



San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study

Summary and Final Recommendations

April 2013



Dear Friends,

The National Park Service is pleased to announce the completion of the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study. The Secretary of the Interior transmitted the final study to Congress on April 10, 2013. This document summarizes the final study report which includes the NPS determinations about the eligibility of the study area as a unit of the national park system (pp. 6-8), as well as the selected alternative recommended to Congress by the Secretary of the Interior (pp. 10-18).

National Park Service Selected Alternative

The alternative recommended to Congress is the National Park Service Director's most effective and efficient alternative for the long-term protection and public enjoyment of nationally significant resources in the San Gabriel watershed and mountains. The selected alternative is primarily a combination of management concepts from alternative A (San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area) and alternative D (San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area), as presented in the draft special resource study. The selected alternative offers what the NPS believes is the most effective and efficient means to provide the resource protection and public enjoyment opportunities that have been central to this study.

The selected alternative takes advantage of the existing National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service presence in the Los Angeles area, while directing the two agencies to expand their scope to the San Gabriel Valley, the San Gabriel Mountains and foothills, and the Puente Hills. It encourages collaborative programs and shared staffing while reducing overlap and redundancy. It also takes advantage of the newly established Service First authority, which allows the NPS and US Forest Service to work together in new ways.

Implementation of the selected alternative would require Congressional legislation. If Congress does not pass legislation to implement the study's recommendations, then the study would simply remain as a recommendation.

The selected alternative includes four primary recommendations for the long-term protection and public enjoyment of nationally significant resources in the San Gabriel watershed and mountains, including:

- 1. Designation of a San Gabriel Unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area** (p. 10) The new unit would include areas of the San Gabriel Mountain foothills, portions of the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo river corridors, and the western Puente Hills. The NPS would work primarily through partnerships with existing landowners in areas of mutual interest such as resource protection, ecological restoration, and education programs. NPS land management policies and regulations would only apply to lands that the NPS acquires. The NPS would only acquire land on a limited basis from willing sellers. The designation would not transfer any land to the NPS.
- 2. Additional federal recognition, tools, and support to the Angeles National Forest** to steward watershed resources and ecosystems and improve recreational opportunities (pp. 10-18).
- 3. Direction for the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service to collaborate** through the Service First authority (p. 13) and other mechanisms to protect the significant resources of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains and provide high quality recreation and educational opportunities.
- 4. NPS technical assistance** to interested communities, agencies, and organizations to protect the region's wildlife corridors; provide close-to-home recreational opportunities; educational opportunities; and to provide an array of seamless outdoor experiences in the San Gabriel watershed and mountains (p. 12).

Thank you for your involvement in the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study.

Sincerely,
NPS Study Team

HOW TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE FINAL STUDY REPORT AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The NPS published the Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment in September 2011. The final report, available now, is comprised of the previously published draft report, a list of errata, and a Finding of No Significant Impact, containing the selected alternative. These documents are posted on the project web site at:

<http://www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel>

A public comment summary and NPS responses to comments received on the draft report are also available on the web site.

Limited printed and CD-ROM copies of the full draft report and errata are available. If you have not received a copy of the draft report and would like one, please contact us by mail or e-mail and provide your name and mailing address.

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The Four Components of the Selected Alternative



Introduction

The San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act (P.L. 108-042, July 2003) authorized the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a special resource study of (1) the San Gabriel River and its tributaries north of and including the city of Santa Fe Springs, and (2) the San Gabriel Mountains within the territory of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

The purpose of the special resource study was to determine whether any portion of the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains study area is eligible to be designated as a unit of the national park system. By reaching out to the public, stakeholders, and resource experts, the NPS determined eligibility and identified alternative strategies to manage, protect, or restore the study area's resources, and to provide or enhance recreational opportunities. The study conveys this information to the U.S. Department of the Interior and Congress to aid in determining whether designation of a unit of the national park system is desirable and appropriate.

The NPS found that many of the resources evaluated through the study are nationally significant, suitable, feasible and appropriate for NPS management. These findings are described on the following pages. This document identifies the most effective and efficient alternative for management selected by the NPS ("the selected alternative").

Study Area

The study legislation directed the NPS to conduct a Special Resource Study of the following areas: (1) the San Gabriel River and its tributaries north of, and including, the city of Santa Fe Springs; and (2) the San Gabriel Mountains within the territory of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

The study area covers more than 1,000 square miles (over 700,000 acres) in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan region. It includes some of the most densely populated and diverse areas of the United States. Most of the study area is located in Los Angeles County and the remainder lies in Orange and San Bernardino counties. In addition to most of the San Gabriel River watershed, the study area also includes portions of the Los Angeles River, the Santa Clara River, and the Antelope Valley watersheds, as well as very small portions of the Santa Ana River and Mojave watersheds.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) manages approximately two thirds of the study area (415,000 acres in the San Gabriel Mountains) as part of the Angeles National Forest (Angeles NF). With the exception of private inholdings, permitted cabins, ski areas, roads, and flood protection structures and other utilities, the forest remains primarily undeveloped, with four designated wilderness areas. In close proximity to highly urban areas, the forest provides a refuge for wildlife and recreational opportunities for the greater Los Angeles metropolitan region.

