to facilities, the availability of recreation programs contributes to the quality of the parks and recreation network in the Project Area. These programs include organized sports, tournaments, scheduled classes, and special events, as well as casual leisure activities such as family picnics and walking. Meeting the diverse needs of the community is critical to having successful recreation programs; therefore, the County has programs intended for preschool-aged children, elementary-school-aged youth, middle-school-aged youth, high-school-aged youth, adults, seniors, and households.

5.15.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project:

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

5.15.3 Relevant Area Plan Goals and Policies

The following is a list of goals and policies included as part of the Proposed Project that are intended to reduce potentially significant adverse effects concerning recreation.

Conservation and Open Space Element

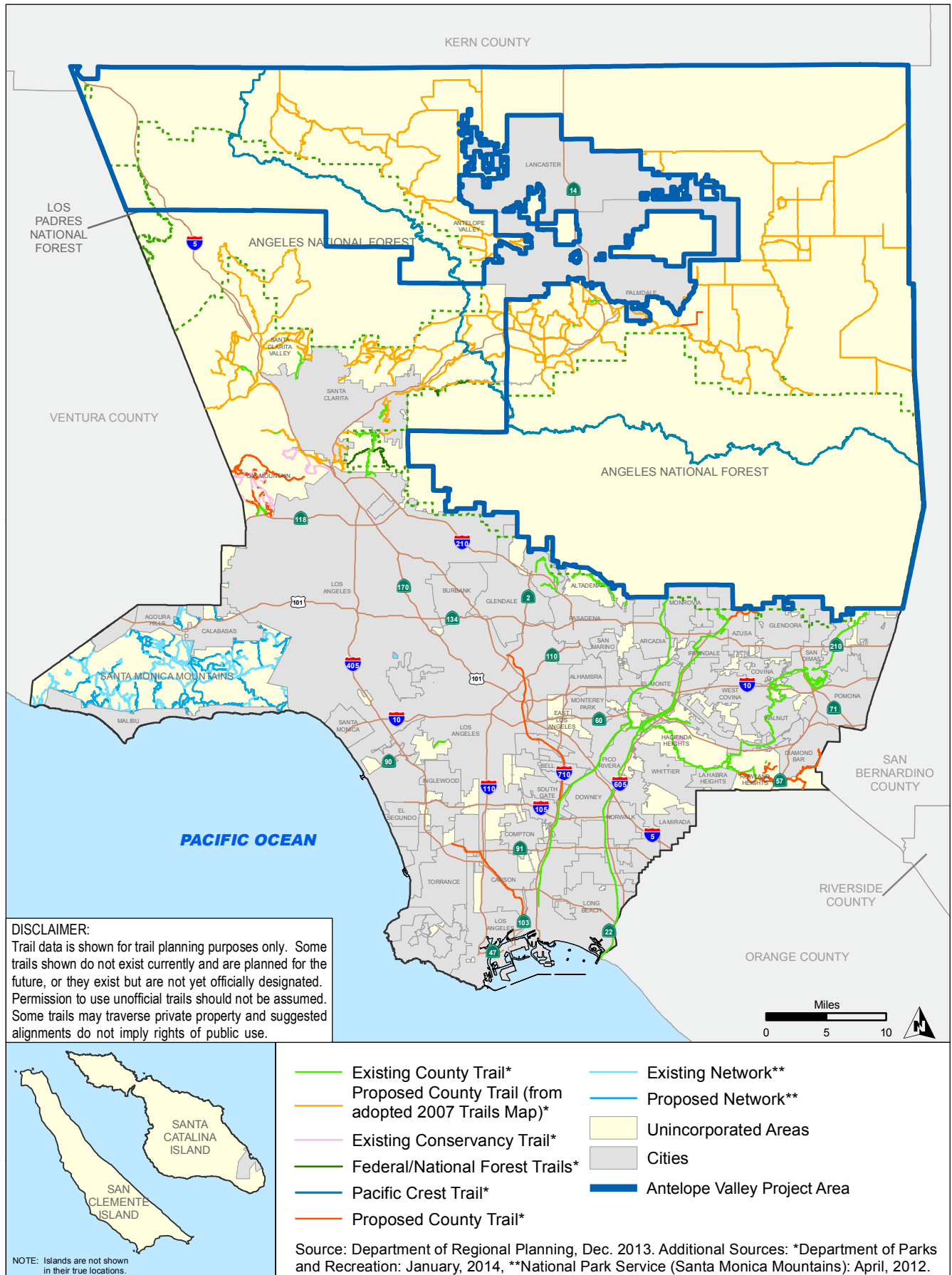
Goal COS 18: Permanently preserved open space areas throughout the Antelope Valley.

