

Ramirez, Angelica

General Public Comment - Group 1

From: Dawn Perrine <dawnperrine@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 9:28 AM
To: sbcob
Cc: Lindgren, Jeffrey; Chapjian, George; Menzies, Jon; Stepien, Todd; minthavong@usbr.gov
Subject: Live Oak Equestrian Trail Data Collection & "Pilot Project"



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May 10, 2021

Bob Nelson, Chair, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Joan Hartman, Vice-Chair, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Das Williams, 1st District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Gregg Hart, Second District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Steve Lavagnino, Fifth District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

☰: Live Oak Equestrian Trail Data Collection & "Pilot Project"
(VIA EMAIL TO sbcob@countyofsb.org)

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Board:

My name is Dawn Perrine and I am an equestrian who enjoys riding in the Santa Ynez Valley. The Live Oak Trail was opened to hikers without adequate environmental and public review on April 15, 2021 for a "Pilot Project" (project) to collect trail user data over a period of 18-months. The project has now been in operation for over one month and there is no method in place to count trail users adequately nor accurately.

The Parks Division has installed an "iron ranger" at the Live Oak trailhead that manually collects Daily User Fees, however, fees are collected from trail users via a Cachuma Lake Recreation Area Annual Pass (Pass) as well. The iron ranger does not capture Pass holders, the bulk of which are equestrians. For Pass holders, no fee is collected at the trailhead - it is paid once per year at Cachuma's main gate. The glaring exclusion of the trail users for which the creation of the Live Oak Trail is intended (equestrians) is unacceptable and inaccurate and renders the month's-worth of current data collected by the iron ranger method unusable.

Please direct Mr. George Chapjian, Director of the Community Services Department to review the current data collection method and its validity to support the stated goal of collecting Live Oak trail user counts. Parks must implement a process (trail counter or other method) that will capture ALL trail users immediately. Additionally, the study period must be a full 18-months as stated in the Parks

project description, the project approved by the Bureau of Reclamation and assured by our Supervisor, Joan Hartman. The study period must be restarted to begin when an accurate data collection method is implemented. I do not understand why the study was not adequately designed BEFORE the Live Oak Trail was opened to additional users.

Thank you for considering my request and I request a response. The project is not going on as planned nor as presented to the public, or the landowner and Cachuma Lake Lease Agreement partner, the Bureau of Reclamation. The data collection must occur under fair and accepted research protocols.

Thank you for your time and attention to this issue. In any case, the Live Oak Trail must remain open and safe equestrian trail riding.

Sincerely,

Dawn Perrine

8052456767

Cc: George Chapjian, Director, Community Services Department (gchapjian@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)

Jeff Lindgren, Parks Superintendent, County Parks Division
Community Services
Department (JLindgren@sbparks.org)
Mr. Jon Menzies Santa Barbara County Parks Division
Community Services Department (jmenzies@sbparks.org)

Todd Stepien, Parks Operations Manager, Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, Santa Barbara
County Parks Department (tstepien@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)

Michael Inthavong, US Bureau of Reclamation (minthavong@usbr.gov)

Ramirez, Angelica

From: Susan Shalit <susanshalit@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 2:51 PM
To: sbcob
Cc: Chapjian, George; Lindgren, Jeffrey; Menzies, Jon; Stepien, Todd; minthavong@usbr.gov
Subject: Live Oak

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16 May 2021

Bob Nelson, Chair, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Joan Hartman, Vice-Chair, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Das Williams, 1st District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Gregg Hart, Second District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Steve Lavagnino, Fifth District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

RE: Live Oak Equestrian Trail Data Collection & "Pilot Project"
(VIA EMAIL TO sbcob@countyofsb.org)

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Board:

My name is Susan Shalit _____ (Your Name Here) _____ and I am an equestrian who enjoys riding in the Santa Ynez Valley. The Live Oak Trail was opened to hikers without adequate environmental and public review on April 15, 2021 for a "Pilot Project" (project) to collect trail user data over a period of 18-months. The project has now been in operation for over one month and there is no method in place to count trail users adequately nor accurately.

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Thank you for considering my request and I request a response. The project is not going on as planned nor as presented to the public, or the landowner and Cachuma Lake Lease Agreement partner, the Bureau of Reclamation. The data collection must occur under fair and accepted research protocols.

Thank you for your time and attention to this issue. In any case, the Live Oak Trail must remain open and safe equestrian trail riding.

Sincerely,
Susan Shalit
1759 Southwood Drive
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
susanshalit@gmail.com
805-787-0456

Ramirez, Angelica

From: Lynne Sherman <lynnesherman@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 3:10 PM
To: sbcob
Cc: Chapjian, George; Lindgren, Jeffrey; Menzies, Jon; Stepien, Todd; minthavong@usbr.gov

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May 16, 2021

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Das Williams, 1 st District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Gregg Hart, Second District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Steve Lavagnino, Fifth District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
RE: Live Oak Equestrian Trail Data Collection & "Pilot Project"
(VIA EMAIL TO sbcob@countyofsb.org)

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Board:

My name is Lillian Lynne Sherman and I am an equestrian who enjoys riding in the Santa Ynez Valley. The Live Oak Trail was opened to hikers without adequate environmental and public review on April 15, 2021 for a "Pilot Project" (project) to collect trail user data over a period of 18-months. The project has now been in operation for over one month and there is no method in place to count trail users adequately nor accurately.

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protocols.

Thank you for your time and attention to this issue. In any case, the Live Oak Trail must remain open and safe equestrian trail riding.

Sincerely,

L. Lynne Sherman

LynneSherman@gmail.com

2106 Red Rose Way, Santa Barbara, CA 93109

Ramirez, Angelica

From: Pam Hubbard <shortmom114@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 10:42 AM
To: sbcob
Cc: Chapjian, George; Lindgren, Jeffrey; Menzies, Jon; tstepien@co.santa-barbars.ca.us; minthavong@usbr.gov
Subject: Live Oak Equestrian Trail

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05/17/21

Bob Nelson, Chair, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Joan Hartman, Vice-Chair, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Das Williams, 1st District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Gregg Hart, Second District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Steve Lavagnino, Fifth District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

RE: Live Oak Equestrian Trail Data Collection & "Pilot Project"
(VIA EMAIL TO sbcob@countyofsb.org)

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Board:

My name is _____ (Pam Hubbard) _____ and I am an equestrian who enjoys riding in the Santa Ynez Valley. The Live Oak Trail was opened to hikers without adequate environmental and public review on April 15, 2021 for a "Pilot Project" (project) to collect trail user data over a period of 18-months. The project has now been in operation for over one month and there is no method in place to count trail users adequately nor accurately.

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Thank you for your time and attention to this issue. In any case, the Live Oak Trail must remain open and safe equestrian trail riding.

Sincerely,

Pam Hubbard
555B Orchard Road, Nipomo, CA 93444
(559) 303-6347

Cc: George Chapjian, Director, Community Services Department (gchapjian@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
Jeff Lindgren, Parks Superintendent, County Parks Division
Community Services
Department (JLindgren@sbparks.org)
Mr. Jon Menzies Santa Barbara County Parks Division
Community Services Department (jmenzies@sbparks.org)

Todd Stepien, Parks Operations Manager, Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, Santa Barbara County
Parks Department (tstepien@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
Michael Inthavong, US Bureau of Reclamation (minthavong@usbr.gov)

Ramirez, Angelica

From: Kathleen Rosenthal <ksrvaquera@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 3:43 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Fwd: Live Oak Trail and Recreation Master Plan
Attachments: 5 15 21 Grass Trespass.png; 1989 Cachuma Lake EQUESTRIAN Trail Management Plan.pdf; 12 18 20 SYVR letter to JM.pdf; 12 21 20 JM Email Response to SYVR.pdf; 12 22 20 SYVR Response to JM.pdf; 1 12 21 NOE Live Oak Trail.pdf; 1 31 21 SYVR to GC Community Services NOE.pdf; 1 28 21 SYVEA to JL NOE Challenge.pdf; 5 17 21 BOS Letter Rec Plan.pdf

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Please distribute to the Board of Supervisors.

From: Kathleen Rosenthal <ksrvaquera@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, May 17, 2021 at 3:21 PM
Subject: Live Oak Trail and Recreation Master Plan
To: <sbcob@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Chapjian, George <gchapjian@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>, Lindgren, Jeffrey <jlindgren@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>, Menzies, Jon <jmenzies@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>

May 17, 2021

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

RE: Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan & Live Oak Equestrian Trail
(VIA EMAIL TO sbcob@countyofsb.org)

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Board:

The Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan (Plan) is currently in process and is a strategic planning program for parks, trails, and recreation facilities throughout Santa Barbara County that will guide recreation development for the next 20 years. The Plan was presented first at the Countywide Recreation Summit held in June 2019 to bring together park and recreation leadership from agencies and key stakeholders countywide. Then the County initiated the Plan in August 2019 (Attached).

The Live Oak Trail Expansion Project (Pilot Project) was originally planned for implementation on January 1st, 2021. Following our request and subsequent work with the County Parks Division (Parks Division), that date was delayed to April 15, 2021 when the Live Oak Trail was expanded from an equestrian trail (the environmental baseline) and to include hikers. This is the "Pilot Project" and will collect trail user data for 18-months, then additional types of trail users will be considered.

In relation to the Plan and Live Oak Trail, we request your Board provide insight to the following questions and consider our requested action items associated with each:

1. Why was Live Oak Trail separated off from the Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan and why is the Live Oak Trail “Pilot Project” continuing ahead of the Plan?

- a. The Plan’s Steering Committee Meeting Agenda Packet dated Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 3:00 PM, Figure 4, Santa Ynez Valley Recreation Facilities (Attached) indicates that the Live Oak Camp and Live Oak Trail area (northeast shore of Cachuma Lake) will be considered in the Plan.
- b. The Live Oak Trail expansion “Pilot Project” began on April 15th, 2021, ahead of the Plan, without benefit of transparent public & environmental review.
- c. The “Pilot Project’s” 18-month period coincides with the Plan timeline.
- d. No accurate data collection is occurring under the “Pilot Program” as of today’s date.
- e. Damage to the trails and the north shore of the Lake ***are continuing***. A consultant (?), contractor (?) is grading and otherwise traveling off road to “map new trails”. These actions are unsupervised and are a fire hazard. (See attached photo). ***This MUST STOP and motorized vehicles prohibited from the trail, especially now during high fire season.***

Action Item: We request that your Board examine the attached documents noted in this letter and the Plan’s timeline thus far, consider that the Live Oak Trail is included as anticipated and indicated on Figure 4 of the above-described documents, will be included in the review, analysis, and public participation as part of the Plan, and halt any further actions, grading, studies, or other activities on-the-ground until the Live Oak Trail expansion “Pilot Project” is adequately evaluated under the Plan.

2. Why was CEQA for the Pilot Project not initiated well before the Santa Ynez Valley Riders (SYVR) intervened?

- a. The Live Oak Trail exemption was filed by the Parks Division only after the SYVR questioned the need for CEQA review.
The SYVR anticipated that the level of environmental review would be, at a minimum, equal to the level of review accomplished in the 1989 “Recommendations for a Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail” (Attached), a Negative Declaration-level document that was prepared by the Parks Department at the time the Live Oak Trail was opened.
- b. Our objections to expanding users on the Trail are well-documented in the SYVR letters (Attached):
 - i. To Jon Menzies dated December 18, 2020 and December 22, 2020,
and
 - ii. Mr. Menzies’ response dated December 21, 2020.
- c. The Live Oak Trail NOE was filed on January 12, 2021 (Attached).
 - i. The equestrian community challenged the NOE and discussion of environmental impacts and discrepancies with the County’s Land Use Plan – Conservation Element policies are documented in the attached letters:
 - 1. SYVR letter of January 31, 2021 to George Chapien, and
 - 2. Santa Ynez Valley Equestrian Association letter of January 28, 2021 to Jeff Lindgren.
 - 3. Both were submitted well within the NOE challenge timeframe under CEQA.

Action Item: We request that your Board examine the attached letters and associated information considering the Plan’s timeline thus far. Then look at the evidence presented in our NOE challenge letters.

Live Oak Trail expansion and/or improvements, their impacts, as well as our concerns must be evaluated with the equestrian only use at Live Oak Trail as the environmental baseline. This must be the starting point for the Plan’s evaluation. This is consistent with the initiation date of the Plan (August 2019) and the Trail use on that date and at that snapshot in time. Hikers are the new users added to the trail under the “Pilot Program” (initiated April 2021) and have no history on the trail. Hiker impacts need evaluation and the Plan process is the time to do it. Only then will the Pilot Project and future new uses of the trail (if any) and their impacts, be

captured & adequately reviewed under CEQA. We cannot ignore the Pilot Project impacts.

3. Why is the Recreation Master Plan being prepared without benefit of qualified in-house planning staff?

- a. The Community Services Department eliminated the Parks Planner position in FY 2018-2019 (Community Services Department Budget and Staffing Report Attached).
- b. The Parks Division is relying on inexperienced staff (through no fault of their own) and rely on hired consultants to guide decisions and analysis that affect the public.
- c. Current staff have neither the experience nor expertise to recognize consequences and long-term cumulative impacts associated with unmitigated recreation planning decisions.

Action item: We request that the Parks Division planner position be restored to guide the Plan's development in a transparent and unbiased manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring these issues to your Board's attention. The public would be well-served to prohibit any other activities at Live Oak Trail at this time and we strongly advocate for the evaluation of Live Oak Trail, as presented to the Plan's Steering Committee, in the Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan. We look forward to your response.

Best Regards,

Kathy Rosenthal
2021 President
Santa Ynez Valley Riders

Cc: George Chapian, Director, Community Services Department (gchapjian@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)

Jeff Lindgren, Parks Superintendent, County Parks Division, Community Services Department (JLindgren@sbparks.org)

Mr. Jon Menzies Santa Barbara County Parks Division, Community Services Department (jmenzies@sbparks.org)

Attachments:

1. Steering Committee Meeting Agenda Packet dated Thursday, September 17, 2020
<https://www.countyofsb.org/parks/recmasterplan.sbc>
2. 5/15/21 Photo Vehicle Tracks in Grass
2. Recommendations for a Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail (1989)
3. SYVR letter to Jon Menzies dated December 18, 2020
4. Jon Menzies Email response to SYVR dated December 21, 2020
5. SYVR reply letter to Jon Menzies December 22, 2020
6. The Live Oak Trail NOE January 12, 2021
7. SYVR NOE challenge letter of January 31, 2021 to George Chapian
8. Santa Ynez Valley Equestrian Association NOE challenge letter of January 28, 2021 to Jeff Lindgren
9. The Community Services Department Budget and Staffing FY 18-19 Report- Parks Planner position deletion (Page D-319) [FY 18 19 Comm Svcs Assets](#)



**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE CACHUMA LAKE EQUESTRIAN TRAIL**

Prepared For:

Santa Barbara County Park Department

Prepared By:

**JM Consulting Group, Inc.
510 Castillo Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101**

September 1989

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In May, 1989, the Santa Barbara County Park Department contracted with JM Consulting Group, Inc. to prepare a Trail Management Plan for the existing horseback riding trail at Cachuma Lake County Park.

The purpose of the Management Plan is to analyze the compatibility of the existing trail route with Cachuma Lake's natural setting and Park objectives; to ascertain if the trail's presence conflicts with the management of the existing leases of the lands over which the trail passes; and to ensure that the administration of the trail is efficient and acceptable to staff and its users.

The Management Plan was initiated by the Park Department due to several problems which arose after the opening of the trail to public use, including but not limited to:

- Complaints and concerns from managers of the Cachuma Lake leaseholds over which the trail passes;
- Complaints from trail users about trail administration and procedures;
- Concerns from Cachuma Lake's Naturalists regarding entry into the north shore areas; and
- Park staff's uncertainty about the availability of the trail to large groups.

The Cachuma Trail Management Plan will fulfill the following objectives:

1. Review the existing trail location and evaluate its recreation potential and constraints.
2. Evaluate Cachuma Staff procedures for the trail's operation with respect to efficiency and usefulness.
3. Review the existing leasehold interests affected by the trail and ascertain if there are problems, and if so, how they can be mitigated or alleviated.
4. Provide recommendations for management of trail activities which will be mutually beneficial to trail users, leaseholders, and Cachuma Lake staff.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Cachuma Lake Recreation Area is owned by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation. In January, 1953, the Bureau entered into an agreement with the County of Santa Barbara which granted management and administration responsibility for the Cachuma Lake recreation area to the County under a fifty (50) year lease. This lease agreement is due to expire in the year 2003.

Cachuma Lake offers its visitor a variety of recreational experiences, ranging from boating and camping to horseback riding, bicycle rentals, public swimming pool, nature tours, and fishing. Early in 1987, the Park Department began to explore the possibility of developing a recreational horse trail at the lake. Due to potential conflicts with park campers and day use visitors at the main recreation area, the decision was made to begin the trail at the San Marcos Camp area, approximately 5.5 miles from the main recreation area.

In April of 1987, Michael Pahos, the Director of Parks, sent a letter to interested equestrian groups throughout the county notifying them that the County was exploring the possibility of developing an "around-the-lake trail", and an access to the Los Padres National Forest. (Appendix A) In July of 1987, the initial planning meeting was conducted by the Park Department at San Marcos Camp. Several interested individuals and equestrian organizations were present and participated in the discussion. Between July 1987 and March 1988, the Park staff conducted several meetings to receive comments and to establish the trail route. On March 26, 1988, the Cachuma Horse Trail was officially opened with a dedication ride.

3.0 INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF TRAIL

Per capita ownership of horses in the Santa Ynez Valley is high in comparison with other areas of the County. A limited number of recreational trails exist in the Santa Ynez Valley and the majority of existing trails are located along the unimproved shoulders of public roadways. The County's Comprehensive Plan of Parks, Recreation and Trails for the Santa Ynez Valley (PRT-4) does not propose a significant amount of riding and hiking trail areas other than those found along road shoulders.

In an effort to provide additional recreational opportunities for equestrians. The Park Department staff developed the concept of an "around-the-lake" trail in 1987. Several meetings were held at the lake to establish the preferred route and formulate rules, regulations, and procedures necessary to effectively administer the operation of the trail. The project proposal was presented to the County Park Commission on August 27, 1987. The Commission unanimously supported the trail concept and commended the Department for encouraging recreational use of the land. (Appendix B)

After receiving the Commission's approval, the trail route and administrative details were finalized. In October 1987, the leaseholders affected by the trail route were notified that the Department was proceeding with the development of an equestrian trail. The trail was opened to public use in March 1988. (Appendix C)

4.0 CACHUMA TRAIL SITE VISIT

On Friday June 9, 1989, a site visit was performed by the consultant and a representative of the County Park Department. The primary purpose of the site visit was to inspect the entire horse trail and its related facilities including gates, signs, restrooms, water availability, and picnic areas. The secondary purpose was to evaluate Cachuma staff's management practices related to the trail. It should be noted that neither the consultant nor the Park Department staff person had ever visited the trail.

Exhibit 3 shows the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area and the location of the San Marcos Camp area. The trail is approximately 12.0 miles long. ^(round trip) The entrance is just east of the San Marcos Camp area and runs parallel to the shoreline on the eastern and northern sections of the lake. The entire trail is located on public recreation lands which are leased to private ranches for grazing purposes.

4.1 ACCESS TO TRAILHEAD

Upon payment of the appropriate fees and completion of the permit form at the main gate area, the trail user is given the combination to two locked gates and directions to the San Marcos Camp Area.

San Marcos Camp is located approximately 5.5 miles east of the main entrance gate. A left turn off Highway 154 is necessary, whereupon the user comes to the first locked gate. The gate contains five different locks, three of which are 4-digit combination locks. The Park Department lock is not marked distinctly; therefore, access may require testing all three locks before entry is gained. Two signs are posted on this gate, one stating "Private Property-No Trespassing" and the other stating "Keep Gate Closed at All Times".

After proceeding through this gate, the trailhead parking area is approximately 1.5 miles to the north, and is located in an open field off the roadway just before the entrance to San Marcos Camp. The second lock is located at the trail's entrance gate. According to Cachuma staff, the combination to the locks are changed every two weeks to provide more security and better management of the area.

12.0 ALTERNATE ROUTES

At the trail user's meeting, referenced in Section 7.0 of this report, the development of alternate routes was discussed. Two alternate routes were discussed as follows: 1) continuation of the existing trail westward from the Santa Cruz Gate area; and 2) development of an alternate trailhead at the Bradbury Dam area.

In discussing alternate routes with Park staff, several other alternate routes were considered as currently available. These additional routes will be discussed below in Sections 12.3 and 12.4.

12.1 EXTENSION OF EXISTING TRAIL

The existing trail terminates at a locked gate at the Santa Cruz River crossing. Developing the trail beyond this point would permit unrestricted access to the entire Santa Cruz Point area. This entire area is a part of the Rancho San Fernando Rey lease area, described in Section 8.1.

From available maps and lack of other information, it is unclear how far riders could proceed westward once the Santa Cruz gate was opened. The presence of other locked gates and the lake's water level may restrict the riders from proceeding westerly at some point. From existing topographical map information, it does not appear that existing trails will permit an "around-the-lake" trail without utilizing some portion of private lands. It is feasible, however, to ride along the eastern shore of Santa Cruz Bay to Santa Cruz Point along an existing unimproved roadway. This ride would terminate at an existing picnic area and restroom used by Cachuma Lake boaters, and would add an additional 1 to 2 hours of riding time.

Additional research of the Santa Cruz area would need to be completed by staff prior to any consideration of opening up additional Cachuma lands to equestrian use, although an initial site visit was undertaken by the Park Director with a member of the Santa Ynez Valley Riders during the initial planning phase of the trail. The decision was made at that time that the trail route not be extended into the C

12.2 BRADBURY DAM TRAILHEAD

The concept of an additional or alternate trailhead adjacent to the Bradbury Dam area was discussed at the June 28, 1989 meeting at Cachuma Lake. The users felt that it would be desirable to provide riders with different areas within which to ride, particularly for users who may get tired of riding on the existing trail repeatedly. The Bradbury Dam area is shown on Exhibit 6.

Conceptually, the alternate trail would operate in the same manner as the existing trail. A permit would be obtained, and riders would obtain entrance to an area for riding by entering through a combination-locked gate. The recreation area adjacent to the Bradbury Dam is not encumbered by any existing grazing leases.

The Cachuma Trails horseback riding concession, previously operated adjacent to this area, and provided a public horseback riding concession. The duration of these supervised rides is unknown, but probably did not approach the 3 1/2 to 4 hour duration available at the existing trail. Furthermore, after reviewing U.S.G.S. topographical maps, it appears that very little area within the Cachuma Recreation area boundary could be utilized for public trail purposes (see Exhibit 6).

12.3 MAIN RECREATION AREA TRAILS

Two trail routes exist within Cachuma's main recreation area - one beginning at Harvey's Cove and one beginning at the overflow area (see Exhibit 7).

The trail from Harvey's Cove proceeds westward to the Vista Point area adjacent to Bradbury Dam. Its short duration would most likely not make it popular to horseback use. The trail is also open to hikers and is used frequently by park users.

The trail originating at the overflow area accesses the Tequepis Trail by a culvert running under Highway 154. The Tequepis Trail provides access to the US Forest Service lands and joins with West Camino Cielo adjacent to Broadcast Peak. Tequepis Trail also accesses the lands adjacent to the Boy Scout Camp, which may offer tremendous riding opportunities along the existing trails and unimproved roads in that area.

12.4 SAN MARCOS CAMP TRAILS

It may also be feasible to develop extensive trails from the San Marcos Camp area in a westerly direction (see Exhibit 8). Park staff have explored this option on a preliminary basis and it appears feasible to connect San Marcos Camp to the overflow area referenced in Section 12.3.

Additional site work needs to be accomplished, however, Caltrans has been contacted, and Highway 154 encroachment permits have been applied for and are pending the submittal of formal drawings by the Park Department relative to required fencing and creek crossing culverts and bridge designs.

Successful completion of this proposed route would offer riders nearly equal in length to the existing Cachuma Trail with the potential to further continue to the Tequepis Trail and West Camino Cielo.

13.0 SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The purpose of the Management Plan was to analyze and understand how the trail and its administrative functions were established; how the trail is serving its users; and what improvements to the overall system could be made to address the concerns of all affected parties, while reducing any possible negative impacts on the natural resources of the area.

This section will present a summary of the facts and findings obtained through the extensive research and interviews undertaken. The findings presented herein are objective and should not be construed to be opinions of the consultant.

For clarity, the findings will be presented as they relate to the major areas of research: development of the trail, physical aspects of the trail, administration, trail use, affects on leaseholders, consistency with adopted plans, environmental considerations, and alternate routes.