Over fifty communities are located in the study area, with approximately 1.5 million residents. The Los Angeles metropolitan region is home to over 16 million residents. The largest communities in the study area include Pomona and Santa Clarita, with populations near 150,000. The City of Palmdale is the largest community at the northern end of the study area with approximately 115,000 residents.



STUDY TIMELINE



Study Process and Public Involvement

The study team conducted extensive public outreach throughout the study process and throughout the region. Five newsletters were published at various stages of the study process and distributed to the study mail and email lists. All information sent by mail and email has been available on the study website, www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel.

The NPS initiated this special resource study in January 2005 with a newsletter describing the study process and opportunities for the public to participate. Public meetings were held in March 2005, comments were accepted, and the study team published the results of the scoping process in a second newsletter. Numerous meetings with agencies, elected officials, and organizations were held into 2006.

Throughout 2006 and 2008, the team worked with local recreation and land conservation agencies and resource experts to analyze the significance of the study area resources and develop preliminary alternative management concepts. In the fall of 2009, the study team presented draft alternative management concepts for public review in a newsletter distributed to over 3,000 individuals and organizations. The study team held six public meetings at locations throughout the study area, as well as numerous meetings with local, state and federal government agencies, organizations, communities, and Congressional offices. The team received and analyzed approximately 4,800 comments.

After a period of public comment review, alternative revisions, and environmental analysis, the study team released the *Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment* for review and comment in 2011. Four hundred participants, including elected officials and stakeholders, participated in public meetings and 12,000 comments were submitted online or by mail. On the basis of those comments and in consultation with other agencies, the NPS has since made necessary corrections to the draft study and selected an alternative that it believes is the most effective and efficient way to manage the natural, cultural, and recreation resources of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains.



Findings

Four Criteria for Evaluating Potential Additions to the National Park System

The National Park System New Area Studies Act and NPS management policies establish the basic process for evaluating potential new additions to the national park system. According to NPS management policies, a proposed addition to the national park system will receive a favorable recommendation from the NPS only if it meets all of the following four criteria for inclusion:

- 1 It possesses **nationally significant natural or cultural resources**.
- 2 It is a **suitable** addition to the system.
- 3 It is a **feasible** addition to the system.
- 4 There is a **need for direct NPS management**, instead of alternative protection by other public agencies or the private sector.

National Park Service management alternatives are developed for study areas that meet all four of the criteria for inclusion, as listed above. The following section explains how the NPS, in consultation with scientists, scholars, and other experts, found that all four criteria were satisfied in the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study.

1 Evaluation of Nationally Significant Resources

Within the large and diverse landscape of the study area, two regions were found to be nationally significant: the San Gabriel Mountains and the Puente-Chino Hills. Because these regions have not been as heavily urbanized as the lowland valleys and floodplains of the study area, they are outstanding examples of the native southern California landscape. The San Gabriel Mountains are also culturally rich, with a long history of human use.

There are significant resources in other portions of the study area. However, these resources are highly fragmented and surrounding development has, in many cases, negatively impacted their integrity.



San Gabriel Mountains, NPS Photo

San Gabriel Mountains

The San Gabriel Mountains and foothills are nationally significant for their geologic resources, high biodiversity, dynamic river systems, and the long history of scientific study and discovery. Early conservation of the San Gabriel Mountains ensured that these areas were protected from rapid urbanization, which began in the late 19th century. Within a short distance, the mountains and foothills feature coastal, desert, montane, and sub-alpine ecological communities.

MOUNTAIN BUILDING AND DIVERSE GEOLOGY

- The San Gabriel Mountains are among the fastest growing mountains in the world. Forces from the San Andreas Fault to the north and a series of thrust faults on their south face are causing the San Gabriel Mountains to rise as much as 2 inches a year. This distinction makes the San Gabriel

Mountains an excellent location to research or study mountain-building.

- Among the most geologically diverse ranges in Southern California, the San Gabriel Mountains are comprised of rock units from all the major geologic eras. The San Gabriel Mountains contain the most extensive, best-exposed, and most completely studied exposures of several geologic formations including the San Gabriel Mountains anorthosite massif, the Mount Lowe plutonic suite, and Pelona schist. Some of the oldest rocks (over one billion years old) on the west coast of the United States are located in the San Gabriel Mountains.
- There is a long history of scientific study of the San Andreas Fault in southern California. Several

historically significant geologic discoveries occurred in the San Gabriel Mountains.

- The dramatic change in elevation from sea level to 10,000 feet, coupled with striking landforms such as the Devil's Punchbowl, makes for a highly scenic landscape of contrasts.

HIGH LEVELS OF BIODIVERSITY

- The topographically and geologically diverse mountains contain high levels of biodiversity. The plant communities in the San Gabriel Mountains provide habitat for 76 plant species and 77 wildlife species considered sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered.
- Outstanding examples of rare southern California ecological communities in the San Gabriel Mountains and foothills include: alluvial fan sage scrub, bigcone Douglas-fir, coastal sage scrub, relict juniper communities, riparian areas, and subalpine habitat.