- **Policy COS 18.5:** Provide parks and recreational facilities, as directed in the policies of the Public Safety, Services, and Facilities Element.

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FIGURE 5.15-1

REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM MAP



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Public Safety, Services, and Facilities Element

Goal PS 8: Antelope Valley residents enjoy access to parks and recreational facilities.

- **Policy PS 8.1:** Maintain existing parks to ensure attractiveness and safety and make improvements as necessary. Ensure adequate funding on an ongoing basis.
- **Policy PS 8.2:** Provide recreational activities at parks that serve all segments of the population.
- **Policy PS 8.3:** Provide new parks as additional development occurs or as the population grows, with a goal of four acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.
- **Policy PS 8.4:** Prioritize new parks for existing park deficient communities.
- **Policy PS 8.5:** Encourage the use of school playgrounds and sporting fields for community recreation (“joint use”) when school is not in session.
- **Policy PS 8.6:** Within rural town center areas, promote the inclusion of parks, recreational facilities, and other gathering places that allow neighbors to meet and socialize.
- **Policy PS 8.7:** Provide trails, bikeways, and bicycle routes for recreational purposes, as directed in the policies of the Mobility Element.
- **Policy PS 8.8:** Maintain existing facilities for public water recreation to ensure attractiveness and safety and make improvements as necessary. Ensure adequate funding on an ongoing basis.
- **Policy PS 8.9:** Provide new facilities for public water recreation in appropriate areas.

5.15.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.15-1: Development in accordance with the Proposed Project would generate additional residents that would increase the use of existing parks and recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration may occur or be accelerated. [Threshold R-1]

Impact Analysis: An increase in population, regardless of location, would result in increased demand for recreational facilities, potentially resulting in the deterioration of existing facilities. As shown in Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of this DEIR, the Project Area is anticipated to contain 81,441 additional dwelling units and 311,920 additional residents at buildout of the Proposed Project. This represents population growth of 333.6 percent during the planning period. The anticipated increase in population would result in an increase in demand for recreational facilities. Additionally, increases in population in areas that currently have inadequate recreational facilities would have the potential to accelerate deterioration of these facilities from intensified overuse.

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The recreational acreage goal identified in the Proposed Area Plan is four acres per 1,000 residents (Policy PS 8.3). The County's Adopted General Plan has a recreational acreage goal of four acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents and six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 County residents. As shown in Table 5.15-3, *Existing Parkland in the Project Area*, the Project Area is currently meeting the regional parkland goal, but not the local parkland goal.

Recreational acreage goals serve as the baseline level of service standard that guides the planning and monitoring of recreational facilities. They are used as planning tools. However, recreational facilities are not automatically considered deficient if these goals are not met. Using the Proposed Area Plan and Adopted General Plan parkland goals, the Proposed Project's demand for local and regional parkland is shown in Table 5.15-5, *Increases in Population and Demand for County Parkland*.

Table 5.15-5 Increases in Population and Demand for County Parkland

Proposed Area Plan and Adopted General Plan Local Parkland Goal (4 acres per 1,000 Project Area residents)		Adopted General Plan Regional Parkland Goal (6 acres per 1,000 residents)	
Project Area Population Increase Over Existing Generated by Proposed Project	Additional Demand for Local Parkland (Acres)	Countywide Population Increase Over Existing Generated by Proposed Project ¹	Additional Demand for Regional Parkland (Acres)
311,920	1,248	311,920	1,872

¹ Does not include population growth in the Planning Area that would be generated in Lancaster and Palmdale.

Regional Parkland

Currently, there is a total of 3,870 acres of regional parkland in the Project Area and adjacent cities. For every 1,000 residents, there is approximately 10 acres of regional parkland. Based on the Adopted General Plan's goal, there is a 1,573-acre surplus of regional parkland under existing conditions.

As discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the Project Area is expected to have a total of 405,410 residents at project buildout, an increase of 311,920 residents. To meet the Adopted General Plan goal of six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents of the total population of Los Angeles County, a total of 1,872 acres of regional parkland would need to be provided. As shown in Table 5.15-5, *Increases in Population and Demand for County Parkland*, there are currently 3,870 acres of regional parkland, which indicates an existing surplus of 1,573 acres of regional parkland. This surplus of 1,573 is less than the projected need for 1,872 additional acres. Therefore, if no additional regional parks were built in the Project Area prior to project buildout, the Project Area would have a deficiency of 299 acres. However, this deficiency is misleading in that it does not include regional recreational amenities not administered by the County—including State Parks and the ANF—and regional parks that would be constructed in the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale during the planning period pursuant to those cities' parkland dedication ordinances (see discussion under *Local Parkland*, below). These areas contribute to the overall availability of regional recreational opportunities in the Project Area.

