



SANTA CLARA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

COYOTE LAKE-HARVEY BEAR RANCH COUNTY PARK

MASTER PLAN DRAFT PROGRAM DOCUMENT

October 2001

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Environmental Science Associates

Rana Creek Habitat Restoration

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Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. EXISTING CONDITIONS	5
Introduction	5
Baseline Environmental Inventory	7
Biological Resources	7
Land Use	15
Population and Housing	18
Cultural Resources	20
Recreational Resources	26
Visual Resources	28
Noise	31
Geology	32
Seismic Settings	33
Hydrology	39
Hazardous Materials	43
Traffic and Circulation	46
Regulatory Overview	56
3. RECREATION TRENDS	65
4. MASTER PLAN GOALS	71
5. FACILITY PROGRAM ELEMENTS	75
Recreation Elements	77
Agricultural and Educational Elements	91
Access Elements	96
Resource Management, Protection and Restoration	99
Park Operations	101
6. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS	105
Constraints Map	105
Recreation Opportunites Map	107
 LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1: Site Location Map	3
Figure 2: Vegetation and Wildlife Habitats	13
Figure 3: Recreation Resources	29
Figure 4: Soils and Hydrology	37
Figure 5: Project Site and Intersection Locations	49
Figure 6: Existing Roadway and Intersection Geometrics	50
Figure 7: Existing Weekday AM/PM Peak Hour Volumes	53
Figure 8: Existing Saturday Average Daily and Midday Peak Hour Volumes	54
Figure 9: Constraints Map	109
Figure 10: Recreation Opportunities Map	111



INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Purpose

This Program Document sets the stage for development of the Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park Master Plan. It provides an inventory and analysis of existing site conditions, establishes goals for the master plan, defines potential park program elements that will be explored further in design alternatives, and identifies both opportunities and constraints to development of recreational and educational activities along with natural and cultural resource conservation. The Program Document completes the first phase of the master planning process. The next phase of the process will be to develop alternative design plans that will be evaluated using a variety of criteria and from which a preferred master plan will emerge.

Park Location

Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park is located in the western foothills of the Mt. Hamilton Range. The park lies east of the City of Gilroy, in southern Santa Clara County. The 4,448 acre site encompasses the entire western side of Coyote Lake, straddles the ridgeline that divides the upper Coyote Creek watershed and Coyote Lake from the Santa Clara Valley, and reaches to the valley floor near the community of San Martin.

History of the Park

Coyote Lake County Park was established in 1969 when the County entered into a long-term lease with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to operate and maintain a park for recreational purposes. The District owns 760 acres including the lake (635 acres) and lands contiguous to the lake (125 acres). These leased lands, plus 36 acres of County owned lands, comprised the original park. Over 70,000 people visited Coyote Lake County Park in 2000. In 1998 the park became significantly larger through acquisition of the Harvey Bear and adjacent Mendoza Ranches. The acquisition of these ranches, coupled with a small acquisition in 1997, have increased the size of the park to 4448 acres, the second largest park in the Santa Clara County Parks system. The park is now called Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park.

While the original park remains open to the public, the Bear and Mendoza properties do not yet have public access, pending completion of the new master plan for the expanded park. In

Introduction

1992, prior to the acquisition of the Bear and Mendoza properties, a master plan was prepared for the Coyote Lake Park, but was never adopted, pending completion of a Watershed Management Study by the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD). SCVWD is responsible for management of the reservoir as a water supply for the Santa Clara Valley. Acquisition of the Bear and Mendoza properties has more than quintupled the size of the original park, necessitating a new master planning effort.

Master Plan Process

The Master Plan process, along with concurrent environmental review and development of a resource management plan, will determine appropriate uses, access points and management objectives for the park. The master plan process is divided into four phases:

- 1) development of the master plan program document;
- 2) development and evaluation of master plan alternatives;
- 3) preparation of a preliminary master plan; and
- 4) refinement into a final master plan. The final master plan will be approved by the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The process must comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The master planning process is being guided by a 13-member citizens advisory Task Force representing a diversity of community and recreational groups that have an interest in the park's development. In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee was created representing the many local, state and federal agencies that influence the park's development and long-term management. The public has an opportunity to be involved in the master planning process at all phases through participation at regular Task Force meetings and at community meetings that are scheduled during each phase.

Introduction

INSERT MAP



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Conditions

INTRODUCTION

Project Location

Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch is located in the western foothills of the Mt. Hamilton Range, a subdivision of the Diablo Range of the Inner South Coast Ranges of California. The park lies east of the City of Gilroy, in Santa Clara County. The 4,448 acre site encompasses the entire western side of Coyote Lake, straddles the ridgeline that divides the upper Coyote Creek watershed and Coyote Lake from the Santa Clara Valley, and extends to the valley floor near the community of San Martin.

Review of Existing Information

This Existing Conditions Report is the result of review and distillation of information previously prepared by others for various purposes, including County park planning and management efforts, remedial investigations, traffic studies, and cultural resource information. Digital mapping was provided by the County for infrastructure, primary roads, trails, property ownership, etc. In addition, new data acquired and developed specifically for the current Master Plan has been incorporated into this document, such as digital cartography, results of biological and infrastructure surveys, and updated information on special status species. References relevant to each section of this document are provided at the end of the section.

Use of Geographic Information Systems

Geographic Information System (GIS) will play a major role in understanding the existing resources and conditions of the Park. GIS allows for accurate mapping and printing of maps by storing and collating information that is collected from multiple sources, such as field-collected observations of vegetation and wildlife, publicly available aerial photography and mapping of soils, geology and hydrology, and county data on land use, property ownership and roads. The data are stored in a digital format that allows for the evaluation of the spatial distribution and relationships among a wide variety of natural and man-made features. This information will be critical not only in this phase, but in the preparation and analysis of design alternatives as well. In the long term, it will be a tool for resource managers to make informed decisions about future Park developments or programs.

Existing Conditions

The GIS will be used to:

- assemble and standardize existing and newly collected digital map layers;
- provide access to these map layers for review and use in preparing maps;
- provide a tool for performing the Opportunities and Constraints Analysis and for evaluating land management alternatives; and
- provide a tool and associated database that can be refined and updated in the future by land management agencies for ongoing land management activities.

Field Studies

Field Studies in support of this existing conditions report are summarized in Table 1. All other information was derived from previous studies, reports, publications or interviews.

**Table 1
Vegetation, Wildlife and Wetlands Field Survey
Dates and Personnel by Project Segment**

Project Segment	Survey Date(s)	Survey Purpose	Survey Conducted By
Biological Resources	June 3, 15, 2001	Breeding Bird Inventory Bird Survey	Rana Creek
		Amphibian Survey (included fish)	Rana Creek
	August 10–12, 2001	Mammal Survey	Rana Creek
	Multiple survey dates	Plant Survey, vegetation mapping	Rana Creek Environmental Science Associates (ESA)
Cultural Resources (reconnaissance only)	September 11, 2001	Potential prehistoric habitation sites	Albion
Visual Resources	September 11, 2001	Documentation of viewsheds	ESA
Traffic and Circulation	September, 2001	Trip counts	ESA

BASELINE ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Existing conditions information was derived from existing reports that describe the vegetation and wildlife resources of the park, including the Natural Resource Management Plan (in prep.), Resource Management Transition Plan (Kephart and Stromberg, 1998), and the 1992 Master Plan (Planning Collaborative, 1992), and from field studies performed by Rana Creek Habitat Restoration. Vegetation and wildlife habitats and special status species are described briefly, followed by a discussion of the issues related to by biological resources.

Vegetation and Wildlife Habitats

The classification and mapping of vegetation is based on interpretation of aerial photographs and field surveys. Vegetation is typical of the western inner coast ranges, and includes the following plant communities:

Foothill Oak Woodland—Foothill oak woodlands are found on the eastern portions of the property on gently sloping hills, swales and canyons. The woodlands are dominated primarily by coast live oak, blue oak, buckeye, and gray pine. Oak woodlands provide habitat for numerous species of mammals, rodents, reptiles, and nesting and migratory birds, as well as insects and arthropods. The understory is composed of shade tolerant shrubs and herbaceous plants, including California blackberry, snowberry, miner's lettuce, blue wild rye, poison oak, yampah, bed straw and sanicle.

Many changes have occurred to oak woodlands as a consequence of livestock grazing, which is implicated in introducing and spreading non-native annual grass species as well as creating habitat disturbances that are rapidly exploited by the fast-growing and competitive non-natives. The result has been a type-conversion from grasslands dominated by native perennial grasses to non-native annual grasses. Grazing also is identified as contributing to the lack of regeneration (*i.e.* germination and establishment) of oak trees, especially blue and valley oak. Other changes that effect the composition and habitat quality of woodlands throughout California include urban and agricultural development and firewood harvesting.

Existing Conditions

Diablan Sage Scrub—Diablan sage scrub occurs in a few scattered locations on steep rocky slopes and isolated rock outcrops and as an occasional understory component of the oak woodlands. It is a dense shrubland vegetation dominated by California sagebrush, coyote brush, and chamise. Herbaceous plants are scattered throughout the shrub understory, and include foothill needlegrass, soap plant, monkey flower, and golden yarrow.

Non-Native Grassland—Native grasses and other herbaceous plants (*i.e.* wildflowers) once dominated the grassland and woodland plant communities of the California Coast Ranges. Native grasses have been gradually replaced by non-native introduced grasses and forbs (non-grass herbaceous plants) by soil tillage, farming and intensive grazing. Non-native grasslands in the Park are dominated by ryegrass, slender oats, soft chess, ripgut brome, and rattail fescue, all introduced species. Dominant forbs include filaree, black mustard, bull thistle, rose clover, and yellow star thistle, also all introduced.

The latter species is an especially noxious invasive species that is classified as a List A-1 pest plant (Most Invasive Wildland Pest Plants) by the California Exotic Plant Pest Council (CalEPPC, 1999). Yellowstar thistle is prevalent over large areas of the northern portion of the Park. It also is common at lower elevations and is rapidly colonizing upper elevation grasslands. Grazing or other means of vegetation management will be required to prevent this species from becoming dominant throughout the Park's grasslands. Other exotic pest plants that are present in lesser degree are Italian thistle, horehound, and fennel.

Non-native grasslands in the Park provide abundant habitat for burrowing mammals and reptiles that provide a prey base for hawks, owls and other birds, as well as for larger predators, such as coyote, bobcat, red fox, gray fox, and mountain lion. The breeding bird survey reported six out of seven indicator species, which are identified as indicators of the avian wildlife habitat value (PIF (California Partners in Flight) 2001), are present in grasslands of the site.

Native Grassland—Native grasslands are similar to the non native grasslands, but include a substantial amount of native perennial grasses, such as foothill needlegrass, purple needlegrass, and blue wild rye. This grassland type represents the original vegetation that probably existed over the majority of the non-woodland portions of the park prior to the

Existing Conditions

arrival of grazing livestock. Intact remnants of this type of grassland are scattered throughout the upper slopes of the Park. They typically occupy slopes, glades and swales where soil moisture retention is higher than the surrounding area. Although small and fragmented, these areas have relatively high diversity of plant species. In addition to the perennial grasses, native plants include dwarf star lily, blue-eyed grass, blue dicks, Johnny jump-ups, and Mariposa lily.

Portions of the native grassland on the Mendoza Ranch contain plant species typically associated with coastal grasslands. California oat grass was observed near the large pond at the southern boundary of the Mendoza Ranch, an extension of the known distribution of this species in Central California.

As a result of over 100 years of intensive grazing, soils and plant composition have been altered in ways that are seen throughout California. Large areas consist of loose bare soil with large populations of pocket gophers. The absence of periodic fire also has likely played a role in the decline of native grasslands. Because they are reduced in geographic extent, and fragmented and altered from their pristine state, native grasslands are classified as threatened by the California Department of Fish and Game (CNDDDB, 2001).

From the standpoint of wildlife habitat, native and non-native grasslands provide generally the same habitat values, and are likely to support similar fauna. Exceptions occur where serpentine soils are extensive or particularly dense and infertile, in which case plant cover and ease of excavation of burrows or dens is substantially diminished. However, serpentine soils support a specialized flora that may include host plants for Bay Checkerspot Butterfly, a federally protected species. Within the park, one area near the ridge has been designated as critical habitat for this species.

In addition, several wetland and aquatic habitats are present, including:

Riparian Forest and Scrub—Willow riparian forest and scrub occurs along creeks and drainages at several locations throughout the park. Riparian forests consist of large mature arroyo or red willow trees that are adapted to seasonal or perennial high ground water in streams. Riparian scrub consists of willows and other shrubs, small trees and vines, such

Existing Conditions

as blue elderberry, buckeye, and wild grape. Understory vegetation in both vegetation types includes California blackberry, mugwort, rushes, and, in reaches with slow perennial flows or ponds, watercress and duckweed. In some places, riparian scrub represents an immature state of riparian forest, or it may persist in where repeating disturbance, such as floods or grazing, prevents the willow shrubs from becoming trees. The most extensive area is on Coyote Creek Arroyo near the Bear Ranch house and barns. Other smaller, often fragmented stands of this vegetation are located in smaller creeks and drainages.

Riparian habitats provide important habitat values for nesting, foraging, cover, and source of water for numerous wildlife species. Typically, 90% of the birds and mammals on California ranches occur only in riparian habitat (Kephart and Stromberg, 1998). Many species depend entirely on riparian habitat.

Freshwater Seep—Seasonal wetland springs and seeps originate at mid-elevations on the western and eastern slopes of the Park. Plants observed in these areas include toadrush, spikerush, sedges, rabbit foot grass, popcorn flower, spreading rush, iris-leaved rush, stinging nettles, and watercress. Seeps on the Mendoza Ranch are a source of water for vernal pools and stock ponds. Others on the Bear Ranch are the result of overflowing cattle troughs. Most of these sites also serve as water sources for livestock, therefore the vegetation is either highly disturbed by trampling or absent.

Vernal Pools—Vernal pools are shallow basins or swales within grasslands that pond water during the winter spring. Underlying soil layers are densely compacted and prevent the downward percolation of water. The pools dry slowly through evaporation, and support a specialized suite of plant species adapted to short periods of inundation and a gradual drying of the pool. Plants observed in vernal pools include coyote thistle, flowering quillwort, and prickly grass. Although vernal pools are identified as potential habitat for special status plant species, none were observed during surveys conducted during Spring 2001 (Rana Creek, 2001).

Existing Conditions

Vernal pools provide seasonal aquatic habitat for invertebrates, frogs, salamanders and birds. During the dry summer and fall months, these areas are often difficult to distinguish from surrounding grasslands, and therefore assume similar habitat values.

Stock Ponds—Several stock ponds have been developed in the Park and it appears that historic vernal pool basins have been enlarged for use by livestock as water sources. Stock ponds are typically impacted by livestock, with barren soils or very little vegetation below the high water mark. However, two of the ponds on the Mendoza Ranch supported substantial populations of plant cover and diversity during the Spring surveys due to reduced impact of grazing. These ponds also support non-native bass and bullfrogs, which reduce or eliminate populations of native amphibians (salamanders and frogs).

Fisheries

Coyote Lake and Coyote Creek provide fisheries habitat for native and introduced fish, including stocked gamefish and unstocked bluegill, crappie and bass. The CDFG periodically stocks the lake with rainbow trout. The condition of native fisheries in the lake is unknown, although the upstream reaches of Coyote Creek may still support a native trout population. Management of the lake as an emergency domestic water supply and inspection of the earth dam for seismic concerns necessitates draining the lake, which limits the long term viability as a fishery. Downstream, the dam at Anderson Lake presents an insurmountable barrier to anadromous fish passage. Therefore, the lake is excluded from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's designation of critical habitat for steelhead and chinook salmon, which are presumed absent from the lake.