DYNAMIC RIVER SYSTEMS

- River systems within the San Gabriel Mountains meet the eligibility criteria for National Wild and Scenic River designation. Free-flowing sections of Little Rock Creek and the North, East, and West forks of the San Gabriel River retain high levels of integrity and support sensitive wildlife.
- Some of the best remaining alluvial fan sage scrub vegetation in the Los Angeles Basin is found within the study area.
- The San Gabriel Mountains are among the richest areas for freshwater fishes in southern California.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY

- Data collected in the San Dimas Experimental Forest since 1933 represents some of the earliest and most comprehensive records from continuously monitored U.S. Forest Service experimental watersheds in the United States. In 1976, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Program recognized the San Dimas Experimental Forest as a "Biosphere Reserve." The San Dimas Experimental Forest contains structures that are excellent examples of Forest Service architecture constructed and maintained through Depression-era relief programs, as well as a lysimeter facility that is the largest structure of its type ever built.



Clockwise, from top left: Arroyo Toad, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Photo; Mount Wilson Observatory; Southern California black walnut, NPS Photo; Augén gneiss boulder, western San Gabriel Mountains, NPS Photo

- The Mount Wilson Observatory, established in 1904, includes five significant telescopes that laid the technological foundation for all large modern telescopes. Many of the major advances, such as the Big Bang theory and the greatest names in 20th-century astronomy, are associated with the observatory.

Puente-Chino Hills

The Puente-Chino Hills in the Los Angeles basin contain rare native plant communities. Although this area is somewhat of an island of open space surrounded by urbanized areas, the Puente-Chino Hills and the Santa Ana Mountains to the southeast together encompass about 500,000 acres of wildlands containing significant biological resources.

HIGH LEVELS OF BIODIVERSITY

- The Puente-Chino Hills are part of a biologically diverse regional wildlife corridor that provides habitat for ecological communities with an abundance of endemic, threatened, and rare plants and animals.
- Outstanding examples of southern California communities in the Puente-Chino Hills include coastal sage scrub, one of the most endangered plant communities in California, and the best remaining stands of California walnut-dominated forests and woodlands south of Ventura County.

2 Evaluation of Suitability

This study concludes that portions of the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills are suitable for inclusion in the national park system, based upon an evaluation of the study area resources and their relative quality, character, and rarity. Together, the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills contain a combination of themes and resources not found in any national park unit or comparably managed area.

3 Evaluation of Feasibility

The study concludes that a collaborative partnership-based park unit, which respects the complex mix of land use, ownership, and regulatory authority in the study area, is feasible. Opportunities for collaborative management with local, state and federal managers to protect natural and cultural resources, to provide recreation, public access, interpretation and educational opportunities, and other compatible uses in a partnership-based park unit have been demonstrated to exist. A large traditional national park unit, owned and operated solely by the NPS, is determined to be infeasible.

4 Need for NPS Management

The study concludes that a collaborative management approach which includes a leadership role for the NPS is a superior management option for meeting the complex conservation and recreation needs of the study area. In particular, the NPS has the ability to work in a coordinated fashion, on a regional basis, to address equitable access to open space, protection of significant resources, and interpretation and education about significant resources. Existing NPS assistance programs are currently insufficient to address these needs in the study area.



Wild cactus in bloom, Santa Fe Dam Natural Area, NPS Photo

Alternatives Analyzed

Four alternatives were analyzed in the *San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Draft Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment*. The alternatives are based on the purpose and need for the project and are consistent with existing laws, NPS policy and the special resource study legislation.

No Action Alternative: Continuation of Current Management

Public land management agencies and local governments would continue their land management, visitor services, public education, recreation and interpretive programs at approximately the current levels of activity and funding, according to current plans. Existing cooperative management efforts would continue. The NPS would have no role in the study area beyond the existing segments of two national historic trails, some ongoing technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, and limited financial assistance through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Alternative A: San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area

Congress would designate the San Gabriel Mountains as a National Recreation Area (NRA) that would continue to be managed by the Angeles National Forest (Angeles NF). The designation would bring additional recognition, tools, and support to the Angeles NF in order to steward watershed resources and ecosystems, and improve recreational opportunities. The NPS would have no role in the NRA beyond a continuation of the informal partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and Santa Monica Mountains NRA.

Alternative C: San Gabriel Watershed National Recreation Area

Congress would designate a National Recreation Area comprised of the upper San Gabriel River watershed within the Angeles NF and a half-mile corridor around the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers within the study area to be managed by a voluntary partnership of agencies and organizations with land and interests in the designated area. The primary roles of the NPS would be coordination of the partnership and taking a lead role in coordinating interpretative and educational messages about significant resources. Each partner and other jurisdictional authorities would retain land ownership, management, and decision-making authority for lands that they own. The partnership would work to create new recreational and open space opportunities that are compatible with maintaining watershed values, water supply, flood protection, and habitat values.

Alternative D: San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area

Congress would designate Angeles NF lands within the San Gabriel Mountains, adjacent foothill areas with ecological resource values, areas near the San Andreas Fault, portions of the western Puente Hills, and half-mile corridors along the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers as a National Recreation Area. The NRA would be managed much the same as described under alternative C, under a partnership comprised of agencies and organizations with interests in the area. The NPS role would be essentially the same as in alternative C, but with the addition of a technical assistance program to provide conservation and recreation planning assistance to interested public agencies, private landowners, and organizations beyond the NRA boundaries to create and connect parks, conserve habitat and provide new recreational experiences throughout the region.