Development of Trail

- The Cachuma Trail was developed after a series of meetings with various user groups and interested individuals. The leaseholders, however, were not notified of the intent to develop the trail until October 1987 - nine months after the trail users were notified. The Park Naturalist at Cachuma Lake did not participate actively in the preliminary discussions. Due to the sensitive nature of these areas, the input from these individuals may have been very valuable.
- The trail route is unclear. The map distributed to users by Cachuma staff shows the route terminating at the picnic area adjacent to Santa Cruz Point. The consultant and Park Department planner assumed that the trail route circumvented this entire area, adding an additional hour to the duration of the ride. At the users' meeting, many of the users were unclear on the matter as well. It does not appear that the trail route was ever finalized with the users.

Physical Aspects of Trail

- With the exception of Section C of the trail, discussed in Section 4.2 of this report, the trail route, described herein, was well planned in terms of layout, ride duration, and enjoyment offered. The majority of trail users, who commented, felt that the 3 1/2 to 4 hour ride offered is adequate, but that longer duration rides should be explored and provided if feasible. The fact that the trail is located primarily on an unimproved roadway makes it ideal for both individual and group riding.
- Maintenance of the trail should be minimal, thus proving beneficial to Cachuma staff in terms of long-term responsibilities and liability concerns.
- The trail offers variety of both terrain and grades, and appears well-suited to all levels of riders.
- Section C of the trail should be improved immediately. It was constructed by volunteers unfamiliar with proper trail specifications. Currently the trail is too steep and narrow to be safe, and presents a severe liability to the County. Improvements can be made in its current configuration to upgrade its tread and reduce brush, rocks, and limbs to the extent necessary to keep it in use.
- Trail signage is inadequate along the route and in directing users to the trailhead parking area. The fact that riders and the consultant were confused, regarding the length and location of the trail, attests to this finding. Better signage is also needed along Highway 154 to direct users to the San Marcos Camp area. The existing sign is parallel to the highway, making it difficult to see. The signs on the vehicular gates and horse gates all say "Private Property", which is incorrect. The property is owned by the Department of the Interior and leased to various ranches. These signs should be removed and replaced with signs which accurately describe the relationship with the ranches. The new signs should incorporate language describing the trail and the necessity to close all horse gates.

- None of the horse gates encountered worked properly. At least two of them did not close properly without some effort. The chains affixed to the bottom of the gates were installed by the ranchers and require the trail user to dismount each time a gate is encountered. Once dismounted, both hands must be used to clip the chain closed. Any rider of any age or those with disabilities would have a great deal of difficulty with the operation of these gates and may even be discouraged from using the trail. These gates were provided by the Santa Ynez Valley Riders and installed by Cachuma Lake staff.

Administration

- The fee structure adopted was not supported by Cachuma staff or the Park Department. The trail users feel the fee is reasonable and equitable. If fees are raised after the two-year restricted period referenced in Section 5.3, use may decline.
- The permit forms do not indicate how much money is collected.
- The requirement to return the permit form back to the main gate after using the trail is awkward and time-consuming. For Santa Barbara area residents, this procedure requires travelling approximately 11 miles out of the way to return this form.
- Based upon many conversations with Cachuma gate personnel, staff knowledge of the trail is poor. The consultant received varying answers when calls were made, and on several occasions was told that supervisors would need to be contacted in order to obtain answers.
- Cachuma staff do not now nor do they plan to patrol the trail regularly. Patrols currently are done randomly by the San Marcos Camp host on a volunteer basis.
- Maintenance costs can be expected to be approximately \$3050 per year. Start-up costs to develop the trail were approximately \$1,625 per year.
- The trail map distributed by gate personnel is hard to read, lacks adequate information, and is unprofessional in appearance. No other information appears to be available to users.

- The policy of trail closure, due to high fire hazard, corresponds to the United States Forest Service's schedule of closures in areas northeast of the Cachuma recreation boundary. It is unclear, however, why the trail was not closed in 1988 and how long it will remain closed in 1989.
- Staff has not advertised the trail due to the desire to retain the trail primarily for local day use. Staff also wanted a period of time to evaluate trail operation before subjecting it to potentially heavier usage.

Trail Use

- Trail use to date has been relatively low. Since the trail's opening in March 1988, only 368 documented riders have used the trail.
- As of June, 1989 \$1,059.50 has been collected in 15 months of operation.
- Fire closure during 1989 could restrict use between the months of July and October, or longer, according to USFS personnel.
- The potential use of the trail is much higher during off-season months than during the summer months of June, July, August, and September. In 1988, only sixteen riders used the trail during the months of July, August, and September.
- Trail users have been sighted in areas far removed from the designated trail area. The riders are either confused over the proper location of the route or are intentionally straying off the trail in restricted areas.

Effect on Leaseholds

- Cachuma Lake leases four areas to adjacent ranches, totalling 3,503 acres and generating \$16,380 per year in revenues.
- The ranches most affected have expressed concerns about the trail ranging from lack of patrol and enforcement to poaching, trespassing, fires, litter, and hunting. There were no actual occurrences of such behavior on the trail route reported by the Rancho San Fernando Rey management.

- According to the RSFR employees, cattle on their grazing leases appear to be more nervous when approached, since the area has been opened to public use.
- The remoteness of the trail's location and lack of regular patrols may encourage riding in areas of the north shore, which are not part of the official trail.

Consistency with Adopted Plans

- Provision of the trail is consistent with the Cachuma Operations Agreement.
- A consistency finding relative to the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan elements for Parks, Recreation and Trails, Open Space, and Environmental Resources Management Element cannot be made until a biological survey of the entire area of the trail is undertaken. This study would ascertain what resources are present and may need to be protected, and develop measures necessary to protect these resources, if applicable. This evaluation also should address the effects of the current grazing activities.

Environmental Considerations

- The Cachuma Lake Naturalist is concerned about human presence in the areas of the lake now accessed by the trail and feels that this issue should be investigated and evaluated further.
- Bald Eagles are present at Cachuma. Although their locations will not be made available, trail users could gain access to these locations by trespassing.
- Archaeological resources exist adjacent to the trail and can be accessed.
- It appears that fire danger will close the trail on a yearly basis. This closure would typically occur sometime between July and October.

- The potential raising of Bradbury Dam will prevent crossing of the Santa Ynez River from San Marcos Camp, making the trail inaccessible.

Alternate Routes

- To stimulate a high level of interest, and to respond to potentially long periods of fire closure, trail users are interested in establishing an alternate trail route, originating from the Bradbury Dam area and possibly providing access to the north shore of Cachuma. Administratively, the trail would operate in a similar manner to the existing trail.
- Many trail users are interested in continuing the trail, described in Section 4.2, westerly beyond the Santa Cruz Creek crossing, eventually attempting to proceed to the Bradbury Dam area.
- Opportunities currently exist to ride horses from the main recreation area at Cachuma Lake. The most practical ride is the overflow area's connection to the Tequepis Trail, which provides access to the Los Padres National Forest and surrounding trails adjacent to the Boy Scout Camp.
- It appears feasible to develop a horse trail from San Marcos Camp proceeding in a westerly direction and connect to the overflow area. Additional work needs to be completed by Park staff to verify the feasibility of this trail route.

14.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following Management Plan Recommendations are again organized by topic and are intended to be recommendations for the County Park Department to consider regarding the administration of the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail.

These recommendations are opinions of the consultant and are based upon the Summary and Findings compiled in Section 13.0.

Development of Trail

1. Park staff should meet with the managers of RSFR, in order to learn more about the grazing activities within the lease area. This was not done to the satisfaction of the leaseholders when the trail was developed initially. Critical grazing areas leased adjacent to the trail should be identified and necessary mitigation measures employed to encourage safer grazing activities.
2. Park staff should clearly identify the route of the trail described in Section 4.2. Leaseholders should be notified immediately of the existing route so enforcement can be coordinated.

Physical Aspects of Trail

1. Section C of the trail as described in Section 4.2 should be improved immediately to United States Forest Service standards, which can be obtained by contacting the USFS headquarters in Goleta..
2. Additional trail signs should be installed by staff along all sections of the trail with the exception of Section C, which is adequately signed. Signs should also be placed at the entrance gate at Highway 154 and on all horse gates along trail. A sign should be placed at the staging area alerting users of the presence of cattle and a telephone at San Marcos Camp in case of emergency. All existing "Private Property" signs installed by RSFR should be required to be removed and replaced by signs with more appropriate language, as discussed in Section 13.0.
3. All horse gates should be repaired or replaced by gates which are easier to use, do not require dismounting to operate, and close consistently.

Administration

1. The permit forms should be revised to include more specific information, such as the amount of money collected and the vehicle's license plate number. Permit forms should include a carbon copy for the user's records. The practice of returning the forms to gate personnel after use of the trail should be discontinued and a drop box placed at the San Marcos Camp staging area. Permits should be available in advance at Rocky Nook Park in Santa Barbara and at Waller Park in Santa Maria.
2. Gate personnel should receive better training about the trail. Overall staff knowledge is poor and could be corrected easily by more thorough training.
3. The trail should be patrolled several times a week, if it is to remain open. This could be done either by Cachuma staff or by volunteer patrols. Volunteer patrols are common throughout the state and appear to be an effective enforcement tool.
4. A brochure should be developed by staff, which includes a map of the trail and how to access the trailhead, as well as containing information regarding park rules and regulations, the grazing activities, and the sensitive nature of the land where the trail is located.
5. Fire closure during high fire hazard periods should be continued. However, specific policies should be developed by park staff regarding closure periods, rather than relying upon US Forest Service dates, which appear more restrictive than necessary.
6. Given the low use figures of the trail over the past two years, it is recommended that the Cachuma Trail be included when advertising the facilities and recreational opportunities available at Cachuma Lake.

Trail Use

1. The trail should remain open to some level of use. There has been no concrete evidence presented to date, which would warrant closure.
2. Individual trail use should only be continued if park staff commits to a higher level of patrolling of the trail area. The concerns expressed by the leaseholders and Park Naturalist appear valid, and patrol and enforcement are the only responses absent closure of the trail which can address their concerns. *or volunteer patrols*
3. If regular patrolling of the area cannot be instituted by Park staff or by volunteer patrols, group use of the trails is recommended. Group use is defined generally as not more than twenty (20) and not less than six (6). Each group should have a trail boss, who is responsible for making sure the group obeys all laws, rules, and regulations. Groups larger than twenty riders should be required to obtain permission to use the trail from the Cachuma Lake Park Superintendent.
4. Off-season usage should be encouraged by staff. The weather is cooler, the scenery more attractive, and fire danger reduced.

Effect on Leaseholds

1. More information should be gathered regarding RSFR grazing activities to ascertain the trail's impact and consistency with accepted grazing practices.
2. Use of the trail should not jeopardize the leasehold interests. Yearly revenues produced by the leases exceed those generated by trail use by a ratio of 16:1. Grazing also significantly reduces backcountry fire danger and should be continued at the appropriate level. *We disagree w/ cancellation of leases. Doham*

3. Potential Cancellation of Leases on Public Land *(This option should be included for Supervisor's final decision)*
Consistency with Adopted Plans

1. A detailed description of the trail should be submitted to the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation to be formally approved as a new recreational use of the lake area.

2. A biological survey should be authorized by Park staff to assess the trail's consistency with adopted plans and to evaluate the impact of the existing grazing activities.

Environmental Considerations

1. Access beyond the existing gate at Santa Cruz Creek should not be permitted without further evaluation. It is unclear as to what effect access would have on the presence of Bald Eagles in the area and other potential effects to leases, grazing activities, and existing biological resources.
2. A Phase I Archaeological evaluation should be performed for the trail area. If archaeological resources are threatened, appropriate mitigation measures should be adopted and implemented by staff.

See
attached
← note
#1

Alternate Routes

1. The extension of the existing trail beyond the Santa Cruz gate area westward should not be considered at this time. This proposal should be further evaluated by Cachuma staff, the Park Naturalist, and RSFR personnel. It is suggested that the recommendations of this Management Plan be implemented and other alternate routes closer to the main recreation area be investigated first. If staff decides to extend the trail beyond the Santa Cruz gate, the trail should follow the existing road to the Santa Cruz Point picnic area and return along the same route.
2. An alternate staging area at the Bradbury Dam area cannot be recommended without a better understanding of the trail routes available in the area.
3. Use of the overflow area as a staging area for riders using the Tequepis Trail south of Highway 154 should be encouraged. This trail provides access to Los Padres National Forest and West Camino Cielo. Further research should be conducted about the trails in the area of the Boy Scout Camp and their potential availability to the general public.
4. Further work should be conducted by staff to ascertain the viability of connecting ~~the~~ overflow area east to San Marcos Camp. This link would add an additional 11 miles to the existing Cachuma Trail, although it may impact an additional leasehold and the eagle habitat area.

← see
attached
note

#1
Bald eagle on private
land, not county land
at Santa Cruz inlet.
→

#2 - Bradbury Dam Trail
now exists from in
Park overflow area.
Abandoned stables area!
Cross the entrance - Pon Place
suggested area to be ruffed
up and horse men to dismount
and walk across.

15.0 LIST OF EXHIBITS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	General Location Map
2	Location Map of Cachuma Lake Recreation Area
Rec-3	Map of Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail and Facilities
4	Map of Equestrian Trail provided by Cachuma Lake Staff
5	Cachuma Lake Leases
6	Bradbury Dam Area
7	Alternate Routes - Main Recreation Area
8	Alternate Routes - San Marcos Camp Area

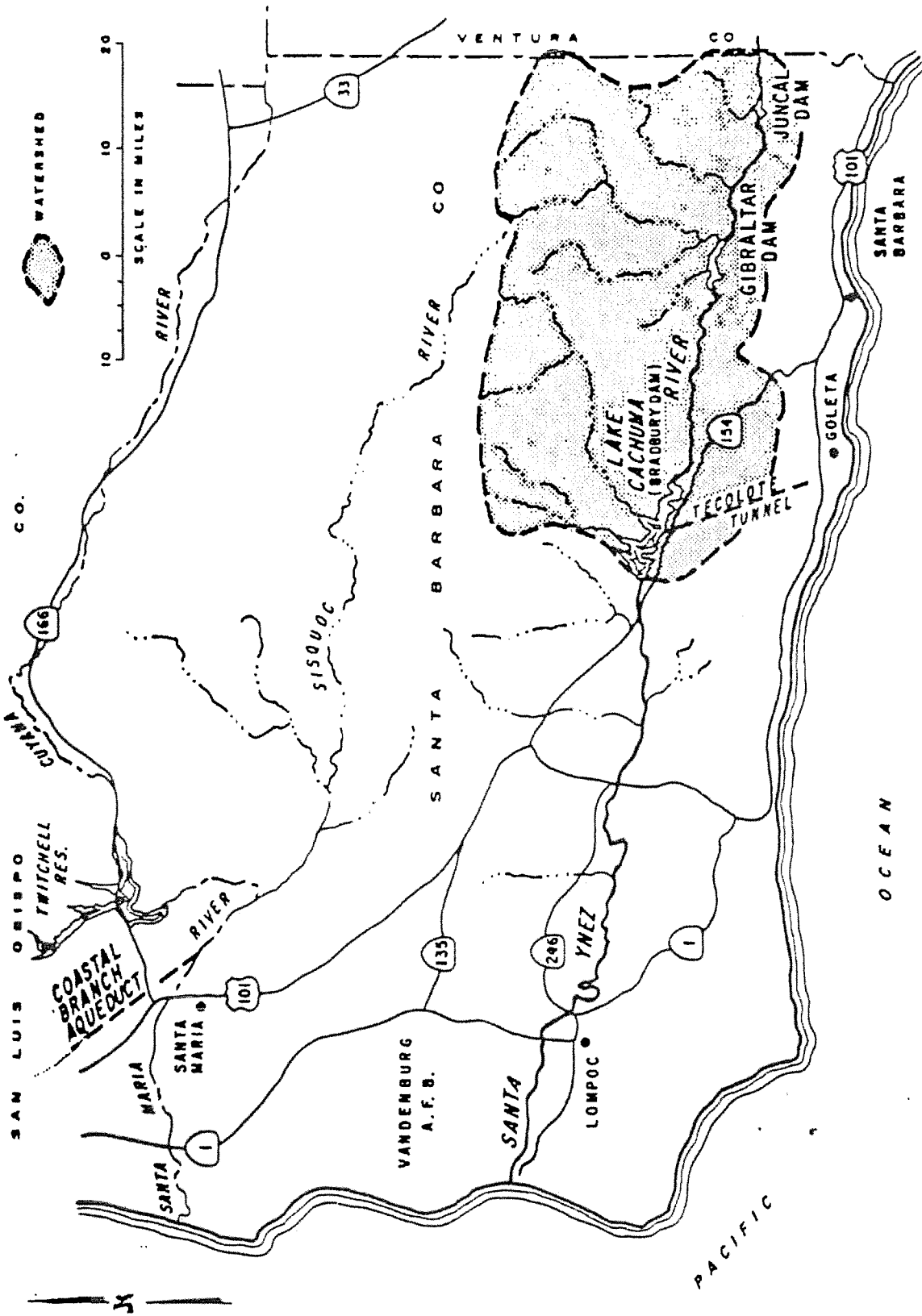


EXHIBIT 1
GENERAL LOCATION MAP



EXHIBIT 2

CACHUMA LAKE EQUESTRIAN TRAIL AND FACILITIES

LEGEND

- * Trail Sign
- Horse Gate
- ⊙ San Marcos Camp
- Water Trough
- ◀▶ Trail Sections