Special Status Species

Special status plants include any species that are recognized for their statewide or local rarity or vulnerability to various causes of habitat loss or population decline. Some species are formally listed and receive specific protection defined in federal or state endangered species legislation. Other species have no formal listing status as threatened or endangered, but are designated as "rare" or "sensitive" on the basis of policies adopted by federal or state resource agencies, by local governmental agencies such as counties, cities, and special districts to meet local conservation objectives, or by organizations with acknowledged expertise such as the California Native Plant Society. These species are referred to collectively as "spe-

Existing Conditions

cial status species" in this report, following a convention that has developed in practice but has no official sanction. Section 4.0 is a discussion of special status species regulations and policies.

The Resource Management Transition Plan (Rana Creek, 1998) identified 28 species of plants with potential to occur in the Park based on a search of the California Native Plant Society Inventory. This list is amended here to include three additional species that are documented by the California Natural Diversity Data Base as occurring on the Gilroy and Gilroy Hot Springs USGS quads (CNDDDB, 2001). These species have potential to occur on the Park on the basis of suitable habitat known to occur on or in the vicinity of the Park. Only one previous observation of a special status plant occurring in the Park has previously been documented due to the majority of the Park being in private ownership. Appropriately timed surveys in the Spring and Summer of 2001 confirmed that this species, big-scale balsamroot, still occurs in the park.

Issues

- Effects of current land management practices on special status species, sensitive plant communities or wildlife habitat
- Effects of future land management practices
- Effects of increased recreational use could diminish wildlife habitat value in some locations
- Protection of sensitive resource areas, including serpentine grasslands and designated critical habitat for Bay checkerspot butterfly
- Protection of oak trees
- Changes of use (i.e. new facilities or park programs) could disturb or displace open space.

References

California Department of Fish and Game, *California Natural Diversity Data Base*, version 2.1.2. Data request for Gilroy and Gilroy Hot Springs 7.5 minute topographic quadrangles. Accessed September 2001.

CalEPPC (California Exotic Plant Pest Council), 1999. Exotic Pest Plant List. October. <http://www.caleppc.org/info/pestplants99.pdf>

Kephart, P., and M. Stromberg, 1998. Coyote Lake County Park: A Resource Management Transition Plan. Prepared for Santa Clara County Parks Dept. Rana Creek Habitat Restoration, Carmel, CA.

Existing Conditions

**Figure 2
Vegetation and Wildlife Habitats**

Existing Conditions

Existing Conditions

Natural Resource Management Plan (in prep.), Resource Management Transition Plan (Rana Creek, 1998), Rana Creek, 1998,

PIF (California Partners in Flight) 2001. Oak Woodland Bird Conservation Plan: A Strategy for Restoring the Oak Woodland Habitats in California associated with them. Draft Conservation Plan. <http://www.prbo.org/CPIF/consplandl.html>

Planning Collaborative, 1992. Coyote Lake Master Plan, Draft Final Master Plan Document. Prepared for County of Santa Clara, Parks and Recreation Task Force, and Coyote Lake Park Task Force.

LAND USE

Coyote Lake Park has been recently expanded from 796 acres to 4,448 acres and is now known as Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park. The change is the result of acquisitions by the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department of 2,940 acres of the former Harvey Bear Ranch and 711 acres of the Mendoza Ranch. A park that was formerly focused on a 625-acre lake behind a dam on Coyote Creek has become an expanse of public land that includes most of the western side of the valley adjoining the lake, the ridge to its west, and some land in the valley beyond. The proposed Master Plan effort will determine the best uses of land in this greatly enlarged park for the next 20 years.

The geographic setting of the park is slightly east of the southern portion of the Santa Clara Valley in the foothills of the Mount Hamilton Range. The original part of the park is within the valley of Coyote Creek, a stream that flows northwestward into San Francisco Bay. Coyote Lake is a linear reservoir that was created with the building of Coyote Dam in 1936. All major topographic features in the park have a northwest-southeast orientation in keeping with the entire Bay Area.

Relative location of the park could be described as six miles northeast of Gilroy, approximately 20 miles southeast of San Jose, and three miles east of Highway 101. It is also three miles southeast of Anderson Lake County Park and four miles west of Henry W. Coe State Park. Proximity to both population centers and large areas of preserved open space influences land use in the vicinity of the project.

The 760 original acres, including the park, have been used as parkland since 1969. Santa Clara County leased the parcel at that time from the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) in order to operate and control recreational use of the lake. This lease was renewed in 1994

Existing Conditions

for a term of 25 years. However, the lake itself, the dam, and all land below the elevation of 818 feet (or 15 vertical feet above the crest of the dam) is owned by the Water District. County zoning for the area is designated as Regional Park (P).

The two large parcels (Bear and Mendoza properties), acquired by the County for park expansion were historically both ranches. Formerly used for grazing, their zoning and land use designation in the Santa Clara County General Plan is Hillside (H). Hillside zones are described in the General Plan as:

“Mountainous lands and foothills unsuitable and/or unplanned for annexation and urban development. Lands so designated shall be preserved largely in natural resources-related and open space uses in order to:

- a) support and enhance rural character;
- b) protect and promote wise management of natural resources;
- c) avoid risks associated with natural hazards characteristic of those areas;
and
- d) protect the quality of reservoir watersheds critical to the region's water supply.”

(General Plan Land Use Policy R-LU 16.)

Because this land has always been located in unincorporated Santa Clara County, it is not subject to any local land use regulations.

Adjacent to and west of this new park land several county land use zones apply. Land contiguous to Bear Ranch to the west is zoned Rural Residential (RR), with the exception of a small area of Hillside zone land near its northwest corner. Rural Residential land is considered outside of city service areas and allows a minimum parcel size of five acres. Primary uses allowed include agriculture, open space and low density residential of five to twenty acres per dwelling, determined by the slope of the land (G.P. Land Use Policy R-LU 58). All land bordering Mendoza Ranch on the western side is zoned Highland (H).

Large areas of nearby land not contiguous to the park are reserved for agriculture. Zoning designations are Agriculture-Large Scale (AL), indicating minimum parcels of no less than 40 acres, and Agriculture-Medium Scale (AM) with parcel sizes no less than 20 acres. These

Existing Conditions

lands are limited to agriculture and ancillary uses because they are favored with a combination of "the finest soils, dependable growing climate, and adequate water supply" (G.P. Land Use Policy R-LU 8). There are no current Williamson Act contracts involving nearby land that would in any way affect development of the park.

Bordering the eastern boundary of the park the primary zoning designation is Ranchland (R). Ranchlands are defined in the General Plan as

"Lands predominantly used as ranches in rural unincorporated areas of the county, remote from urbanized areas and generally less accessible than other mountain lands. Important resources include watersheds for regional water supply, grazing lands, mineral resources, forests and wildlife habitat, rare or locally unique plant or animal communities, historic and archeological sites, and recreational and scenic areas of importance that also serve to define the setting for the urban areas." (G.P. Land Use Policy R-LU 35.)

The Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy, has acquired 9000 acres directly east of the lake since the 1992 Master Plan.

The remaining significant land use in the vicinity is zoned (P) indicating an existing regional park. Three miles to the east of Coyote Lake, beyond the crests of Timber and Sheep Ridges and beyond limits of the watershed, is Henry W. Coe State Park. It is a nearly 81,000-acre expanse of parkland that is part of a series of parks and preserved undeveloped open spaces in the East Bay Hills administered by the state, counties in which they are located, or the East Bay Regional Parks District. Regional Parks are meant to serve a large population of a major region such as the entire San Francisco Bay Area. The zoning for Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park and nearby Anderson Lake County Park is also (P), suggesting design and use that is expected to have more than local significance.

Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park is included in plans for both regional and countywide trail systems. Regional trails extend beyond county boundaries, and are considered to be of national, state, or regional significance. Best known is the Bay Area Ridge Trail which will be approximately 400 miles in length when completed, following the mountains surrounding San Francisco Bay at or near their ridgelines. It will connect the mountains on

Existing Conditions

either side of the Bay by an east-west route linking Mount Madonna County Park with Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park. County and connector trail routes, either existing or proposed, link the park with other nearby parks, communities, and major population centers of the South Bay. Trails are generally developed gradually in segments as opportunities become available. Development of trails within the park is controlled by the county and would not be affected. Priorities regarding new routes would be established in the new Master Plan.

Issues

Enlargement of the park is not expected to necessitate changes in existing land use designations in its vicinity. Through continued cooperation between the County Parks and Recreation Department and the Santa Clara Valley Water District, it will improve protection and management of the watershed and lake which provides part of the county's water supply. It will also protect the viewshed from visual encroachment of nearby suburban development providing an enhanced aesthetic resource.

References

County of Santa Clara, Santa Clara County General Plan, Books A and B, 1994.

County of Santa Clara, Parks and Recreation Department, Countywide Trails Master Plan Update, adopted November, 1995.

County of Santa Clara, Parks and Recreation Department, website - <http://www.parkhere.org/>, accessed September 25, 2001.

Ryan, Elish, Park Planner, Santa Clara County (personal communication, 9/26/01)

The Planning Collaborative, Coyote Lake Park Master Plan, prepared for County of Santa Clara, Parks and Recreation Department, October, 1992, (not adopted).

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Santa Clara County currently has the largest population of the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area with Year 2000 estimated population of 1,755,300. The rapid growth of Silicon Valley has expanded the County's influence beyond the traditional nine Bay Area counties westward into Santa Cruz and Monterey, southward into San Benito County, and eastward into the edge of the Central Valley in Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin Counties. Population in these surrounding counties has also grown as they have become home to people employed

Existing Conditions

in Santa Clara County. Growth Projections prepared by ABAG anticipate a countywide population of 2,016,700 by the year 2020.

The City of San Jose is the largest in the county and the Bay Area with a population of 972,200 recorded in 2000. A growth rate of 25% is expected during the next 20 years according to the same ABAG study. Due to constraints of the already densely populated northern part of the county and the limiting topography of mountains on both the east and west sides of the city as well as the Bay to the north, population pressure would be exerted southward down the Santa Clara Valley. This trend has already caused substantial growth in existing south valley population centers. The City of Gilroy, six miles southwest of the park, has grown from 37,000 to 45,300 in the last five years with a projected growth rate of 60% between the present and 2020. Morgan Hill has experienced similar growth and anticipates a growth rate of 62% during the same time period.

San Martin, a small community on unincorporated county land approximately 3 miles west of Coyote Lake, is the population center closest to the park. Between Highway 101 and the park, residences are widely spaced and scattered in a pattern characteristic of agricultural land use.

There is a housing shortage throughout the Bay Area that is most severe in Santa Clara County. Growth in population attracted by growth in employment opportunities has exceeded the supply of available housing units. Proposed new housing development lags far behind current need. Resulting high prices in urban areas have caused the more affordable surrounding rural areas to become attractive for residential use. This is also reflected in the population growth of the southern portions of Santa Clara Valley.

Issues

While the park program may include limited housing for some employees, housing is not anticipated as a significant park program issue. However, the park design program will need to take into account the recreation needs of a growing Santa Clara County population.

References

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Existing Conditions

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CULTURAL RESOURCES

SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The extent of cultural resources located on Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear County Park property is largely unexplored. Despite the incomplete nature of the local record, important information on resource distribution for the larger area can be gleaned from studies conducted on lands immediately adjacent to the property. Numerous survey and recording efforts for agencies have significantly enhanced the inventory of known resources in the region surrounding the park.

Regional Setting

The region around the Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park property contains a full range of cultural resources, representing a long span of occupation and land use beginning in prehistoric times and continuing into the recent historic period. The resource inventory comprises prehistoric and historic archaeological deposits, structures and buildings, historic landscapes, and places of traditional value to groups in present day society. The property has a remarkably rich history, revealing information on important people and historic themes of national, state and local interest, including the last western expansion of the United States, early California history, and the development of the communities that now make up the southern Santa Clara Valley.

Prehistoric Resources

The few archaeological surveys conducted within the Park boundaries have resulted in five recorded prehistoric sites, only one of which has been subjected to further subsurface testing. These consist of:

- A remnant prehistoric village containing tools associated with food preparation, tool manufacture, and likely inhumations along the northwestern shore of Coyote Lake.

Existing Conditions

- A small prehistoric village with lithic tools representing tool manufacture and food processing activities north of Roop Road west of Coyote Lake.
- Scatter of fire-cracked rock, chert debitage, and a single piece of groundstone along the south end of Coyote Lake.
- Surface scatter of groundstone materials, chert debitage, and a flaked stone tool southeast of Church Avenue in San Martin.
- A small occupation site characterized by dark midden soils, several pieces of groundstone and a single retouched chert flake tool east of Foothill Avenue.

Three additional sites are located immediately adjacent to the Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch Park property. While these resources will not be considered under the Park's Master Plan, they are important to the current assessment as they provide information for predicting the location and kinds of resources that may be located within the project area. These consist of:

- A special use site relating to tool manufacture along the east end of Howell Lane.
- An extensive scatter of flaked and groundstone materials southeast of Robin Lane off of Foothill Avenue.
- The "Mission Tree" or "Witness Tree" near the intersection of Jeanie Lane and New Avenue, reported to be associated with either a Mission out-building or possibly a witness point used by earlier surveyors.

The current archaeological record of the Park and its immediate surroundings provide a preliminary framework from which to assess the potential for archaeological resources. Given this data, it can confidently be assumed that a large portion of areas contained within the Park have some potential for archaeological resources. Based on the distribution of sites in the region, the following areas may be considered highly sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources:

- Areas around springs and natural watercourses west of the ridge paralleling Coyote Lake;
- Plateaus above the current shore line of Coyote Lake, and areas currently under water;
- Portions of upper canyon environments on east and west side of the ridge;
- Areas around all recorded prehistoric sites;

Existing Conditions

- Flat open areas at the interface between canyon mouths and the valley floor on the western portion of the project area;
- The alluvial plain between the valley floor and the base of the hills on the western portion the Park property; and
- Low areas at the south end of Coyote Lake, including marsh areas above the lake.

While no area within the project vicinity can be completely disregarded for cultural resources, areas of highest elevation (*i.e.*, ridge tops) have the lowest potential for archaeological deposits. As these areas generally lack natural water sources, occupation sites are not likely. However, special use sites centered on resources such as acorns and raw lithic material may be found here.

The area confined to the northern part of the Park is relatively unknown. The area encompasses numerous drainages leading into Coyote Creek, below the dam at the north end of the lake. Given that the area encompasses upper canyon environments, the likelihood for sites is potentially high.

Historical Resources

As is the case with the regional prehistoric record, much of what is known about the history of the project area can be gathered from investigations conducted in surrounding areas (King and Hickman 1973, Milliken et al. 1993). To date, knowledge about the Park holdings relates to the Early American and Late American Periods, with an emphasis on documentation of land acquisition and histories of founding members of local communities such as Gilroy, San Martin and Morgan Hill (Hunter 1978, Wyman 1982, Mason 1999).

Two studies have been carried out in the Park, including Cartier's 1991 study along the western shore of Coyote Lake, and a significance evaluation of the Foreman's House at Bear Ranch (Mineweaser and Associates 1999). Since this time there have been no additional efforts to identify, record or evaluate the larger historical complex of this or any other ranching operations within the Park boundary.

Cartier's (1991) reconnaissance revealed four potential historic resources situated adjacent to Coyote Lake. The resources included two residential structures, a stone house foundation or retaining wall, and a trash dump. The features were described as follows:

Existing Conditions

Historic Resource 1 is a residential structure in the Minimal Traditional architectural style popular from 1935-1950. The structure features a cross-gabled roof with close rake and open eaves. The house is clad with both vertical and channeled siding, and has a concrete foundation. A detached two-car garage of compatible design is located near by.

Historic Resource 2 is a stone house foundation or retaining wall possibly associated with Historic Resource 1.