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Local Parkland

The current ratio of local parkland is 0.54 acres of local parkland for every 1,000 residents in the Project Area. Based on the Adopted General Plan and Proposed Area Plan's desired ratio of four acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents, there is currently a 324-acre deficit of local parkland. Although there is an existing local park deficiency, there are a number of other recreation and open space assets that serve to reduce the demand for local park facilities. The considerable amount of regional parkland, state parks, trails, and private recreational facilities available to the residents of the Project Area (see 5.15.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, above) substantially reduces the demand for local park facilities.

As shown in Table 5.15-5, buildout of the Proposed Project is anticipated to generate 311,920 new residents, resulting in a total population of 405,410 in the Project Area. To meet the County's adopted goal for local parkland for the new population, the County would need to provide 1,247 new acres of local parkland, or 1,622 acres total. The County currently falls short of its goal for local parkland and would not be able to accommodate the Proposed Project's additional demand through existing local parkland inventory. However, given the local parkland deficiency, the inability of the County to meet the Adopted General Plan goal of four acres of local parkland for every 1,000 residents upon buildout of the Proposed Project would not in and of itself result in a significant physical deterioration of recreation facilities. Increases in parkland acreage proportional to the increases in population (or sufficient increases in maintenance) would be adequate to assume that a substantial physical deterioration of facilities would not occur.

The extent to which the County can implement parks, trails, and other recreational facilities is related to the availability of funding. As discussed, the Quimby Act is a funding mechanism for parkland acquisition. As allowed by this Act and pursuant to the County Code, residential subdivisions must dedicate parkland or pay in-lieu fees (or both, in some circumstances) to enable the County to acquire a ratio of at least three acres of local parkland for every 1,000 residents (Section 21.24.340). This provision assures that the funding for parkland acquisition will be proportional to increases in population. Other regulations, including the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982, the Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972, and Los Angeles County Proposition A (Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1992 and 1996), would serve as supplemental sources of funding for parkland. Additionally, the County requires a residential subdivider to either dedicate local park space to serve the proposed subdivision, pay in-lieu fees, provide local park space less than required but developed with amenities equal in value to the park fee, or do a combination of the above in accordance with the requirements of County Ordinance 2013-0009.

The provisions of County Code Section 21.24.340 require three acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents, while the Proposed Area Plan Policy PS 8.3 sets a goal of four acres per 1,000 residents. As a result, there is an inherent deficit between the ratio of local parkland the County would like to maintain and the amount of parkland it can provide in accordance with County Code Section 21.24.340. Therefore, although much of the demand for local parkland can be accommodated, a deficit of parkland would remain compared to the Proposed Area Plan's goal.

Nevertheless, numerous policies in the Proposed Area Plan listed under Section 5.15.3, *Relevant Area Plan Goals and Policies*, would reduce the significance of this impact. For example, Policy PS 8.1 ensures adequate funding on an ongoing basis; Policies PS 8.5 and 8.7 encourage additional recreational opportunities through

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the use of school playgrounds/sports fields, trails, bikeways, and bicycles routes; and Policy PS 8.6 promotes implementing parks and recreational facilities at gathering places within town centers as a way to allow neighbors to meet and socialize. Perhaps most importantly, Policy PS 8.3 reiterates the Adopted General Plan's goal that four acres of parkland be provided for every 1,000 residents.

The presence of a variety of recreation options beyond local park facilities and policies that require funding for parks to be proportional to future increases in population and development would both serve to reduce the potential for significant deterioration of recreational facilities associated with buildout of the Proposed Project. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Impact 5.15-2: Implementation of the Proposed Project would result in the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. [Threshold R-2]

Impact Analysis: Implementation of the Proposed Project would require the construction and expansion of new recreational facilities to serve the forecasted population growth in the Project Area. Although the Proposed Project does not specifically site or plan recreational facilities, it would allow for the development of future recreational facilities, including parks, trails, and athletic fields, within many land use designations, including residential designations.

While the Proposed Project does recognize the need for additional recreational facilities, considering that the Proposed Project is a programmatic planning document, it does not contain actual development proposals with locations or project-specific details. Rather, the Proposed Project sets forth goals and policies, which are intended to guide the development of the Project Area.

Development pursuant to the Proposed Project would result in the construction of new recreational facilities and expansion of existing facilities. Development and operation of new recreational facilities may have an adverse physical effect on the environment, including impacts relating to air quality, biological resources, lighting, noise, and traffic. Environmental impacts associated with construction of new and/or expansion of recreational facilities in accordance with the Proposed Project are addressed separately (see appropriate environmental topical areas in Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*). However, it is speculative to determine the location of proposed park facilities and impacts arising from the development of individual park projects. Implementation of goals and policies in the Proposed Area Plan, including Policy COS 18.5 and Policies PS 8.1 through PS 8.9 would guide the development of future recreational facilities. Moreover, existing federal, state, and local regulations would mitigate potential adverse impacts to the environment that may result from the expansion of parks, recreational facilities, and trails pursuant to buildout of the Proposed Project. Furthermore, subsequent environmental review would be required for development of park projects under existing regulations. Consequently, the Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts relating to new or expanded recreational facilities.