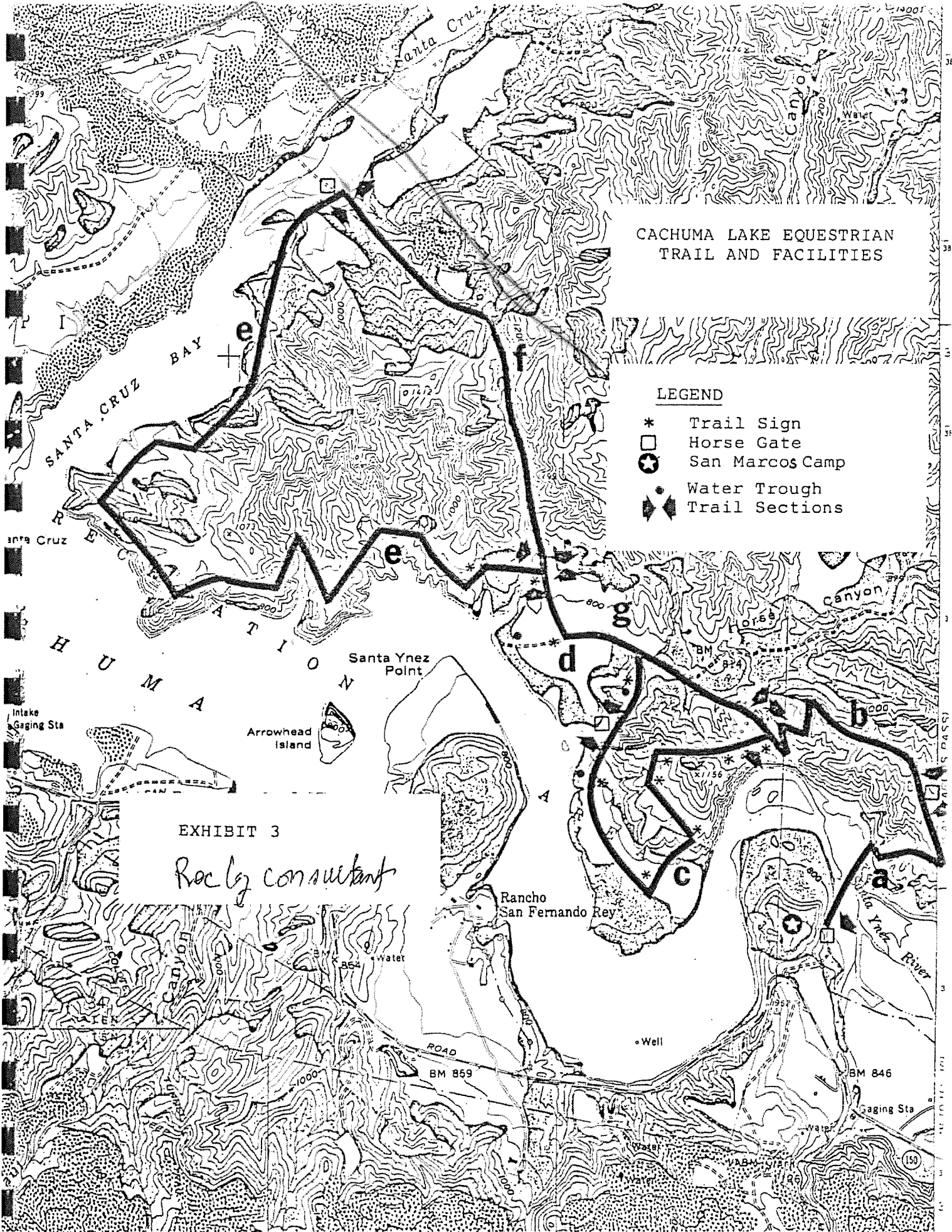


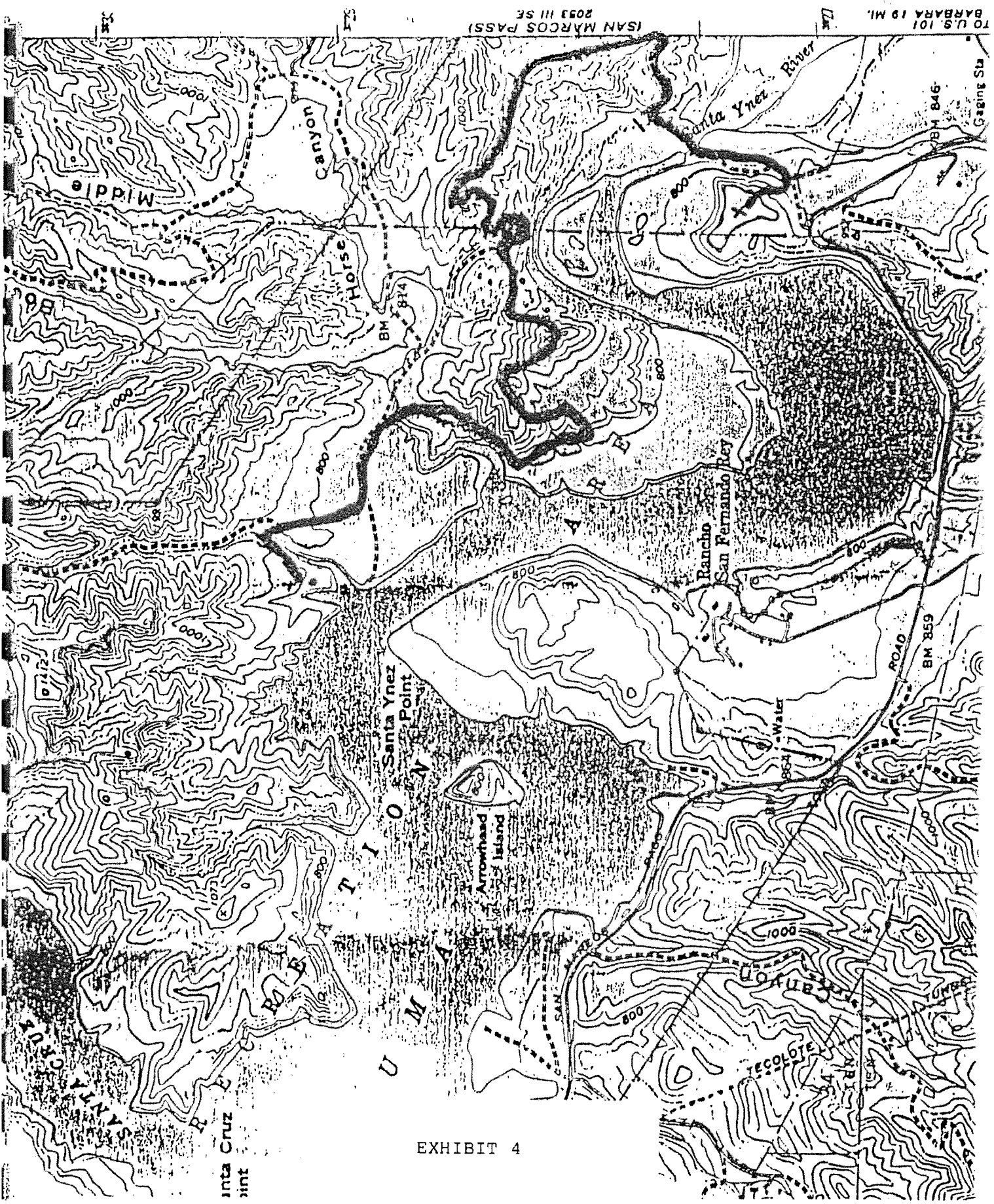
EXHIBIT 3

Reilly Consultants

Rancho San Fernando Rey

Gaging Sta

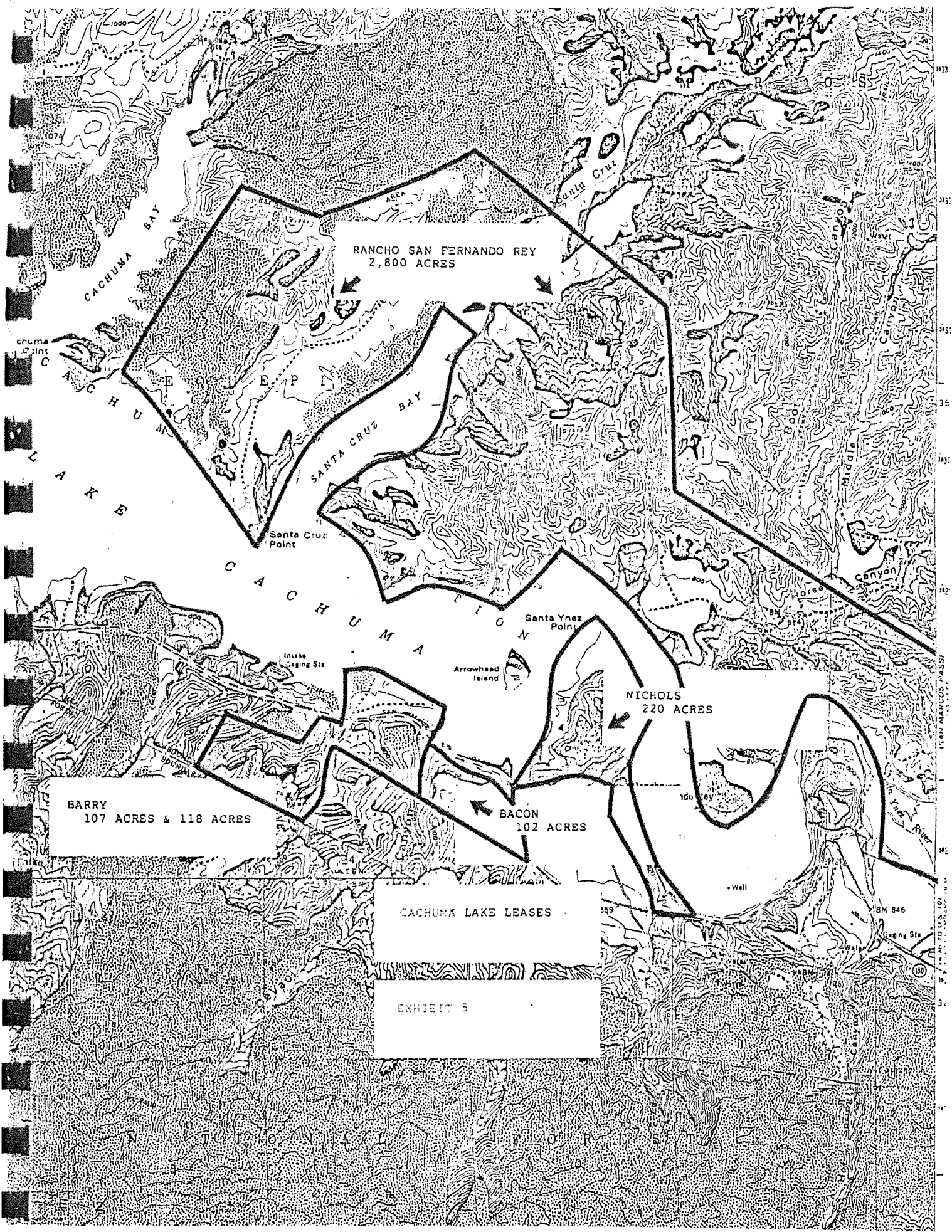
150



TO U.S. 101 19 MI.
BARBARA 19 MI.
(SAN MARCOS PASS)
2093 III SE

EXHIBIT 4

Santa Cruz
Point



RANCHO SAN FERNANDO REY
2,800 ACRES

BARRY
107 ACRES & 118 ACRES

BACON
102 ACRES

NICHOLS
220 ACRES

CACHUMA LAKE LEASES

EXHIBIT 5

Cachuma Point C

Santa Cruz Point

Santa Ynez Point

Inlake Logging Site

Arrowhead Island

Island

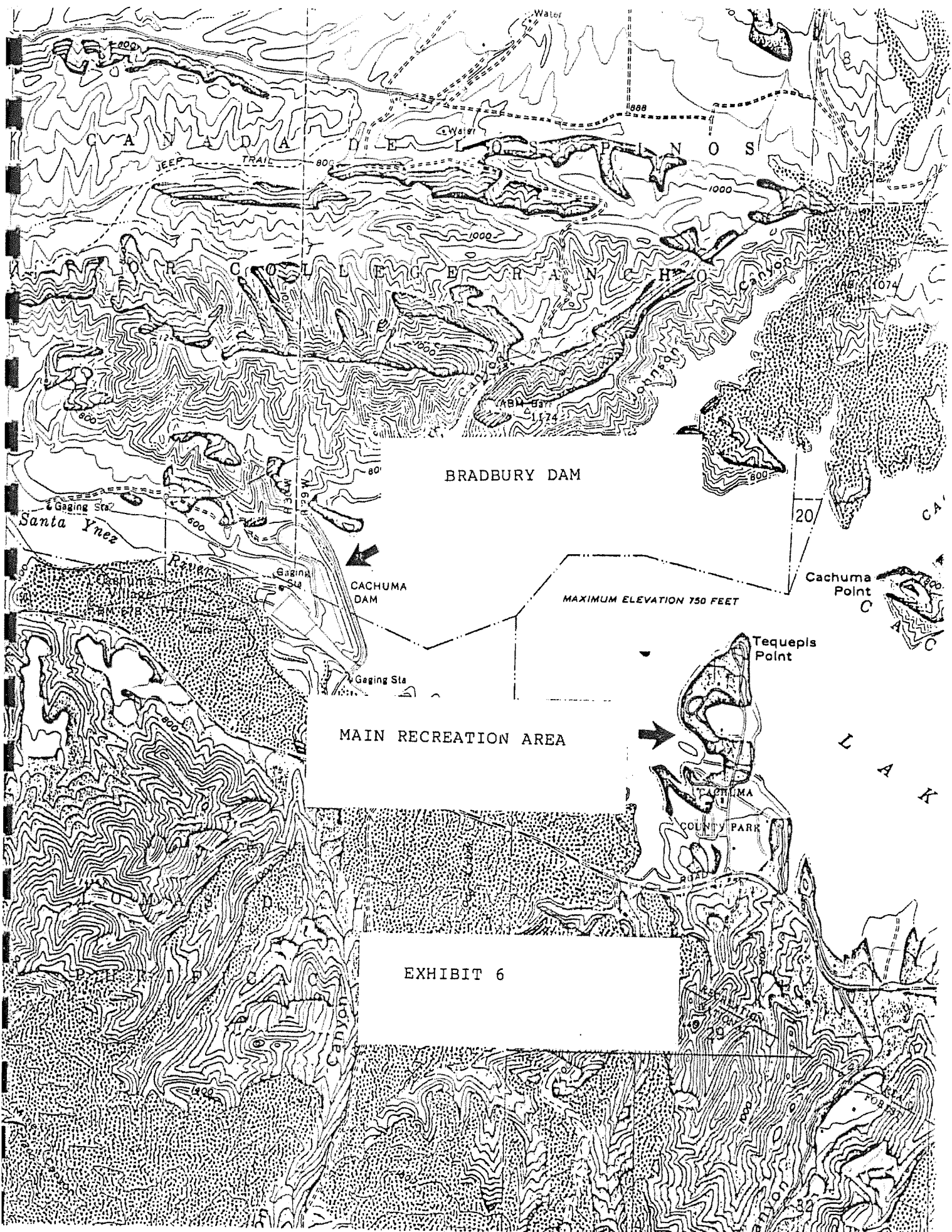
Well

BM 846

Inlake Logging Site

19

PLAN MARCOS PASSY



BRADBURY DAM

CACHUMA DAM

MAXIMUM ELEVATION 750 FEET

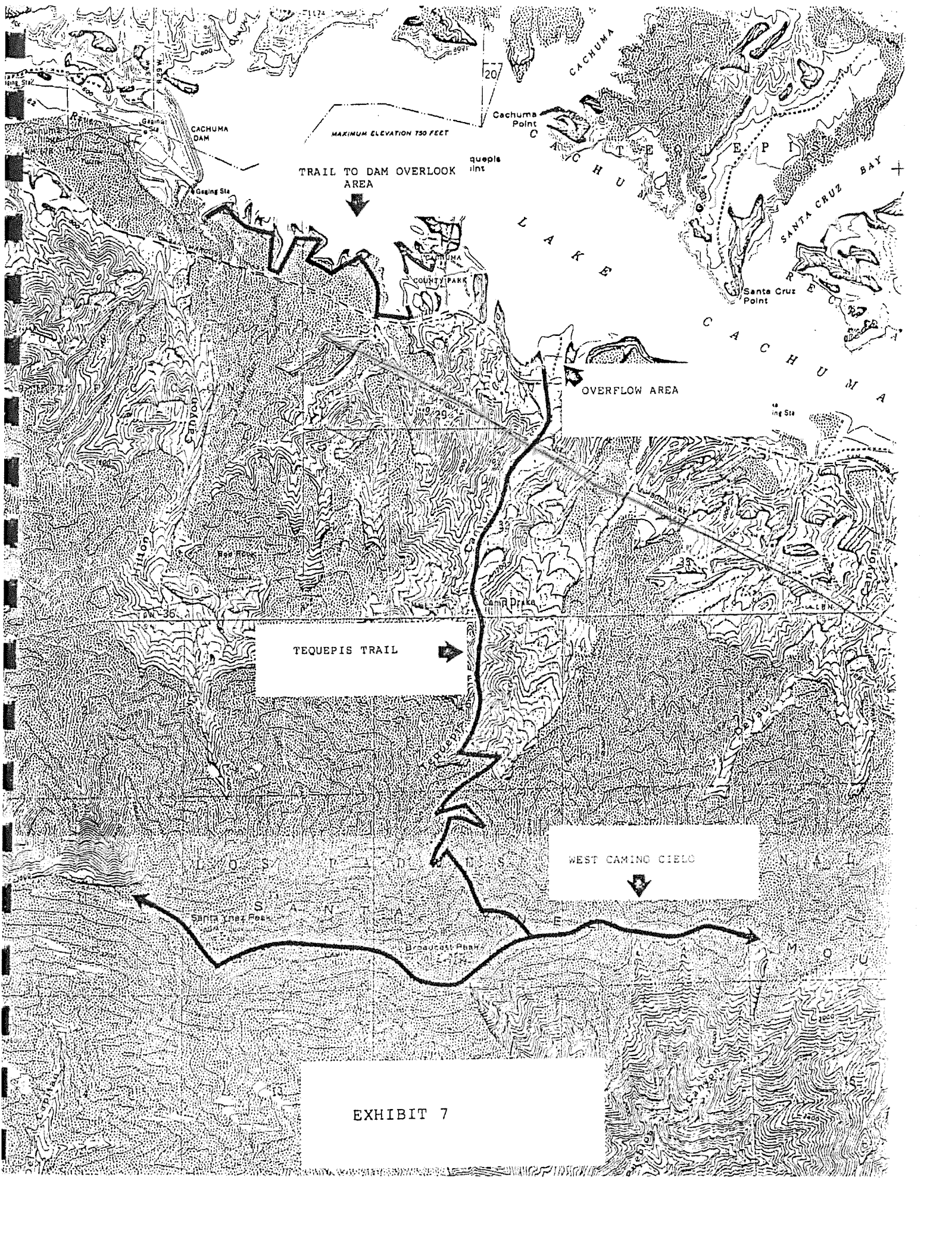
Cachuma Point

Tequepis Point

MAIN RECREATION AREA

COUNTY PARK

EXHIBIT 6



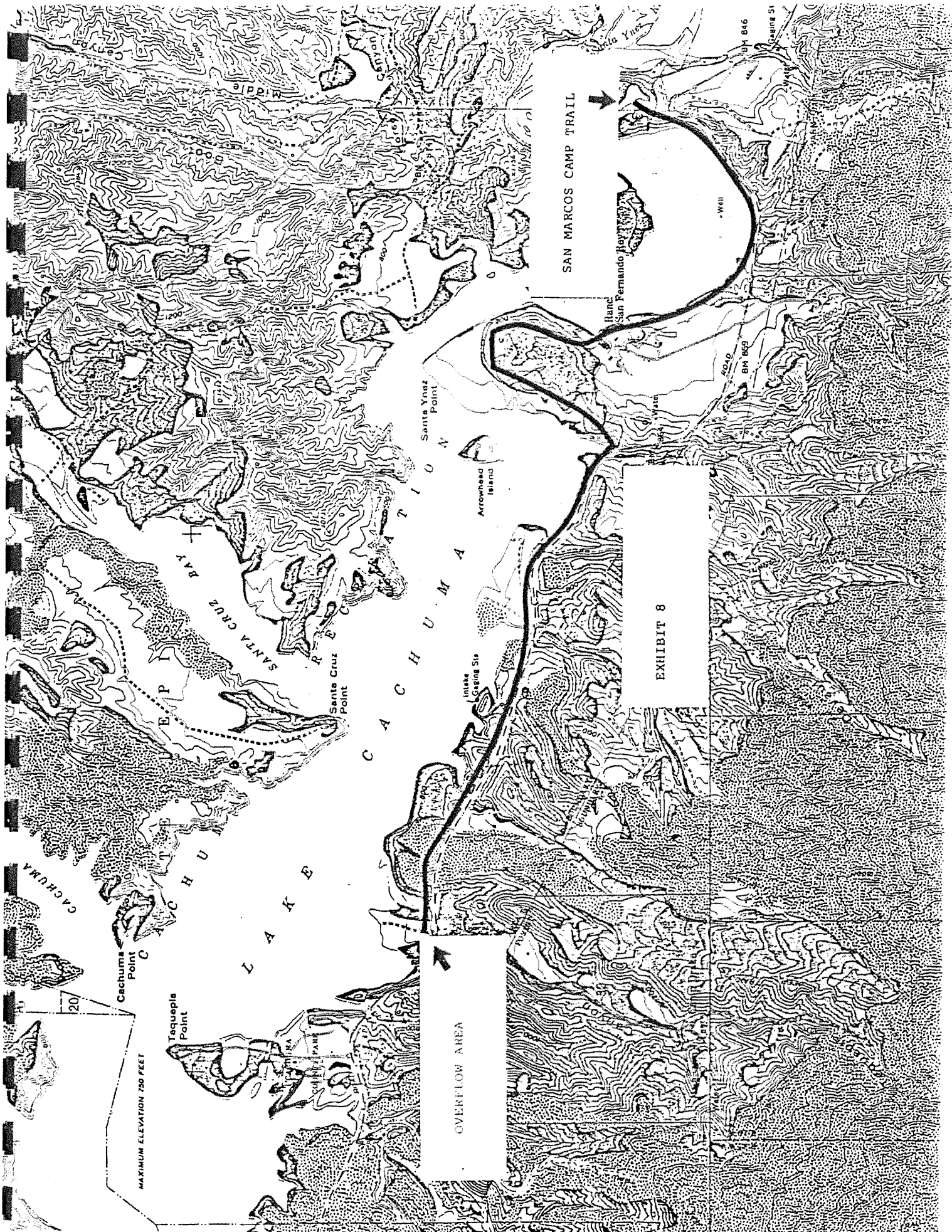
TRAIL TO DAM OVERLOOK AREA

OVERFLOW AREA

TEQUEPIS TRAIL

WEST CAMINO CIELO

EXHIBIT 7



20'
MAXIMUM ELEVATION 750 FEET

Cactuna Point
Taquepita Point

Santa Cruz Point

OVERFLOW AREA

EXHIBIT 8

SAN MARCOS CAMP TRAIL

CACHUMA

SANTA CRUZ BAY

San Fernando River

ROAD 8040

ROAD 8046

BM 8040

BM 8046

San Marcos Camp Trail

San Fernando River

Arrowhead Island

Cactuna Point

Taquepita Point

Santa Cruz Point

San Marcos Camp Trail

San Fernando River

Arrowhead Island

Cactuna Point

Taquepita Point

Santa Cruz Point

San Marcos Camp Trail

San Fernando River

Arrowhead Island

16.0 APPENDIX

- A Letter from Michael Pahos to Interested Equestrian Groups
- B Minutes of August 27, 1987 Park Commission Meeting and Letter to Park Commission regarding Trail
- C News Release Regarding the Trail Opening
- D Cachuma Trail Permit Form
- E Adopted Fee Resolution 88-498
- F Trail Usage Summary Report for 1989
- G Trail User's Meeting - Agenda
- H Trail User's Meeting - Attendance Sheet
- I Letter from Michael Pahos to Grazing Leaseholders
- J Letters from Joshua Odell
- K Table 5 - Recreation Element
- L ECOS Bald Eagle Study



Santa Barbara County Park Department

610 Mission Canyon Rd., Santa Barbara, Ca. 93105 (805) 963-7109

"At Rocky Nook Park"

MICHAEL H. PAHOS
Director of Parks

FRANK LAURAN
Deputy
Director of Parks

April 28, 1987

TO: Interested Equestrian Groups
FROM: Michael H. Pahos, Director of Parks
SUBJECT: Proposed Equestrian Center at Lake Cachuma


The Santa Barbara County Park Department is interested in building a camping unit exclusively reserved for equestrians at Lake Cachuma.

This interest is based on the belief that it is possible to also construct a trail system to provide an around-the-lake trail and an access into the Los Padres National Forest to the south of the lake.

You and others have received this letter because of your interest in horses and trails. If you would like to be involved in such a project, could you tell us:

- Do you think it is worthwhile?
- Do you have suggestions about things to avoid or to be sure to include in a campground design?
- We have the horse camp in Caspar Regional Park in Orange County in mind. Have you seen it? What do you think of it? Do you know of other successful horse camps?

Depending on the response we receive to this request, we will schedule a meeting at Lake Cachuma in mid-June. Thank you for your comments and cooperation.


MICHAEL H. PAHOS
Director of Parks

MHP:cds

APPENDIX A

MINUTES
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PARK COMMISSION
August 27, 1987

The Santa Barbara County Park Commission met in the Board Room of the Solvang Municipal Center, 1644 Oak Avenue, Solvang, California. Present were Commissioners Martha Hickey, Pamela Strickland, Judy Johnson and Robert Ferrero. Absent Gene Petersen.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the July 23, 1987 Meeting.

Motion Hickey/Johnson to approve the minutes of the July 23, 1987 meeting. Unanimous.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION

Frank Luran presented letters which were received by the department protesting the installation of a ballfield in the Mesa Hills area of Lompoc. Recreational opportunities will have to be satisfactory to the community before development can take place.

It was announced that there will be a public hearing, September 9th at 7:30 P.M. on the Carneros Creek Flood Control Plan.

2. Discussion of Comite's Proposed Fee Schedule for Use of the Building at LeRoy Park.

Marcela Franco presented the Commission with a fee schedule for the LeRoy Park recreation building which she would like recommended to the Board of Supervisors. The schedule outlines fees for dances, receptions, banquets and special activities. Organized youth groups, senior citizens and non-profit organizations will be charged one-half of the standard fee. Recreational group activities, lessons and classes will be \$10 an hour and Guadalupe School and City sponsored activities will be \$5.00 an hour. There will be no charge for City, County, State or Federal Board meetings. A \$1.00 parking fee for certain Comite events is requested in order to control traffic. All fees generated would be used for building maintenance. Commissioners addressed several questions to Ms. Franco, which she answered in further detail.

Andy Radler from the City of Guadalupe expressed concern about the youth activity fees and stressed that it would negatively affect the youth basketball program since the City has a joint use agreement with the schools. Fees for use of the LeRoy facility would add \$2,000 to the youth program and this cost would have to be passed on to the basketball participants. He would like to work out a cooperative fee with some in-kind services such as providing security and police protection at Comite events. Mr Radler's understanding of the

11. Progress Report on Day Use Horse Trail Originating at San Marcos Camp.

The department presented a proposal to create a low use horse camp adjacent to San Marcos Camp with minimal facilities for day use riders. A trail would branch out from there in either direction around the lake. Frank Lauran reported that the only difficulty in initiating the project may be with the grazing leaseholders and it is hoped that a harmonious agreement can be worked out with them to create this recreational opportunity for the community. Fences and control gates would need to be installed. Several supporters from the equestrian community and trail riding organizations spoke in favor of the camp and said they were eager to work with the County on development of this project.

Motion Strickland/Johnson to support the recommendation for a day use horse trail and commend the Park Department for encouraging recreational use of the land. Unanimous.

Frank Lauran will begin project development by contacting the leaseholders.

12. Update of Time Schedule for Expenditure of SB 959 Funds.

It was reported that the La Playa Stadium check had been delivered. A letter has been sent to the Coastal Conservancy requesting their sharing the cost of the property appraisal for Santa Barbara Shores. Jalama Beach's SB 959 appropriation may have to be used for park development rather than acquisition. The September public meeting may determine future development at Jalama. Plans for Wallace Avenue and Loon Point development are not finalized.

13. Staff Reports.

- a. Quimby Status Report, Including Map of Demand Areas.

For Information.

- b. 1. Review of Report on Breakdown of Quimby Revenues, Santa Ynez/Buellton Area.

There was some confusion as to what money is available from the capital program for development of the Buellton Park and it was determined that \$21,308 currently in the Quimby reserve is an additional amount that can be designated for park development. Commissioners asked that the Demand Fee be clarified and staff will return with the information at the next meeting.



Santa Barbara County Park Department

610 Mission Canyon Rd., Santa Barbara, Ca. 93105 (805) 963-7109

"At Rocky Nook Park"

MICHAEL H. PAHOS
Director of Parks

FRANK LAURAN
Deputy
Director of Parks

August 20, 1987

TO: Santa Barbara County Park Commission
FROM: Michael H. Pahos, Director of Parks
SUBJECT: Development of Cachuma Horse Trails

RECOMMENDATION:

Concur in policy to develop horse trail network around Lake Cachuma.

DISCUSSION:

The Lake Cachuma Project has established and maintained trails, but only to a limited degree, and nearly none are for equestrians.

As a result of several current circumstances, it is proposed to develop a horse trail network around Cachuma. The circumstances are: the continuing growth in a horse-oriented population in the Santa Ynez Valley; slow achievements in the trail network countywide; and this department's approved policy to relinquish all claims on trail easements in agricultural land, except for primary and historical trails. (There are no primary or historic trails in the North County.)

The object of this proposal is to create a low use horse camp for day use riders adjacent to San Marcos Camp, with minimal facilities. A trail would branch out from there in either direction around the lake.

We believe that costs would be low, primarily for horse gates across grazing leases, and it is possible that equestrian groups will donate these.

The full development of the horse camp which is envisioned as a rustic site with no paving and not more than running water, picnic tables and portable toilets, as well as the full lake trail system, would take up to two years. In addition to donated funds for gates, we believe that donated labor (the CCC) and Wildlife Conservation grants would permit the department to accomplish this work without any significant cost. It would be possible, however, to begin some trail riding within three months of today.

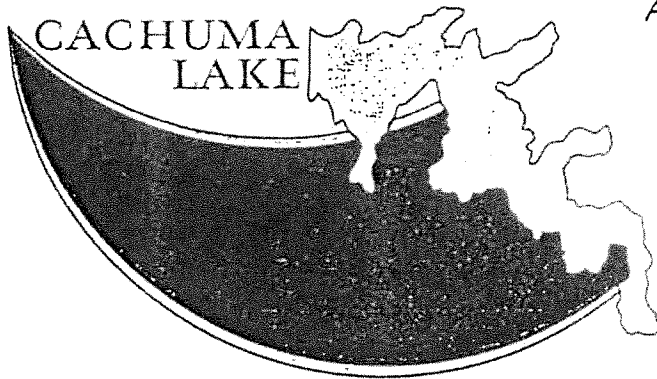
It is my optimistic hope that it will be possible to work through gate arrangements and trail routes which are not uncomfortable to the grazing leaseholder. Reviewing other such trail systems, it is clear that it is possible for a grazing lease and a recreational trail to exist harmoniously.

SUMMARY:

The trail system is being proposed as a means to inexpensively create an important recreational opportunity and relieve some pressure for trail development in the Santa Ynez Valley.