Historic Resource 3 is a side gabled vernacular cottage that may have served as a summer residence. The structure date to the 1920s or 30s, and has a low-pitched roof with open eaves and rake. The house is situated on concrete piers. Also noted were two associated brick buildings and a mortared stone retaining wall.

Historic Resource 4 is a trash dump with refuse dating from 1930-1990.

Upon acquisition of the Bear Ranch property, Santa Clara County Department of Parks and Recreation requested a historical assessment of the Foreman's House located on the Bear Ranch property at the end of San Martin Avenue. It is commonly believed that the Bear Ranch was once part of the Martin Murphy holdings acquired around 1845. However, no documentation exists indicating which buildings, if any, on the ranch were associated with Murphy. The purpose of the study was to determine the age of the building and assess its historical significance (Mineweaser 1999). Other structures located on the ranch were not evaluated.

Due to the lack of specific historical records of the building, the 1999 assessment was based solely on examination of the features and construction of the actual building. From these observations, it was determined that the structure was constructed sometime in the 1940s. Its current configuration appears to have been the result of combining two older structures and finishing the interior. The report indicated that the two original structures were built between 1850 and 1920 (Mineweaser and Associates Addendum 2000:3). An interesting feature of the building is the absence of a stud wall in the building frame; rather the exterior walls were constructed by placing 1x12 boards vertically on a post-and-beam frame. This is considered a highly unusual construction technique.

Existing Conditions

The evaluation concluded that given the unusual construction technique employed, the Foreman's house constituted a significant resource on the state and local level (Criteria C). The structure was not considered significant enough for listing on the National Register of Historic Places; however, the report did indicate that further research of the larger ranch complex as well as possible archaeological deposits could indeed alter the finding and elevate the property to national significance.

There is no doubt that activities associated with each of the historic occupation periods have made their mark on the local landscape. These include tangible remains such as standing and collapsed buildings, vestiges of irrigation systems, and old road cuts. Historical archaeological deposits may also constitute an important resource for the project vicinity. These resources are generally subsurface deposits that develop over the course of time (*i.e.*, privies or trash dumps), or the buried remains of structural features such as foundations, footings and cellars.

Based on the existing record, assumptions can be made that most of the areas contained within the Park have some potential for historic resources.

The following areas are at present considered highly sensitive for historic resources, including archaeological deposits. It includes areas where known and potential historic structures are located, and areas likely to support activities carried out on the property through history.

- All flat open areas below the hills west of the ridge
- The current shore line of Coyote Lake, and areas currently under water
- Flat open areas along the south end of Coyote lake
- The Bear Ranch complex of buildings at the end of San Martin Ave.

The more rugged parts of the Park, including the ridge top and adjacent slope to the east and west, or any area containing steep slopes and ravines are not likely to contain large ranch complexes or homesteads, however, they may contain resources related to ranch supporting activities including irrigation systems, cattle troughs, and trash dumps.

Existing Conditions

Issues

Given the knowledge of the relationship between prehistoric site distribution and specific environmental-topographic zones in the Southern Santa Clara Valley, it is prudent to assume that all areas of the Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park contain some potential for archaeological resources. Because of the limited archaeological record for the property, review of State laws governing site-specific investigations will be required for implementation of park programs that result in ground disturbance or other potential disruption of cultural sites. Procedures regarding discovery during implementation will be adhered to.

To avoid potential significant issues related to existing prehistoric and historic resources that have not been recorded, it is suggested to conduct an archaeological survey prior to any programmatic undertaking that would include earth-disturbing activities in areas of high sensitivity. These surveys would be conducted as the subsequent CEQA process for specific construction projects. The cost effectiveness of this approach obviously depends on the type of actions implemented under the Park's Master Plan. Minor construction and maintenance projects may be expedited by using a sample survey method. A sample survey would be based on environmental variables including topography and proximity to water. Data generated from the survey could be used to refine the proposed sensitivity model, in turn potentially reducing requirements for pre-construction archaeological treatment in some areas of the Park.

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RECREATION RESOURCES

Recreational Opportunities in Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park

Coyote Lake, a three-mile long reservoir, is the primary attraction of the existing Coyote Lake Park with recreational opportunities that include both passive and active recreational activities. Passive recreational activities include photography, nature study, and sightseeing. Active recreational activities at Coyote Lake include boating, walking/hiking, bicycling, fishing, picnicking, and camping.

Existing Conditions

Coyote Lake provides opportunities for power and non-power boating. Fishing opportunities are abundant as the reservoir is stocked with trout and contains unstocked populations of bluegill, crappie and bass. Shoreline picnic areas are provided along the western shore of the lake with barbecue facilities provided to the south. The park offers the County's only shoreline camping area with the Lakeview Campground providing 64 campsites with two restroom facilities, fresh water, and firepit barbecues. The boat launch ramp is located one mile north of the visitor center. The park visitor center and ranger station, located near the park entrance kiosk, features a display on local wildlife and Ohlone Indian culture and links to two hiking trails along the lakeshore.

Issues

Recreational access to the most recently acquired portions of the Park is the highest priority issue facing the park planning process. While the original park remains open to the public, the Bear and Mendoza properties do not yet have public access.

Expansion of the Park will result in increased use, a more diverse array of recreational uses, and may ultimately result in development of facilities particular to specific types of recreation.

Recent acquisitions of land near the Park introduce opportunities for trail linkages beyond the boundaries of Coyote – Bear. These include the 9,000-acre Lakeview Meadows Ranch directly east of Coyote Lake, acquired by the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy, substantial acreage that has been added to nearby Henry W. Coe State Park, and another 11,000 acres are pending public approval. Trail systems with linkage opportunities include the Anza Historic Trail, the Bay Area Ridge Trail, links to Anderson Reservoir, Henry W. Coe State Park, and a possible cross-valley trail.

Access to recreational resources in the Park will need to be provided at new locations. Access locations on the west side of the Park will need to address impacts to surrounding neighborhoods. Recreational uses will need to address countywide recreational needs, as well as management of sensitive natural and cultural resources.

Existing Conditions

VISUAL RESOURCES

The landscape of the Park typifies the California foothills, with varied topography that ranges from nearly flat on the western valley floor to gently rolling hills, with several steep canyons and rugged escarpments. A northwest-southeast trending ridgeline dominates the central portion of the Park and divides the major viewsheds. To the west is the Santa Clara Valley, which is visible in an unbroken sweep from many of the higher elevations and retains a rural appearance from these vantages, although on a clear day downtown San Jose can be seen from some viewpoints. To the east is Coyote Lake with Palassou Ridge rising sharply above it. Views of the lake from the main ridge are periodically broken by dense stands of foothill oak woodland, which follow narrow side canyons and draws down the slope toward the lake's edge. Between the stands of oaks and other evergreen and deciduous trees are broad expanses of annual grassland, which also cloaks the entire western slope of the hills above the valley floor. Through the seasons, these areas undergo the dramatic transformation that is the landscape's expression of California's Mediterranean climate, from the velvet green of winter and spring to the burnished brown and gold of summer and fall.

Within the Park, there are a few structures associated with the Park headquarters near the Lake, the Bear Ranch houses, barns and associated farm buildings, and the Mendoza Ranch house. Each of these localities is isolated from the others and the ranch buildings retain much of their historic visual appeal.

Recreational facilities in the campground, picnic areas, boat launch and the dam are typical of these types of facilities.

Issues

Some park developments will either be located in the immediate vicinity of similar features (*i.e.*, improvements in the overnight and day use areas), or will be isolated and therefore have nominal effect on the visual experience of the park. Given the prominence of the western-facing hillsides to the San Martin community and southern Santa Clara Valley, siting, mass and style of new facilities will need to address visual quality.

Existing Conditions

**Figure 3
Recreation Resources**

Existing Conditions

Existing Conditions

NOISE

Natural sounds within Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park and adjacent to Coyote Creek are not considered to be noise. These sounds result from natural sources such as flowing water, animals, and rustling tree leaves. Rather, noise within the park results from mechanical sources such as motor vehicles, generators, and aircraft, and from human activities such as talking and yelling.

Regional and Local Noise Environment

The regional noise environment of the project is dominated by noise from transportation sources such as railways, freeways, and highways, including Highway 101 and Business Highway 101. Noise sources in the vicinity of the Project include uses within the Coyote Lake County Park and local residential uses to the east and south.

Sensitive Receptors

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to ambient noise levels than others, due to the amount of noise exposure (in terms of both exposure duration and insulation from noise) and the types of activities typically involved. Residences, motels and hotels, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, and parks and other outdoor recreation areas are generally more sensitive to noise than commercial and industrial land uses.

Trail and recreational users along Coyote Lake, including those visiting the park, utilizing the campgrounds, picnic areas, hiking trails and Visitor's Center would be the sensitive receptors considered to analyze noise impacts from project implementation.

Besides the intermittent, muted noise from the recreational users during park hours, the noise environment in the project area is expected to be relatively quiet and is considered to be within acceptable levels for the park.

Existing Noise Sources

Motor Vehicles—The noise environment at the project site is primarily influenced by people using the trails and nearby facilities. The noise environment closer to the campgrounds, picnic areas and the Visitor Center is influenced by automobiles, recreational vehicles (including noise from generators), and trucks and by camper conversations and activities. Noise from motor vehicles is obviously “loudest” immediately adjacent to camp-

Existing Conditions

ground and other park roadways but, due to generally low background sound levels, can be audible a long distance from the roadway. Atmospheric effects such as wind, temperature, humidity, topography, rain, and fog can significantly affect the presence or absence of motor vehicle noise near the project site. Logically, noise levels from this source will be “loudest” where and when activity levels are the greatest and nearest to the area.

Other Sources—Other mechanical sources of noise within the park and near Coyote Lake include power boats, jet skis, generators, radios, and park maintenance equipment (i.e., mowers and chainsaws). The frequency of use and the location of these sources vary both by season and reason for use.

Issues

The presence of noise can reduce a visitor’s enjoyment and degrade the immediate environment adjacent to a river. Depending on the area, noise sources adjacent to the Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park include motor vehicles, aircraft, and human activity, such as talking and yelling. Depending on proposed uses and their locations, increased noise as a result of park use may be an issue for adjacent neighborhoods.

GEOLOGY

The Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch site is situated on the western flanking foothills of the Diablo Range, between Timber Ridge and the floor of the Santa Clara Valley. The Diablo Range is part of the Coast Ranges geomorphic province, a natural region of the State characterized by discontinuous northwest trending mountain ranges and valleys. The Diablo Range in southern Santa Clara County contains a series of ridges including Palassou Ridge, Sheep Ridge, and Timber Ridge. Timber Ridge, at elevation of about 2,000 feet is the first major ridgeline east of the proposed project site and from there, elevations decrease westward to 754 feet at Coyote Lake and then to about 300 feet at the eastern extent of the property. The Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch area has considerable topographic relief and therefore hill slopes range gradient from gradual to very steep, as shown on the slope map.

The Diablo Range is composed of Great Valley Sequence and the Franciscan Assemblage bedrock (also referred to as its “basement”). The Great Valley sequence is a thick section of ancient sea floor sediments laid down during the Cretaceous Period, while the Central Valley

Existing Conditions

was covered with water and the eroding Sierra Nevada deposited sediments westward. The Franciscan Assemblage is the name applied collectively to the folded and faulted sea floor sediments that were wedged against the continent during subduction to form much of the Coast Ranges province.

In the region surrounding the project site, the Great Valley Sequence rocks, exposed on the east side of Coyote Lake, consist of eastward-dipping sandstone along Timber Ridge and older Cretaceous Period shale (about 70 million years old), thought to belong to the Berryessa Formation. Franciscan Assemblage basement rocks are not found in abundance in the project area, but rather, the foothills in this area are composed of younger basalt (about 3.5 million years old) and even younger non-marine deposits of gravel, sand, and clay of the Santa Clara Formation. Previous mapping west of Coyote Lake (Dibblee, 1973) have identified rocks containing serpentine which is commonly found in conjunction with Franciscan Assemblage rocks. Young alluvial deposits, especially those generated by landslide activity, overlie the major bedrock formations throughout the project area.

Mineral Resources

The California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) has classified lands within the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Region into Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) based on guidelines adopted by the California State Mining and Geology Board, as mandated by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1974 (Stinson et al., 1983). No portion of the Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch site has a MRZ designation according to Special Report 146 (Stinson et al., 1983).

SEISMIC SETTING

The geology of the entire San Francisco Bay Area is in part controlled by both active and potentially active faults and is considered a region of high seismic activity due to its location on a tectonic plate boundary denoted by the San Andreas Fault Zone. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities has evaluated the probability of one or more earthquakes of Richter magnitude 6.7 or higher occurring in the San Francisco Bay Area within the next 30 years. The result of the evaluation indicated a 70 percent likelihood that such an earthquake event will occur in the Bay Area between 2000 and 2030 (USGS, 1999).

Existing Conditions

Regional Faults

Surely the most significant geologic feature of the Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch area is the Calaveras fault, which is mapped to extend in a northwest direction through Coyote Lake and the Coyote Lake Dam. The Calaveras fault, like the Hayward fault and San Andreas fault exhibit "strike-slip" movement that has undergone displacement within the last 150 years. The Calaveras fault joins the San Andreas about 24 miles south of the Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch site and the Hayward diverges from the Calaveras approximately 18 miles north.

In the vicinity of Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch area, the Calaveras fault has exhibited seismic activity within the last 200 years with epicenters being recorded in 1979 and 1989 just south of Coyote Lake. The potential for seismic activity on this Calaveras fault segment is high considering these recent movements and the proximity to the San Andreas Fault Zone, and Hayward Fault Zone.

In addition to the Calaveras fault, a potentially active system referred known as the Silver Creek fault parallels the Calaveras fault to the west. Movement on the Silver Creek fault is thought to have occurred within the last 1.6 million years.

Other principal faults in the region capable of producing significant ground shaking at the project site include the Marsh Creek-Greenville, San Gregorio-Hosgri, and Rodgers Creek Faults. A major seismic event on any of these active faults could cause significant ground shaking at the site, as experienced during earthquakes in recent history, namely the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, and the 1989 Loma-Prieta earthquake (ABAG, 1999).

Geologic and Seismic Hazards

The Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch site is located on the Calaveras fault and therefore is in an area susceptible to earthquake ground shaking and its related ground failures, as well as surface fault rupture. Slope failures through both static and seismically induced forces are possible considering the underlying bedrock and hill slopes within the project site. In addition, excessive soil erosion caused from the action of wind and water on exposed surficial materials and landslide debris is considered a potential geologic hazard, especially in areas adjacent to Coyote Lake.

Existing Conditions

Ground Shaking

Ground movement during an earthquake can vary depending on the overall magnitude, distance to the fault, focus of earthquake energy, and type of geologic material. The composition of underlying soils located relatively distant from faults, can intensity ground shaking. Areas that are underlain by bedrock tend to experience less ground shaking than those underlain by unconsolidated sediments such as artificial fill. An earthquake on the Calaveras fault is likely to generate exceptionally high intensity ground shaking if the epicenter is on the Calaveras fault in the proximity of the Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch site.

Landslide Hazards

The susceptibility of land (slope) failure is dependent on the slope and geology as well as the amount of rainfall, excavation or seismic activities. A landslide is a mass of rock, soil, and debris displaced down-slope by sliding, flowing, or falling. Steep slopes and down-slope creep of surface materials characterize areas most susceptible to landsliding. Landslides are least likely in topographically low alluvial fans and at the margin of the San Francisco Bay. However, the undulating foothills and steeply sloped areas with fractures bedrock have a high susceptibility to slope failure. Previous mapping has identified many landslides on the slopes surrounding the Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch area (Nilsen, 1972). Slope failures including debris flows can take place as single, isolated landslides or part of large complexes consisting of multiple failures occurring over a long period of time.