Alternatives Considered But Dismissed

Alternative B, the San Gabriel Parks and Open Space Network, was initially presented to the public as an alternative management concept. Public review revealed a high level of dissatisfaction for this concept. Alternative B envisioned a network of public and private partners engaged in collaborative planning and information sharing, focused on open space, recreation, wildlife corridor, and interpretive opportunities. It did not include designation of a National Recreation Area. This alternative was dismissed for its inability to meet project objectives, as determined through agency and public input.



Children playing in the North Fork of the San Gabriel River, NPS Photo

The Selected Alternative

Concept

The selected alternative is primarily a combination of management concepts from alternative A (San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area) and alternative D (San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area), as presented in the *Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study*. Some additional refinements have been made to reflect public concerns, provide for efficient management, and to take advantage of new authorities provided to the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) through the Service First authority.

The selected alternative would establish a San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area which would provide the NPS, and other land management agencies and organizations with guidance and direction to work together in new ways. Partnership arrangements among federal and state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, and area landowners would be the primary means to achieve the conservation, recreational, and educational goals of the San Gabriel unit. Although the Angeles National Forest (Angeles NF) would not be included in the San Gabriel unit, the NPS and USFS would be directed to work in partnership. In addition, legislative guidance would provide additional support and authorities for the Angeles NF to steward resources and improve recreational opportunities.

Specifically, components of the selected alternative would include:

San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA (San Gabriel unit). The San Gabriel Mountains foothills, San Gabriel and Rio Hondo river corridors and the western Puente Hills (alternative D south of the Angeles NF) would be established as an additional unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA. The NPS and numerous other agencies and organizations with land and interests in the area would: 1) work collaboratively to protect significant resources, restore ecological communities, and improve recreational opportunities; 2) provide technical assistance to willing communities for conservation planning to extend open space connections and form a network of parks, habitats, and open spaces; and 3) offer new educational and interpretive opportunities.

Angeles National Forest. The selected alternative would also bring additional recognition, tools, and support to the Angeles NF in order to steward watershed resources and ecosystems and improve recreational opportunities. In lieu of a new designation for the Angeles NF, this guidance would: 1) reaffirm the primary importance of the Angeles

NF in preserving watershed and natural resources, while continuing to provide for multiple use management; and 2) prioritize funding for resource protection, recreation, and education, and establish mechanisms to increase funding for facilities, maintenance, ecological restoration, visitor management; and offer new educational programming, and stewardship activities. This would be accomplished without a national recreation area designation on the Angeles NF.

Collaborative Federal Management. The NPS and USFS would collaborate through the Service First authority and other mechanisms to protect the significant resources of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains, provide high quality recreation and education opportunities, and assist the surrounding communities in providing community-based recreation and conservation opportunities. The NPS and the USFS would work together:

- To explore opportunities to protect and enhance interconnected ecosystems essential for long-term viability of significant natural resources.
- To help communities provide close-to-home outdoor recreation, conservation and education opportunities for their residents, as well as to better connect to the nearby national park and national forest areas.
- To provide an array of seamless outdoor experiences in the San Gabriel watershed and mountains.

Proposed Area

The San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA would include:

- The San Gabriel Mountains foothill areas in the San Gabriel Valley (but outside of the Angeles National Forest) with ecological resource values. Areas with ecological resource values include designated critical habitat for federally listed threatened or endangered species, and areas within one of the Los Angeles County proposed significant ecological areas;
- A half-mile corridor around the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers from the Angeles NF boundary south to Santa Fe Springs; and
- Portions of the western Puente Hills with ecological resource value and recreational potential (areas west of Harbor Boulevard). This primarily includes lands owned/or and managed by the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority and lands proposed by Los Angeles County to be included in the Puente Hills Significant Ecological

Selected Alternative



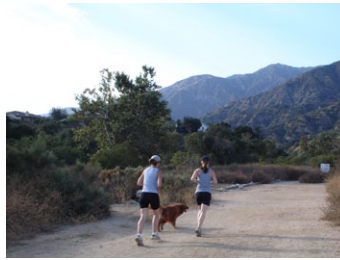
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Area. The Puente Hills Landfill would not be included in the boundary. However, at some time in the future, the NPS and the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority could enter into management agreements with the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County to provide recreational opportunities in this area.

The San Gabriel unit would include approximately 49,000 acres of land; approximately 37% of this area is already protected for conservation or recreation by existing agencies and organizations.

The San Gabriel Mountains within the Angeles NF are also addressed in the selected alternative. However, no new designation would be applied to this area.



Clockwise, from top left: Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, NPS Photo; Eaton Canyon, NPS Photo; San Gabriel River Trail, NPS Photo

The San Gabriel unit partners could include, but would not be limited to, the following agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, Los Angeles County, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority, the Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority, and the Watershed Conservation Authority. Local communities/cities could also participate in the partnership. Through cooperative management agreements, partners would be able to provide coordinated educational and recreational programming, and share funding, staff, and facilities. In existing public land areas, interagency agreements could augment agency staffing to manage heavily used areas providing higher levels of visitor services, education, and safety. Other partnerships could also be established, such as with community-based organizations and tribal groups.