MICHAEL H. PAHOS
Director of Parks

MHP:rh
W:4932g



A TREASURE TO DISCOVER AND ENJOY!

Star Route, Santa Barbara CA 93105

(805) 688-4658 Voice/TDD

Ron Place
Park Superintendent

Rick Wheeler
Assistant Park Superintendent

Santa Barbara County Park Department

March 21, 1988

F O R I M M E D I A T E R E L E A S E

A dedication ride is planned for SATURDAY, MARCH 26th, by the Santa Ynez Valley Riders to initiate the new LAKE CACHUMA EQUESTRIAN TRAIL. This loop trail has been constructed by the Santa Barbara County Park Department in cooperation with local equestrian groups, who have participated in the planning and donated funds for several trail gates.

Riders will meet at 9:00 AM at the main entrance gate of Lake Cachuma County Park to register. The 3-1/2 hour ride will depart from the newly constructed trailhead parking above the San Marcos Camp group facility. Bring your camera, as the trail winds through meadows of wildflowers and mesas offering breathtaking lake vistas. Chances are good you'll catch at least a glimpse of deer, wild boar, hawks, the last of Cachuma's wintering eagles, and many other local birds and wildlife.

Following the ride at Noon, enjoy the camaraderie and a delicious barbecue lunch catered by the Agin Brothers, at a cost of \$5.00 per person. For reservations, please call Phyllis Traylor at (805) 688-0714.

For more information on the Cachuma Equestrian Trail and other park facilities, please call (805) 688-4658.

* * * * *

APPENDIX C

DAY USE HORSE RIDER'S PERMIT

FEEES:

Daily: \$ 5.00 per Horse and Rider
Annual: \$50.00 Regular
\$40.00 Senior Citizen

Rules and Regulations

VISITORS WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

Returning main gate key to Cachuma, staying on trails, shutting all gates, and, as a courtesy to others, scattering all manure to aid decomposition and deterrence flies at the parking area. When possible, riders must clear trails to make travel easier for themselves and others. When a detour is necessary, notify local managers so the trail can be cleared before an alternate route forms.

THE FOLLOWING WILL NOT BE PERMITTED:

Dogs, bicycles, motor vehicles, fires, camping, firearms, riding on fire department red flag days, riding immediately after rains, disturbing cattle, and bicycling (adopt a pack it in, pack it out philosophy).

PLEASE OBEY ALL RULES AND REGULATIONS AND LEAVE THE AREA A BETTER PLACE BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN THERE.

NAME (Please Print) ADDRESS (Mailing) STATE & ZIP

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN PARTY GATE KEY NUMBER

I agree to abide by ALL LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS which apply to this area and will do my best to see that everyone in our group does likewise.

VISITOR'S SIGNATURE DATE

TIME IN TIME OUT ISSUING RANGER (Signature)

CP



Star Route
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION APPROVING FEES FOR)
USE OF EQUESTRIAN TRAILS AT)
LAKE CACHUMA RECREATION AREA)

RESOLUTION NO. 88-498

WHEREAS, Lake Cachuma Recreation Area is devoted to park and recreational purposes; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section 50402 provides that Santa Barbara County may make a charge for use or services provided in Lake Cachuma Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, the charges imposed by this Resolution do not exceed the cost of the services provided in Lake Cachuma Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, the charges imposed by this Resolution are to the extent feasible, uniform with charges for similar uses or services imposed by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors throughout its area of jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, Section 50402 provides that Santa Barbara County may be resolution control, regulate, restrict or close road entrances to Lake Cachuma Recreation Area for the purpose of facilitating collection of the charges imposed by this Section; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the proposed fees at Lake Cachuma Recreation Area is found by the Board of Supervisors to be exempt from CEQA review, inasmuch as increased revenue received will be used for such items of expenditure as staffing, wage increases, loan repayment, new or replacement equipment, improvement or maintenance of the grounds and structures, and to provide reimbursement for rentals and contractual services; and

WHEREAS, Santa Barbara County has installed a system of fee collection at Lake Cachuma Recreation Area which involves an appropriate road access allowing entrance and a designated employee and/or collection device to receive said imposed fees;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The Board of Supervisors approves and adopts the following schedule of fees for use of the public equestrian trails system at Lake Cachuma Recreation Area:

FEE DESCRIPTION	FEE AMOUNT
Use of Trails per trailer/per day	\$ 5.00
Annual Riding Fee	50.00
Senior Citizens Annual Riding Fee	40.00

2. The schedule of fees adopted by this Resolution is to be effective upon adoption; and

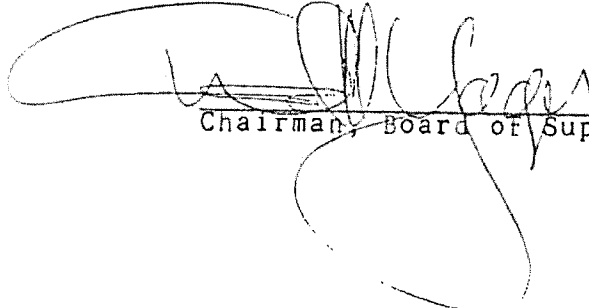
3. Entrance to the trails system at Lake Cachuma Recreation Area is to be controlled, restricted, regulated, or closed by the Santa Barbara County Park Department for the purpose of limiting access and collecting fees by such Department.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, this 12th day of September 1988, by the following vote:

AYES: Rogers, Wallace, Holmdahl, Miyoshi

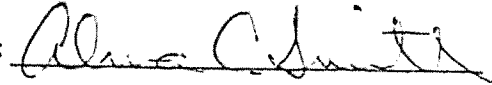
NOES: Yager

ABSENT: None


Chairman, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

KENNETH PETTIT
COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER

By: 

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

KENNETH NELSON
COUNTY COUNSEL

By: 

APPROVED AS TO ACCOUNTING FORM:

KRISTI M. JOHNSON
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

By: 

W5590g

APPENDIX E

JUN 22 REC'D

SAN MARCOS HOPE TRAIL USAGE

1989

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u># in Party</u>	<u>Paid</u>	<u>From</u>
Feb. 12	Robert LaRoe	2	\$5.00	Goleta
Feb. 13	N. Shuler	2	5.00	Santa Ynez
Feb. 19	Carolyn Egus	4	10.00	S.B.
Feb. 19	Mary West	2	(annual)	S.B.
Feb. 19	Sue Strickland	4	10.00	S.B.
Feb. 19	Pete Rose	1	5.00	Solvang
Feb. 20	Bob Waller	1	5.00	S.B.
Feb. 20	Eugene LaRoe	2	5.00	Santa Ynez
Feb. 25	Tom Schubring	1	5.00	S.B.
Feb. 26	Susie Snow	14 Trlrs.	70.00?	Santa Ynez
Feb. 26	J. Michael Sobieszczyk	2	5.00	S.B.
	:			
Mar. 4	Mary West	2	(annual)	S.B.
Mar. 9	Jane Snow	2	5.00	S.B.
Mar. 9	Wythe Platt	1	5.00	S.B.
Mar. 19	Susan Strickland	2	5.00	S.B.
Mar. 19	Carl Wagner	2	5.00	Solvang
Mar. 19	Ed Hilgaertner	7	20.00	Solvang
Mar. 20	Mary West	2	(annual)	S.B.
Mar. 26	Bruno Vogelsanger	6	15.00	S.B.
Mar. 27	Loretta Singley	2	5.00	Lompoc
Mar. 27	Lois Amsden	2	5.00	Santa Ynez
Mar. 27	L. Kern	2	5.00	Santa Ynez
No Date	Mary West	2	(annual)	S.B.
No Date	Phyllis Traylor	2	5.00	Los Olivos
Apr. 2	Dennis Houston	4	10.00	Santa Ynez
Apr. 2	Mary West	2	(annual)	S.B.
Apr. 9	Carolyn Egus	3	10.00	S.B.
Apr. 9	Val Saint Clair	3	10.00	Solvang
Apr. 9	Judith Collier	2	5.00	S.B.
Apr. 14	Anne E. Harris	2	(annual)	Santa Ynez
Apr. 18	Linda Branch	3	10.00	S.B.
Apr. 30	David Bringley	2	5.00	Santa Ynez
Apr. 30	Carolyn Egus	4	10.00	S.B.
No Date	Val Saint Clair	2	5.00	Solvang

The amounts paid may not be accurate as there are no amounts paid on the permits. There may be more annuals than are reflected here.

APPENDIX F

*PCW
6/15/89*

SAN MARCOS HORSE TRAIL USAGE

1989

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u># in Party</u>	<u>Paid</u>	<u>From</u>
May 7	R.E. Laroe	2	\$5.00	Goleta
June 3	Mary West	2	(annual)	S.B.
No Date	Mary West	2	(annual)	S.B.

RCW
6/15/89

CACHUMA TRAIL MANAGEMENT PLAN
USER MEETING/CACHUMA LAKE RECREATION ROOM
6-28-89

AGENDA

- I. INTRODUCTION (5 min.)
- II. PURPOSE OF MEETING (5 min.)
- III. DISCUSSION OF TRAIL'S DEVELOPMENT (30 min.)
 - A. User Input
 - B. Staff Input
 - C. Resulting Trail Route
 1. Satisfied/Unsatisfied?
 2. Why/Why not?
- IV. CACHUMA STAFF MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (30 min.)
 - A. Staff Input
 1. Knowledgeable/Helpful?
 - B. Adequacy of Facilities
 1. Water
 2. Restrooms
 - C. Gate/Signs
 1. Convenient
 2. Clear in intent
 - D. Fees
- V. USE TO DATE (15 min.)
 - A. Documented Use
 - B. Revenues to Department
 - C. Group Use vs. Individual Use
- VI. SUMMARY (10 min)
 - A. Suggestions/Comments
 - B. Complaints

CACHUMA TRAIL MANAGEMENT PLAN
USER MEETING/CACHUMA LAKE RECREATION ROOM
6-28-89

ATTENDANCE

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE
Joan P. ...	4237 "H"	736-0934
Larry Scobari	423 N. "G" Loupoc	736-0934 93436
Barbara ...	P.O. Box 534 ...	
Barbara ...	871 W Hwy 246 Bullton	688-5432
Proz ...	1261 Calzada Santa Ynez	688-8873
David ...	335 Camino San Carlos Bullton	688-0721
Lucie Snow	2720 Long Canyon Rd, Santa Ynez	
Bob ...	1070 Mustang Dr. S.Y.	6887698
Robert ...	1391 ...	937-5819
Shirley ...	1454 Tunnel Rd. S.B.	682-8809
Lois ...	4200 Marina Dr. S.B. 93110	687-2020
Mary ...	1395 ...	684-3188
Marilyn ...	1371 Holiday Hill Rd. Santa Ynez	964-7078
Bob ...	1475 LAS PALMAS DR. S.B. 93110	967-1909
Jim ...	JM Consulting	966-9934



Santa Barbara County Park Department

610 Mission Canyon Rd., Santa Barbara, Ca. 93105 (805) 963-7109

"At Rocky Nook Park"

MICHAEL H. PAHOS
Director of Parks

FRANK LAURAN
Deputy
Director of Parks

October 1, 1987

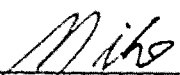
TO: Grazing Leaseholders
FROM: Michael H. Pahos, Director of Parks
SUBJECT: Horse Trails at Lake Cachuma

As a result of considerable and growing support for horse trails in the County and particularly in the Santa Ynez Valley, the department is moving toward establishing a day use equestrian camp in the general area of San Marcos Camp. This issue has been brought to the department and the Park Commission with great enthusiasm and energy by local horse groups, and the Commission has been persuaded to support the concept unanimously.

Reviewing the grazing leases, it is clear that such equestrian uses are consistent with our recreational management responsibilities. In view of the ardent public support, we plan to begin laying out a trail network in the next 60 days, with construction to begin in 120 days.

To insure that you have an opportunity to state your concerns, give your input on trail/fence issues, or explore your own decision concerning possible modification or termination of the grazing lease, I would very much like to meet with you. If you wish to meet, please call my office to set up a date and time. I would be pleased to meet on the grazing lease, at Lake Cachuma, or here at Rocky Nook.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL H. PAHOS
Director of Parks

MHP:cds
W5045g

SAN MARCOS RANCH
STAR ROUTE SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA 93105

Mr. Mike Pahos
Santa Barbara County Park Department
610 Mission Canyon Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

22 November 1988

Dear Mr. Pahos:

I am writing to inquire about the newly establish Horse Riding Trail that The Lake Cachuma Recreation Area has established at the San Marcos Camp sight.

There is a new sign posted at the gate on the old county road entrance stating that the combination may be obtained by paying a \$5 fee for a permit to ride the trail at the Lake Cachuma Main gate. The notice is signed at the bottom by Mr. Rick Wheeler.

The families living on The San Marcos ranch are very concerned as to how the Santa Barbara County Park Department is going to be able to responsibly supervise and maintain the horse trail entrance. There are six sperate households on The San Marcos Ranch.

How are Lake Cachuma rangers going to be able to monitor the responsible use of the trail entrance if the combination lock is simply given out from the Main Gate? Who is going to see that the privilege is not abused? (I do understand that the combination lock on the front gate is changed periodically, and the combination on the horse gate is changed every month.)

I am a runner and jog several times during the week, and every Saturday and Sunday along the county road that divides two of our fields and enters the Cachuma Camp. Because I regularly jog along the road at dusk I have had the opportunity to observed, first hand, a number of disturbing occurrences which I would like to alert you to.

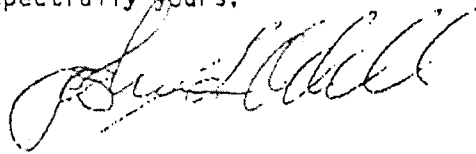
In the past weeks I have noticed a significantly increased amount of trash along the road and in our fields. I have notice beer cans, Coke cans, potato salad containers, potato chip bags, empty peanut cans, plastic coffee cups.

I have also witnessed a number of cars driving at speeds approximately 35 to 45 m.p.h. (When my grandfather ran our ranch the posted speed signs were 10 m.p.h.). There are many deer in the open fields as well as our horses and cattle, though they are fenced in. I also frequently see skunks, raccoons and other wildlife on our ranch

APPENDIX J

I would be very pleased, as would my neighbors I believe, to discuss that matter with you at further length. I enjoy and appreciate the Lake Cachuma Recreational Area and value its benefits to the community. I very much look forward to hearing from you. My office is at 629 State Street, Suite 246, tel. 966-5389.

Respectfully yours,



Joshua Odell

cc: Mr. Rick Wheeler
Mr. Ron Place

*The same one who wants
to convert his Ranch
into a Public Golf
course !!!*

Public Presentation

SAN MARCOS RANCH
STAR ROUTE SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA 93105

TELEPHONE (805) 967-3614
805; 964-5128

Mr. Mike Pahos
Santa Barbara County Park Department
610 Mission Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

RECEIVED

NOV 28 1988

22 November 1988

S. B. County Park Dept

Dear Mr. Pahos,

I am writing you this letter separately from my previous letter discussing the problems and concerns regarding the Cachuma Camp horse trail. In this letter I wish to alert you to the problems regarding the week-end group use of the Cachuma Camp. This is a separate matter than that of the horse trail entrance.

You will recall I spoke to you over the telephone this past summer in June about the difficulties we have had with a few particularly unmanageable groups. At that time we also spoke about the problem with the signs indicating where the San Marcos Camp is located, and the problems people have in finding their way to the camp. I would like to address this problem specifically, as it is the simplest to solve.

The only sign that the Park Department has put up is a very low sign, approximately four feet high, brown stained wood with white lettering, which reads: "SAN MARCOS CAMP". There is an arrow in white pointing toward the county road gate. The problem with this sign is that it is not easily visible from the road because it is too low and set too far back. Consequently groups using the Cachuma Camp, particularly large groups who have used the camp before, paint large signs and place them either on the road or on the entrance to our ranch. This causes the families renting and working for us at The San Marcos Ranch serious disturbances.

We have a more visible sign, which is also constructed out of wood stained brown with white letters reading "SAN MARCOS RANCH." Our sign has had large nails, screws, staple-type nails, duct tape, rope, and wire attached to it over the past couple of years by groups who use it to display their signs. This past summer one group brought reflective letters spelling out their group name. They then nailed each letter into our ranch sign. It has virtually been ruined.

Approximately one month ago the Cachuma Camp was rented for a teampenning competition. Did you know that they placed a billboard sign, in bold red letters, at the foot of my driveway, advertising "COORS BEER" in enormous letters and directing divers to take the next turn off in 500 yards. They also placed an identical sign at the other end of the ranch at the intersection of Old Stage Coach road. I have no objection to the teampenning competition being held at the Cachuma Camp, but how would you like a billboard advertising beer placed at the foot of your driveway? I don't believe any Cachuma Ranger or park personnel is even aware of this situation. I find this extremely upsetting, as do the other families living on The San Marcos Ranch and our neighbors--who I have spoken with.

Groups using the area have also attached balloons to our entrance sign and tied balloons to our mailboxes (tying the mailboxes closed so that we are unable to even pick up our mail). They do this because the mailboxes are visible from Highway 154. This has occurred repeatedly.

Some particularly troublesome groups have attempted to light fires at the entrance and loitered in vans and cars while listening to loud music. They do this so they can direct people back to the camp. Friday nights when the groups usually arrive it is extremely disturbing, especially to the ranch Foreman, his wife and two children whose home is at the entrance. On such occasions we often have found pilings of rocks and boulders, wire, and garbage at the entrance. We are the ones who clean it up. I have never seen or spoken with a Cachuma Ranger in the area of the entrance. It appears to be completely unmonitored.

It is illegal to display signs on 154 because it is a scenic Highway. I know because we had one of our signs removed by the CAL-TRANS department and I was told that we couldn't put it back up. Yet these groups put the signs up nearly every week-end during the busy summer months, and several times they have destroyed them and left them by the side of the road when they leave.

What I would like to ask you is if you could put up a slightly larger more visible sign at the entrance. I also wonder if you could have a wooden folding-type sign that you could put out on week-ends when you have rented the camp. I would also like to ask you to have produced at the same time a new sign to replace our sign reading "SAN MARCOS RANCH" which has been vandalized by the groups you have invited and charged to use the Cachuma Camp.

I would like our new sign to be about 20% larger than the present sign, we could place it in a new location down the entrance drive to our ranch just behind our gate. I would like to be able to attach a uniformly painted sign reading "Private" beneath the "SAN MARCOS RANCH" sign. It will need to be approximately 20% larger so that it will still be visible when moved further from the road and placed at a distance from you sign. My hope is that this will clarify to people the "CACHUMA SAN MARCOS CAMP" is separate from "THE SAN MARCOS RANCH."

It would be helpful to have a uniformly made sign to place at the gate to the county road that would read something along the lines of: "PROCEED TO SAN MARCOS CAMP/ YOU ARE DRIVING THROUGH PRIVATE PROPERTY." Not long ago I was jogging in the early evening on our property and I came upon two ladies who were walking in the our fields off the county road picking some wild flowers and sage. I asked them what they were doing, and they were surprised to learn that they were on private property, they were out for a hike while staying at the San Marcos Camp. People going back to the San Marcos Camp in groups don't seem to always know that our ranch borders the property, and there is no Ranger to keep track of the situation. Many people are good and considerate visitors, I'm only writing to you about the problems I have personally experienced.

Finally, a sign should be located at the end of the county road where we have built a metal green gate. A sign placed here could read "CACHUMA

SAN MARCOS CAMP" and have an arrow pointing to the right leading down to the camp. This green gate has been driven into and smashed down numerous times in the past several years (the last time was the week-end of November 12), and many people have asked me when reaching the top where they should go.

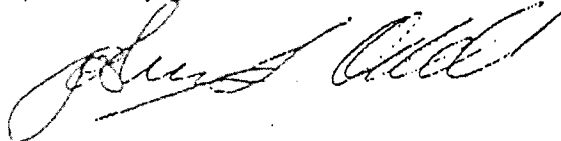
Please contact me in reply to these suggestions.

The situation of the Lake Cachuma Recreation Area leasing out the San Marcos Camp has continued to deteriorate and it has in some instances become hazardous and dangerous. This letter is to suggest to you that these signs will help the situation, but it is also to register a complaint that we have had difficult on a number of occasions with people using the camp on week-ends.

This is notify you that we do not feel the camp is responsibly monitored, and that there have been acts of vandalism, drunken driving, trespassing, speeding by cars entering the camp, loitering, and littering. I would welcome the opportunity to detail these occurrences with you. I would sincerely like to improve the situation--and the relations and rapport--between the County Park Department and the families living on The San Marcos Ranch, and our neighbors.

Once again, my office is located at 629 State Street, tel. 966-5389.

Respectfully yours,



Joshua Odell

cc: Mr. Rick Wheeler
Mr. Ron Place

Table 5 (con't)
EXISTING PARKS AND JOINT USE FACILITIES

Site No.	Acres	Name	Natural Areas	Walking	Inf. Rec.	Family Picnic	Beach Use	Group Picnic	Soft ball	Hand ball	Soc. Cor. Mis.	Ten- Ball	Foot. Rec.	Indoor Rec. Activities	Indoor Rec. Prog.	Swimming Pools	Camp- ing	Trail Heads	Eques- trian	Unde- vel- oped Rec. Areas
E1	6	Arroyo Burro		XX	XX	XX	XX													
E2	3.3	Buellton Parkway		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												XX
E3	29	Galeta Beach		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E4	26	Guadalupe Dunes	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E5	30	Hans C. Andersen		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E6	1.5	Isla Vista Beach		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												XX
E7	28	Jalama		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E8	61	Ken Adam	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E9	137	Lake Los Carneros	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E10	4	LeRoy Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX						XX						
E11	2	Lookout Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E12	51	Los Alamos Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX					XX							
E13	12	Manning Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX				XX								
E14	4	Miguelito Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E15	82	Nojoqui Falls Park	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E16	36	Ocean Park	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E17	16	Richardson Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E18	3	Rincon Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E19	19	Rocky Nook Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E20	106	San Antonio Park	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E21	31	Santa Rosa Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E22	4.5	Santa Ynez Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E23	1	Solvang Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E24	11	Stos Grove Park	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												XX
E25	20.5	Suey Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												XX
E26	8	Summerland Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E27	68	Toro Canyon Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E28	2	Ventucopa Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E29	100	Waller Park		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												XX
E30	4.6	Sharon Place (Buellton Flagg's Hill)		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX												
E31	9.696	Cachuma Lake	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX								XX				XX

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BALD EAGLES
AT LAKE CACHUMA COUNTY PARK

Prepared for:

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PARK DEPARTMENT
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

By:

Phillip J. Detrich

ECOS, Inc.
Environmental Consultants
1600 Sacramento Inn Way, Suite 129
Sacramento, CA

April 1989

APPENDIX L

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INTRODUCTION

In 1988, the Santa Barbara County Park Department (SBCPD) contracted with ECOS, Inc. to conduct a field study of wintering Bald Eagles at Lake Cachuma. The study's goal was to provide the information necessary to ensure long-term viability of Bald Eagle habitat at Lake Cachuma County Park, while maintaining optimum levels of visitor education and enjoyment. The scope of work included the following tasks:

1. Evaluation of Bald Eagle habitat and opportunities for enhancement.
2. Evaluation of potential disturbance of eagles resulting from eagle observation boat tours conducted by park staff.
3. Review of collision and electrocution potential associated with an existing power distribution line near the lake.
4. Supplying background material on Bald Eagle natural history to park staff.
5. Providing recommendations for management of park activities related to eagles.

Background

Prior to the 1950s, Bald Eagles bred at several locations in coastal Santa Barbara County (Kiff 1980). The last known breeding in the county was apparently in the early 1950s. The loss of the breeding population was primarily attributed to food chain contamination by the agricultural pesticide DDT. Since that time, Bald Eagles occurring in Santa Barbara County have been winter migrants from northern breeding populations.

In 1953, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) completed construction of Bradbury Dam on the Santa Ynez River in interior Santa Barbara County, forming the 3,000-surface-acre Lake Cachuma. Prior to dam construction, Bald Eagles were found on the Santa Ynez River during the annual winter steelhead run (Taylor pers. comm.). This fishery was eliminated by the dam's impoundment of winter flows for domestic use by coastal communities. Whether the reservoir's fishery offset that loss of eagle foraging habitat is unknown. Bald Eagle populations suffered widespread declines in the

1



1950s, but there was little scientific documentation of population levels (Detrich 1986).

In the 1960s and 1970s, scattered sightings of a few Bald Eagles at Lake Cachuma were recorded by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (SBMNH unpublished data). Nationwide scientific and management interest increased dramatically in the 1970s, spurred by passage of environmental legislation such as the U.S. Endangered Species Act. In 1979, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) counted 13 Bald Eagles at the lake during the first annual national Bald Eagle winter survey (Detrich 1981). Subsequent winter surveys recorded between four and ten eagles until 1988 and 1989, when 18 were recorded in each year (DFG unpublished data, Lehman 1988.) (Annual winter count results and other records obtained during this study have been supplied to park management for inclusion in their files.)