Liquefaction

Liquefaction is a phenomenon whereby unconsolidated and/or near saturated soils lose cohesion and are converted to a fluid state as a result of severe vibratory motion. The relatively rapid loss of soil shear strength during strong earthquake shaking results in the temporary fluid-like behavior of the soil. Soil liquefaction causes ground failure that can damage roads, pipelines, underground cables, and buildings with shallow foundations. Liquefaction can occur in areas characterized by water-saturated, cohesionless, granular materials at depths less than 40 feet. In addition, liquefaction can occur in unconsolidated or artificial fill sediments. The depth of groundwater influences the potential for liquefaction in this area, the shallower the groundwater, the higher potential for liquefaction. Potential liquefaction on the Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch site would be expected where susceptible materials are saturated by high groundwater or by surface water such as along the margin of Coyote Lake.

Existing Conditions

Soil Erosion

Soil erosion is a process whereby soil materials are worn away and transported to another area either by wind or water. Rates of erosion can vary depending on the soil material and structure, placement and human activity. The erosion potential for soils is variable; soil containing high amounts of silt can be easily eroded while sandy soils are less susceptible. Erosion is most likely on areas with exposed soil, and soil erosion hazards can therefore often be higher during the construction phase. Typically, the soil erosion potential is reduced once the soil is graded and covered with concrete, structures or asphalt. Overlying soil materials at the Coyote Ranch/Harvey Bear Ranch site consist of alluvium, landslide debris, and fractured, weathered rock and are therefore susceptible to erosion by wind and water. Construction activities can accelerate soil erosion. Soil materials could be susceptible to erosion, especially when graded and temporarily exposed to wind or water.

Issues

The Park is located on the Calaveras fault, and a portion of the park is located with an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Hazard Zone. The County is the responsible agency for ensuring that future developments would not be threatened by surface fault rupture.

Areas that are susceptible to landslides and erosion due to soil characteristics and steep slopes must be thoroughly evaluated prior to development of new structures, trails or roads.

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Existing Conditions

**Figure 4
Soil and Hydrology**

Existing Conditions

Existing Conditions

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HYDROLOGY

Watershed and Drainage

Coyote Bear Park incorporates 4,448 acres of the western foothills of the Diablo Range, west of Timber Ridge, sloping west onto the eastern edge of Coyote Valley. The park includes the entirety of Coyote Lake, which was formed by damming a portion of Coyote Creek in 1936. In addition, numerous springs are located throughout the property, and the Park incorporates the headwaters of Skillet Creek, Church Creek, New Creek, Center Creek, San Martin Creek, and a branch of Little Llagas Creek.

Drainage within the park is divided. The eastern edge drains into Coyote Creek, which flows northwest along the Diablo Range before eventually emptying into Coyote Valley and later into the San Francisco Bay. A small ridge, which reaches around 1,000 feet, divides Coyote Creek and Coyote Lake from the remainder of the park hydrologically. The springs and creeks which originate along the western flank of the foothills flow west down onto the floor of the southern Santa Clara Valley near the towns of San Martin and Gilroy, and become tributaries of Llagas Creek.

Flooding

Due to its elevated topographic status, the majority of the park is located outside of the 100-year and 500-year flood zone, as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Administration's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (FEMA). However, the shoreline around Coyote Lake, particularly the south end of the lake, is located with the 100-year flood zone. The boundaries of the 100-year flood zone are determined from a combination of precipitation data and land use characteristics, and is used as a design criterion to ensure a

Existing Conditions

factor of safety from flood hazard. During any given year, there is a one percent chance a 100-year flood will occur and a 0.2 percent chance of a 500-year flood.

Water Quality

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region (SFRWQCB) and California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (CCRWQCB) is responsible for protecting and regulating water quality in Coyote Bear Park. The division in regulatory oversight is due to the different watersheds Coyote Creek and Coyote Lake incorporate, as opposed to the remainder of the park, which drains into Llagas Creek.

Coyote Lake—Coyote Lake is a 4.8 mile long, 648-acre artificial reservoir with a capacity to store 22,925 acre-feet of water (Santa Clara Valley Water District, September 2001). The volume of water stored by the reservoir varies seasonally, in conjunction with cyclic precipitation patterns. As the recreational focal point of the park, Coyote Lake is used by visitors for swimming, boating, water ski-ing, jet ski-ing, and fishing. Among the various recreational pursuits the lake supports, motorized boating and jet-skies have the highest potential to degrade water quality. Methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), an oxygenate added to gasoline fuel, has been detected in several County reservoirs¹. In recognition of this, Santa Clara County Parks System now requires non-MTBE fuel be used for all vessels in County reservoirs, including Coyote Lake (Santa Clara Park System, September 2001).

Non-Point Source Pollution—Non-point source pollution is a concern whenever there is a potential that proposed or existing activities will increase the amount of urban runoff and therefore increase the quantities of polluted runoff from paved surfaces such as streets and parking lots (referred to as non-point source pollutants). Under its existing conditions, the park represents a minor contribution of non-point source pollution to the Coyote Creek and Llagas Creek reservoirs.

¹ MTBE has been identified as a potential carcinogen. The California Department of Health Services has designated a primary maximum contaminant level (MCL) for MTBE in drinking water of 13 micrograms per liter. In addition, a secondary MCL has been established for MTBE of 5 micrograms per liter. Secondary MCLs address taste, odor, and appearance of drinking water (California Department of Health Services, 2001).

Existing Conditions

Soil Erosion

Erosion and sedimentation are natural processes driven by surface runoff that can be accelerated by human activities such as grading or vegetation removal. Removal of vegetation or impervious areas (concrete, asphalt, etc.) expose soils to precipitation and surface runoff and can accelerate surface soil erosion. Erosion potential is determined by four principal factors: the characteristics of the soil, extent of vegetative cover, topography, and climate.

Erosion at the project site is currently minimized by the existing vegetation. However, areas of the foothills with steep slopes and water bodies or springs may be susceptible to erosion hazards during periods of intense rainfall or removal of existing vegetation.

Groundwater

Depth to groundwater varies throughout the park, with some areas containing active springs, while in other regions depth to groundwater has been estimated at 115 feet below ground surface (ATC Environmental, Inc., 1997). Groundwater quality within the region is regulated by the Santa Clara Water District, SFRWQCB, and CCRWQCB.

Issues

Increased turbidity and contamination from runoff potential and soil erosion is a primary concern in regards to water quality impacts from park development. Trails frequently result in a change to drainage patterns that may create erosion issues. To mitigate for these issues, trails should be designed to shed runoff and not erode to reduce the amount of concentrated erosion.

Equestrian facility elements and trail use potentially considered in the Master Plan document may contribute to an increase in water quality contamination in the park waterways and the reservoir. Equestrian facilities result in high levels of fecal coliforms and nitrate concentrations in surface runoff from the manure. Additionally, hay that is fed to the horses frequently introduces pests to the area, i.e., rats, that can contribute to this problem. This issue may be resolved or mitigated by creating a respectable buffer (approximately 500 feet) between the facilities and any receiving waters. Preventing equine trails from traversing directly through waterways will also decrease potential impacts.

Existing Conditions

Consideration of a golf course in the Master Plan would also create potential issues for water quality impacts. Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers contaminate runoff to receiving waters and often also to groundwater. A common mitigation is the development of a Pesticide and Herbicide Application Plan to manage the amount of fertilizer that is used resulting in lower levels of pollutants to surface and ground water.

Project construction activities adjacent to waterways could result in soil erosion and decreased water quality unless erosion control and sedimentation precautions are employed. Excavation, grading, stockpiling, and other earth-moving operations could potentially result in erosion and sedimentation to waterways, especially during the rainy season. Sedimentation to the waterways would degrade water quality for beneficial uses by increasing channel sedimentation and suspended sediment, reducing the flood-carrying capacity, and affecting associated aquatic and riparian habitats. The requirement that the contractor comply with, and implement the provisions of a SWPPP and the RWQCB requirements of the NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity would assist in lessening potential impacts from project construction. The objectives of the SWPPP are to identify pollutant sources that could affect the quality of stormwater discharge, to implement control practices to reduce pollutants in stormwater discharges and to protect receiving water quality.

References

- ATC Environmental Inc., *Results of a Subsurface Investigation Conducted at the Bear Ranch, 2045 San Martin Avenue, San Martin*, February 7, 1997.
- California Department of Health Services website, accessed September 2001.
- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, *Water Quality Control Plan*, September 8, 1994.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Rate Map
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, *San Francisco Bay Basin Plan*, June 1995.
- Santa Clara County Parks website, accessed September 2001.
- Santa Clara Valley Water District, *Standards for the Construction and Destruction of Wells and other Deep Excavations in Santa Clara County*, June 1989.
- Santa Clara Valley Water District website, accessed September 2001.
- United States Geologic Survey, 7.5 Minute Quadrangles, *Gilroy*, 1955, photorevised 1981.

Existing Conditions

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The 4,448-acre project site is the former location of the 2,970-acre Bear Ranch in San Martin and the 711-acre Mendoza Ranch in Gilroy. Although the majority of the park does not have a history of hazardous materials use, the limited areas associated with ranching residences, equipment fueling, pesticide application, and agricultural chemical storage have been impacted by former ranching operations. Environmental Site Assessments were conducted at the both Bear Ranch and Mendoza Ranch at the time of property acquisition by the Trust for Public Land, in coordination with the Santa Clara County Parks Department.²

Remedial Activities

Subsurface soil investigation and remedial activities at the Mendoza Ranch were conducted under the oversight of the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health (SCCDEH) by Erler and Kalinowski, Inc. Their report, entitled *Revised Elements of Remedial Plan, Mendoza Property, California*, dated December 16, 1996, included soil remediation criteria based upon U.S. EPA industrial soil screening standards Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRGs). The remedial plan was approved by SCCDEH. A report of completion of remedial activities and request for closure was submitted to SCCDEH in October 1997. Based on this report and the remedial actions taken, SCCDEH determined that no further action was necessary.

Underground and Aboveground Storage Tanks

The former Bear Ranch operated one 500-gallon diesel AST (aboveground storage tank) and one 500-gallon gasoline UST (underground storage tank). The UST was removed from the property the early 1980's, and the AST was removed in 1996. As part of the property transfer to the Trust for Public Land, an investigation was conducted by Erler & Kalinowski, Inc. to assess soil and groundwater conditions in the vicinity of the former UST and AST. Soil samples were collected in 1996 near the former locations of the AST and UST, and analyzed for total petroleum hydrocarbons as diesel (TPH-d), total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPH-g), benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and total xylenes (BTEX).

Soil samples collected in 1996 near the former AST detected concentrations of TPH-d at 2 feet and 4 feet below ground surface (feet bgs), however deeper soil samples did not detect

² Information regarding site environmental conditions was derived from reports prepared by ATC Environmental, Inc., and Erler and Kalinowski, Inc.

Existing Conditions

concentrations of TPHd above the laboratory detection limit, indicating the extent of soil impact is limited to shallow soils. Soil samples collected near the former UST detected concentrations of TPHg and BTEX in soil samples up to 100 feet bgs.³

One groundwater monitoring well was installed near the former UST following collection of soil samples; groundwater was encountered approximately 115 feet bgs during soil boring activities. Groundwater beneath the site was found to contain negligible concentrations of benzene, toluene, and xylenes that do not exceed California maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for drinking water.

Landfills

Three household dumps were identified on the Bear Ranch and Mendoza Ranch. Concentrations of 4,4'-DDD, 4,4'-DDE and 4,4'-DDD were detected in soil samples collected at the former household dump area at the Mendoza Ranch⁴. Following excavation of impacted soil in accordance with Eler and Kalinowski *Remediation Plan* described above, additional soil samples were detected at the limit of the excavated areas to determine potential remaining concentrations of organopesticides in soil. Organopesticide concentrations detected in soil samples collected at the limits of the excavation were below the established remedial criteria.

Pesticide Spray Areas

Concentrations of 4,4'-DDD, 4,4'-DDE, 4,4'-DDD, and toxaphene were detected in soil samples collected at former pesticide application areas at the Mendoza Ranch. Following excavation of impacted soil in accordance with Eler and Kalinowski *Remediation Plan*, additional soil samples were detected at the limit of the excavated areas to determine potential remaining concentrations of organopesticides in soil. Organopesticide concentrations detected in soil samples collected at the limits of the excavation were below the established remedial criteria.

³ Benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene are referred to as "aromatic hydrocarbons" and are present in gasoline. Benzene is a confirmed carcinogen.

⁴ 4,4'-DDT, 4,4'-DDD, 4,4'-DDE are organopesticides.

Existing Conditions

Former Ranch Buildings

Numerous buildings associated with former ranching activities are located on the Bear Ranch and Mendoza Ranch. Investigations have not been conducted to assess the potential presence of lead-based paint, asbestos, or PCBs in these structures. However, ATC's Phase I Site Assessment at the Bear Ranch indicated that the majority of structures likely contained lead-based paint and asbestos. The potential presence of lead-based paint and asbestos has not been assessed at the Mendoza Ranch.

Surrounding Properties

The Phase I investigation for the Bear Ranch and Mendoza Ranch identified potential on- or off-site sources of hazardous substances that could affect soil and groundwater quality at the project site. The identified sites are downgradient (west) of Coyote Bear Park, based on the reported groundwater flow direction (westerly). ACT Environmental and Erlen and Kalinowski concluded it was unlikely that constituents from these sites have affected soil or groundwater quality at the project site.

Issues

Subsurface hazardous materials may be encountered during construction. The construction team may encounter unexpected materials that may be considered hazardous waste once they are exposed. Procedures of proper handling and disposal are established by federal, state, and local regulations.

References

ATC Environmental Inc., *Environmental Site Assessment for the Bear Ranch at 2045 San Martin Avenue, San Martin*, November 8, 1996.

ATC Environmental Inc., *Results of a Subsurface Investigation Conducted at the Bear Ranch, 2045 San Martin Avenue, San Martin*, February 7, 1997.

Budavari, Susan, Ed., *The Merck Index: An Encyclopedia of Chemicals, Drugs, and Biologicals*, 11th Edition, Merck & Co., Inc., (available at the UC Berkeley Public Health Library, University of California, Berkeley, California) 1989.

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4.5 "Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Wastes," Chapter 11, Article 3 (Characteristics of Hazardous Waste), Sections 66261.20-24.

Erlen & Kalinowski, *Phase I Preliminary Environmental Site Assessment for Property Located at 4495 Roop Road in Gilroy, California*, September 9, 1996.

Existing Conditions

Erler & Kalinowski, Inc., *Results of Investigations and Remedial Plan, Mendoza Property, Gilroy*, December 2, 1996.

Erler & Kalinowski, Inc., *Report of Completion of Remedial Activities and Request for Closure, Former Mendoza Property, 4495 Roop Road, Gilroy*, October 13, 1997.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Administration, *Occupational Safety and Health Guidance Manual for Hazardous Waste Site Activities*, October 1985.

Sax, N.I. and R.J. Lewis, *Dangerous Properties of Industrial Materials*, 7th Edition, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1989.

Sittig, M., *Handbook of Toxic and Hazardous Chemicals and Carcinogens*, 2nd Edition, Noyes Publications, Park Ridge, New Jersey, 1985.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

The existing transportation system in the vicinity of the Coyote Lake/Harvey Bear Ranch County Park, includes the roadway network, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit service, and roadway operating characteristics.

Access to regional transportation facilities such as U.S. Highway 101 (US-101) and State Route 152 (SR-152) from the project site are provided by Leavesley Road. In addition, San Martin Avenue provides access to US-101 from the northern portion of the project site. However, there is currently no park access from San Martin Avenue.