5.15.5 Cumulative Impacts

Buildout of the Proposed Project would increase use of existing local and regional parks and could result in the accelerated deterioration of recreational facilities. Some cumulative projects, such as those associated with

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buildout of general plans for the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale, would have the potential to increase the demand for recreational facilities, potentially resulting in deterioration of existing facilities. Cumulative development would incrementally increase the need for new or expanded facilities, which would have the potential to result in adverse environmental effects.

As discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the Project Area is anticipated to have a population of approximately 405,410 at buildout of the Proposed Project. As discussed in Section 5.13, *Population and Housing*, SCAG estimates that the combined population of the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale is estimated to be 407,453 in 2035. Therefore, the Project Area and adjacent cities are expected to have approximately 812,863 residents in 2035. To meet the Adopted General Plan goal of six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents (including residents of incorporated cities), a total of 4,877 acres of regional parkland would need to be in place at project buildout. As shown in Table 5.15-3, *Existing Parkland in the Planning Area*, there are currently 3,870 acres of regional parkland in the Project Area and adjacent cities. Although the existing amount of regional parkland available to Planning Area residents would not be sufficient to meet the County's goal at buildout of the Proposed Project, overall regional parkland would be expected to grow well beyond the existing inventory of regional parks. Deterioration that would occur to local parks and recreational facilities resulting from regional population growth would be offset with funding from new development such as in-lieu fees for parks or donation of parkland pursuant to the Quimby Act. As discussed, the Quimby Act is a funding mechanism for parkland acquisition for jurisdictions. As allowed by this Act, most cities in Los Angeles County—including the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale—have park dedication ordinances as part of their municipal codes. These ordinances require most residential subdivisions to dedicate parkland or pay in-lieu fees to enable the jurisdictions to acquire local parkland at ratios between three acres and five acres per 1,000 residents. Consistent with established park dedication ordinances, additional parks and recreational facilities would be developed and constructed in the Planning Area.

Existing regulations do not assure that the funding for parkland acquisition would be proportional to increases in population. The provisions of County Code Sections 21.24.340, 21.24.350, 21.28.120, 21.28.130, and 21.28.140 require three acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents, while Proposed Area Plan Policy PS 8.3 sets a goal of six acres per 1,000 residents. As a result, there is an inherent deficit between the ratio of local parkland the County would like to maintain and the amount of parkland it can provide in accordance with County Code Section 21.24.340. Therefore, although much of the demand for local parkland can be accommodated, a deficit of parkland would remain compared to the County's goal. However, regulations, including the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 and the Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972, would serve as supplemental sources of funding for parkland. Overall, enforcement of existing parkland dedication requirements would serve to reduce the potential for deterioration of facilities by allowing for adequate funding for the provision and maintenance of recreational facilities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

It is speculative to determine the location of proposed park facilities in the Project Area and impacts arising from development of individual park projects. The majority of cumulative projects would be discretionary and would be required to demonstrate compliance with CEQA prior to project approval; existing federal, state, and local regulations would mitigate potential adverse impacts to the environment that may result from

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the expansion of parks, recreational facilities, and trails. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact associated with deterioration of parks and construction of recreational facilities.

5.15.6 Existing Regulations and Standard Conditions

State

- Quimby Act (California Government Code 66477)
- The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982
- Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972, California Streets and Highway Code Section 22500 – 22509

Local

- Los Angeles County Code Sections 21.24.340, 21.24.350, 21.28.120, 21.28.130, and 21.28.140
- County of Los Angeles Park Design Guidelines and Standards
- Los Angeles County Trails Manual
- Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1992, 1996, Proposition A

5.15.7 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Upon implementation of regulatory requirements, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.15-1 and 5.15-2.

5.15.8 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5.15.9 Level of Significance After Mitigation.

No significant impacts have been identified and no significant and unavoidable impacts would occur.

5.15.10 References

Los Angeles County, 2014, Public Review Draft General Plan, Parks and Recreation Element.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).2012, April.2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) Growth Forecast.<http://rtpscs.scag.ca.gov/Pages/2012-2035-RTP-SCS.aspx>

Westrup, Laura. 2002.Quimby Act 101: An Abbreviated Overview, Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation, Planning Division, <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/quimby101.pdf>.