Lake Cachuma and surrounding lands are managed by the SBCPD. Until recent years, fishing was the primary winter recreation activity at the park. In the winter of 1986-87, the SBCPD began conducting boat tours to show visitors wintering Bald Eagles and other wildlife. This popular program soon became an important financial source for the Park, and stimulated concern for the welfare of eagles and their habitat at Lake Cachuma. During the winter of 1988-89, SBCPD and ECOS, Inc. conducted a study of Bald Eagle management needs at the lake, the results of which are reported herein.



STUDY METHODS

The study was conducted by Phillip Detrich, one of California's most experienced Bald Eagle biologists, with the assistance of Park Naturalist Neal Taylor, intern Elizabeth Putnam, and other park personnel. Mr. Detrich spent one week in December 1988, and one week in February 1989, searching for and evaluating eagle habitat and observing human activities at Lake Cachuma. Potential disturbance related to the boat tours was evaluated by accompanying the tours, observing tours from a distance without informing tour operators, and interviewing tour participants. The potential for eagle collision and electrocution on the power line was assessed by observation of eagle behavior and discussions with park staff and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) personnel. Organizations and agencies such as SBMNH, USBR, and DFG were contacted to obtain relevant information on history, lake management, and habitat components.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of habitat assessments, evaluation of disturbance and mortality factors, and recommendations for management activities are discussed below.

Habitat Components

Forage Base

Abundant forage in the form of fish and waterfowl is the most basic attraction for Bald Eagles at Lake Cachuma. Established warmwater fish species such as largemouth bass (Micropterus salmoides), smallmouth bass (M. dolomieu), crappie (Pomoxis spp.), and catfish (Ictalurus spp.), are augmented by large winter plantings of rainbow trout (Salmo gairdneri) (Sasaki pers. comm.). Park staff have established a number of fish cover structures to provide protective habitat for fry and fingerlings. The abundance of the winter fishery is indicated by the presence of numerous piscivorous birds in addition to Bald Eagles, including osprey (Pandion haliaetus), double-crested cormorants (Phalacrocorax auritus), great blue herons (Ardea herodias), and common mergansers (Mergus merganser).

Bald Eagles are also known to prey on fish in the Santa Ynez River and other tributaries to the reservoir, particularly when trout are attempting to move up these streams to spawn (Taylor pers. comm.). During this study, virtually no inflow occurred from the river, but eagles were seen fishing on Santa Cruz Creek about two miles above the reservoir. Fish in these streams are believed to primarily consist of prickly sculpin (Cottus asper), stickleback (Gasterosteus aculeatus), and arroyo chub (Gila orcutti) (Sasaki pers. comm.).

Several thousand waterfowl are found at Lake Cachuma during the winter months. American coots (Fulica americana), which serve as a Bald Eagle prey item throughout California, are common. Other waterfowl species of regular occurrence include Canada geese (Branta canadensis), mallard (Anas platyrhynchos), American wigeon (Anas americana), and western grebes (Aimophorus occidentalis). County park regulations prohibit waterfowl hunting on the reservoir and surrounding shoreline.

In the winter of 1988-89, available habitat for coots and other shallow water species may have been reduced, because



Large flats normally inundated were left dry by falling water levels resulting from drought conditions. This factor was probably responsible for the reduction in numbers of waterfowl counted by DFG in January 1989. Whether this reduction in the waterfowl component of the forage base was compensated by increased stress and mortality among fish populations is unknown.

In general, the forage base for eagles appears stable. The habitat goal should be overall maintenance of the existing forage base. Any proposal to modify the fishery of the lake or its tributaries should be evaluated carefully with regard to indirect effects on eagles. Similarly, changes which may affect waterfowl habitat should be assessed. Effects of continued low water levels on waterfowl and fish should be monitored and recorded. However, it must be remembered that variations in numbers of eagles wintering at Lake Cachuma may result from causes elsewhere in the winter range, and cannot necessarily be ascribed to changes in local conditions.

Foraging Perches

Favorable perching locations near forage sources are an important factor in successful capture of prey by Bald Eagles. Lack of such perches may reduce availability of existing forage, and result in increased competition at sites where perches are available.

(In this discussion, as elsewhere in the scientific literature, the term "perch" applies to locations where eagles sit during daylight hours to hunt, preen, loaf, etc. It is not used interchangeably with the term "roost", which refers to the location where eagles spend the night.)

Live trees, sometimes with prominent dead branches, provide the most commonly used perches at Lake Cachuma. Eagles are able to perch in live trees where branches are strong enough to support their weight, but they apparently prefer to perch in exposed locations atop the tree, where small terminal branches may not support them. The dominant tree species around the shoreline of Lake Cachuma, the coast live oak (Quercus agrifolia), is an evergreen oak which typically has a very bushy crown of small branches. This species does not provide an abundance of suitable perch sites.



Observations by park staff and records of perches used during the winter of 1988-89 indicate that Bald Eagles perch repeatedly at certain locations around Lake Cachuma, and are rarely recorded in other areas. This distribution may reflect variations in forage availability and human disturbance, but may also be affected by a lack of suitable perches in some areas.

The degree to which the lack of suitable perches limits eagles at Lake Cachuma is unknown. However, when compared to the widespread distribution of live oaks, the very patchy distribution of known eagle perch sites indicates that enhancement of perches may be desirable. Increasing the number of suitable perches might make additional foraging areas available, reduce competition at present preferred sites, and provide alternate perch locations to which eagles can retreat when disturbed by human activity.

Perch enhancement can be provided either by erecting artificial pole-and-crossarm structures, or by altering existing trees. Expense, difficult terrain, and aesthetics weigh against the use of artificial perches. Therefore, it is recommended that a number of existing trees be modified. Because live oaks often form multiple heavy forks low to the ground, it should not be difficult to girdle and kill a major outer fork and corresponding portion of the crown without killing the entire tree. As the small limbs die back, stout, accessible perches would be provided in the dead fork of the living tree.

It is recommended that this treatment be applied to create approximately four perches per shoreline mile, except where perches already appear adequate, in areas of concentrated human use, or where difficult terrain creates unsafe working conditions. Trees selected should have a clear view of the water, but be far enough above the shoreline to provide a buffer against disturbance. Sites near shallow areas should receive priority. Locations of modified trees should be mapped, and future use of these trees recorded for evaluation of the project.

Night Roosting Habitat

Throughout their winter range, Bald Eagles use traditional communal night roost locations. These locations often provide favorable microclimatic conditions, and may play an important role in intraspecific social interactions. Eagles in roosts



are sensitive to disturbance, and roosts are often in remote areas several miles from foraging areas. At lower elevation wintering areas in California, digger pines (Pinus sabiniana) are commonly used for night roosting.

In late February 1989, Bald Eagles were found roosting in two digger pines in the canyon of Santa Cruz Creek, several miles from Lake Cachuma. It is suspected that other roost trees are also located in this area since other eagles were seen in flight near the site in dusk and dawn hours. The total number of eagles using the roost area at that time was believed to be about five. These sites are on privately owned ranch lands outside the park boundary.

Because of the sensitive nature of night roost sites, the exact location should not be made public. DFG has been provided with a map of the area, and the landowner should be encouraged to protect the integrity of the site. Fuel load on the ground beneath these trees is low, so wildfire does not present an acute danger.

Winter Nest Site

Normally, migrant Bald Eagles are not associated with nests during the winter. However, on several occasions wintering Bald Eagles in California have constructed "housekeeping" or courtship nests (Detrich 1986). No actual breeding takes place at these nests, which are abandoned when the eagles migrate north in the spring. However, on at least two occasions in northern California such nests have eventually been occupied by breeding pairs, so they are regarded as important features worthy of protection.

In February 1989, a pair of adult Bald Eagles was seen adding sticks to a large nest in Santa Cruz Canyon on private land several miles from Lake Cachuma. It is strongly suspected that the nest is a courtship nest as described above.

The exact location of this sensitive site should not be made public. DFG has been provided with a map of the site, and should be responsible for any surveys or future management activities. The landowner should be encouraged to protect the integrity of the site, and urged to report any activity suggesting that the site is being used for breeding. If adult eagles are seen at Lake Cachuma in spring or summer months, this nest site should be checked for possible breeding activity.

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County land —

Human Disturbance

Human disturbance presents the greatest potential threat to Bald Eagles at Lake Cachuma. Continued disturbance can increase the energetic demands of eagles, displace eagles to nonpreferred, marginal habitat, and increase competition at undisturbed sites, resulting in lowered carrying capacity of a given habitat area (Stalmaster and Newman 1978, Stalmaster 1980, 1983). Repeated disturbance also can cause eventual abandonment of traditional habitat areas.

Anticipation and planning for effective control of human disturbance is the key to successful eagle management at Lake Cachuma. The SBCPD's concern over this problem was the primary reason for conducting this study, and they should be commended for their foresight. Continued attention to every facet of the issue will ensure that humans can enjoy the presence of eagles at Lake Cachuma for years to come.

Boat Tours

The "eagle cruises," in which park visitors are taken on a patio boat around the lake to view eagles and other wildlife, are becoming increasingly popular. Almost 1,800 people participated in eagle cruises in the winter of 1988-89, an increase of over 25 percent from the previous winter. These tours have the potential to disturb eagles, and must be managed carefully.

The most important variable is the distance to which the tour boats approach perched eagles. The majority of disturbance studies have been conducted on streams; results may not be directly applicable to reservoirs. On the Nooksack River, Washington, 99 percent of eagles remained perched at approach distances exceeding 350 meters (Knight and Knight 1984). Davis (pers. comm.) has reported that a 300-meter approach limit successfully prevents disturbance at San Antonio Reservoir, Monterey County, California. Although at times it is possible to approach much closer, particularly to immatures, closer approaches result in higher disturbance risk. Any repeated, willful flushing of eagles may constitute harassment, which is a violation of the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

The evaluation of eagle cruise activities during December 1988 and February 1989 indicated that tour boats were causing almost no disturbance to eagles. This was primarily due to the



experience and conscientious attitude of the tour boat operators. However, the unusually low water level of this winter increased the distance between the boat and perched eagles, so the potential for disturbance was probably less than in other years.

The following guidelines should be followed to prevent disturbance by boat tours:

1. Maintain a distance of 200 yards from the shoreline at all times, and maintain a distance of 300 yards in areas where eagles are known to concentrate. As the tour progresses, the tour operator should scan the shoreline ahead to ensure that eagles are seen and avoided well in advance.
2. Do not approach eagles directly; rather, maintain a course parallel to the shoreline. Maintain a distance of 300 yards from perched eagles. Any eagles which show signs of nervousness, such as vocalizing, holding the beak open, changing posture, ruffling the feathers, or defecating, should be avoided. If an eagle shows these behaviors while under observation, the operator should quickly and smoothly increase the distance between the boat and the eagle.
3. When rounding points where the opposite side cannot be seen, the boat should circle widely so that any eagles perched on the opposite side are not disturbed. Narrow coves should be entered cautiously.
4. Do not throw out fish for eagles. Although feeding eagles may result in exciting viewing, it may also contribute to tameness and the association of humans with food. These behaviors could result in the eagle's demise at some other location.
5. In introductory remarks and throughout the tour, the operator should discuss the importance of avoiding disturbance. Minimize noise, excitement, and gesturing among observers. Firmly deny requests to approach eagles more closely.
6. Avoid scheduling tours in early morning and late afternoon hours to avoid disturbing eagles during their favored foraging periods. Also avoid overscheduling tours, allowing eagles several days each week without potential disturbance by tour boats.



7. Whenever new personnel begin conducting boat tours, make sure they are trained to spot eagles well in advance, and evaluated in terms of sensitivity to the disturbance issue.
8. At all times, make the welfare of the eagles paramount to the goals and desires of the eagle cruise program. Tour operators and park management must constantly re-evaluate the program, and be prepared to alter tour routines and schedules if there is any indication that eagles are being disturbed.

Private Observers

As more people become aware of the presence of Bald Eagles at Lake Cachuma, park staff should expect an increase in numbers of photographers and amateur naturalists attempting to observe eagles from private boats. Such activities could result in numerous disturbances of eagles.

Disturbance by private photographers and other observers can be reduced or controlled in several ways. First, educational materials should be provided to all visitors entering the park with boats or who rent boats from the concessionaire. In addition to natural history information, these brochures should contain guidelines for preventing disturbance and unequivocal warnings regarding citations for disturbance of eagles. The current brochure ("The eagles have arrived at Lake Cachuma") is not directed toward the private observer, but rather toward eagle cruise participants. It includes information inferring that approaches within 200 feet are acceptable; that figure should actually be 300 yards.

Park patrol staff should be alerted to the increasing likelihood of disturbance by private observers, educated as to the needs of eagles, and trained to recognize willful disturbance.

Closed areas should be maintained at sites preferred by eagles. The existing closure at the Tecolete Intake structure is effective in protecting the most important eagle use area on the lake. Santa Cruz Creek cove was also closed during the winter of 1988-89. Another favored perching area on the Nichols Ranch at the east end of the lake, used during years of higher water (Bontrager and Foerster 1987), was protected by an area closure when appropriate. Maintaining records of numbers



of eagles using certain areas can be helpful in determining areas where closures are desirable.

Park management should also anticipate the possibility that outside groups may attempt commercial or educational activities at Lake Cachuma based on the presence of Bald Eagles (Davis pers. comm.). Such activities might include canoe clubs, commercial guiding operations, or extension classes. A permit policy regarding such activities should be formulated before such occasions arise. Ideally such groups should be guided by the park naturalist, and should at least receive instruction on avoiding disturbance and the legal ramifications of disturbance. Park management is encouraged to consult with Jim Davis, Superintendent of Lake San Antonio County Park in Monterey County, regarding policy on commercial and educational groups.

Fishing

Fishing boats cause a low degree of disturbance to eagles, but this level of disturbance is not believed to be serious. People concentrating on fishing rarely apply the focussed attention of birders or photographers, and often pass perched eagles without noticing the birds. However, eagles may be disturbed by boat traffic in confined areas such as narrow coves. For this reason, log booms should be maintained across the mouth of certain coves where eagles forage regularly. Such booms also prevent scattering of waterfowl, which are an important food source for eagles.

Horseback Riding

At the present time, riding is confined to trails which are not associated with eagle use areas. The back country horse trails north of the lake do not enter the private lands which include the known roost sites. In general, eagles are less disturbed by people on horseback than by people on foot. Combined, these factors suggest that the current level of riding use creates little disturbance to eagles; however, these activities should be monitored and any change in use patterns carefully evaluated.



Aircraft

Private aircraft operated at legal altitudes have no effect on eagles; however, repeated occurrences of private planes "buzzing" the lake at low level have been reported. In February 1989, eagles and waterfowl were flushed by a plane which was well below the legal altitude limit. This behavior presents a danger to park visitors as well as to wildlife, and should be eliminated. The registration number of the plane was recorded and provided to park management for legal action.

Mortality Factors

Power Lines

Park staff have expressed concern over the potential for eagle collisions and electrocutions on the power distribution line which parallels the south shore of the reservoir along Highway 154. Olendorff and Lehman (1986), in a summary of raptor/power line collision problems, stated that while raptors do occasionally collide with power lines, the likelihood of such collisions is greatly reduced by the good eyesight, relatively slow flight speed, and good maneuverability of raptors. More common than collisions are electrocutions of raptors perched on power poles -- especially eagles, whose large wingspan increases the chance of simultaneous contact with separated conductors and/or grounding wires.

While eagles in flight may occasionally cross the power line in question, it appears that a number of factors weigh against the possibility of collision with the line. The line does not pass between perching and foraging areas, nor does it cross the path of eagles moving to and from the roost site. The proximity to the highway may also discourage eagles from approaching the line. Checking the line's path for carcasses was not accomplished due to heavy brush; but overall, it appears that the likelihood of eagles colliding with the line is low.

Power poles along the distribution lines near Lake Cachuma are of two general types. In the area west of the park entrance, one line of poles are of a "raptor-proof" design. Elsewhere, more typical pole and crossarm designs are found. These poles are somewhat unusual in that they carry six conductors, rather than the more typical three.



Raptors which perch on the second type of poles are at some risk of electrocution due to the number of lines mounted on the crossarms. However, the dense configuration of insulators discourages perching on the crossarms, and perching usually occurs atop the pole, somewhat removed from the energized conductors. Red-tailed hawks are often seen perched atop poles along this line, and an osprey was once seen perched on one of these poles eating a fish (Collins pers. comm.). A dead turkey vulture showing signs of electrocution was found beneath a pole near the lake in the past (Taylor pers. comm.).

According to PG&E, there are not an unusual number of outages along this line, and the only outage in the past three years involving raptor electrocution was caused by an owl (Parker pers. comm.). However, USBR personnel reported three known raptor electrocutions in the past three years, two involving vultures near the dam and one involving an owl at the intake tunnel. All of these incidents were believed to be caused by birds landing on transformers (Jones pers. comm.).

No reports of electrocutions involving Bald Eagles were received. Bald Eagles are known to perch on power poles much less than other raptors, and most of the poles along this line are not in locations favorable for use as foraging perches by eagles. It is unlikely that eagles would attempt to land on transformers, because most transformers are placed on the side of poles below crossarms, where the eagle's size prevents a perching attempt.

Overall, the risk of eagle electrocution on power poles at Lake Cachuma appears low. Any incidents of eagle electrocution should be reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as to the utility. Any poles known to have caused more than one raptor electrocution should be modified to meet industry standards for raptor protection (Olendorff et. al 1981).

Ground Squirrel Control

Rodenticides should be used with extreme caution. Occasionally squirrels poisoned with anticoagulants will thrash about on the ground, presenting a highly visible and possibly lethal foraging opportunity for eagles or other raptors in the area. Such programs should be carefully monitored.



Recording of Observations

In January 1989, park staff were provided with maps and report forms for recording all eagle observations. Completion of these forms during every boat tour is highly recommended. Although it may be regarded as a tedious chore, the creation of a data base on eagle distribution on the lake can provide a foundation for protective efforts. The records will provide documentation of use of modified perch trees, record eagle responses to changes in water levels and management regimes, and provide support for any area closures which might become necessary. It will also provide important information for use in planning future developments in and around the park.

Proposed Modification of Bradbury Dam

The USBR has proposed modifying Bradbury Dam to improve dam safety and increase storage capacity. The preferred alternative would raise the maximum water surface of Lake Cachuma 50 feet (increasing the lake's surface area by 59 percent to 4,900 acres), and modify the Tecolete Intake structure to provide for the higher water level. The following discussion summarizes portions of the USBR Biological Assessment (URS Consultants 1988) pertaining to anticipated impacts to Bald Eagles.

During the two-year construction period the lake would be lowered to the 700 foot level, reducing the foraging area and possibly reducing the forage base. Some favored foraging perches would be left distant from the lake. (This situation would be similar to that existing during drought conditions in the winter of 1988-89.) Eagles would probably avoid borrow and construction areas at the southwest and west end of the lake, and also the construction area at the Tecolete Intake. These factors may result in lower numbers of eagles using the lake during the construction period.

Proposed compensation measures include provision of artificial perch structures, supplemental feeding, exclusion of boat traffic from remaining favorable areas, and monitoring of overall effects.

After the project's completion, numbers of wintering Bald Eagles using Lake Cachuma would be expected to return to pre-construction levels and perhaps increase. Bald Eagle habitat is expected to increase, because total fish biomass and



waterfowl habitat are expected to expand as a result of increased shallow water habitat and because total shoreline would be 35 percent greater. The increase in forage availability may be partially offset by greater and more rapid seasonal drawdowns, but the report's conclusion is that the expanded Lake Cachuma would support more wintering eagles than at present.

We see little reason to disagree with these conclusions regarding long-term use, based upon the project description provided in the report. However, several unmentioned peripheral issues will also influence the lake's suitability for eagles, both during construction and during operation of the enlarged reservoir. The relocation of portions of Highway 154 could cause disturbance of eagles in the short- and long-term, depending upon the new location. Another set of issues involves potential expansion of recreational facilities in compensation for loss of current campground space, the location of such expansion, and whether greater recreational use will result in an increased frequency of eagle disturbance. Such indirect, cumulative impacts to eagles remain to be addressed.



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Santa Ynez Valley Riders



December 18, 2020

Mr. Jon Menzies
County of Santa Barbara Parks
4568 Calle Real, Bldg E
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

RE: Proposed User "Pilot Program" at Live Oak Equestrian Trails (VIA EMAIL)

Dear Mr. Menzies,

I represent the Santa Ynez Valley Riders (SYVR) the oldest equestrian riding group in the Santa Ynez Valley. Our past member Mr. Bob Crowe, who has since passed away, was instrumental in securing the Live Oak trails for equestrian riders. Recently, his widow, Donna Crowe, gave to me all the documentation of that process and the original maps of the trail system. Our history goes back over 30 years.

While pursuing replacement of our kiosk at the Cachuma Equestrian Trail (aka. Live Oak) Mr. Todd Saipen, who we have been in contact with, informed me of a "pilot project" (Pilot) that on January 1, 2021, the equestrian trails were being opened to hikers, with a second opening to mountain bikes on June 1, 2021. SYVR received no public notification of the pilot and we have had subsequent email exchange to clarify why the pilot is being pursued and the way it is going forward.

Note that Live Oak is practically the only place in the Santa Barbara County Park System that has adequate parking and staging area for equestrians *in any number*. Lack of trailhead amenities (i.e. parking and staging area) over time and elimination of riding on private lands in recent years has limited safe riding opportunities, coupled with the lack of adequate parking that allows for more than one rider to park at trailheads (we always try to ride with a partner) has deterred many equestrians from recreating in a manner commonly provided to other recreational users at trailheads in other areas of the County.

Live Oak is a unique resource to equestrians as it provides a **truly safe**, natural environment that minimizes conflict with other users and allows equestrians' ability to prepare for and ride safely. Since we have the entire Los Padres National Forest open to all equestrians, hikers, mountain bikers as well as most City and County Parks open to at a minimum hikers and mountain bikes, is there an **actual or perceived need** to have these trails open to other users, especially in light of the potential conflicts between new users, equestrian users, and existing agricultural operations (grazing permittee) at Live Oak?

Post Office Box 72 • Santa Ynez, California 93460

We also understand from our conversations with Mr. Stepien, that the land holder, the US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), requires non-exclusive trail activities at Cachuma. We consulted with USBR staff and learned that non-exclusive use means “open to the public” but not in terms of user type (i.e. equestrian, hikers, bikes). The Live Oak Trail is designated for equestrian use and because it is open to the equestrian trail riding public, it is a non-exclusive use and allowed as it currently exists.

In light of these facts, SYVR requests that the County Park Department and USBR suspend any and all plans or actions in relation to the Pilot or changes to current use at the Cachuma Equestrian Trail at Live Oak Camp until:

- A user baseline is established and a scientific evaluation completed to determine if new trails and users are necessary and appropriate at this location. We suggest, at a minimum a year's worth of data. Data is also required to determine if the trails are currently at their capacity and can tolerate more intensive use.
- The public and existing users (trail riders and grazing permittee) are adequately notified and included in developing a trail management plan and associated impacts evaluated under CEQA and any other appropriate regulations.

To that end, we suggest the following:

- **Delay opening the trails to new users for at least a year** until a determination of need to open the trails to other than equestrian users can be evaluated and if the trail themselves can accommodate different users and increased numbers of users.
- **Develop, distribute a survey, and collect trailhead data rather than the move forward with proposed Pilot.**

Rather than the proposed Pilot, a survey, would be more beneficial and accurately evaluate the need to open the trails without associated environmental impacts, such as increased impacts on wildlife, threatening and endangered species, erosion, and the current grazing operation on Cachuma's north shore.

We encourage The County to continue to collect data on the number of equestrian users throughout this period to develop a scientifically sound baseline for evaluation and comparison. Volunteers may best be used to gather accurate equestrian user data at the trailhead, rather than the County's current system.

- **Create a Trails Management Plan Working Group** consisting of the County, USBR, Santa Barbara Trails Council, Santa Ynez Valley Riders (as representative for the equestrian community), the grazing permittee, and any other representatives as indicated by responses to the survey.

The Trails Management Plan working group would be responsible for developing a draft Trails Management Plan that would undergo public review, similar to the Baron Ranch Master Plan.

- **Complete a through analysis and public review under CEQA.** Following development of the Draft Trails Management Plan, complete the CEQA process as required.
- **Create a Foundation for the Live Oak Trail.** SYVR, under our 501(c)(3) status, wishes to begin negotiations with the County Park, Cachuma Lake, and/or the USBR to create a Foundation to provide a reliable source of funds for improvements at the Live Oak trailhead (parking, kiosk, etc.) and for trail maintenance.