Regional Roadway Access

U.S. Highway 101 is located west of the Park and provides access via interchanges at Leavesley Road and San Martin Avenue. As reported on the Caltrans website (www.dot.gov), the most current (2000) traffic volume counts on US-101 show that approximately 92,000 average daily trips (ADT) occur north of San Martin Avenue; 83,000 ADT occur between San Martin Avenue and Leavesley Road; and 75,000 ADT occur south of Leavesley Road.

State Route 152, also known as Leavesley Road west of US-101, is an east-west four-lane divided road adjacent to its interchange with US-101. SR-152 is a discontinuous highway near the park. SR-152 shares the same route as US-101 between Leavesley Road and 10th Street. At the 10th Street/US-101 interchange, SR-152 continues to the east through the Pacheco Pass providing access to Interstate 5 (I-5). This portion of SR-152 is primarily a two-lane

Existing Conditions

undivided road with four-lane divided segments in the Pacheco Pass area. SR-152 provides regional access from the Watsonville area to the west; and central California from the east. According to Caltrans year 2000 data, SR-152 carries approximately 31,000 ADT on Leavesley Road (west of US-101).

Local Roadway Access

The main local roadways serving the vicinity of the park include: Roop Road, New Avenue, San Martin Avenue and Leavesley Road. Each of these roadways is discussed below:

Roop Road—Roop Road is the sole access road to the existing Coyote Lake County Park. This east-west access road originates at New Avenue and primarily serves the local residents in the area along with visitors to Coyote Lake and Henry Coe State Park. Roop Road is a rural two-lane undivided road. Due to the topographical features of the area, Roop Road contains several curved roadway sections with limited horizontal sight distance (i.e., blind curves). In addition, roadway lane width is constrained with maximum lane widths between nine and ten feet. Based on traffic counts collected by ESA in September, 2001, Roop Road, east of New Avenue carries approximately 1,300 ADT.

New Avenue—New Avenue is a north-south rural roadway that provides access to Roop Road from San Martin Avenue and Leavesley Road. This two-lane undivided roadway primarily serves the local residents in the area and provides access to Coyote Lake (via Roop Road). New Avenue has a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour (mph) south of Church Avenue, and a 35 mph speed limit north of Church Avenue. A roadway “jog” exists at Fircrest Drive. A soft shoulder exists on both sides of the roadway, and lane widths range between ten and eleven feet. Based on traffic counts collected by ESA in September, 2001, New Avenue, south of Roop Road, carries approximately 3,500 ADT.

San Martin Avenue—San Martin Avenue is located towards the northern portion of the park, however there are no existing access roads from San Martin Avenue to Coyote Lake. San Martin Avenue has a diamond configuration interchange with US-101. San Martin Avenue is an east-west two-lane undivided roadway with soft shoulders. San Martin Avenue has striped 11-foot lanes between US-101 and New Avenue. San Martin Avenue provides local access to residents from US-101 and has a posted speed limit of 45 mph.

Existing Conditions

Based on traffic counts collected by ESA in September, 2001, San Martin Avenue, east of US-101, carries approximately 8,000 ADT.

Leavesley Road—Leavesley Road provides direct access from US-101 to New Avenue (which provides access to Roop Road). Currently, Leavesley Road is the main regional access road to the Coyote Lake area since it provides direct access to US-101 and SR-152. West of US-101, Leavesley continues as SR-152 to the Watsonville area. Leavesley Road has a partial cloverleaf interchange with US-101. Near New Avenue, Leavesley Road is an east-west two-lane undivided roadway with soft shoulders and a 50 mph speed limit. Towards the US-101 interchange, Leavesley Road is a four lane divided roadway with signalized access to adjacent regional retail centers (i.e., Gilroy Outlet Malls). Based on traffic counts collected by ESA in September, 2001, Leavesley Road, east of US-101, carries approximately 7,900 ADT.

Study Area Intersections

The following list outlines the study area intersections could be potentially affected by vehicle traffic generated by the proposed parkland uses. Data for all of the roadway segments and intersections were collected by ESA in September, 2001. A list of the study area intersections and their existing traffic control is provided below:

Intersection	Traffic Control
1. New Avenue/Roop Rd.	2-way stop control on Roop Road
2. New Avenue/Leavesley Rd.	1-way stop control on New Avenue
3. US-101 northbound ramps/Leavesley Rd.	Signalized intersection
4. US-101 southbound ramps/Leavesley Rd.	Signalized intersection
5. US-101 northbound ramps/San Martin Ave.	1-way stop control on NB off-ramp
6. US-101 southbound ramps/San Martin Ave.	1-way stop control on SB off-ramp

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The data in this section are based primarily on information contained in the City of Gilroy and County of Santa Clara General Plans' Circulation Elements supplemented with additional descriptions of existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities from site surveys conducted by

Existing Conditions

**Figure 5
Project Site and Intersection Locations**

Existing Conditions

Figure 6
Existing Roadway and Intersection Geometrics

Existing Conditions

ESA in September, 2001. Types of bikeways are described by Caltrans in the *Highway Design Manual* (HDM) as follows:

Class I Bikeway Referred to as a “bike path” or “multi-use trail”. Provides for bicycle travel on a paved right-of-way (ROW) completely separated from any street or highway.

Class II Bikeway Referred to as a “bike lane”. Provides a striped lane for one-way travel on a street or highway.

Class III Bikeway Referred to as a “bike route”. Provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic and is identified only by signing.

Public Transportation

Public transportation is currently provided, mainly in the City of Gilroy, via three Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) bus routes. There are no existing bus stops near the park. Regional rail transit is provided via Caltrain service from the Gilroy and Morgan Hill Caltrain station.

Existing Roadway Operating Characteristics

Terminology and Methods of Analysis—The existing roadway operating characteristics in the Plan Area were evaluated using a peak hour level of service (LOS) analysis. The LOS analysis calculates operating LOS of affected intersections based upon a number of values, including traffic volumes and roadway capacity. LOS is a qualitative assessment of motorists’ and passengers’ perceptions of traffic conditions. LOS generally reflects driving conditions such as travel time and speed, freedom to maneuver, and traffic interruptions, even though it uses quantifiable traffic measures such as vehicle control delay (in delay seconds per vehicle) to approximate driver satisfaction. LOS measures differ by roadway type because users’ perceptions and expectations vary by roadway type. An individual LOS is designated by letter: “A” for most favorable to “F” for least favorable, each representing a range of conditions. LOS A represents free flow conditions while LOS F indicates excessive delays and gridlocked conditions. Table A provides a description of the level of service grades.

Existing Conditions

**Table 2
Level of Service Definitions**

Level of Service	Intersection Operations	Delay (Seconds/Veh)
Signalized Intersection Levels of Service		
A	Free flow conditions	≤ 10 sec.
B	Reasonable free flow, slight restriction to maneuverability	> 10 to 20 sec.
C	Stable operations, restricted maneuverability	> 20 to 35 sec.
D	Unstable operations, severely limited maneuverability	> 35 to 55 sec.
E	Extremely unstable, approaching or at capacity	> 55 to 80 sec.
F	Breakdown conditions, projected demand exceeds capacity	> 80 sec.
Unsignalized Intersection Levels of Service		
A	Little or no delay	≤ 10 sec.
B	Short traffic delays	> 10 to 15 sec.
C	Average traffic delays	> 15 to 25 sec.
D	Long traffic delays	> 25 to 35 sec.
E	Very long traffic delays	> 35 to 50 sec.
F	Extreme delays potentially affecting other traffic movements in the intersection	> 50 sec.

Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2000. *Highway Capacity Manual 2000*.

For this analysis, the LOS was calculated for the a.m. and p.m. peak hours using the Highway Capacity Manual's (HCM2000) intersection "operations" method for both signalized and unsignalized intersections. According to the VTA Congestion Management Program (CMP), LOS E is the minimum acceptable level of service threshold for intersections within the VTA's jurisdiction. For facilities within the City of Gilroy, LOS D is the minimum acceptable level of service threshold.

Existing Condition Levels of Service –To establish existing intersection LOS, weekday a.m. and p.m. peak hour, and weekend midday peak hour turning movement count data were obtained at the six existing study area intersections.

Existing Conditions

Figure 7
Existing Weekday AM/PM Peak Hour Volumes

Existing Conditions

Figure 8
Existing Saturday Average Daily and Midday Peak Hour Volumes

Existing Conditions

**Table 3
Existing Intersection Levels of Service**

Intersection	Weekday Peak Hours				Saturday Peak Hour	
	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Midday Peak Hour	
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
1. New Avenue/Roop Rd.	9.9 sec	A	10.3 sec	B	9.8 sec	A
2. New Avenue/Leavesley Rd.	14.6 sec	B	12.5 sec	B	13.5 sec	B
3. US-101 NB Ramps/Leavesley Rd.	25.0 sec	C	29.0 sec	C	30.5 sec	C
4. US-101 SB Ramps/Leavesley Rd.	15.9 sec	B	10.5 sec	B	20.2 sec	C
5. US-101 NB Ramps/San Martin Ave.	14.8 sec	B	18.4 sec	C	14.5 sec	B
6. US-101 SB Ramps/San Martin Ave.	12.5 sec	B	20.0 sec	C	14.5 sec	B

As shown in the table, most of the study area intersections currently operate at LOS C or better during the weekday a.m. and p.m. peak hours, and the weekend midday peak hour.

Issues

The following provides a list of issues and conclusions based on the results of the existing traffic conditions analysis:

- US-101 and SR-52 provide regional access to the park. Leavesley Road currently provides the most direct access to/from regional transportation facilities (including Caltrain) to the existing park entrance off Roop Road.
- Currently, in both the weekday and weekend peak hours, the study area intersections along Leavesley Road (US-101 interchange and New Avenue) operate with satisfactory levels of service at LOS C or better.
- Based on the existing conditions analysis, the US-101/San Martin Avenue interchange also operates with satisfactory levels of service (LOS C or better) in both the weekday and weekend peak hours.
- The current roadway access to Coyote Lake County Park, Roop Road, has limited horizontal sight distance due to curved sections of the roadway; and has limited lane widths of nine feet. This may cause vehicular conflicts for large recreational vehicles (i.e., RVs).

Existing Conditions

REGULATORY OVERVIEW

The Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch Master Plan, as well as resulting specific projects that are implemented as a result of this plan, are required to comply with federal, state, and local regulations that govern the types of resources and programs within the park. “Existing conditions” at the Park include not only the physical state of the land and its present uses, but also the regulatory context in which any change in management will take effect. A legal restriction on a portion of the land based on the federal Clean Water Act, or the provisions of county zoning, may not be as obvious as its slope or soils but may have equal or greater effect in defining the options for its future land use decisions.

Laws, regulations, code sections and ordinances that are likely to impose the strongest regulatory constraints on the planning process are summarized, along with its relevance to the Master Plan program elements. In general, these are regulations dealing with biological resources, water quality and wetlands, cultural resources, and land use and zoning.

Regulatory constraints may affect Park planning by triggering an evaluation of potential uses, and possibly by disallowing them or by changing their location, their intensity, or their duration. For example, the locations of trails or season of use for a particular trail may be modified by laws protecting sensitive species or important cultural resources. Garages where vehicles and equipment are stored and maintained may be constrained by water quality considerations that are mandated by regulations governing releasing oils or hazardous materials into the environment..

COYOTE LAKE COUNTY PARK–A RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TRANSITION PLAN

This document, prepared for the Santa Clara County Parks Department, provided interim guidance for the management of natural resources, including grazing, control of exotic (*i.e.* invasive) plant species, wildlife management, habitat restoration, protection of sensitive habitats and wildlife management. Some of these recommendations were not implemented because of the perceived need for a more comprehensive master plan and environmental review triggered by acquisition of the additional Park property. In addition, observations of baseline conditions provided in this report will form the basis of the new environmental document.

Existing Conditions

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND MASTER PLAN APPROVAL

Environmental review will occur concurrently with preparation of the Master Plan and will incorporate public participation. This means that preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), to be prepared according to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), cannot be deferred until the Plan is written. During the planning process, alternatives will be developed that will identify a reasonable range of options for protecting resources while allowing certain specified sustainable uses. The public will be invited to participate in the scoping process, review of the Draft EIR, and attend public comment meetings.

Availability of the Draft EIR for review and written comment will be announced publicly by the Parks and Recreation Department through local and regional news media, project websites, and direct mailing. Comments on the Draft EIR will be considered fully, and will be incorporated into a Final EIR as appropriate. The County Parks and Recreation Commission and ultimately, the Board of Supervisors will consider the Master Plan and EIR jointly for adoption upon completion.

LAWS, REGULATIONS, ORDINANCES AND POLICIES

The following table lists a wide range of requirements that must be met for compliance with laws, ordinances, regulations, and policies imposed by federal, state, and local entities with authority over park developments or resources that may be affected by park actions.

References

Cowardin, L.M., V. Carter, F.C. Golet, and E.T. LaRoe, *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 131 pp., 1979.

Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fishery Service. *Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service. Eight chapters and 18 appendices. 1996

Santa Clara County. General Plan. 1994.

Rana Creek, 2001. Resource Management Plan for Coyote Lake Bear Ranch County Park. (Draft).

¹. "Take" is defined somewhat differently in federal and state ESA law. However, the term is intended to have a broader definition than simply killing an organism outright, and deliberately. Actions which make it more difficult for the species to survive are also included. An attempt to monitor a species for its own protection may have a deleterious effect (by attracting predators, for example) and must be analyzed as well.

Existing Conditions

². Plants adapted to and dependent on moist soil conditions.

³ . The Supreme Court of the United States recently ruled (January 8, 2001: *Solid Waste Agency of Northwestern Cook County v. United State Army Corps of Engineers et al.*) that certain isolated wetlands do not fall under the jurisdiction of the CWA.