NPS Role. The NPS would take a lead role in coordinating partnership-based activities within the San Gabriel unit. Through cooperative management agreements, the NPS could also provide educational, interpretive, law enforcement and other services to partner agencies. The NPS would also take a lead role in providing coordinated interpretative and educational messages about the significance of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains for existing nature centers, museums, park programs, etc.

The NPS would have no land use regulatory authority for lands that it does not own. As funding permits, the NPS would be authorized to acquire lands from willing sellers within the San Gabriel unit to protect significant resources or for operational purposes.

The NPS would offer technical assistance to interested public agencies, private landowners, and organizations to create and connect parks, conserve habitat, provide new recreational experiences, and foster a sense of regional identity. The NPS could also assist in organizing volunteer programs within the San Gabriel unit and on the Angeles NF.

Angeles National Forest

The Angeles NF would continue to be managed by the USFS according to existing guiding policies. Additional guidance would authorize the USFS to enter into cooperative management agreements with local agencies and conservancies to protect biodiversity and watershed resources, interpret significant resources, enhance recreational opportunities, and provide more educational and interpretive opportunities within San Gabriel Mountains. In addition, the Angeles NF would have the

Management

San Gabriel Unit

The San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA would be managed in partnership with agencies and organizations with land and interests in the area. Agencies and organizations that own and manage land within the San Gabriel unit would continue to manage their lands according to their own policies and regulations. NPS policies would only apply to lands that the NPS acquires. As much of the land within the NRA is currently in public ownership and much of the remaining land is comprised of commercial and residential uses inappropriate for NPS management, land acquisition by the NPS would be limited.

Service First

In December of 2011, the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture were given the authority (Public Law 112-74) to establish programs involving certain land management agencies to:

- Conduct activities jointly or on behalf of one another;
- Collocate in Federal offices or leased facilities; and
- Make reciprocal delegations of their respective authorities, duties and responsibilities
- Make transfer of funds and reimbursement of funds on an annual basis, including transfers and reimbursements for multi-year projects.

The Service First authority provides for interagency operational efficiency in attaining shared goals and missions, allows agencies to develop programs and projects tailored to meet shared objectives, allows agencies to share equipment, facilities and other resources to accomplish mutually agreed-upon work, and allows the re-delegation of staff authorities, duties and responsibilities among participating Service First agencies (NPS, USFS, BLM, FWS). These partnership efforts are achieved through a Service First agreement, which documents the agencies' commitment to work collaboratively.

Stories of successful Service First partnerships are beginning to emerge as the authority is implemented around the country. In Colorado, for example, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service have integrated management of public lands and national forest system lands in and around the San Luis Valley. The two agencies share funding, staff and authority under a robust agreement intended to maximize efficient use of personnel and provide one-stop service to visitors and stakeholders. In Arizona and Utah, the Grand Canyon Parashant National Monument is co-managed by the BLM and the NPS with an integrated staff and a streamlined process for transferring funds. These success stories and more are described at www.fs.fed.us/servicefirst.

ability to accept donations from philanthropic and partner organizations to improve facilities and resources.

Legislative guidance would also direct the USFS and the NPS to engage in partnership efforts and interagency coordination to protect the significant resources of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains, provide high quality recreation and education opportunities, and assist the surrounding communities in providing community-based recreation and conservation opportunities. Such partnerships could be facilitated through the Service First authority and other mechanisms.

Existing Agencies, Regulatory Authorities, and Land Use

San Gabriel Unit

Much of the land within the proposed San Gabriel unit (approximately 37%) is already protected by various agencies and organizations. The National Park Service recognizes that existing public agencies, private conservation organizations, and individuals successfully manage important natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities within the proposed San Gabriel unit. The NPS applauds these accomplishments and actively encourages the expansion of conservation

activities by state, local, and private entities and by other federal agencies.

Retention of Local Land Use and Existing Regulatory Authorities. The designation of an NPS national recreation area unit would not establish additional regulatory or land use authorities over local governments. The NPS is not a regulatory agency. NPS land management policies and regulations would only apply to lands that the NPS acquires. The NPS would only consider acquiring land on a limited basis from willing sellers. The selected alternative would respect existing general plans and local zoning, as well as state and local laws and policies for lands that are not federally owned.

Protection of Water Supply, Flood Protection, and Sanitation Infrastructure Facilities and Functions. The Los Angeles metropolitan region has highly complex systems of public infrastructure to transport and store local and regional water supplies. In addition, numerous facilities are necessary to treat wastewater and manage solid waste. Many of these facilities are located on or near the San Gabriel River. The San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-042) directed that the study consider regional flood control and drainage needs and publicly owned infrastructure such as wastewater treatment facilities. The study recommends that any resulting legislation ensure that infrastructure designed for flood



protection, storage and transport of water supplies, treatment of water and wastewater, and management of solid waste would be unaffected by the designation. This includes exemption from 16 U.S.C. § 460l-22(c) (prohibition of solid waste disposal operations in national parks) for existing solid waste facilities and operations, such as landfills and transfer stations, within the San Gabriel unit.