We envision that the Foundation would be the responsible partner for fundraising and private donations to support the County and USBR equestrian trail activities at Live Oak.

Thank you for your time and attention to our requests and suggestions. The equestrian trails at Live Oak are such a limited resource to equestrians, we are adamant that the process described in this email be coordinated and followed.

Please contact me with questions or concerns. We look forward to your responses to the proposed actions and working with you in the future.

Best Regards,

Kathy Rosenthal
2021 President
Santa Ynez Valley Riders

Cc: Todd Stepien, Parks Operations Manager, Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, Santa Barbara County Parks Department
2020-21 Board Members, Santa Ynez Valley Riders
Otis Calef, Santa Barbara County Trails Council
Suzie Thielman, Los Padres Forest Association
Nancy Eckland-Hunsicker, Santa Ynez Valley Equestrian Association
Susie Rassmussen, Back County Horsemen of America, Los Padres Unit
Linda Clarke, West Coast Rocky Mountain Horse Club
Sheila Patterson, President, Ride Nipomo
Nancy Emerson, President, WEWatch
Stacy Brown, US Bureau of Reclamation
Joan Hartmann, Third District Supervisor, County of Santa Barbara

Live Oak Trails Pilot Program

Menzies, Jon <jmenzies@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>

Mon, Dec 21,
3:44 PM (2
days ago)

to Jon

Thank you for your comments regarding the multi-use trail pilot program for the trails at Live Oak. County Parks has received a few messages from concerned members of the equestrian community and would like to share some background on the pilot program for expanded access to the trails at Live Oak.

Over the next year and a half, Santa Barbara County Parks is planning to introduce hiking, then explore biking on the Live Oak trails as part of an effort to expand recreational opportunities countywide. Expanding uses will be incremental to ensure all concerns are heard and there is time to address interactions of users. This pilot program meets the intent of the Cachuma Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. This is the basis for the County's management of Cachuma Recreation Area, including Live Oak, on behalf of the US Bureau of Reclamation. The plan specifically identifies permitting 'hiking and biking' on the Live Oak trails in its preferred alternative. This is also the standard for trails throughout Santa Barbara County.

Throughout this pilot programs effort, Parks staff intends to evaluate the needs of the various trail groups, make improvements to the Live Oak trail system for all users, establish clear rules for trail use, and to identify opportunities for unique trail experiences. This may include trail segments for specific user groups and looking for locations suitable for future trail network expansion. The purpose of approaching this effort as a pilot program is to allow for public feedback and to allow Parks the opportunity to the make adjustments.

Parks staff is aware of the concern about conflicts between different trail user groups. The terrain around the Live Oak area is generally open with few steep areas and long established routes along existing ranch roads where these types of conflicts can be minimized or eliminated with good trail management and user compliance.

For this effort to be successful your input will be invaluable. We encourage you to continue to share your experiences at the Live Oak trails with our staff through this dedicated email address. Trails@sbparks.org.

I will be out of the office from 12/24 through 1/5 and checking my email periodically.



Santa Ynez Valley Riders



December 22, 2020

Mr. Jon Menzies
County of Santa Barbara Parks
4568 Calle Real, Bldg E
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

RE: Public Review "Pilot Program" at Live Oak Equestrian Trails (VIA EMAIL)

Dear Mr. Menzies,

Thank you for your response email to our letter of December 18, 2021. We have reviewed the Cachuma Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and continue to believe the decision to move forward with the Pilot Project (Pilot) to open Live Oak Trail at Lake Cachuma is premature.

With our review and additional research, we have the following additional issues and questions that need resolution prior to starting the Pilot:

1. Programmatic vs. Project Specific Environmental Review

As you identified, the RMP and EIS, specifically identify permitting 'hiking and biking' on the Live Oak trails as the preferred alternative in the EIS (Alternative 2). However, in the EIS introduction it states that: **"The RMP is a long - term plan that will guide future actions in the Plan Area and is based on a comprehensive inventory of environmental resources and facilities and input from local, state, and federal agencies, and the general public. The Final EIS is a program - level analysis (emphasis added) of the potential environmental impacts associated with adoption of the RMP."**

Additionally, Under Alternative 2, Section 2.7.2 On the North Shore, Alternative 2 would allow limited hiking and biking on primitive trails. Permits issued by the local managing partner would regulate these uses. Users could be required to make advance reservations and pay a small fee for access to the north side of the lake. **The Trail System Management Plan that would be developed under this alternative** would specify the process for obtaining a permit.

Also, Section 2.7.3 describes "Management Actions for County Park Under this alternative" and goes on to say that the following recreational enhancements and projects would be encouraged at the County Park area. **The precise number, layout, and timing of the new facilities would be determined by the local managing partner¹ through a separate planning, design, and permitting process.**

These statements indicate that the **USBR contemplated follow-up analyses and public input** by the County as individual components or “projects” are implemented on the ground over time. the **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)** and the County’s planning process (including public comment) are mandated.

2. NEPA and CEQA

While the Pilot appears to meet the intent of the RMP and EIS, and these two documents satisfy environmental review under the **National Environmental Quality Act (NEPA)** at the Federal level (the US Bureau of Reclamation being the lead agency), implementation of the RMP requires the County (as lead agency) to develop a Trails Management Plan, and complete environmental review of individual “projects” (such as the proposed Pilot) under the **CEQA**, to implement the RMP. (See comments above)

Note that it has been 10 years since review for the EIS was published in the Federal Register (May 19, 2010). Many changes in recreational activity and equipment technology (not all for the good) and popularity have occurred. We believe the impacts of new users on Live Oak Trail needs to be revisited, the new impacts identified and mitigated to minimize conflicts among users as required under the CRM, EIS and CEQA.

If the CEQA review and associated documents are complete, please provide us with a copy of the CEQA documents for the Pilot program. If not, please start the CEQA process start as soon as possible.

3. EIS Mitigation and Trail System Management Plan

The CRM, Page 4-78, Section 4, Environmental Consequences, Impact R – 3, states “Potential conflicts would occur between users on trails that are shared among different user groups including hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders. **This impact is considered a potentially major adverse impact** (emphasis added) and

Mitigation R - 3 **A Trail System Management Plan would be developed under Alternatives 2 and 3** (emphasis added). The plan would include provisions for management of trails. An education program would also be implemented to solve trail conflicts. Trail rules can be established for different users. It would be the management’s and visitors ’ collective responsibility to find and uphold solutions that allow multiple use trails to work. Cyclists must be safe and conscientious riders and should follow some general rules that respect hikers and horses and their riders. Equestrians must also be safe and conscientious riders; they should only ride horses that are well trained and capable to withstand sharing multiple use public trails. Therefore, residual impacts would be minor. However, no Trail System Management Plan is proposed for the No Action Alternative; therefore, **impacts could be major under this alternative as future demand grows**

From the summary of Environmental Consequences and Mitigation above it’s clear that the Trails System Management Plan is anticipated **BEFORE** any type of new trail users are added at the

Equestrian Trail at Live Oak. As the potential conflicts among users is identified as a potentially major significant impact, preparation of a Trail System Management Plan and public comment are required by the CRM and County processes.

4. Summary

In light of research and our findings, we support the following actions:

- **Create a Live Oak Trail Management Plan Working Group** consisting of the County, USBR, Santa Barbara Trails Council, Santa Ynez Valley Riders (as representative for the equestrian community), the grazing permittee, and any other representatives as is appropriate.

The Trails Management Plan working group would be responsible for developing the Trails System Management Plan that would undergo public review, like the Baron Ranch Master Plan.

- **Complete the Trail System Management Plan for the Equestrian Trail at Live Oak.** It is required for compliance with the CRM and to mitigate significant impacts identified in the EIS. Through the development process, allow for public input, including interested all equestrians to the Trails System Management Plan development and review.
- **Accomplish environmental review for the Pilot as proposed under CEQA.** The CRM and EIS offered the programmatic overview of proposed changes at Live Oak. Completing the (project specific) CEQA process for the Pilot is required by the CRM. Now that the County is preparing to launch improvements suggested in the CRM (the Pilot), it is time to do "project specific" CEQA analysis that includes public input and review. The project description and mitigations must address all potential impacts identified in the CRM and EIS as well as those issues identified through robust public comment.
- **Create a Foundation for the Live Oak Trail.** Mitigations for the project must include provisions for trail safety and security. The County has not proposed nor funded any new staff to patrol or otherwise monitor the trails and user interactions or provide for trail maintenance if the number of users increase. We reviewed the County's 2019-2024 Capital Improvement Program and, to our knowledge, no large improvement project for the Live Oak Camp or the Trail is proposed or scheduled for funding. Therefore, funding from a separate Foundation will be necessary to provide any level of funding to adequately monitor and maintain the trail.

As we proposed in our previous letter, the SYVR, under our 501(c)(3) status, wishes to begin negotiations with the County Park, Cachuma Lake, and/or the USBR to create a Foundation to provide a reliable source of funds for improvements at the Live Oak trailhead (parking, kiosk, etc.) and for trail maintenance.

We envision that the Live Oak Trail Foundation would be a partner with the County to develop the Trails System Management Plan, and monitor trail use as well as be the responsible

partner for fundraising to support the County and USBR staffing and trail maintenance for the Equestrian Trail at Live Oak.

Finally, your statement that “This (the Pilot) is also the standard for trails throughout Santa Barbara County” indicates that more dialog between County and equestrians is necessary. The Live Oak Equestrian Trail was dedicated specifically as an equestrian trail over 30 years ago and, while unique, should be the gold-standard the County strives for in multi-use trail design. Many of the amenities at the Live Oak trailhead; its remoteness, safety and rideable trails allow equestrians to enjoy not only the historic California Oak Woodland and grassland environments but also provides a time with our horses **without harassment from other users**. Having a safe environment to ride and enjoy the area without bullying (or even recourse) is a huge draw to the Live Oak Equestrian Trail for equestrians.

You should be aware that one of the most limiting factors to equestrians is adequate parking. Trailhead design over time and user non-compliance (i.e., parking in space intended for equestrian parking or parking so close trailers cannot be accessed) have deterred and all but excluded equestrians at a majority of other County hiking trails. **No other trail user group (hikers and bikers) have been so systematically excluded.**

Again, thank you for your time and attention to our requests and suggestions. We hope formation of the above-mentioned Working Group will be instituted and SYVR will be pleased to join as a member. The equestrian trails at Live Oak are such a limited resource to equestrians, we are adamant that the process described in the RMP and EIS be coordinated and followed.

Please contact me with questions or concerns. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Best Regards,

Kathy Rosenthal
2021 President
Santa Ynez Valley Riders

Cc: Todd Stepien, Parks Operations Manager, Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, Santa Barbara County
Parks Department
2020-21 Board Members, Santa Ynez Valley Riders
Otis Calef, Santa Barbara County Trails Council
Suzie Thielman, Los Padres Forest Association
Nancy Eckland-Hunsicker, Santa Ynez Valley Equestrian Association
Susie Rassmussen, Back County Horsemen of America, Los Padres Unit
Linda Clarke, West Coast Rocky Mountain Horse Club
Sheila Patterson, President, Ride Nipomo
Nancy Emerson, President, WEWatch
Stacy Brown, US Bureau of Reclamation
Joan Hartmann, Third District Supervisor, County of Santa Barbara

¹ The County of Santa Barbara Park Division



State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2021 ENVIRONMENTAL FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT
 DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/21) Previously DFG 753.5a

Print StartOver Save

RECEIPT NUMBER:
 42 — 01122021 — 005
 STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (If applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY Santa Barbara County Community Services Dpt	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL jvanwie@co.santa-barbara.ca.us	DATE 01122021
COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING Santa Barbara	DOCUMENT NUMBER	

PROJECT TITLE

Live Oak Multi-Use Trail

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME Santa Barbara County Community Services Dpt	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER ()
PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS 123 E. Anapamu St., 2nd Floor	CITY Santa Barbara	STATE CA
		ZIP CODE 93101

PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box)

- Local Public Agency
 School District
 Other Special District
 State Agency
 Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

- | | | | |
|---|------------|----|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Impact Report (EIR) | \$3,445.25 | \$ | 0.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND) | \$2,480.25 | \$ | 0.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW | \$1,171.25 | \$ | 0.00 |
|
 | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exempt from fee | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Exemption (attach) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CDFW No Effect Determination (attach) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy) | | | |

- | | | | |
|---|----------|----|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only) | \$850.00 | \$ | 0.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County documentary handling fee | | \$ | 50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | \$ | |

PAYMENT METHOD:

- Cash
 Credit
 Check
 Other
 TOTAL RECEIVED
 \$ 50.00

SIGNATURE 	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE Angelica Ramirez, Deputy Clerk
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State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2021 ENVIRONMENTAL FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT
 DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/21) Previously DFG 753.5a

NOTICE

Each project applicant shall remit to the county clerk the environmental filing fee before or at the time of filing a Notice of Determination (Pub. Resources Code, § 21152; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4, subdivision (d); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 753.5). Without the appropriate fee, statutory or categorical exemption, or a valid No Effect Determination issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the Notice of Determination is not operative, vested, or final, and shall not be accepted by the county clerk.

COUNTY DOCUMENTARY HANDLING FEE

The county clerk may charge a documentary handling fee of fifty dollars (\$50) per filing in addition to the environmental filing fee (Fish & G. Code, § 711.4, subd. (e); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 753.5, subd. (g)(1)). A county board of supervisors shall have the authority to increase or decrease the fee or charge, that is otherwise authorized to be levied by another provision of law, in the amount reasonably necessary to recover the cost of providing any product or service or the cost of enforcing any regulation for which the fee or charge is levied (Gov. Code, § 54985, subd. (a)).

COLLECTION PROCEDURES FOR COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

Filing Notice of Determination (NOD):

- Collect environmental filing fee or copy of previously issued cash receipt. *(Do not collect fee if project applicant presents a No Effect Determination signed by CDFW. An additional fee is required for each separate environmental document. An addendum is not considered a separate environmental document. Checks should be made payable to the county.)*
- Issue cash receipt to project applicant.
- Attach copy of cash receipt and, if applicable, previously issued cash receipt, to NOD.
- Mail filing fees for CRP document to CDFW prior to filing the NOD or equivalent final approval (Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14, § 753.5 (b)(5)). The CRP should request receipt from CDFW to show proof of payment for filing the NOD or equivalent approval. Please mail payment to address below made attention to the Cash Receipts Unit of the Accounting Services Branch.

If the project applicant presents a **No Effect Determination** signed by CDFW, also:

- Attach No Effect Determination to NOD *(no environmental filing fee is due).*

Filing Notice of Exemption (NOE) (Statutorily or categorically exempt project (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §§ 15260-15285, 15300-15333))

- Issue cash receipt to project applicant.
- Attach copy of cash receipt to NOE *(no environmental filing fee is due).*

Within 30 days after the end of each month in which the environmental filing fees are collected, each county shall summarize and record the amount collected on the monthly State of California Form No. CA25 (TC31) and remit the amount collected to the State Treasurer. Identify the remittance on Form No. CA25 as "Environmental Document Filing Fees" per Fish and Game Code section 711.4.

The county clerk shall mail the following documents to CDFW on a monthly basis:

- ✓ A photocopy of the monthly State of California Form No. CA25 (TC31)
- ✓ CDFW/ASB copies of all cash receipts (including all voided receipts)
- ✓ A copy of all CDFW No Effect Determinations filed in lieu of fee payment
- ✓ A copy of all NODs filed with the county during the preceding month
- ✓ A list of the name, address and telephone number of all project applicants for which an NOD has been filed. If this information is contained on the cash receipt filed with CDFW under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 753.5, subdivision (e)(6), no additional information is required.

DOCUMENT RETENTION

The county shall retain two copies of the cash receipt (for lead agency and county clerk) and a copy of all documents described above for at least 12 months.

RECEIPT NUMBER

- # The first two digits automatically populate by making the appropriate selection in the County/State Agency of Filing drop down menu.
- # The next eight digits automatically populate when a date is entered.
- # The last three digits correspond with the sequential order of issuance for each calendar year. For example, the first receipt number issued on January 1 should end in 001. If a county issued 252 receipts for the year ending on December 31, the last receipt number should end in 252. CDFW recommends that counties and state agencies 1) save a local copy of this form, and 2) track receipt numbers on a spreadsheet tabbed by month to ensure accuracy.

DO NOT COMBINE THE ENVIRONMENTAL FEES WITH THE STATE SHARE OF FISH AND WILDLIFE FEES.

Mail to:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 Accounting Services Branch
 P.O. Box 944209
 Sacramento, California 94244-2090



2021 CEQA Transmittal Memorandum

County of Santa Barbara - Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

105 E. Anapamu St. Room 407 • Santa Barbara • CA • 93101

(805) 568-2240

Complete this form when filing a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, Environmental Impact Report or Notice of Exemption.

You will need to submit one original for posting plus one copy for the Department of Fish & Wildlife. A scanned copy including the date/time of posting will be emailed to the Lead Agency and Project Applicant. If you would like a return copy, please submit an extra copy along with a pre-addressed, stamped envelope.

Contact Person Jill Van Wie		Phone 805-568-2470	
Lead Agency Santa Barbara County Community Services Dpt		Lead Agency Email jvanwie@co.santa-barbara.ca.us	
Project Title Live Oak Multi-Use Trail			
Project Applicant same as above	Email	Phone	
Project Applicant Address 123 E. Anapamu St., 2nd Floor	City Santa Barbara	State CA	Zip 93101

DOCUMENT BEING FILED:

- Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
 - 2021 Filing Fee\$3,445.25
 - Previously Paid (must attach receipt) \$0.00
 - No Effect Determination (must be attached)..... \$0.00

- Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration
 - 2021 Filing Fee\$2,480.25
 - Previously Paid (must attach receipt) \$0.00
 - No Effect Determination (must be attached)..... \$0.00

- Notice of Exemption \$0.00

- County Administrative Handling Fee (required for all filings, effective 7/19/18) \$50.00

TOTAL: \$ 50.00

PAYMENT METHOD: ALL APPLICABLE FEES MUST BE PAID AT THE TIME OF FILING

- Cash Credit Card Check # _____ Journal Entry # JE-0213015

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Community Services Department, Parks Division

Based on a preliminary review of the project, the following activity is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN(s) 145-160-073

LOCATION: Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, 2225-4600 Highway 154, Santa Barbara, CA

PROJECT TITLE: Live Oak Trails Multi-Use Program

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Live Oak trails system consists of approximately 15 miles of existing dirt roads and trails on the North Shore of Cachuma Lake. These trails are on leased grazing land within the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area in Santa Barbara County which is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation ("BOR") and managed by the Santa Barbara County Community Services Department Parks Division ("Parks"). The lease has allowed horses and cattle to graze the land. Historically, the BOR and Parks have allowed equestrians to access the trail system which is approximately 90% dirt service roads. The purpose of the program will be to allow hikers and mountain bikers on these roads and trails, in addition to equestrians (multi-use).

EXEMPT STATUS: (Check One)

- Ministerial
- Statutory
- Categorical Exemption**
- Emergency Project
- No Possibility of Significant Effect

Cite specific CEQA Guideline Section: Section 15301 (g)

Reasons to support exemption findings (attach additional material, if necessary):

The proposed action is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 [*Existing Facilities*] of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The CEQA Existing Facilities exemption at Section 15301 allows for the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use. The proposed Live Oak Trails Multi-Use Program does not involve an expansion of use under the reasonably same parameters that currently exist, therefore, change in signage indicating this usage is exempt from CEQA in accordance with Section 15301 (g).

With regard to the proposed project, the exceptions to the Existing Facilities categorical exemption that must be considered pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are:

- (a) *Location. Classes 3,4,5,6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located - a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resources of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and official adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.*

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
CLERK OF THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Section 15301 is a Class 1 Categorical Exemption, therefore, this exception is not applicable.

- (b) Cumulative Impact.** *All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

There are no successive projects of the same type in the same place anticipated for this location. There is only an expansion of mode of usage on existing ranch roads. There is no cumulative impact and, therefore this exception does not apply.

- (c) Significant Effect.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

The expanded trail use on an existing road/trail system will not result in any physical changes or have significant impacts to the environment and therefore will not result in a significant effect on the environment.

- (d) Scenic Highways.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements, which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.*

This proposed project is on existing roads and trails, and as such this exception does not apply.

- (e) Hazardous Waste Sites.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.*

This proposed project is not located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Therefore, it is not located on a hazardous waste site and this exception does not apply.

- (f) Historical Resources.** *A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

This proposed project does not involve any impact to historical resources. Users must stay on existing ranch roads and trails. This exception does not apply.

As described above, none of the exceptions to the categorical exemptions contained within Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines apply to this project.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Jill Van Wie Phone: (805) 568-2470

Date filed with Clerk of Board

E. Cameron
Department/Division Representative

1/12/2021
Date

for Jill Van Wie

NOTE: A copy of this document must be filed with the County Clerk of the Board

January 31, 2021

George Chapjian, Director
Community Services Department
123 East Anapamu Street, 2nd Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Proposed Trail Expansion at Live Oak Trail (Via Email)

Dear Mr. Chapjian:

I represent the Santa Ynez Valley Riders (SYVR) and our equestrian alliance SAVE Live Oak Equestrian Trail. We are seriously concerned about the Parks Division's (Parks) plan to open the Live Oak Trail to hikers and mountain bikers in 2021 (Project). The Live Oak Trail has an over 30-year history as the Cachuma Equestrian Trail (aka. Live Oak Trail), established through the efforts of the SYVR. Our member Mr. Bob Crowe was instrumental in securing the Live Oak trails for use only by equestrian riders in 1989. Recently, the SYVR received the historic record of that process and the original maps of the Cachuma Equestrian Trail system (see Attached Map).

Background

Approximately a year ago (January 2020), SYVR members noticed the kiosk located at the Trail entrance gate was missing. The kiosk was built and donated by the SYVR at the time the Cachuma Equestrian Trail was dedicated. While pursuing replacement of our kiosk at the Live Oak Trail, we contacted by Mr. Todd Saipen, Parks Operations Manager at Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, who acknowledged that the kiosk was removed by Parks. During the conversation, he informed me of a "Pilot Project" (Pilot), that on January 1, 2021, the equestrian trails were being opened to hikers, with a second opening planned to mountain bikes on June 1, 2021. The SYVR had received no public notification of the Pilot and we have had several subsequent email exchanges to clarify why the Pilot is being pursued and object to the way it is going forward. We are also in contact with Third District Supervisor Joan Hartmann and are grateful that through her efforts, the Project has been delayed, although the Community Services Department filed a California Environmental Policy Act (CEQA) Notice of Exemption on January 12, 2021. More discussion on the applicability of the NOE CEQA compliance is provided below.

The SYVR and alliance members are sympathetic to some of the recreational goals of the County, and open to well thought out change at Live Oak Trail, but we are astounded that the Project has proceeded under clandestine and less than transparent circumstances. Even from our years of observation and experience in the field, on the Live Oak Trail. We have been ignored and left out of the process.

During this time of Pandemic, we are encumbered in our research and response to what we believe is an illegal end run around the CEQA and public processes. Even the Board of

Supervisors' meeting are held remotely. Many in the equestrian community are not "tech-savvy" and will be excluded from providing input should the Project go forward at this time. This is a form of prejudice. Due to remote meetings, the Board will not have the advantage of seeing just how many people are affected and concerned with the Project and in other times, would pack the Board Room on this issue. These conditions put us at a great disadvantage to demonstrate the true level of support for continued safe equestrian use at Live Oak Trail. We believe the timing of the Project should be delayed until after the Pandemic has passed and a "normal" review process can proceed.

Project Description

As noted above, the Project description when we initially contacted the County in December 2020, was for a "Pilot" Project to gather data and eventually to assess impacts of trail expansion at Live Oak. Then and only then would a decision be made to continue the Project.

However, the Community Services Department filed a California Environmental Policy Act (CEQA) Notice of Exemption (NOE) on January 12, 2021 for what appears to be the permanent Project. The "Pilot" Program is not even mentioned in the Project Description for the NOE. The NOE is for the Permanent Project. More discussion on the applicability of the NOE CEQA compliance is provided below.

What exactly is the Project description: "Pilot Project" or permanent expansion of trail users? Experience dictates that a "pilot" to study, or any study, should not have as many impacts as the permanent project itself. An on-line survey, similar to that conducted for the County-wide Recreation Master Plan, would yield just as true data without environmental harm, safety, or other concerns. One can assume that the expansion Project is a "done deal" and the study is merely the means to an already decided-upon end.