Table 4
Laws, Regulations, Ordinances and Policies

Regulatory Issue	Jurisdiction	Citation	Administering Agency	Requirements/Compliance
Biological Resources	Federal	Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended; 16 USC § 1531 et seq.; 50 CFR parts 17 and 222	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); National Marine Fisheries Service	Protect and manage federally-listed species
	Federal	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	USFWS	Protect migratory birds and their nests
	Federal	Clean Water Act of 1977; 33 USC § 1344; 30 CFR § 330.5(a)(26)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Regulates discharge of fill material into wetlands and other waters of the U.S., including streams, ponds, vernal pools and springs.
	State	California Species Preservation Act of 1970; California Wildlife Preservation Act of 1990; California Fish and Game Code §§ 900 – 903	California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)	Protect and enhance the birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, and reptiles of California
	State	Native Plant Protection Act of 1977	CDFG	Protect rare and endangered plants
	State	California Endangered Species Act of 1984, California Fish and Game Code §§ 2050 - 2098	CDFG	Protect state-listed plants and animals
	State	California Fish and Game Code §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515	CDFG	Prohibits taking fully-protected birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, or fishes
	Local	Santa Clara County General Plan, Resource Conservation Element	Santa Clara County Planning Commission	Comply with requirements to protect habitat and biodiversity
Water Quality	Federal	Clean Water Act § 402; 33 USC § 1342; 40 CFR parts 122 – 136	RWQCB, EPA Region IX	As necessary, obtain NPDES permits for stormwater discharge and prepare SWPPPs for construction projects
	Federal	Clean Water Act § 311; 33 USC § 1321; 40 CFR parts 110, 112, 116, and 117	RWQCB, EPA Region IX, and California Office of Emergency Services	Report any prohibited discharge of oil or hazardous substances

Regulatory Issue	Jurisdiction	Citation	Administering Agency	Requirements/Compliance
	State	California Water Code § 13271 – 13272; 23 CCR 2250 – 2260	RWQCB and California Office of Emergency Services	Report releases of reportable quantities of hazardous substances or sewage and releases of specified quantities of oil or petroleum products
	State	Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1972; California Water Code §13260 – 13269; 23 CCR Chapter 9	CEQA lead agency, RWQCB and Water Resources Control Board	Provide adequate protection of water quality by appropriate design, sizing, and construction of erosion and sediment controls; meet waste discharge require-ments concerning potential surface water pollution from runoff
	State/Local	California Public Resources Code § 25523(a); 20 CCR §§ 1752, 1752.5, 2300 – 2309, and Chapter 2 Subchapter 5, Article 1, Appendix B, Part (1)	CEQA Lead Agency	Provide information concerning proposed water resources and water quality protection
	Local	Santa Clara County General Plan, Resource Conservation Element	Santa Clara County Planning Commission	Comply with requirements to protect water quality
	Local		Santa Clara Valley Water District	Protection of domestic water supply
	Local		San Martin Water District	Protection of domestic water supply
Geology	State/Local	Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone Act	Santa Clara County	Meet requirements for protection from seismic and other geologic hazards
	State	Seismic Hazards Mapping Act	State Geologist	Requires geotechnical investigation and appropriate mitigation prior to issuance of local permits
	Local	California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 24, Part 2 (a portion of the California Building Standards Code)	Santa Clara County Planning Department	Comply with requirements to mitigate for geologic hazards

Regulatory Issue	Jurisdiction	Citation	Administering Agency	Requirements/Compliance
Soil Conservation	Federal	Clean Water Act	RWQCB: Central Coast Region under the direction of the Water Resources Control Board	Meet discharge requirements relative to sediment
	Federal	Soil Conservation Service National Engineering Handbook (1983)	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Implement standards for soil conservation
	State	California Public Resources Code § 25523(a); CCR §§ 1752, 1752.5, 2300 - 2309, and Chapter 2, Subchapter 5, Article1, Appendix B, part (I)	CEQA lead agency	Submit information about potential environmental impacts
	State	Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, Appendix G; 14 CCR § 15000-15387	CEQA lead agency	Evaluate erosion and sediment deposition; evaluate conversion of agricultural lands
	Local	Santa Clara County General Plan, Resource Conservation Element	Santa Clara County Planning Commission	Comply with requirements to prevent erosion
Cultural and Paleontological Resources	Federal	National Historic Preservation Act, as amended; 16 USC § 470 et seq. and § 106; 36 CFR 800	Lead Federal Agency and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); triggered when federal permits are issued, such as by the Corps for wetlands fill (Section 404)	Obtain formal finding by the lead Federal agency for cultural resources in consultation with the SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; implement procedures for dealing with cultural resources discovered during surface-disturbing activities
	State	California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) § 15064.5; California Public Resources code § 5024, 5024.5, and 21083.2; Title 14 CCR § 15126	Lead State Agency	Directs the State Lead Agency to determine significance of project-related effects on important cultural resources and unique paleontological resources to develop appropriate mitigation measures
	State	California Public Resources Code § 21083.2	Lead State Agency	Directs the State Lead Agency to provide special consideration of unique historical, archaeological, and cultural sites as defined under CEQA

Regulatory Issue	Jurisdiction	Citation	Administering Agency	Requirements/Compliance
	State	California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5	County Coroner (Medical Examiner)	Determination of origin of human remains and coordination with NAHC
	State	California Public Resources Code § 5024.1	State Historical Resources Commission	Establishes the California Register of Historical Resources and procedures for nominating sites to the Register
	Local	California Public Resources Code § 5097.5	Santa Clara County Planning Department	Prevent unauthorized removal of archaeological resources or paleontological remains on public lands
	Local	Santa Clara County General Plan, Heritage Resources Element	Santa Clara County Planning Commission	Comply with requirements to protect historical sites and structures, archaeological and paleontological sites and artifacts.
Land Use	State	CEQA Appendix G	State Lead Agency	Evaluate significance of conflicts adopted community plans or with established commercial, recreational, educational religious or scientific uses of the area; evaluate the significance of the project on prime agricultural land
	Local	Santa Clara County General Plan, Land Use element	Santa Clara County Planning Commission	Adhere to land use policies
Aesthetic/Visual Resources	State	CEQA Appendices G and I	State Lead Agency	Evaluate impacts using significance criteria
	Local	Santa Clara County General Plan Resource Conservation Element	Santa Clara County Planning Commission	Comply with policies regarding significant scenic resources.
Noise	State	CEQA Appendix G	State Lead Agency	Ensure that project activities do not substantially increase ambient noise in adjacent areas
	Local	Santa Clara County General Plan Resource Conservation Element	Santa Clara County Planning Commission	Comply with policies regarding noise.

Regulatory Issue	Jurisdiction	Citation	Administering Agency	Requirements/Compliance
Air quality	State/Local	CEQA Appendix G	State Lead Agency	Evaluate project compliance with ambient air quality standards, substantial contributions to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations
Health and Safety	State		California Department of Forestry	Provides wildland fire protection
	Local	Santa Clara County Building Code	Santa Clara County Planning Department	Comply with requirements to mitigate for geologic hazards
Water Supply	Local		Santa Clara County Valley District	Maintain Coyote Lake for emergency water supply.
	Local		San Martin Water District	Maintain and develop local domestic water supply.
Transportation	Local		Santa Clara County	Obtain encroachment permits for work on public roads.

Existing Conditions

References

Cowardin, L.M., V. Carter, F.C. Golet, and E.T. LaRoe, *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 131 pp., 1979.

Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fishery Service. *Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service. Eight chapters and 18 appendices. 1996

Santa Clara County. General Plan. 1994.

Rana Creek, 2001. Resource Management Plan for Coyote Lake Bear Ranch County Park. (Draft).



RECREATION TRENDS

Recreation Trends

In addition to responding to the resource issues of the site, the master plan must also respond to regional recreational needs. This section looks at recreation trends in Santa Clara County as noted in recent surveys conducted by the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department for development of a proposed Parks Strategic Plan currently being developed as well as other sources.

Demographics

According to the County Planning Office's demographics publication, *INFO conditions and Trends in Santa Clara County*, Santa Clara County's population is projected to increase from 1,599,100 in 1995 to 2,016,700 in 2020.¹ (2000 population has been estimated at 1,755,300.) This population increase will certainly have an impact on South County and will result in increased recreational use of the County's parks.

Telephone Survey

In May 2001, the Parks and Recreation Department conducted a public opinion survey of our Santa Clara County residents, as part of a continuing marketing and public outreach study and to assist in developing its Strategic Plan for the Santa Clara County parks and recreation system. The telephone survey of five hundred randomly selected county residents was conducted in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

The margin of error for this survey is +/- 4.4 percentage points. An earlier similar survey was conducted in English only in April 1999. As noted in the presentation of survey results, prepared by Evans/McDonough Company, Inc:

"Walking and running are still the most popular outdoor activities with 58% mentioning these as one of the activities they do most frequently (56% in 1999). Picnicking is the second most popular outdoor recreation with one in five (20%) listing it as a frequent activity (23% in 1999). Biking, hiking, swimming, tennis, playgrounds, fishing and baseball/softball are all popular as well with more than one in ten mentioning these as common activities"

¹ "Projections 2000" prepared by Association of Bay Area Governments.

Recreation Trends

When reviewing Parks Department activities that are important to residents, a number of activities rank as “very important” or “somewhat important” that should be considered in developing the Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch Master Plan. The following table shows a ranking of activities and their percentage receiving an “important” rating:

Activity	Percentage Very or Somewhat Important
Providing maintenance and improvements at existing parks	94%
Preserving the natural resources in our County parks	91%
Developing activities and programs for children and youth	88%
Providing diverse recreation experiences and opportunities for all ages, ethnicities, types of users and levels of abilities	87%
Buying land to protect open space and natural resources	86%
Family oriented outdoor opportunities	85%
Adding patrols and security to the parks and trails	81%
Active outdoor facilities with courts, fields and playgrounds	81%
Improved public transit	80%
Educational programs	82%
Places to exercise	79%
New neighborhood parks	78%
Swimming locations	75%
Unpaved trails	75%
Camping facilities	72%
New regional parks	71%
Parks with open space and trails	71%
Lake/stream access	69%
Using parks for agriculture	64%
Developing public golf courses in environmentally appropriate areas	43%

As indicated above, only “developing public golf courses” received an “unimportant” rating by a slim majority. It should be noted that the survey information compiled should not be construed as a market study. A golf course feasibility study prepared for the County by Economics Research Associates in 1998 found a strong demand for public golf courses, stating

Recreation Trends

that “within five years, demand for public golf is projected to exceed supply by nearly 40 percent in Santa Clara County.”

When asked to list what three leisure activities that they do most frequently, respondents were presented an open-ended question, where survey choices were not presented for their selection.

As noted in the responses from both April 1999 and May 2001 below, there is a slight change in public opinions about their preference in various leisure activities.

Activity	April 1999	May 2001
Walking/Running	56%	58%
Picnics	23%	29%
Biking	25%	19%
Hiking	28%	17%
Swimming	12%	13%
Tennis	6%	13%
Playgrounds	7%	12%
Fishing	8%	11%
Baseball/Softball	13%	10%
Camping	13%	9%
Basketball	6%	8%
Golf	10%	6%
Boating	4%	5%
Skiing	3%	3%
Equestrian Use	2%	1%
Other	8%	13%
None	4%	8%

Respondents were also asked which activity should be the highest priority for Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation over the next five years. Responses are given Countywide and also for South County.

Recreation Trends

Priority	Countywide	South County
Developing outdoor recreation facilities and programs	25%	3%
Purchasing land to create new parks and protect natural resources and open space	25%	24%
Developing extensive education programs about nature	15%	9%
Upgrading and/or developing new trails	10%	22%
All of the above (not read as an option)	17%	22%
None/don't know	7%	9%

It is interesting to note that "trails" is a much higher priority in South County than countywide.

Other County Park Use Trends

In addition to the results of the telephone survey, County Parks Department staff shared their observations of changes in park use at a meeting for the Strategic Plan as noted in the Strategic Plan's *Draft Summary of Trends*:

- "Trail use by hikers and bicyclists is expanding. Equestrian use is declining."
- "Weekend trail use is no longer the 'spike' it once was. Trail use is consistently heavy before and after work as well as on weekends."
- "Bird watching is increasing."
- "Parks are increasingly being used for exercise."
- "The buffer between urban areas and parks that were once 'remote' is disappearing."
- "Some parks are being used less and less for family picnicking."

Gilroy and Morgan Hill

In addition to this countywide information, recent parks and recreation master plans prepared for the cities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy indicate a shortage of park land, trails, sports fields and aquatics facilities to meet current and projected future population needs. Existing sports fields, including school facilities, are fully impacted. Both Morgan Hill and Gilroy have ambitious plans to develop sports parks in the future. Morgan Hill has recently acquired land and is in the planning stages for an aquatics center that may include an outdoor recre-

Recreation Trends

ation pool with slides and other features, as well as a 50-meter competition pool. While the aquatics center would serve a regional market, the envisioned sports fields will most likely serve only the populations of the two incorporated cities, and not unincorporated areas such as San Martin.



MASTER PLAN GOALS

Master Plan Goals

The following goals were established by the task force to guide the Master Plan process. They were compiled after reviewing a variety of sources, including the County General Plan, Countywide Trails Master Plan, Strategic Plan documents, previously prepared Coyote Lake Master Plan, and comments from the first community meeting. The goals will be one of the criteria used to evaluate the alternative design plans in the next phase of the master plan process.

- 1. *Recognize and plan for the regional context of Coyote Lake - Harvey Bear Ranch County Park.***
 - a. Where appropriate and feasible, provide regional trail connections to State, County, and other public parks and open spaces.
 - b. Provide consistency with the goals and policies of the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department, Countywide Trails Master Plan, and County General Plan.

- 2. *Provide a variety of sustainable recreational opportunities consistent with the needs of Santa Clara County residents and compatible with the environmental, cultural and historic resources of the land.***
 - a. Provide areas of high and low-intensity recreational use activities based on sound resource management principles.
 - b. Provide areas of land-based and water-based recreational activities.
 - c. Recognize the needs of adjacent residents and property owners.
 - d. Consider both environmental and financial aspects of sustainability.
 - e. Incorporate opportunities for environmental, historic and cultural preservation, restoration, and interpretation.

- 3. *Ensure public access to the park for a wide range of users.***
 - a. Design recreational facilities, including trails, to be accessible to all people, regardless of physical abilities, consistent with the constraints of the natural landscape and physical resources of the site.

Master Plan Goals

- b. Provide trails for a variety of users, including hikers, bicyclists and equestrians.
- c. Accommodate public transit access to the park.
- d. Consider the concerns of adjacent residents and property owners when locating parking and staging areas.
- e. Consider public safety in remote and fire hazard areas.

4. *Preserve and enhance the natural, ranchland character of the park.*

- a. Where appropriate, park structures and recreational facilities should reflect and reinforce the distinct ranchland character of the park. Consider the visual impact of park facilities and structures.
- b. Facilities and infrastructure should be subordinate to the natural landscape setting. Indigenous plant material should be used where feasible.
- c. Management of the natural resources of the park should enhance wildlife habitat, protect environmentally sensitive areas of the park, reduce the threat of erosion and wildfire, revegetate native plant communities, and protect the water quality of Coyote Lake.
- d. Incorporate opportunities for interpretation of the park's natural and cultural history.
- e. Consider programs and facilities to educate the public, especially youth, about Santa Clara County's ranching heritage.

5. *Develop a plan that can be implemented over time, taking into account available resources, potential phasing, and long-term management implications.*

- a. Consider the environmental resources of the land, as well as the existing and potential future human and financial resources of the County Parks and Recreation Department, as well as other agencies that will be responsible for the implementation and long-term management of the master plan.
- b. Consider opportunities for revenue generation that can off-set long-term management costs, consistent with other master plan goals.
- c. Continue to encourage interagency coordination and collaboration throughout the design process, as well as during implementation and long-term management.
- d. Coyote Lake and the surrounding watershed shall be managed to meet the mutually beneficial goals of the County and the Santa Clara Valley Water District, for joint

Master Plan Goals

water supply and recreational use, meeting the needs of Santa Clara County residents.

- e. Encourage partnerships with other agencies and organizations that can assist in implementing and maintaining park facilities and programs.
- f. A phased program of park improvements should be based on plan priorities determined by natural resource implications, funding for development, recreational need, logical construction and sequencing, coordination with reservoir management, and maintenance implications.
- g. Incorporate regular monitoring, review and update of the Master Plan to assess natural resource impacts, changes in recreational need, and available management resources to ensure the long-term sustainability of the park.
- h. Strive to open portions of the park for public use as soon as possible, consistent with other goals and CEQA requirements.



FACILITY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Facility Program Elements

INTRODUCTION

The following program elements will be considered in the alternatives phase of the master plan design process. As noted below, not all of the program elements will be included in each alternative, and some program elements may not be included in the final master plan. In addition, as spatial and operational relationships are further refined, the size and scope of some of the program elements may change. The program elements are organized into five major categories:

- 1) Recreation Elements
- 2) Agricultural and Educational Elements
- 3) Access Elements
- 4) Resource Management, Protection, and Restoration
- 5) Operations

Concurrent with the Master Plan, a proposed “Phase One” improvements plan will be developed to denote master plan elements that can be implemented quickly and easily once the master plan is approved, thereby expediting public use of the park. The discussion of the various master plan elements also includes identification of the program elements that might be included as a part of phase one improvements.

Photographs in this section are from Coyote Lake–Harvey Bear Ranch County Park and other locations that illustrate the potential program elements.