The selected alternative would retain existing water rights. Management of water supply and treatment plants would continue under current authorities. The proposed San Gabriel unit designation would not entail any new or future beneficial uses or requirements for water supply, water quality, or air quality regulations.

Private Property Rights. Any legislation proposed to implement study recommendations should specify that eminent domain would not be used for land acquisition within the San Gabriel unit. The NPS would only consider acquiring land on a limited basis from willing sellers. Designation would not impact local land use authority over lands not owned by the NPS.

Fire Protection. Fire protection would remain the responsibility of existing federal, state, and local agencies (Los Angeles County, U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). The San Gabriel unit partnership could work together to take a proactive approach to coordinated resource management to reduce catastrophic fires.

Angeles National Forest

U.S. Forest Service management of existing Angeles NF lands would continue. USFS policies would continue to be applied to management of these lands.

Education and Interpretation

San Gabriel Unit

Through new interpretive and educational programs, the NPS would engage people of all ages in learning about the significant natural and cultural resources within the San Gabriel watershed and mountains. Examples of interpretive messages would include the history and importance of water resources, regional biodiversity, the geological significance of the San Gabriel Mountains, Native American history and prehistory, the role of fire on the landscape, and early California settlement.

The NPS would coordinate a voluntary information network to partner with established environmental education centers, visitor centers, etc. throughout the watershed to help augment and enrich interpretive and educational programming related to the significance of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains. The primary role of the NPS within the San Gabriel unit would be to lead the effort to provide coordinated interpretive messages and educational programs. The NPS would also work with partners to develop accessible interpretive and educational materials, including multi-lingual information and signage, to reach broader audiences.

In addition to programs conducted within the San Gabriel unit, NPS staff would coordinate with local school districts and area youth organizations to conduct environmental stewardship programs and engage youth in learning about the natural world around them. When needed and as funding permits, new facilities and programs could be developed to support educational efforts. The NPS Junior Ranger program could be promoted for school-aged children. There are also opportunities to inspire youth about the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Angeles National Forest

The Angeles NF would be recognized for its nationally significant resources associated with the San Gabriel Mountains. Working through Service First agreements, the USFS and the NPS would provide more interpretive information about significant resources and offer new educational programs. Educational programs would emphasize to visitors the value of watershed resources and how to recreate in a way that is compatible with protecting such resources. New opportunities for educational programs associated with the San Dimas Experimental Forest would be explored.

Recreational Opportunities and Access

San Gabriel Unit

Within the San Gabriel unit, a variety of recreational opportunities would continue to be available to the public. Many communities in the region, however, lack appropriate access to park and recreational resources. Recreational uses and activities would be determined by the existing land management agency. The NPS and partner agencies would seek to improve recreational access and opportunities in urban areas that are deficient in recreation and park lands by offering assistance in planning for close-to-home recreational opportunities, better trail access, and improved public transportation options to recreational areas. Additionally, the NPS and partner agencies would explore opportunities to restore vacant or unused land to provide new recreational opportunities.

The NPS and partners would work together to target underserved and disadvantaged communities for engagement in the opportunities for and benefits of outdoor recreation. Children in communities that do not have adequate access to outdoor recreation tend to have higher rates of childhood diseases related to obesity such as diabetes. The NPS would conduct outreach to local communities, organizations, and schools to promote opportunities for healthy recreation in the San Gabriel unit.

The NPS would also work with partners to seek ways to improve the recreational experience in more heavily impacted areas by providing more education, improving facilities, improving maintenance and law enforcement, and enhancing visitor management to reduce impacts. Improved recreational experiences in more rural areas could focus on protecting the rural recreational experience by providing better trail connections and improved equestrian staging areas.

A voluntary information network would identify parks and sites with recreational and learning opportunities. This network would be expansive, including sites with recreational and learning opportunities associated with the San Gabriel River watershed, the Puente Hills, and the San Gabriel Mountains. At each site, visitors could find maps and guides linking one site with others pertaining to the same or related themes.

Many agencies are currently working to improve accessibility, as is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The NPS would work with partners to improve recreational access to the area's parks and public lands for persons with disabilities.

Angeles National Forest

Recreation is the primary use in the Angeles NF. With over 3 million annual visitors, the Angeles NF has one of the highest national forest visitation levels in the nation. Over the past ten years, funding for recreation, interpretation, and education has remained flat. Increased attention and focused management resulting from new legislative directives may encourage additional or reprioritized federal funding for enhancing recreation in the San Gabriel Mountains. This could include improved visitor management in heavily used recreational areas as a result of more forest rangers, better facilities, improved trail connections and trailheads, better educational efforts, and new approaches to manage visitation.

Existing recreational opportunities would remain on the Angeles NF pursuant to USFS established rules and regulations. Future decisions regarding appropriate recreational opportunities would continue to be determined by the USFS, including administration of any

recreational special use permits such as for recreational residences and ski areas.

New partnership opportunities may also assist the Angeles NF in fundraising for improved recreational experiences and planning for recreational connections (e.g. trails, bicycle paths). The NPS and USFS would partner and work together on recreational opportunities on the Angeles NF through Service First agreements. Such agreements allow the two agencies to share staff, funding, and offices to achieve mutual objectives.