Project Need

To date we have not been provided with any reason why the Project is going forward at this time and at such a furious pace, only to be told there is a need with the Pandemic. Mr. Saipen has admitted that Parks has no data to indicate any expansion of trails at Cachuma are necessary. Have people been turned away from the main Cachuma Lake Recreation Area during the pandemic? What initiating event triggered the project?

The Cachuma Lake Recreation Area has recently expanded and improved hiker/mountain bike trails in the vicinity of the main campground area, most notably following the Whittier Fire (see Attached Map). After the Whittier Fire, a new mountain bike trail was cut on the Mesa above the Fire Camp on the east end of the recreation area that is intended to be a mountain bike trail (USBR, December 2020). Note that this area was once an equestrian camp and the "Mesa Trail" was an equestrian trail. A culvert under Hwy 246 provided access to the Tequepis Trail. The facilities were removed over time without any public notice or input.

Today, there is a very high demand for horse camping facilities. The closest public campground with equestrian facilities is Montana de Oro State Park. In recent years it has

become increasingly difficult to secure a reservation there and we are attempting to obtain horse camp use data for the past few years for your information. With the advent of living-quarters horse trailers, horse camping reservations are at a premium. Recreational campers would include locals, tourists, snowbirds and participants at local horse shows in Santa Barbara and the Santa Ynez Valley. Horse camping sites could be a viable, low-cost revenue generator for Parks at Live Oak Camp.

The Sweetwater Trail offers hikers and mountain bikes access to the Cachuma's south shore between Cachuma's main gate and the Bradbury Dam Overlook and has been in use for many years. Because of the inherent conflict between equestrians and unregulated mountain bikers, that trail is essentially no longer used by equestrians.

Recently, mountain bike clubs completed trail maintenance on the Taquepis Trail across Highway 246 in the vicinity of the non-profit camps. This trail provides mountain bikers and hikers access to East Camino Cielo and a plethora of trails in the western Los Padres National Forest. Again, with the inherent conflict between equestrians and unregulated mountain bikers, the equestrians have been pushed off.

These actions demonstrate that trails for hikers and mountain bikers have been expanded in recent years, while equestrian use at Cachuma has been whittled away over time and is now confined to the Live Oak Trail. Live Oak Trail has the history, appropriate siting, and public support to remain equestrian only, but we realize low-level recreational uses such as hikers and birdwatchers may be appropriate as well and we are open to that discussion.

Our real question is: Is there a real or perceived need to open Live Oak Trail to mountain bikers? We think not. We suggest limiting mountain bikers to the developed recreational area on the south side of Cachuma where all the trails are easily accessible to them. Where is the data to indicate the need for more mountain bike trails? Is the trail expansion Project at Live Oak part of a larger Master Plan for Live Oak Camp?

Policy Interpretation

In an email response to our inquiries from Mr. Saipen (December 22, 2020), he stated that: "This (the Pilot) is also the standard for trails throughout Santa Barbara County" (i.e., multi-use trails).

We are unable to find the County Parks policies to verify such a claim, but it clearly speaks to the assumptions and interpretations Parks staff is promoting - that every trail must be a multi-use trail. The statement above illustrates the Parks staff's inflexibility to adapt to the public they serve (equestrian trail riders at Live Oak Trail) and indicates that more inclusive dialog between County and equestrians is necessary.

We take issue with Parks staff's interpretation in two ways. First, the interpretation of "multi-use" trails can and should be flexible enough to allow for two trail user groups where appropriate, similar to the model at Midland School. The Midland Trails are open to equestrians and hikers, a better combination for Live Oak Trail, appropriate to minimizing

conflicts at the trail head and on the trail. Multi-use can be interpreted to mean hiker and equestrian users.

Secondly, it's time to change the insistence on "multi-use" trails (three users) as the "norm" for every trail. This concept is now perhaps novel to some, but in the case of Live Oak Trail, equestrians have a long history of use with minimal conflict and cost to the County. Equestrian use at the Live Oak Trail is site appropriate; mountain biking is not. We are not willing to settle for the Parks unpublished mission of opening every County trail to multi-use under the three-user model. The faster, aggressive mentality developed by bike riders over the past 25 years, promoted by the MTB industry, while ignoring associated trail damage and impacts to other trail users, livestock and wildlife has made the "multi-use trail" experiment a failure. The tide needs to turn, and the pendulum swing to defend the of rights of other recreational trail users and the environment. We want peace and the ability to enjoy and relax on our trails. For further insight, please read this article here authored by a MTB rider, about the need to change our paradigm on trails and the sport of mountain biking.

The Live Oak Equestrian Trail was dedicated specifically as an equestrian trail over 30 years ago and, while unique, should be the gold-standard the County strives for in equestrian trail design. Many of the amenities at the Live Oak trailhead; its remoteness, safety and rideable trails allow equestrians to enjoy not only the historic California Oak Woodland and grassland environments but also provides a peaceful time with our horses without harassment from other users. Having a safe environment to ride and enjoy the area without bullying (or in some cases, recourse) is a huge draw to the Live Oak Equestrian Trail for equestrians. We have a precious little number of trails to ride safely now. Our primary objectives are to maintain the safety, peacefulness and enjoy Live Oak Trail, as well as protect sensitive resources (livestock and wildlife) on Cachuma's north shore and mesas to the east, at the boundary with Rancho San Fernando Rey.

Also, in conversations with Mr. Saipen several reasons for the proposed Trail expansion Project were offered, but in recent weeks, the Project has changed. One reason for the proposed Project is the "exclusivity" definition, Mr. Saipen used to defend the Project.

We know, after consultation with USBR staff (phone call, December 2020, Stacy Brown, Natural Resource Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation), that Parks interpretation of "exclusive use" is incorrect and flawed. The County is under no obligation to expand the use of the Live Oak Trail under the USBR Cachuma Management Plan, and if it does, other resources and uses must be protected.

Mr. Saipen assumed that the trail cannot be for "exclusive use", however the USBR staff explained that "exclusive use" pertains to limiting exclusive use to an exclusive organization or group, it does not speak to the type of recreational user. For example, if the Trail were leased to the Boy Scouts for their member use only, this would constitute exclusive use. While the Cachuma Equestrian Trail was created, dedicated, and remains today as an equestrian trail, its use is not limited to any one organization, but instead to any and all equestrians in the public. The fact that the Trail is open only to equestrians, regardless of affiliation or as an

individual, does not constitute exclusive use according to USBR staff. We need the clarification that can only come about through a public development and approval process for any Project at Live Oak.

The most limiting factors to equestrians are safe access, adequate parking, and safe passage on the trail. Live Oak Trail provides all those attributes and more for trail riders. The County's trailhead designs over time and user non-compliance (i.e., non-equestrians parking in space intended for equestrian parking or parking so close trailers cannot be accessed) have deterred and all but excluded equestrians at most other County hiking trails. Equestrian have been virtually ignored in trail planning, relegated to the most remote and sometimes dangerous areas with questionable access to trail heads. Once we're there and on the trail, we can be harassed and sometimes assaulted due to other trail users' selfishness. **No other trail user group has been so systematically excluded from what should be our right.**

As a matter of good public policy and sound management the Project should be delayed and prohibited from operation at the expense of the long-established equestrian trail program at Live Oak. The Live Oak Trail currently operates at relatively low-cost to the County, serves the south coast communities, and is a historic resource reflecting the tradition and culture of Santa Barbara County.

CEQA Requirements

This section is intended to outline the County's legal responsibilities under CEQA and document why the Notice of Exemption (NOE) filed on January 12, 2021 is inadequate and inappropriate. We have obtained and reviewed the NOE under Section 15301, Existing Facilities...involving negligible or no expansion of existing facilities. The Project is indeed an expansion of use and will result in increased in number of users. The Project necessitates preparation of an Initial Study to analyze and determination level of impacts with expansion of use. Preparation of an Initial Study (IS) would indicate one of two paths: preparation of a Negative Declaration (ND) or Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Exemption needs to be rescinded.

As compared to any other County projects, especially with such a conflict in policy, and associated environmental impacts and concerns, the up-front analysis, including, a Management Plan must be prepared, and a complete CEQA and Comprehensive Plan analysis with stakeholder input and public comment completed. The Project must be brought before the Board of Supervisors for consideration. Without proper review, process, and opportunity for public input, Parks is skirting their responsibilities.

Indeed, prior to the Cachuma Equestrian Trail dedication in 1989, the County Parks Department (as it was known at that time) under the direction of Parks Director Mike Pahos, prepared "Recommendations for a Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail" (JM Consulting Group, Inc., September 1989). This study analyzed environmental impacts and land use consistency for the trail, including special studies to analyze effects on the Bald Eagle population and archaeological resources. In addition, alternatives were analyzed in what amounted to a Negative Declaration (ND)-level analysis. With the influx of users

expected with the Project, a similar analysis, through an IS and consequential preparation of a ND or EIS depending on the findings, must be prepared, and completed.

Two points of this NOE are of particular importance:

1. Project Description. The NOE Project Description states: "The Live Oak trails system consists of approximately 15 miles of existing dirt roads and trails on the North Shore of Cachuma Lake. These trails are on leased grazing land within the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area in Santa Barbara County which is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation ("BOR") and managed by the Santa Barbara Community Services Department Parks Division ("Parks"). The lease has allowed horses and cattle to graze the land. Historically, BOR and Parks have allowed equestrians to access the trail system which is approximately 90% dirt service roads. The purpose of the program will be to allow hikers and mountain bikes on these roads and trails, in addition to equestrians (multi-use)."

The Project Description makes no distinction that the Project is a "Pilot", and instead is obviously intended for the permanent Project. The description of the system as "approximately 90% dirt service roads" is misleading –the trails traverse steep slopes in some areas (see attached topographic map). Further, the description does not include a discussion of the number of users expected and no acknowledgement of the well-documented conflict between unregulated mountain bikers and equestrians.

We disagree that the Project under any circumstances falls under the exemption of the NOE. SYVR was under the assumption, based on conversations with Parks Division personnel that the Project would be a "pilot" to gather user information and environmental effects and then the data analyzed. Once that step was complete, a Trails Management Plan would be developed. This in itself seems a backward process. What amounts to a study ("Pilot") is essentially the proposed permanent Project as described in the NOE project description. It appears the Project has already been approved, without proper process.

2. Applicability of Exemption 15031. The NOE is for a long-term permanent program and is a trail expansion project in terms of both the type of recreations users allowed on the trail and, consequently, the number of users. Thus, Section 15031 does not apply to the Project.

In 1989 when the Trail was first created, the former Park Department under then Director Mike Pahos, completed a study intitled "Recommendations for a Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail (JM Consulting Group, Inc., September 1989). This study evaluated resources and the projects' impacts on Leaseholders, consistency with the County's adopted plans and programs, natural resources including effects on wildlife, archeological resources, fire closures, grazing activities, and most importantly Bald Eagles. The study went on to identify and explore alternatives in what essentially would be considered a comprehensive analysis. The County must rescind the NOE and commence a valid CEQA process. We expect nothing less for the proposed Project.

The Project must also be reviewed by other County, State and Federal Agencies for policy consistency analysis and resource allocation, as well as open to public comment. We reminded Parks that, as a matter of law, the County is required to consider whether the impacts of this decision are in compliance with other laws including other laws including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). For example, we note that since the original development of the Cachuma Equestrian Trail, the Southern Steelhead have been listed as “endangered” under the ESA. The County has done no analysis of the effects of additional siltation and erosion or any other impacts of opening the Live Oak Trail that potentially millions of hikers and mountain bikers living within a 2-hour radius will have on sensitive species. To date the required review and consultation has not been accomplished.

County of Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan, Conservation Element Consistency

The 1989 Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail referenced above also evaluated consistency with the adopted Plans of the of Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan which included the Comprehensive Plan elements for Parks, Recreation and Trail Open Space Element and Environmental Management Element. The Cachuma Equestrian Trail was found to be consistent with all County Plans and Programs.

However, in a glaring omission in the current rush to implement changes at Live Oak, Parks has failed to consider consistency with the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, Conservation Element for the proposed Project. Applicable policies and brief analysis are presented below for your information:

Under PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES, Category 2, Areas Tributary to Present Major Surface Water Supplies – the Conservation Plan states that:

“Facilities providing significant surface water supplies that were considered in defining Category 2 include Gibraltar, Jameson, and Cachuma reservoirs along with several small reservoirs located north of Goleta and Santa Barbara on the coastal side of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Twitchell Reservoir was excluded from Category 2 because its primary purpose is to provide groundwater recharge.

In this category, activities should not be permitted that would significantly degrade the quality of the surface water supplies or increase silt production. Accordingly, the amount of development should be limited, and controls should be imposed on development to prevent deleterious effects.

Light recreational activities should cause few problems, provided that sanitary pollution from such usage is prevented and erosion is not increased. Intensive recreational usage could be somewhat more of a problem because of the potentially greater sanitary pollution load resulting from more people using the area. (Page 26)”

The Project as described in the NOE would, in fact, increase the type of recreation use as well as the number of recreational users drawn to the Live Oak Trail. Impacts from increased recreation, especially during the Pandemic, have shown an astronomical increase in trash,

human waste, and erosion on trails in many public agency jurisdictions. The current staff of the land management agencies are not able to keep up with the number of users. For example: recently, the Pismo Preserve in Pismo Beach, CA made the decision to close their multi-use trails because of the amount of waste generated throughout the Preserve and the lack of San Luis Obispo Land Trust volunteers and staff to keep up with it. Without a Trail Management Plan, additional staffing at Cachuma Lake, budget to support those staff and their increased responsibilities concerns (i.e., trash and restroom facilities) at the Santa Ynez River crossing, as well as all along the Live Oak Trail, the Project cannot be found consistent with the Conservation Plan. As noted below, we also expect the River crossing to become the newest “swimming hole” on the Santa Ynez River – the new “Red Rock”.

In addition, much of the trail system involves narrow and steep single-track trails and all of the trail system is untreated dirt. It is entirely disingenuous to ignore the obvious increase in erosion and siltation from unregulated mountain bike access to these trails.

A second pertinent issue area, described in the Conservation Element under SPECIES AND ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES OF PARTICULAR VALUE it states that:

“Southern Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) - Although not as rare as the Peregrine Falcon, this species, our national bird, is rapidly diminishing in numbers and faces the threat of extinction. According to Waldo Abbott of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, several eagles nested in the late 1930’s along the South Coast (Dos Pueblos Ranch, Rincon Creek, Mission Creek, Santa Cruz Island, and Anacapa Island) with the Dos Pueblos Ranch nest remaining active for about twenty years. There have been few recent sightings in the County. One bird, probably a migrant, was seen at the Santa Barbara Bird Refuge in the fall of 1971. Slightly more encouraging, however, is the almost yearly appearance of several wintering birds at Lake Cachuma. Metcalf (1972) comments that one to four birds have wintered at Cachuma in eight of the past eleven years. If we expect these birds to continue to use the area, it is imperative that portions of the lake be left undisturbed. The present policy of limiting camping and recreational activity to the western two-thirds of the lake is suitable. Under no circumstances should the eastern end of the lake be opened to human use; the continuing presence of the eagles may depend on it.” (Pages 113-114).

The analysis for equestrian trail riding focused on impacts to the Bald Eagle population on the north shore, east side of the lake as part of the 1989 Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail. The study entitled “Management Recommendations for Bald Eagles at Lake Cachuma County Park”, prepared by Phillip J. Detrich of ECOS Environmental Consultants (April 1989) was commissioned and evaluated recreational activities of Boat Tours, Fishing and Horseback Riding on the Bald Eagles. With respect to horseback riding, the study states:

“At the present time, riding is confined to trails which are not associated with eagle use areas. The back country horse trails north of the lake do not enter private lands which include the known roost sites. In general, eagles are less disturbed by people on horseback than by people on foot. Combined, these factors suggest that the current level of riding use creates

little disturbance to eagles; however, these activities should be monitored and any change in use patterns carefully evaluated.” (Page 11)

It has been over 30 years since that study was completed and trail rider numbers have remained steady or slightly increased according to our field observations. Actual data counts have been destroyed, according to Parks staff and we believe the recently collected Parks data for equestrian use is inaccurate. In the intervening time, the Bald Eagles at Cachuma Lake have gone from an over-wintering migrant population to a permanent, resident nesting population. The Bald Eagle as an overall species has recovered from the brink of extinction, so much so that the species was delisted from the Federal Endangered Species list. However, the Bald Eagle, remains an Endangered Species under the California Threatened and Endangered Species Act to this day. Given the expansion of the Eagles' permanent use of Santa Cruz Canyon and Cachuma's north shore, equestrian trail riders and grazing lease have apparently been compatible and beneficial uses over all these years.

In addition to Bald Eagles, in 1996 Southern Steelhead have been listed as an endangered species. Millions of dollars have been spent to improve their habitat along the Santa Ynez River, including above Bradbury Dam.

The current Project as proposed would increase users and types of recreational users (hikers bikes, bathers, picnickers). In a recent study The California Fish and Wildlife Journal (CFWJ) devoted to evaluating recreational trail users and their effect on wildlife, the report entitled "Balancing Conservation and Recreation" July, 2020 (CFWJ is a peer-reviewed, scientific journal focused on the biology, ecology, and conservation of the flora and fauna of California) found that:

“ALL wildlife are disturbed by mountain biking, hiking, and horseback riding. Biking is the most disruptive, followed by hiking and then by horseback riding, but ALL human activity disrupts wildlife. The findings attributed the disturbance to the following distinguishing facets of mountain biking:

"Together with the extent and creation and use of unauthorized trails and technical trail features by mountain bikers, the mass-marketing of the sport, and the very large numbers of mountain bikers (Burgin and Hardiman 2012), at least four facets of mountain biking distinguish it from other recreational activities such that it may be of potentially greater concern with respect to its effects on wildlife: distance traveled, speed of travel, biking in the dark, and political lobbying and advocacy."

Equestrian trail riding obviously has not been detrimental to the Cachuma's Bald Eagle population over time. Mountain biking is an incompatible use on Live Oak Trail. Introduction of mountain bikes and hikers into the area in and around Santa Cruz Canyon on Cachuma's north shore would have significant impacts to the Eagle population due to factors and behaviors cited above. We cannot determine the level of impacts because there has been no study or analysis. We expect that if and when the County appropriately consults with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), some concern will be raised for Southern Steelhead.

The third area of concern is under AQUATIC FRESHWATER COMMUNITIES. The Conservation Plan reads:

“96. Lake Cachuma (1-2-3, 1-1-1)

Location: In the eastern end of the Santa Ynez Valley, approximately 15 miles northwest of Santa Barbara.

Biological comments: Cachuma Lake, the largest inland body of water in the County, attracts numerous migratory birds and acts as home for a wide variety of plants and animals. A rookery of Great Blue Herons can be found in the dead Valley Oak (Quercus lobata) at the eastern end of the lake. It also is possible to observe such uncommon predatory birds as Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper’s Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, Ospreys, and the endangered Southern Bald Eagle at this same section of the lake.

Recommendations: The eastern end of the lake, at present undisturbed, should continue to receive total protection. Traffic into this portion of the lake would reduce the attractiveness of this habitat to the large birds of prey which now frequent the area. It also would be desirable to maintain the Park Department’s present policy of preventing use of the northern shore.” (page 146)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Aquatic Habitats

The eastern end of Lake Cachuma should remain undisturbed to protect the bird habitat, and the lake’s north shore also should remain closed to the public.” (Page 157)

The Santa Ynez River (River) crossing just past the Live Oak Trail entrance is of major concern with new, pedestrian and bicycle users. Equestrians have forded the River in time of high flows for years. We expect to be allowed to continue trail riding in times of high flows, when for other users it may not be safe or possible.

In the spring, a deep pool forms on either side of the River crossing. With influx of the hikers and mountain bikers, the area may also attract bather and picnickers with no interest in the Trail, also an expansion of the Live Oak Trail’s use. The pools are expected to become the new swimming hole that will surely be picked up on by social media and broadcast widely.

The attractiveness of the pools and the ease in which Live Oak Trail is accessed off Highway 246, make this area ripe for astronomical new human intrusion. We see the effects of human intrusion in other recreational areas, trailheads, parks, even in traditional dispersed camping areas. The Live Oak Trail River crossing would be subject to the same issues (trash, human waste, safety, and conflict) as the popular Red Rock swimming area upstream, on the Los Padres National Forest. These issues will translate into degradation of water quality, riparian vegetation, and aquatic habitat at the River crossing. The Project, therefore, as described, is inconsistent with the water quality policies of the the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. In no other instance has the language, intended to protect aquatic

habitats and consequently, water quality, been so strongly targeted to a specific area and precise.

The Community Services Department, Parks Division must make findings of consistency with the County's own Comprehensive Plan. If the findings cannot be made, the Project cannot be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Our brief analyses are clear: the consistency findings cannot be made.

Proposed Plan Moving Forward

- **Recognize the historic and culturally significance of the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail (aka Live Oak Trail).** The Trail and current equestrian trail rider use levels are the "existing project" and form the basis as the "environmental baseline". As such equestrian use is the existing, "grandfathered" use and is NOT being expanded over the current management. Equestrian use at the Live Oak Trail will continue while the planning, public and approval processes for the Project go forward.
 - Hikers, mountain bikers and bathers and picnickers are the new additions and would constitute the "expansion of Live Oak Trail".
- **Delay opening Live Oak Trail to new recreational users** - This is a necessary step to allow time for the Parks Division to do the required work as the public agency charged with management the County's public lands, especially in an area which sensitive resources that have thrived under equestrian trail use on the Live Oak Trail. The following steps must be completed:
 - Conduct a survey of user trail preference in lieu of the proposed "Pilot" Project.
 - Delay the Project until the County-wide Recreational Plan is completed
 - Complete all up-front environmental and land-use planning, including public noticing and comment.
- **Re-define the Project (trail expansion)**
 - Clearly define project purpose and project description.
 - Develop alternatives:
 - No Action (Equestrian Trail Use)
 - Equestrian/hiker trail use, similar to the model at the private Midland School Trails. Midland is an excellent example of the newly defined, safer "multi-use" trail for hikers and equestrians
 - Equestrian/Hiker/Mountain bike trail use.
 - Others as appropriate.
- **Rescind the Notice of Exemption and complete an Initial Study in compliance with CEQA**
 - Depending on the findings, complete CEQA review, a MND or EIR, complete with adequate public noticing of neighbors and regulatory agencies as well as public comment hearings.

- **Prepare a Trails Management Plan for Live Oak Trail**, and complete all required up-front environmental review and policy consistency work:
 - Re-define the proposed Project to mitigate potential impacts.
 - Could potentially result in a finding of no significant environmental impacts and consistency with the Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan.
 - Will require rules and a system of effective enforcement on the new users, particular mountain bikes, as discussed below.
- **Create a Trails Management Plan Working Group** consisting of the County, USBR, Santa Barbara Trails Council, Santa Ynez Valley Riders (as representative for the equestrian community), the grazing permittee, and any other stakeholders as indicated by responses to the survey.
- **Develop an enforceable set of “Trail Rules” in consultation with equestrian riders.**
 - Trail Rules must address the following issues, as well as others that will be identified through agency and public input.
 - Unleashed dogs on the trail
 - Trail etiquette and harassment (livestock and wildlife).
 - Prohibiting ear bud use on the trail.
 - Trail user harassment, trailhead security and illegal trespass.
 - Access road: illegal parking and maintaining emergency access.
 - Recently leaders from the Santa Barbara County Fire Chiefs Association came together recently to create three workgroups with the goal of addressing major fire safety concerns on a regional level on three main issues to tackle: access and parking at county trailheads and beaches, dispersed camping, and fires and other safety issues associated with homeless encampments. All of these issue areas have potential to become concerns at Live Oak. Read the article [here](#).
 - Santa Ynez River crossing.
 - Equestrians must be able to access Live Oak Trail in time of high River flows as we have done for the past 30 years.
 - Develop water quality protection measures.
 - Develop specific rules for trail users on foot and bicycles.
 - Equestrians will be allowed to cross the River as was allowed in the past.
 - High water at the crossing is navigable by equestrians, less so for hikers and others.
 - Limit access to the pools at the crossing and recognize and develop safety guidelines for the swimming hole at the crossing.
 - This is not an exhaustive list, but simply illustrates the short-sightedness and inadequacy of the “new” rules posted at the Live Oak Trail head in early January.