Here is a summary list of the program elements that are further described below:

1. *Recreation Elements*

- Trails
- Lakeside Uses
- Camping
- Swimming
- Equestrian Center

Facility Program Elements

- Fishing
- Golf Course
- Sports Fields
- Group Events Center
- Paragliding/Hang Gliding

2. *Agricultural and Educational Elements*

- Ag/Ranching Learning and Display Area
- Education Center
- Visitor Center
- Interpretive Programs

3. *Access Elements*

- Staging Areas
- Realigned access from Roop Road
- Street-adjacent trails that provide non-automobile access to the park

4. *Resource Management, Protection and Restoration*

- Historic Preservation
- Resource Management Plan

5. *Operations*

- Park Headquarters
- Ranger Station
- Maintenance Facilities
- Entry Kiosk

Facility Program Elements

RECREATION ELEMENTS

Trails



Hiking, equestrian and bicycling trails should be of varying difficulty. Some trails may be multiuse trails, while others may be exclusively for one type of user. Criteria and policies will be established to determine multiuse vs. single-use trails. In addition some trails may be designated for different users on a rotating schedule.



Some beginning trails should be located near staging areas on relatively flat ground. Some trails should achieve current standards for universal accessibility, including trail grade, surfacing and signage. Consider development of some street-adjacent trails that would allow non-automobile access to the park (see access elements). Also consider one-way “loop” trails. Consider some trails for horse-drawn carts. More advanced trails would be longer and incorporate a variety of topographic conditions.

Selected trails should be considered “interpretive trails” with appropriate signage and other features.

Trail Support Facilities:

- Restrooms, potable water, shade areas, staging areas, picnic areas, water and hitching facilities for equestrian trails, bicycle parking facilities for bicycle trails, emergency and service access, gates and fencing where needed.
- Trail sections and standards should be consistent with the Santa Clara County *Countywide Trails Master Plan*.
- Consider a trail ranking system and signage to inform users of trail difficulty (similar to ski slopes).

Issues to be considered when establishing trail locations and trail types:

- Use of existing trails and ranch roads where feasible
- Connections between on-site recreational uses (for example, between the lake and

Facility Program Elements



remote camping areas); east-west trail connections, connections to regional trails, such as the Bay Area Ridge Trail and Anza Historic Trail; and connections to other parks, such as a link between Coyote and Anderson Reservoirs, and a connection to Coe Park.

- Scenic views
- A variety of user experiences responding to both the diversity of the site's environmental conditions as well as a diversity in user's experience and ability levels.
- Protection of the site's habitat and other natural resources
- Safety
- Potentially conflicting uses, such as grazing
- Seasonal access

Acreage Requirements:

- To be determined, depends on the extent and type of trails.

Financial Implications:

- Initial capital costs for trail construction, signage and support facilities.
- Annual costs for trail maintenance, staffing and potential expansion of emergency response needs.

Note: These costs will be evaluated as a part of the alternatives analysis.



Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

- Trails on existing ranch roads with minimal rerouting
- Gates and Fencing
- Staging areas and necessary support facilities



Elements to be Considered in Alternatives:

- Location, extent and types of trails may vary in the alternatives.

Facility Program Elements



Lakeside Uses

Current waterfront uses should be maintained, such as the boat launch, and boat trailer parking area. Regulations that impact recreational lake use (no swimming, number and types of boats, water levels, etc.) are controlled by State water quality regulations and are not under the jurisdiction of County Parks. Therefore management of the lake's recreational resources will require continued close collaboration between County Parks and the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD). Roads within the park are currently the responsibility of the County Roads and Airports Department, and therefore, coordination will be needed for any proposed roadway improvements within the park.



Improvements to existing lakeside uses that may be considered:

- Improvements to the lakeside road from the entrance area to the dam
- Improvements to the kiosk entrance area and/or kiosk relocation
- Improvements to the boat parking/launch ramp area

Additional lakeside uses that may be considered:

- Improved lakeside pedestrian/bicycle trail
- Equestrian trail parallel to the lake but buffered from the lake edge
- Snack bar/concession with boating/fishing supplies (no alcohol)
- Rental marina with non-power boats and fishing boats with electric motors (similar to Loch Lomond Lake in Santa Cruz County)
- Improved day use/picnic areas

Issues to be considered when establishing additional lakeside uses:

- Water quality
- Coordination with other management agencies, such as SCVWD and County Roads and Airports
- Habitat/resource protection
- Infrastructure needs where appropriate (potable water, utilities, sewer, parking, roadway access)

Facility Program Elements

- Visual impact
- Safety

Acreage Requirements:

Will depend on size of improvements, location and associated parking requirements

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for trail and other improvements. Marina and store, if shown to be financially feasible, could be leased to a concession resulting in little long-term operations costs. Potential lease revenues for these additional uses.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Pedestrian/bicycle trail improvements along the lake edge

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Some alternatives may include the additional lakeside uses (such as concession store and marina, while other alternatives may not include these uses).

Camping



The existing Lakeview Campground currently provides 75 camping spaces which primarily serve those interested in lake-related uses, such as boating and fishing.

Some improvements to the existing campground are proposed:

Provide showers, reduce the density of the campground, and provide irrigated grass areas.



In addition to the existing campground, a variety of new camping experiences may be considered as noted below:

- Group camping area. Suitable for camping by larger groups (30–100 people) by reservation. This area could be used by scout, school, church or other large groups. Facilities would

Facility Program Elements



include restrooms, showers, barbecues, fire rings, and areas for tent setup.

- Amphitheater for evening “campfire” programs. This should be located within walking distance of camping areas.
- Remote camping areas accessible only by trails. These campgrounds could be used as an introduction to backpacking and overnight equestrian trips. Given the overall size of the park, the number of remote camping areas should be limited. No fires allowed in these areas. Some remote camping areas may have facilities for horse camping (small paddocks with hay and water) that can be reserved by equestrians. Portable toilets or restrooms would need to be provided at remote camping areas.
- Cabins, tent cabins, or “yurts”. These could be provided and may also be located at remote locations to provide a walk-in or ride-in experience, without needing to carry tents.

Issues to be considered when establishing additional camping uses:

- Infrastructure needs (utilities, potable water, sewer, parking, roadway access)
- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Habitat/resource protection
- Visual impact
- Safety/Emergency access
- Fire suppression
- Capacity

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined. Depends on type and size of camping facility provided and densities desired.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for campground improvements. Long-term operations costs for camping maintenance. Potential revenues from camping fees to offset operations costs.

Facility Program Elements

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

- Develop showers at existing campground
- Some remote campground sites may be included if they can be located with minimal disruption.

Elements to be included in the Alternatives:

Alternatives may explore size, number and location of additional camping facilities, such as the group campground and remote camping areas.

Swimming

A swimming pool could be provided near camping areas and would provide an alternative to lake swimming that is currently prohibited. A hard-bottomed pool (as opposed to a pond or lagoon) would allow for water quality to be controlled and would limit possible contamination of the lake water. It could be designed to appear more naturalistic than a traditional public pool. Alternatively, a recreational pool or swimming pond could be included on the west side of the park nearer population centers and other potential park facilities and away from the Coyote Lake drainage area.

Issues to be considered when establishing swimming location and type:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Capacity
- Infrastructure requirements
- Safety
- Water quality
- Operations and maintenance capabilities
- Competition with proposed municipal aquatics centers
- Parking
- Access

Acreage requirements:

To be determined

Facility Program Elements

Financial implications:

- Initial capital costs for pool or pond construction, and support facilities.
- Annual costs for operations and maintenance. Potential income from user fees.

Elements to be included in “Phase 1”:

Not included in Phase 1.

Fishing

Fishing could include enhancement to lakeside fishing and supplies as noted in the “lakeside uses” section. In addition, an existing pond, or newly created pond could be used for youth-oriented or specialized fishing events, such as the County’s annual “Fishability Day.”



Issues to be considered when establishing fishing location and type:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Infrastructure requirements
- Safety
- Effect on native habitats
- Maintenance
- Access for stocking

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined

Financial implications:

- Initial capital costs would vary depending on whether existing facilities are used, or a new pond is created. Annual operations and maintenance costs.
- Potential income from user fees.

Elements to be included in “Phase 1”:

Elements may be included in Phase 1 if existing facilities can be used.

Elements to be considered in Alternatives:

A fishing pond may not be included in all of the alternatives. Location of a pond, if included, may vary in the alternatives.

Facility Program Elements

Equestrian Center



An equestrian center could vary in range and size from a simple equestrian staging area to a regional center for equestrian shows, events, and trainings. Elements of an equestrian center could include the following:



- Parking for vehicles and horse trailers
- Stables for horse rentals and/or boarding
- Arena for equestrian shows, training and events. (May be a covered arena. Could also be used for non-equestrian events)
- Area/trails for horse-driven carts. This could include rentals/tours.
- Warm-up corral
- Tack room/storage area
- Interpretive displays
- Horse troughs/area for hosing down horses



Issues to be considered when establishing equestrian center location and features:

- Regional market/need for various equestrian features.
- Ability to use existing structures and facilities
- Infrastructure requirements
- Compatibility with both adjacent on-site and off-site uses
- Capacity and condition of existing access roadways
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Long-term maintenance and operations implications
- Non-point source pollution control

Acreage Requirements:

Will depend on range of features provided.

Facility Program Elements

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for equestrian center. Yearly costs for maintenance and staffing. Potential income from leases/concession. The financial analysis should include evaluating the need for varying levels of equestrian services in South County and competition with the private sector both in the short and long term.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

"Phase 1" will include basic equestrian staging area(s) (see staging area discussion). Additional equestrian center uses may be included in Phase 1 using existing structures with minimal investment if feasible.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Size, features and location of the equestrian center may vary in the alternatives.

Golf Course

Economics Research Associates prepared the *Market and Financial Feasibility Study for the Harvey Bear Ranch Golf Course* in 1998 for the Santa Clara County Parks Department. This report analyzed the feasibility of developing a golf course on a portion of the Harvey Bear Ranch. It concluded that the most cost-effective model would be a 27-hole course, with three separate nine-hole layouts. The feasibility study concluded that there is a strong demand for affordable public golf courses in the region and that the golf course could generate substantial operating revenues for the park. Elements of the golf course could include the following:



- Up to 27 holes
- Clubhouse (approximately 5000 square feet)
- Practice range
- Practice Tees
- Practice greens
- Maintenance Center

Facility Program Elements

- Turf nursery
- Parking
- Creation of a signature environmentally compatible golf course emphasizing use of native plants, water conservation, habitat enhancement, and minimal use of chemical fertilizers/pesticides.

Issues to be considered when establishing golf course size and features:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Compatibility with “ranchland” theme
- Capacity and condition of existing access roadways
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Accommodation of other potential uses that also require flat land
- Number of users potentially served vs. other uses on the same land
- Water use and impact on water quality
- Long-term operations and maintenance implications
- Control of problem animals, such as feral pigs, gophers and ground squirrels
- Non-point source pollution control
- Potential for revenue generation
- Infrastructure requirements

Acreage Requirements:

Will depend on number of holes and facilities provided. A 27-hole course and related facilities would require about 258 acres, according to the feasibility study. An 18-hole course would require 150–175 acres.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for golf course. Yearly costs for maintenance and operations. Construction and maintenance costs could be offset by anticipated revenues depending on development and management structure.

Elements to be included in “Phase 1”:

Given the time frame required for permitting, design and construction, the golf course would not be included in Phase 1.

Facility Program Elements

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

The golf course may not be included in all of the alternatives. The size of the course may be varied in some of the alternatives.

Multiuse Sports Fields

Communities in the area (Gilroy, San Martin and Morgan Hill) have all expressed a need for additional sports fields to serve their residents. A portion of the park could be developed for multiuse sports fields and support facilities for community use.



The scope of this program element could range from large informal grass areas that can be used for pickup games and unstructured family use, to regulation sports fields that could be used for league play. The following features may be included:

- Informal grass areas for pickups games and unstructured play
- Soccer/football fields (practice and/or regulation fields)
- Baseball/softball fields (practice and/or regulation fields)
- Concession stand
- Spectator seating
- Score booth
- Restrooms
- Parking
- Maintenance facility
- Night lighting

Issues to be considered when establishing sports fields size and features:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Compatibility with "ranchland" theme
- Capacity and condition of existing access roadways
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Accommodation of other potential uses that also require flat land
- Number of users potentially served vs. other uses on the same land

Facility Program Elements

- Water use and impact on water quality
- Long-term operations and maintenance implications
- Potential for revenue generation
- Infrastructure requirements
- Control of problem animals, such as feral pigs, gophers and ground squirrels
- Non-point source pollution control

Acreage Requirements:

Will depend on number and type of fields provided. Soccer fields require 3.5–4 acres per field, including support facilities; baseball/softball fields require 2.5–3 acres per field.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for sports fields and support facilities. Annual costs for maintenance and operations. Construction and maintenance costs may be at least partially offset through partnerships with other agencies and organizations (such as sports leagues), and user fees.

Elements to be included in “Phase 1”:

Given the time frame required for permitting, design and construction, sports fields would not be included in Phase 1.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Sports fields may not be included in all of the alternatives. Number and location of fields may vary in some of the alternatives.



Group Events Center

The group events center would be an area that could be leased for large events in a rural setting, accommodating up to 1,500 people. This might include corporate or large group events, retreats, weddings, etc., and would be designed to reflect a rustic, ranchland theme. For example a “chuckwagon barbecue” might be an appropriate activity. Facilities at the center may include the following:

Facility Program Elements

- Indoor/outdoor gathering spaces of flexible size
- Kitchen/catering facility
- Indoor/outdoor dining areas
- Support facilities (restrooms, storage, etc.)
- Parking (could be shared with other uses, such as golf course, sports fields, and/or equestrian center)

Issues to be considered when establishing group events center features and location:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Compatibility with "ranchland" theme
- Capacity and condition of existing access roadways
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Long-term operations and maintenance implications
- Potential for revenue generation
- Infrastructure requirements
- Amplified sound

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for center. Yearly costs for maintenance and operations. Construction and maintenance costs could be offset by anticipated revenues depending on development and management structure.



Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Not included in Phase 1.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

The group events center may not be included in all of the alternatives. The size of the center may be varied in some of the alternatives.

Facility Program Elements



Paragliding/Hang Gliding

Coyote Lake/Harvey Bear Ranch provides good wind conditions and potential landing sites for this sport which has limited venues in the County. Elements that would be considered include the following:

- Launch site *Note: Advocates for this sport have identified a preferred launch site that is off-site and therefore not within the purview of this Master Plan.*
- Landing site
- Access roads to launch and landing sites
- Support facilities (restrooms, drinking water, etc.)

Issues to be considered when establishing hang gliding/paragliding facilities:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Compatibility with "ranchland" theme
- Capacity and condition of existing access roadways
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Long-term operations and maintenance implications
- Safety
- Seasonal access

Acreage Requirements:

A landing site is approximately a 100-foot diameter circle, not including support facilities.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for landing site and support facilities. Annual costs for maintenance and operations. Construction and maintenance costs may be at least partially offset through user fees.

Facility Program Elements

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Not included in Phase 1.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

This use may not be included in all of the alternatives.

AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION ELEMENTS



Ag/Ranching Learning and Display Area

This would include facilities for education, training and display through existing programs such as 4H and Future Farmers of America. This could also provide educational opportunities for school field trips and could be tied into the environmental education center noted above. Similar facilities that have been noted include the Emma Prusch Farm Park in San Jose and the Ardenwood Historic Farm in Fremont. Elements of this area may include the following:



- Indoor and outdoor classroom space
- Barn for equipment and animal storage
- Animal display and grooming areas
- Pasture/animal grazing areas
- Arena (could be combined with equestrian center)
- Restrooms/offices
- Parking (could be combined with other staging/parking areas)

Issues to be considered when establishing ag/ranching learning area location and features:

- Compatibility with adjacent on-site and off-site uses
- Capacity and condition of existing access roadways
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Infrastructure requirements

Facility Program Elements

- Ability to use existing structures and facilities
- Long-term maintenance implications
- Non-point source of pollution

Acreage Requirements:

Approximately 25 acres. More acreage may be required if farming is included.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for facilities. Yearly costs for maintenance and staffing. Potential income from user/lease fees. Potential partnership with other agencies/organizations for long-term operations costs.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Some basic elements of such a facility may be included in Phase 1 if they can be incorporated into existing structures/facilities with minimal investment.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

This facility may not be included in all of the alternatives. Size, feature and locations of the learning and display area may vary in some of the alternatives.