Resource Protection (Ecological Communities and Cultural Resources)

The selected alternative would emphasize protecting significant resources associated with the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente Hills.

San Gabriel Unit

The NPS would facilitate opportunities to work in collaboration with resource management agencies and organizations to conserve and enhance resources through research, cooperative management, monitoring, and restoration. Ecological communities could be enhanced by additional scientific knowledge, expertise, and technical assistance.

The NPS and partner agencies would work together to identify opportunities to protect ecosystems and wildlife corridors. For example, the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills are refuges for rare and endangered species. These species need to be able to move to and from these open space areas, particularly in the case of wildfire events and for adaptation associated with climate change. Better ecosystem connectivity also fosters greater biodiversity. The NPS and partner agencies would seek to leverage additional funding for ecological restoration and wildlife habitat conservation efforts.

Coordinated cultural resource management would also be an emphasis. The NPS would seek to document, protect and interpret cultural resources within the San Gabriel unit. Such efforts would improve the ability of the NPS to develop interpretive materials and programming related to cultural resources.

Angeles National Forest

The Angeles NF would continue to balance use and resource protection in accordance with its multiple-use policy. Legislative guidance could affirm the original intent of the national forest to protect watershed resources. Legislation could bring additional, tools, and resources to the Angeles NF in order to steward the significant geological and biological resources associated with the San Gabriel Mountains. For example, the San

Gabriel Mountains function as a refuge for many rare and endangered species. To protect the habitats and ecosystems associated with these species, the USFS could enter into management agreements with non-federal agencies and organizations to protect habitat that spans multiple jurisdictional boundaries, providing opportunities for the dispersal of wildlife and plants within the forest and into other areas. Protection of habitat across the region would also benefit wildlife and plant adaptation to climate change. In general, a higher priority would be placed on ecological restoration.

The San Gabriel Mountains are rich in cultural resources including archeology, Native American resources, historic recreation sites, historic mining sites, architecture, and historic flood protection structures. New resources could be allocated to document, protect, and interpret cultural resources in the San Gabriel Mountains. Programs could be designed for the public to experience the cultural, historical, and spiritual value of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Operations and Maintenance

San Gabriel Unit

Existing agencies would continue to be responsible for the operation and maintenance of their lands and facilities. The NPS would be responsible for operations and maintenance of lands which it acquires.

Staffing. Given NPS budget constraints, it is likely that the San Gabriel unit would initially have a small staff, or rely on support from existing staff at Santa Monica Mountains NRA. However, funding would likely increase over time, subject to Congressional budget priorities. Soon after establishment, the NPS would complete a unit management plan that would identify park priorities, management emphases, and required NPS staffing for a 15-20 year timeframe.

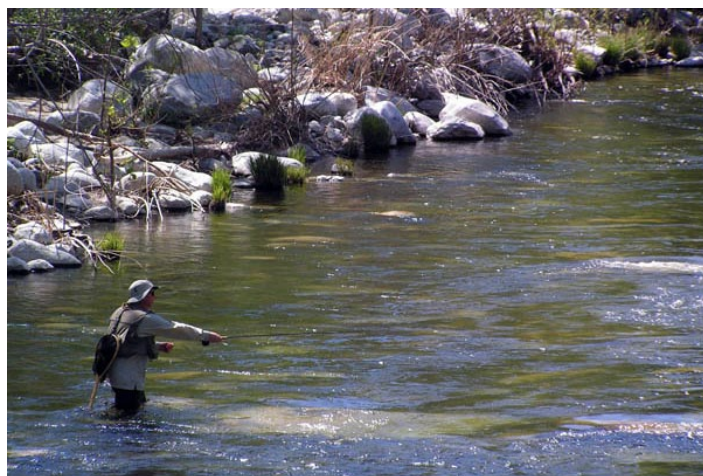
Because the San Gabriel unit would be managed as part of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA and managed in partnership with other agencies, less staff would be required than what would be expected in a traditional national park. Partnership parks typically require staff to handle park coordination and outreach, assist partners with conservation planning, and provide interpretive and educational programs.

Based on comparisons of staffing levels for existing partnership parks of similar size and with small NPS landownership, the following types of staff might be recommended for the selected alternative. Some positions would be shared with the Santa Monica Mountains NRA staff based in Thousand Oaks, CA.

- Partnership Specialist
- Unit Manager
- Administrative Assistant
- Visitor Use Assistant
- Interpretive Park Rangers
- Law Enforcement Park Rangers
- Teacher Ranger
- GIS Technician
- Volunteer/Outreach Program Coordinator
- Education Program Specialist
- Cultural Resource Specialist
- Outdoor Recreation Planner/Community Planner
- Wildlife Ecologist
- Biological Technician

Through Service First or cooperative management agreements, the NPS and other partner agencies could share staff, facilities, and funding to assist in the operations and maintenance of heavily used visitor areas. For example, the NPS could provide rangers to supplement USFS staff in high use areas of the Angeles NF. The NPS and partner agencies could also leverage funding and resources to improve existing facilities or provide new facilities where necessary.