- **Develop a true docent/patrol program, like that at the City of Santa Maria's Las Flores Ranch.**
 - Appoint a docent coordinator.
 - Develop orientation program.
 - Provide a budget for expenses.
- **Consider other Equestrian-based recreational options for Live Oak Camp**
 - In reviewing our historical files, at the time of the trail dedication, the Park Department was prohibited from advertising the Cachuma Equestrian Trail, believing it would serve as a local community resource, although riders from all over come to enjoy the trail.
 - If indeed trail expansion boils down to a revenue issue, delay the Project and promoting the equestrian use concurrent with developing and opening a few horse camping spots at Live Oak Camp to increase revenues.
- **Provide adequate funding and increased staffing levels.**
 - With the increased numbers of trail users, the Parks Division must take responsibility and provided adequate dedicated staff for enforcement of the "trail rules", maintenance and other measures to address and fulfill mitigation obligations for effective and adequate management of the Live Oak Trail.
 - As Live Oak Trail is close to and easily accessible from major metropolitan areas (i.e., Los Angeles), near a destination vacation city (Santa Barbara) and tourist-driven economy centers (Buellton, Solvang, Santa Ynez, and Los Olivos) and preponderance of social media sharing to advertise, the sheer numbers of new people the Proposal would allow into the rural area of the Live Oak Trail, the Park Department staff and resources can be expected to be over run and Live Oak Trail loved to death. This must be prevented. The anticipated number of new trail users must be quantified, analyzed, and mitigated.
- **Create a Foundation for the Live Oak Trail.**
 - As we have offered several times before in our letters of December 18, 2020 and December 22, 2020 to Jon Menzies of the Parks Division, we propose to create a Foundation for the Live Oak Trail to provide a reliable source of funds for improvements at the Live Oak trailhead (parking, kiosk, etc.) and for trail maintenance.
 - We envision that the Foundation would be the responsible partner for fundraising and private donations to support the County and USBR equestrian trail activities at Live Oak. The Foundation would operate under the model of those created and operating to supplement National Parks. We have suggested a Foundation for Live Oak to the USBR and they are reviewing the possibility.
 - The SYVR has made informal donations to other trail systems throughout the south coast, including Los Flores Ranch and Midland. We had not received notice that funding is necessary to maintain the trails at this point; water damage and downed trees are what we observe for the most part on the Live Oak Trail that require routine attention. Erosion and off trail trespass are not common with

the equestrians, but we anticipate a greater preponderance of illegal off-trail activity and increased need for maintenance if the Project moves forward. Technical maintenance (i.e., habitat restoration, revegetation) and the costs associated with the work will become the norm that will escalate over time.

In summary, the Project is ill-defined, policies mis-interpreted, and requires full CEQA review and stakeholder coordination, due to the potential for significant impacts, and to address inconsistencies with the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan – Conservation Element. All County projects are held to this standard and require public interaction. The expansion Project at Live Oak Trail is no different.

Thank you for your time to consider our questions and points in this letter. While well meaning, Parks needs to consider the domino effect recreational expansion at Live Oak Trail will have on other resources, the true magnitude of people that will be introduced to the Live Oak Area should the Project proceed, the strain on their staff and budget as well as other County agencies - especially emergency response - as well as recognize the need to review and modify strict interpretations of policies and procedures.

We are expecting a meeting invitation facilitated through Joan Hartmann's office soon. We hope the facts and processes outlined on this letter will serve as a framework for discussion and look forward to working with you.

Best Regards,

Kathy Rosenthal
2021 President
Santa Ynez Valley Riders

Cc: **Joan Hartmann**, Third District Supervisor, County of Santa Barbara
jhartmann@countyofsb.org

Jeff Lindgren, Parks Superintendent, Parks Division Community Services Department, County of Santa Barbara
JLindgren@sbparks.org

Jon Menzies, Aquatics Director, Parks Division, Community Services Department, County of Santa Barbara
jmenzies@sbparks.org

Todd Stepien, Parks Operations Manager, Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, Parks Division Community Services Department, County of Santa Barbara
TStepien@sbparks.org

Stacy Brown, Natural Resource Specialist, United States Bureau of Reclamation
Sbrown@usbr.gov

References:

Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan, Conservation Element

<https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/t6t55tvyczghf6gx2kypz7wkao0464z>

NoozeHawk, January 23, 2021

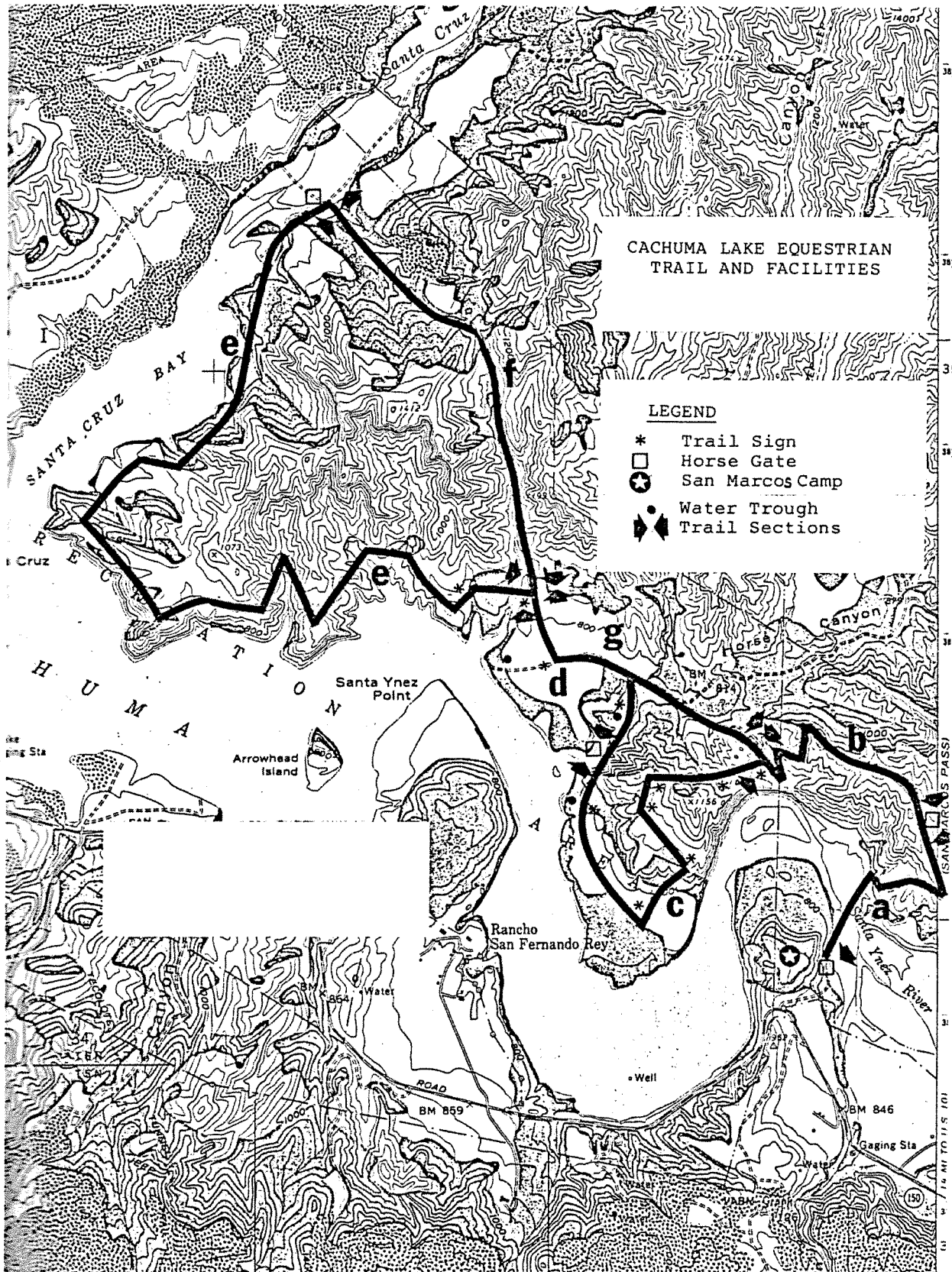
<https://www.noozhawk.com/article/fire-chiefs-association-working-to-address-major-regional-concerns>

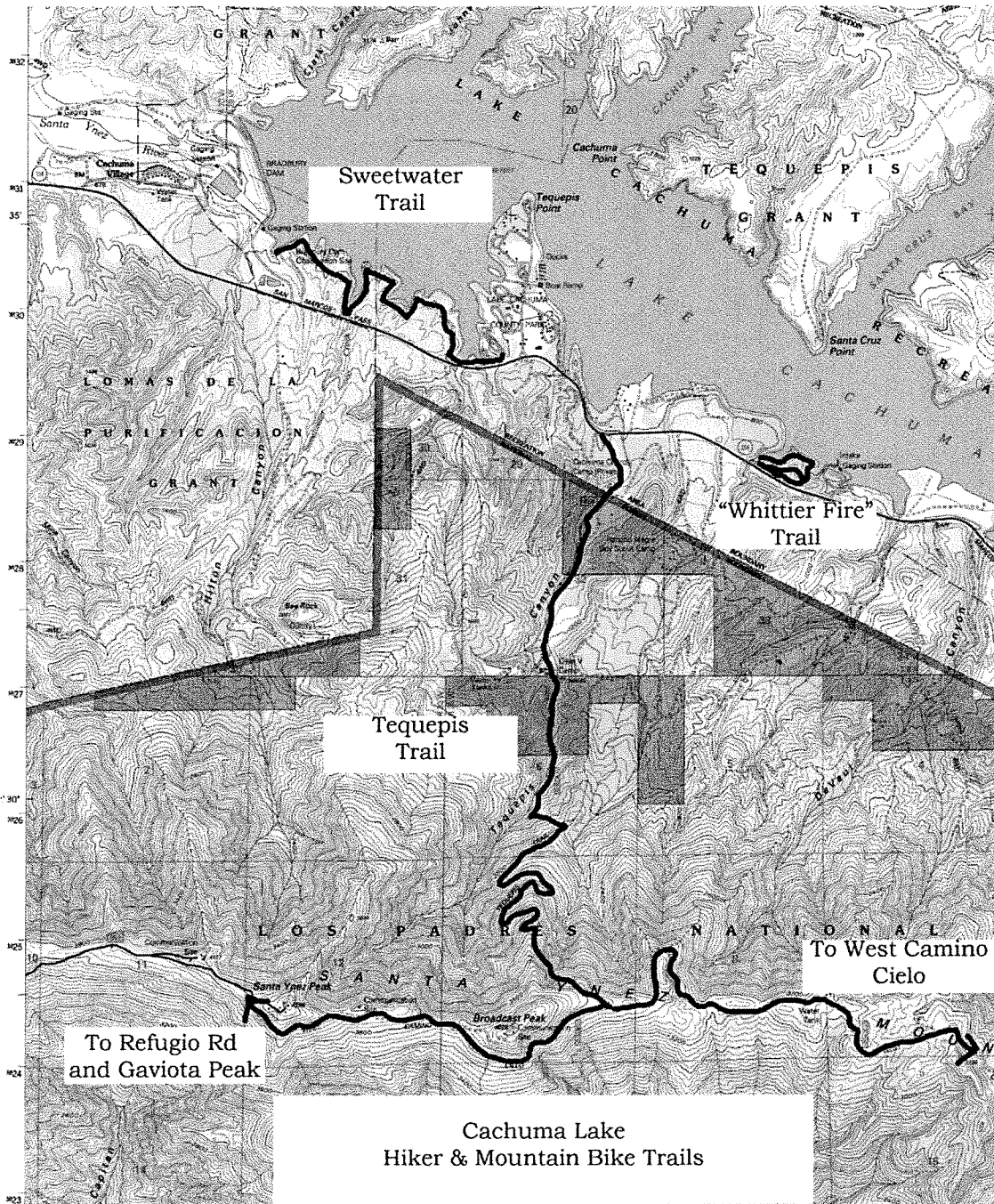
Adventure Journal

The Culture of Mountain Biking Has Gone Astray

By Mike Curiak, May 17, 2018

<https://www.adventure-journal.com/2018/05/culture-mountain-biking-gone-astray/?fbclid=IwAR2yYAk1xpfMIPRqUKHZAw10nP4XYU57599cK7uzffPJ4f10xEVRPFb2PQ>





January 29, 2021

Mr. Jeff Lindgren, Parks Superintendent
County of Santa Barbara
Community Services Department, Parks Division
123 E. Anapamu Street, 2nd Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Attn. Jon Menzies, Todd Stepien

SUBJECT: Adoption of Categorical Exemption for a project entitled "Live Oak Multi-Use Trail at the Cachuma Lake Recreation Area

Dear Mr. Lindgren:

This office represents the Santa Ynez Valley Equestrian Association ("SYVEA"), a non-profit association with over 250 members. The association hosts numerous horse shows, youth programs, disabled children programs and is a central gathering and education place for valley equestrians. Many of our members are avid trail riders, including on the referenced trail.

Very recently, and not by way of the County personnel contacting the association, it was learned that the County is pursuing a "fast-track" and poorly documented program to open the Live Oak Trail to hiker and mountain bike use, in addition to equestrian use. It is undisputed that this trail has been devoted to equestrian use only for many years.

The County may not use a Class 1 Categorical Exemption for this project.

We write to OPPOSE the granting of a Class 1 Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). We also are unable to determine the approving body for the project itself, which is identified in a single sentence in the Project Description as "The purpose of the program will be to allow hikers and mountain bikers on these roads and trails, in addition to equestrians (multi-use)." No statement is made as to who approves this significant change.

Even with this meager project description, which is clearly misleading and inadequate, a reasonable person could anticipate conflicts between users and impacts to resources. The intensity of the use of the trail is proposed to greatly increase, expanding the existing use in impactful ways, as set forth in more detail below.

There are other serious flaws and misrepresentations in the document. The explanation under “Reasons to support exemption findings” treats the activity being proposed as merely a change in signage, overlooking the true impacts of mixing users on this trail. This is not only an inappropriate use of Class 1 (since expansion of uses cannot occur under this exemption), it is disingenuous.

CEQA, its Guidelines and applicable case law are very clear that the use of a categorical exemption must be limited, and must be supported by substantial evidence in the record that each and every element of the Categorical Exemption is satisfied. Here, the only “analysis” conducted was to disguise what is actually a massive expansion of use as a “sign change”. This is not the result that CEQA intends.

Expansion of use will cause significant, unmitigated impacts.

The Live Oak Trail is located in an environmentally sensitive area. Equestrians for years have self-policed and treated the trail with respect. Abundant fauna and flora occur on the trail, including nesting bald eagles.

Equestrians regularly mix successfully with hikers when the hikers are made aware of the conduct they must follow when around horses. Horses are easily surprised, and even the most seasoned trail horse can be spooked. Because of the difference in size between a horse and a human, horses can cause damage to the hiker, the rider and themselves in a very short period of time.

Consideration about the different habits of equestrians and other users are also instructive. Hikers and horses generally travel at close to the same speed. However, mountain bikers, e-bikes and the like travel far faster and are prone to more aggressive movements than either equestrians or hikers. In addition, mountain bikers often go off-trail and create erosion and habitat destruction issues. The County fails to recognize that many mountain bikers will be visitors from urban areas, clearly unfamiliar with proper conduct around horses and hikers. For this reason, mountain bikers pose a particular risk to other users and to the environment. CEQA and applicable cases make clear that an agency cannot “shut its eyes to the potentially significant and cumulative effects of an action” (*See East Peninsula Education Council, Inc. v. Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District* (2nd Dist. 1989) 210 Cal App. 3d, 155, 170-173 [258 Cal. Rptr. 147])

CEQA is at its heart a public information law aimed at the environment. Had the County avoided a Categorical Exemption and used the Initial Study process to determine what type of CEQA document is appropriate for this project, much greater public engagement would have resulted, together with more evidence and constructive suggestions. The fact that the County looks at all of its trails as “multi-use” does not excuse the County from taking a “hard look” at expansion on a trail that has historically been for equestrian use only.

For all of these reasons, the County should rescind the Notice of Exemption, commence a valid CEQA process together with a clear and stable project description, and consider the appropriate CEQA document to support the decisionmaker(s) deliberation on this project.

The filing of the Notice of Exemption is invalid.

The Notice of Exemption (NOE) cannot be filed until the agency acts on the project (CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15062(a)). Here, it is not clear whether any decision has been made because the project description and the NOE does not state who is the approving entity, what scope of authority the approving entity has to make this decision and when the decision was made. Informal contact with the Parks Department resulted in a response that the project was only a “pilot project”; but that is not what the Project Description states, even in its very limited form.

In addition, the NOE is materially defective for an inadequate and shifting project description, as previously stated. Therefore, there is no 35-day statute of limitations and the statute of limitations is 180 days. If the NOE was filed before the decision was made, it is invalid (*County of Amador v. El Dorado County Water Agency* (3d Dist. 1999) 76 Cal App 4th 931,962-964 [91 Cal. Rptr. 2d 66]).

For all of these reasons, the NOE is invalid and the County should rescind it and perform an appropriate CEQA process.

Conclusion.

Trail use is an important component of any County recreational program. But in this case, the decision has been made to expand the use of this trail in a cavalier and potentially dangerous manner, also adversely affecting significant environmental values on the trail. SYVEA does not contend that no one but equestrians can use the trail. But the addition of mountain bikers and e-bikes cannot be made safe in this remote area and the County should seriously consider the risks of such a mix in its deliberations.

Sincerely,

cc: Supervisor Joan Hartmann, Third District
Jefferson Litten, Third District
SYVEA Board of Directors and Membership
Kathy Rosenthal, Santa Ynez Valley Riders

May 17, 2021

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

RE: Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan & the Live Oak Equestrian Trail
(VIA EMAIL TO sbcob@countyofsb.org)

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Board:

The Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan (Plan) is currently in process and is a strategic planning program for parks, trails, and recreation facilities throughout Santa Barbara County that will guide recreation development for the next 20 years. The Plan was presented first at the Countywide Recreation Summit held in June 2019 to bring together park and recreation leadership from agencies and key stakeholders countywide. Then the County initiated the Plan in August 2019 (Attached).

The Live Oak Trail Expansion Project (Pilot Project) was originally planned for implementation on January 1st, 2021. Following our request and subsequent work with the County Parks Division (Parks Division), that date was delayed to April 15, 2021 when the Live Oak Trail was expanded from an equestrian trail (the environmental baseline) and to include hikers. This is the "Pilot Project" and will collect trail user data for 18-months, then additional types of trail users will be considered.

In relation to the Plan and Live Oak Trail, we request your Board provide insight to the following questions and consider our requested action items associated with each:

1. **Why was Live Oak Trail separated off from the Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan and why is the Live Oak Trail "Pilot Project" continuing ahead of the Plan?**
 - a. The Plan's Steering Committee Meeting Agenda Packet dated Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 3:00 PM, Figure 4, Santa Ynez Valley Recreation Facilities (Attached) indicates that the Live Oak Camp and Live Oak Trail area (northeast shore of Cachuma Lake) will be considered in the Plan.
 - b. The Live Oak Trail expansion "Pilot Project" began on April 15th, 2021, ahead of the Plan, without benefit of transparent public review.
 - c. The "Pilot Project's" 18-month period coincides with the Plan timeline.
 - d. No accurate data collection is occurring under the "Pilot Program" as of today's date.
 - e. Damage to the trails and the north shore of the Lake ***are continuing***. A consultant (?), contractor (?) is grading and otherwise traveling off road to "map new trails". These actions are unsupervised and are a fire hazard. (See attached photo). ***This MUST STOP and motorized vehicles prohibited from the trail, especially now during high fire season.***

Action Item: We request that your Board examine the attached documents noted in this letter and the Plan's timeline thus far, consider that the Live Oak Trail is included as anticipated and indicated on Figure 4 of the above-described documents, will be included in the review, analysis, and public participation as part of the Plan, and halt any further actions, grading, studies, or other activities on-the-ground until the Live Oak Trail expansion "Pilot Project" is adequately evaluated under the Plan.

2. **Why was CEQA not initiated well before the Santa Ynez Valley Riders (SYVR) intervened?**
 - a. The Live Oak Trail exemption was filed by the Parks Division only after the SYVR questioned the need for CEQA review. The SYVR anticipated that the level of environmental review would be, at a minimum, equal to the level of review accomplished in the 1989 "Recommendations for a Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail" (Attached), a Negative

Declaration-level document that was prepared by the Parks Department at the time the Live Oak Trail was opened.

- b. Our objections to expanding users on the Trail are well-documented in the SYVR letters (Attached):
 - i. To Jon Menzies dated December 18, 2020 and December 22, 2020, and
 - ii. Mr. Menzies' response dated December 21, 2020.
- c. The Live Oak Trail NOE was filed on January 12, 2021 (Attached).
 - i. The equestrian community challenged the NOE and discussion of environmental impacts and discrepancies with the County's Land Use Plan – Conservation Element policies are documented in the attached letters:
 - 1. The SYVR letter of January 31, 2021 to George Chapian, and
 - 2. The Santa Ynez Valley Equestrian Association letter of January 28, 2021 to Jeff Lindgren.
 - 3. Both were submitted well within the NOE challenge timeframe under CEQA.

Action Item: We request that your Board examine the attached letters and associated information considering the Plan's timeline thus far. Then look at the evidence presented in our NOE challenge letters.

Live Oak Trail expansion and/or improvements, as well as our concerns must be evaluated with the equestrian only use at Live Oak Trail as the environmental baseline. This must be the starting point for the Plan's evaluation. This is consistent with the initiation date of the Plan (August 2019) and the Trail use on that date and at that snapshot in time. Hikers are the new users added to the trail under the "Pilot Program" (initiated April 2021) and have no history on the trail. Hiker impacts need to be evaluated and the Plan is the vehicle to do it. The Pilot Project impacts cannot be ignored. Only then will the Pilot Project and future new uses of the trail (if any), be adequately reviewed under CEQA.

3. Why is the Recreation Master Plan being prepared without benefit of qualified in-house planning staff?

- a. The Community Services Department eliminated the Parks Planner position in FY 2018-2019 (Community Services Department Budget and Staffing Report Attached).
- b. The Parks Division is relying on inexperienced staff (through no fault of their own) and rely on hired consultants to guide decisions and analysis that affect the public.
- c. Current staff have neither the experience nor expertise to recognize consequences and long-term cumulative impacts associated with unmitigated recreation planning decisions.

Action item: We request that the Parks Division planner position be restored to guide the Plan's development in a transparent and un-biased manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring these issues to your Board's attention. The public would be well-served to prohibit any other activities at Live Oak Trail at this time and we strongly advocate for the evaluation of Live Oak Trail, as presented to the Plan's Steering Committee, in the Santa Barbara County Recreation Master Plan. We look forward to your response.

Best Regards,

Kathy Rosenthal
2021 President
Santa Ynez Valley Riders

Cc: George Chapien, Director, Community Services Department (gchapjian@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)

Jeff Lindgren, Parks Superintendent, County Parks Division, Community Services Department (JLindgren@sbparks.org)

Mr. Jon Menzies Santa Barbara County Parks Division, Community Services Department (jmenzies@sbparks.org)

Attachments:

1. Steering Committee Meeting Agenda Packet dated Thursday, September 17, 2020
<https://www.countyofsb.org/parks/recmasterplan.sbc>
2. 5/15/21 Photo Vehicle Tracks in Grass
2. Recommendations for a Management Plan for the Cachuma Lake Equestrian Trail (1989)
3. SYVR letter to Jon Menzies dated December 18, 2020
4. Jon Menzies Email response to SYVR dated December 21, 2020
5. SYVR reply letter to Jon Menzies December 22, 2020
6. The Live Oak Trail NOE January 12, 2021
7. SYVR NOE challenge letter of January 31, 2021 to George Chapien
8. Santa Ynez Valley Equestrian Association NOE challenge letter of January 28, 2021 to Jeff Lindgren
9. The Community Services Department Budget and Staffing FY 18-19 Report- Parks Planner position deletion (Page D-319) [FY 18 19 Comm Svcs Assets](#)

Ramirez, Angelica

From: patfish@luckyfish.com
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 3:58 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Live Oak Equestrian Trail

The current "Pilot Project" intended to increase the users of Live Oak Trails with hikers and bikers was supposedly going to be "collecting user data" for 18 months, but at present the tally, such as it is, does not include the annual permit holders.

I am an annual permit holder, and ride my mule with friends at the Live Oak trails several times a month.

If this "pilot" is to have any validity there needs to be a provision for accurate user tabulation.

We believe that the addition of these new classes of users presents a danger to us, and ask that these mere 12 miles continue to be reserved for exclusively equestrian use. EVERY other trail in the entire county, as well as every one in Ventura County, is open to all classes of users. Please, reconsider this decision to open these trails and recognize that left as it always has been for decades it could be managed to become a world-class equestrian destination, with camping up in the campground bringing in significant income to the County.

Having these trails remain exclusively equestrian will prevent the inevitable conflicts, accidents, and liability that multi-use will bring.



patfish@luckyfish.com
www.LuckyFish.com
www.LuckyFishArt.com
PO Box 777
Santa Barbara
CA 93102
805-962-7552