Education Center



An education center would be a facility for week-long and or day use by school or other groups to explore the natural environment and learn about the ranching heritage of the park. This would be an opportunity to create a unique setting that is relatively accessible to a substantial urban population, and could be modeled after some of the "science camps" that exist in the Santa Cruz mountains as well as the "Yosemite Institute" in Yosemite National Park. Facilities could include the following:



- Cabins, tent cabins or other structures for overnight accommodations.
- Kitchen and dining area
- Amphitheater

Facility Program Elements

- Administrative office
- Emergency/service vehicle access
- Parking or access to staging area for school buses, vans, and cars
- Indoor and outdoor classroom space
- Restrooms/showers

The education center could be linked to other educational program elements, such as historic structures and a model ranch/4H area as noted in other sections of this document.

Issues to be considered when establishing education center location and features

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Infrastructure and access requirements
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Safety/emergency access needs
- Long-term maintenance implications
- Opportunities for partnership with other agencies/organizations for long-term operations
- Capacity
- Educational focus
- Seasonal access

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined .

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for education center. Annual costs for maintenance and operations, which may be handled by independent contract. Potential income from lease or other user fee structure.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Some day use educational programs could possibly be organized with existing structures and facilities.

Facility Program Elements

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

The education center may not be included in all of the alternatives. Location and size may also vary in some of the alternatives.

Visitor Center

The visitor center would focus on providing services and education for daily park users. This would include education of the natural and cultural history of the park, as well as information on park rules, and use permit applications. The visitor center could also be a common meeting point for docent-led programs. A small visitor center currently exists near the existing park entrance. Facilities could include the following:

- Display areas
- Administrative offices and storage
- Restrooms
- Telephones
- Emergency/service vehicle access
- Parking or access to staging area for school buses, vans, and cars
- Indoor and outdoor classroom space

Issues to be considered when establishing visitor center location and features:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Accessibility to other park uses
- Infrastructure and access requirements
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Safety/emergency access needs
- Long-term operations and staffing requirements

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for visitor center. Annual costs for maintenance and operations, including rotation of exhibits and information.

Facility Program Elements

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Potential for improvements to existing visitor center.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Location and size of the visitor center may vary in the alternatives.



Interpretive Programs

In addition to the visitor center and education center, the park provides many opportunities for interpretation of the area's natural and cultural history. Facilities to support interpretive programs could include interpretive signage and displays along trails and at distinctive sites.

Issues to be considered when establishing interpretive program features:

- Compatibility with park character and selected interpretive themes
- Protection of fragile resources
- Long-term maintenance implications
- Staffing
- Access

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Financial Implications:

- Capital construction costs and annual maintenance costs.
- Elements to be included in "Phase 1":
- Consider some interpretive signage of unique site features where appropriate.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

An interpretation program and themes should be developed once a direction for the Master Plan is determined. This will not be a significant factor in the alternatives.

Facility Program Elements

ACCESS ELEMENTS

Staging Areas

Staging areas provide controlled and managed entry to the park and may include the following. Final program for each staging area will depend on the number and type of vehicles and the adjacent recreational facilities the staging area is intended to serve, as well as the available space and existing environmental conditions of each proposed staging area.

- Car/Truck Parking, including handicap parking
- Horse/Bike Trailer Parking
- Bus stop (if appropriate for mass transit)
- School bus parking (if needed for educational programs)
- Restrooms
- Trail map/information
- Emergency phone
- Emergency access
- Benches/seating /picnic areas
- Buffer zones/setbacks
- Signage
- Fee collection system (kiosk or automated system)
- Access control gates/fencing
- Trash/recycle containers
- Bicycle racks or other bicycle parking facilities
- Watering troughs and hitching posts for horses
- Infrastructure (potable water, electricity, telephone, etc.)

Issues to be considered when establishing staging area locations and features:

- Recreational uses to be served by the staging area
- Number and types of vehicles to be accommodated
- Opportunity for staging areas to serve multiple uses with shared parking requirements to minimize total number of parking spaces (for example a staging area to serve both an equestrian and conference center)
- Compatibility with Americans with Disability Act (ADA) guidelines
- Potential impact on adjacent properties

Facility Program Elements

- Capacity and condition of existing access roadways
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Opportunity for mass transit connections, such as connections to VTA and CalTrain.
- Safety/emergency access needs
- Infrastructure needs
- Long-term maintenance implications
- Staff support/oversight

Acreage Requirements:

- Will depend on number and types of vehicles to be served and support facilities.
- Assume a total of about 400 square feet per car and 1000 square feet for truck/trailer or bus. With this in mind, parking for 100 cars would take about 1 acre, and parking for 50 horse trailers would take about 1.15 acres.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for staging areas. Yearly costs for maintenance and staffing. Potential income from day use/parking fees that could be collected at the staging areas.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Basic improvements to provide functional and safe staging areas with minimal costs. For example rather than permanent restrooms, portable toilets may be used. Gravel road base may be used as an interim surfacing rather than asphalt pavement. Where feasible, locate Phase 1 staging areas with minimal disruptions to the existing site and adjacent roadways.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Size, features and locations of the staging areas will vary in the alternatives based on the various uses that are proposed.

Facility Program Elements

Realigned East Access from Roop Road to the Lake Across the Mendoza Property

This concept was considered as a part of the original Coyote Lake Master Plan and will be reconsidered in at least one of the alternatives. With the acquisition of the Mendoza property, alternative alignments can also be considered that may minimize the difficulty of accessing the site from Roop Road.

Issues to be considered when considering alternative access routes:

- Visual impact
- Grading implications
- Resource protection
- Potential to use existing ranch roads
- Impact on adjacent properties
- Potential for improved emergency vehicle/fire access

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs for roadway and other facilities that may be needed, such as retaining walls, drainage improvements, etc. Yearly costs for maintenance and operations.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Not included in Phase 1.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Alternative Roop Road access alignments will be considered.

Street-Adjacent Trails

Street adjacent trails would connect to controlled park access points to provide non-automobile access to the park.

Issues to be considered when establishing street-adjacent trails:

- Compatibility with neighborhood and adjacent uses

Facility Program Elements

- Ability to control park access
- Existing site conditions (topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Safety/emergency access needs
- Long-term maintenance implications
- Consistency with future County roadway and trails plans.

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs and annual maintenance costs.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Easily constructed road-adjacent trails may be included.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Location and extent of these trails will be considered in the alternatives.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, PROTECTION, RESTORATION AND INTERPRETATION



Historic Preservation

This includes preservation, restoration and interpretation of existing structures/settings of historical and cultural significance. These structures and settings will be further identified as a part of the Existing Conditions Report, and are presumed to include some or all of the existing ranch structures on both the Mendoza and Bear properties, including some of the pond structures. Archaeological sites may also be included.

Facility Program Elements

Issues to be considered when establishing historic preservation sites:

- National, state and local guidelines for historic preservation
- Recreational/educational opportunities that are complementary to the goals of historic preservation
- Safety/emergency access needs
- Long-term maintenance implications
- Opportunities for partnership with other agencies/foundations for restoration and interpretive programs.

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Financial Implications:

Capital costs for restoration, plus annual operating costs. Potential income from educational/interpretive programs.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Basic protection of historic resources for future restoration. Some interpretive displays may be included in Phase 1 depending on the existing condition of historic structures and suitability for public access.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Extent of historic restoration may be explored in the alternatives.

Resource Management Plan

Many issues will be addressed in the resource management plan that is being developed parallel to the Master Plan. Issues to be addressed that will need to be coordinated with the Master Plan include the following:

- Protection and restoration of native species and habitats
- Exotic species control



Facility Program Elements



- Riparian/wetland management
- Fire management zones and strategies
- Grazing as a resource management tool
- Wildlife management
- Monitoring and reporting

PARK OPERATIONS

Park Headquarters

These would be the central offices for park operations and may include the following facilities:

- Administrative offices
- Staff housing
- Conference room
- Emergency response center
- Restrooms
- Vehicle parking
- Stables
- Visitor center
- Maintenance facility

Issues to be considered when establishing park headquarters location and features:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Accessibility to all areas of the park
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Safety/emergency access needs

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Facility Program Elements

Financial Implications:

Capital construction and annual costs for maintenance and operations.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

The Mendoza House would presumably remain as park satellite offices in Phase 1.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Location and size of the park headquarters may vary in the alternatives.

Ranger Station

Depending on the final park design and location of the park headquarters, a satellite ranger station may be needed. This will be considered in the alternatives.

Maintenance Facilities

The size and scope of maintenance facilities will vary depending on the design program. Facilities could include the following:

- Corporation yard for equipment and materials storage and repairs
- Vehicle maintenance area/garage
- Maintenance staff offices

Issues to be considered when establishing maintenance facility location and features:

- Compatibility with adjacent uses
- Infrastructure and access requirements
- Existing site conditions (size, topography, environmental constraints)
- Visual impact
- Safety/emergency access needs
- Long-term maintenance implications
- Non-point source pollution control

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Facility Program Elements

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs and annual costs for maintenance and operations.

Elements to be included in "Phase 1":

Maintenance facilities needed to support Phase 1 uses.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Size and location of maintenance facilities will vary with the design program of each alternative.

Entry Kiosks

Entry kiosks are essential features at some park entrances such as at the existing Coyote Lake entrance, where boating and camping capacity can be monitored. In addition, entry kiosks can be used to provide park users with weather conditions, park rules and other basic park information.

Issues to be considered when establishing entry kiosk locations and features:

- Need for kiosk at various entry points
- Road geometrics for adequate stacking and turning radii
- Visual impact
- Safety
- Infrastructure needs
- Staffing requirements

Acreage Requirements:

To be determined.

Financial Implications:

Capital construction costs. Annual maintenance and staffing costs. Potential revenue generation from user fee collection.

Facility Program Elements

Elements to be Included in Phase 1:

Potential improvements to existing kiosk.

Elements to be considered in the Alternatives:

Potential relocation of the existing kiosk. Potential additional kiosks at other park entrances.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities & Constraints

The opportunities and constraints maps in this section summarize the existing conditions found in previous sections of the program document and begin to define the most significant environmental issues for development of the park master plan. The “constraints” map provides an evaluation of the site from the perspective of the most environmentally sensitive areas that may be unsuitable or incompatible for recreational use. Conversely, the “recreational opportunities” map looks at the site from the perspective of areas that are most desirable for recreational development. There are some inherent conflicts between the two maps. For example, streams, which are highly sensitive ecosystems, are also highly desirable destinations for trails and other recreational pursuits. Some of the existing ranch roads, which are ideal for trails, pass through sensitive habitat areas. These potential conflicts will be further evaluated as design alternatives are developed and a preferred master plan is refined.

CONSTRAINTS MAP

The constraints delineated on the map exhibit fall into four categories, Erosion Hazards, Sensitive Habitat, Special Status Species Habitat, and Steep Slopes.

Erosion Hazards

The erosion hazards on the property are areas where erosion features are currently present. These erosion features can be described as slides, slumps, gullies, or headcuts. The most easily identifiable are the slides and gullies. Most of the slides and gullies occurring on the property are on generally steep slopes near some hydrologic feature, such as a spring, or at the head of an ephemeral watercourse or drainage. One of the largest erosion features on the property is a slide along the southern edge of the ranch road leading from the north-south ridge that dissects the property toward the Bear House.

Sensitive Habitat

The sensitive habitats of the property consist of the vegetation communities that are of specific concern in California. These communities are blue oak woodland, riparian, wetlands (including vernal basins and ponds), and serpentine grassland. These communities were originally delineated in the vegetation mapping of the property. Field surveys were conducted to verify the locations and classification of these particular communities. Each of these communities has a particular issue that makes it of specific concern.

Opportunities & Constraints

Blue oak woodlands throughout the state of California are declining. There are many factors leading to this decline but a specific issue of concern is a severe lack of blue oak regeneration. There is currently no clear explanation of why regeneration is so low. All that is known is that the regeneration rate is steadily declining.

Riparian zones and wetlands on the property, and throughout California, are of particular concern for many reasons, perhaps most importantly, water quality and potential habitat for special status species. Limiting activities within riparian zones can help reduce the erosion of the stream banks and therefore reduce sediment transport, leading to a reduction in siltation and subsequent erosion in the lower reaches of the watercourse. Reducing sediment caused by unnaturally eroding stream banks will improve overall water quality, and subsequently improve the potential special status species habitat. The wetlands of the property are potential habitat for special status species as well. These areas, especially the vernal basins, can potentially support a variety of special status species such as the red legged frog and California tiger salamander. While the wetlands of the property are good potential habitat, neither of these two special status species, or any others, were found during the amphibian surveys conducted for this project. Limiting activity around these areas will help improve the overall habitat.

The serpentine grassland on the property represents a vegetation community that has been steadily declining throughout California for years. Serpentine grasslands are unique in composition and form. Existing on a relatively uncommon soil type, serpentine grasslands are widely scattered and relatively fragile. Unnatural disturbances of these grasslands can result in their loss. Serpentine grasslands are also potential habitat for the Checkerspot butterfly, a federally listed species. In regard to the map exhibit, there is overlap of the serpentine grassland identified as sensitive habitat and the Checkerspot butterfly habitat identified as special status species habitat.

Special Status Species Habitat

The special status species habitat consists of data collected from government agencies showing the known habitats for special status species identified as occurring on the property. Two special status species are identified as currently or historically occurring on the property, the Checkerspot butterfly and Large-scale balsam root. These delineations are based on field work

Opportunities & Constraints

conducted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are unsuitable for development of most recreational facilities and may be hazardous. Therefore slopes greater than 40% are illustrated on the Constraints Map.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES MAP

The Opportunities Map shows areas that are most desirable for recreational development as defined in the Program Elements section of this report. The following elements were considered in developing the map:

Slopes

Flatter areas of the park are more desirable for many recreational facilities, including structures, staging areas, campgrounds, sports fields, golf courses equestrian areas, etc., as well as for accessible and beginning trails. Therefore, the opportunities map indicates slopes up to 15%.

Lakefront

Since some existing and additional lakefront uses are considered as a part of the program elements, a lakefront area has been highlighted on the recreational opportunities map.

Ranch Roads

Existing ranch roads provide opportunities for trails as well as for service/emergency access routes with minimal additional disruption to the landscape.

Streams and Ponds

Streams and ponds provide changes in landscape character and water features that are highly desirable as trail destinations. As noted above, these are also frequently environmentally sensitive areas that can be degraded through extensive human use.

Vista Points

Vista points along the ridgeline provide spectacular views that can also serve as trail destinations.

Opportunities & Constraints

Structures

Existing structures may have recreational value along with their historical value. For example, the existing barn structures may be able to be used as part of an equestrian center or ag/ranching education center.

Vegetation

Two vegetation types have been shown on the recreation opportunities map. Non-native grassland, which covers much of the site, has already been disturbed from its native condition, and therefore is more suitable for recreational development. In addition the foothill oak woodland indicates oak species that are fairly common (coast live oak) and not as sensitive to recreational use as the blue oak. Oaks provide shade and visual contrast to the grassland and are therefore desirable for some recreational activities, such as hiking, picnicking, and camping.

NEXT STEPS

The opportunities and constraints maps, along with the program elements, other existing conditions information and trends found in this report, will be used to develop alternative design concepts. These alternative designs will be evaluated using the goals that have been established for the park and other criteria, including financial and environmental evaluation. The existing conditions information will serve as a "baseline" for environmental evaluation of the alternatives. Once alternatives have been developed and evaluated, a preferred master plan will be selected and further refined with additional environmental review.