The NPS would coordinate new partnerships and facilitate the development of more volunteer programs to assist in the maintenance of facilities, preservation/restoration



Fishing, West Fork of the San Gabriel River, NPS Photo

efforts, and interpretation of significant resources. Additionally, the NPS would provide opportunities for job training and conservation stewardship programs for youth and community members.

Land Acquisition. Lands within the San Gabriel unit would remain under their current jurisdictions, with each land management agency continuing to fund its own operations. Approximately 37% of the land in the proposed NRA is already protected for recreation and conservation by partner agencies (18,500 of approximately 49,000 acres). Much of the remaining lands are comprised of commercial and residential uses that would not be appropriate or feasible for NPS land acquisition. The NPS could request funding for land acquisition for acquisition of areas with resource significance such as a historic site or open space with native habitat. NPS land acquisition funding is extremely limited. Partner agencies may also pursue land acquisition within the San Gabriel unit. The NPS would be directed to identify priority parcels for acquisition (through donation or purchase) within two years of designation.

Operational and Visitor Facilities. Construction of new administrative facilities for NPS operations and management would not likely be required to support the proposed San Gabriel unit. Some staff and operational work could be accomplished at existing facilities within the Santa Monica Mountains NRA. However, given the distance to the San Gabriel Valley, an operational presence would also be necessary in the San Gabriel unit, particularly for education, outreach, and agency coordination positions. Given the existing amount of office space available in and near the proposed San Gabriel unit, it is likely that the NPS could share administrative and operational facilities with partner agencies or lease other office space available in the area. There may also be opportunities to adaptively reuse an historic building or property if the NPS acquired land that contained such facilities. The NPS could also use partner facilities or adaptively reuse buildings to provide visitor facilities. The Angeles NF and various local and state park and recreation agencies also operate and manage existing visitor facilities. If established, the NPS would identify specific operational and visitor facilities needs through a unit management plan.

Angeles National Forest

Legislative guidance may direct additional funding for operations and maintenance of the Angeles NF to provide more rangers and other staff in heavily used visitor areas. New volunteer programs would be developed to assist in the maintenance of facilities, preservation/restoration efforts, and interpretation of significant resources.

Use of the Service First authority would improve the customer service, effectiveness and efficiency of the NPS



Clockwise, from top left: Jackson Lake; Lashbrook Park; Devils Punchbowl; Pio Pico State Historic Park

and Angeles NF in attaining shared goals by authorizing the two agencies to use each other's staff, equipment, facilities, and other resources, as appropriate, to accomplish mutually agreed-upon work.

Funding and Costs

The selected alternative would rely on the funding streams of partner agencies, as well as newly authorized NPS funding. Legislative guidance for the Angeles NF may authorize additional funding. Working in partnership with the NPS and other agencies, partners may be able to explore new fundraising opportunities to achieve resource restoration and protection goals, as well as provide improved recreation, interpretation, and educational facilities and programs.

San Gabriel Unit

The NPS would need additional federal funding for its administrative, educational, technical assistance, and interpretive roles. In addition, the NPS and partner agencies could establish a fundraising organization, be a coordinating body for existing grant programs, and work together to leverage funds from a variety of sources (e.g. state bonds, Land & Water Conservation Fund) to increase and prioritize funding for projects and staff in the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains. Partner organizations could also work together to leverage private funding and donations.

NPS operating costs for national recreation areas vary widely, depending on the amount and type of resources managed, number of visitors, level of programs offered, safety and security issues, and many other factors. While no formal estimates of operating costs have been completed for this study, budgets from comparable NPS units illustrate the potential range. Boston Harbor Islands

NRA, Chattahoochee River NRA, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, and Santa Monica Mountains NRA are all partnership-based NPS units comprised primarily of non-NPS lands. The annual operating base budgets for these units range from \$1.22 million to \$8.9 million. Based on the size of the area, and the types of services and assistance offered through the partnership, the cost of NPS operations for the San Gabriel unit could be expected to be \$1 to \$3 million. The operational budget would primarily fund salaries. Additional costs would include leasing or maintaining administrative space, interpretive and educational materials or media, and maintenance of any NPS-owned facilities or lands.

Planning and Implementation Projects. The San Gabriel unit would be eligible to receive funding for planning and projects through the NPS. For example, soon after establishment, the NPS could provide initial planning funds for a unit management plan which would define management priorities, more specific actions, and funding needs for the San Gabriel unit. The unit management plan would be completed in collaboration with partners. A unit management for the size and scale of unit proposed in the selected alternative would likely take 4 to 5 years to complete and could cost between \$500,000 and \$700,000. Additional NPS funding may also be available for specific projects such as trail planning and development and interpretive materials. A unit management plan would identify more specific implementation needs.

Many NPS partnership parks also rely on private fundraising through “friends” groups. The funds raised through these groups can be used to supplement the operating budgets of the partners. At Boston Harbor Islands NRA, for example, the Boston Harbor Island Alliance is a nonprofit organization authorized through legislation to raise and manage funds for facilities and programming on partner lands. In 2008, the Alliance spent \$2.25 million for visitor programming and capital improvements within the NRA on lands owned by state, federal, municipal, and private entities. In addition, the Alliance received \$5 million for environmental mitigation projects over several years, to be used on partner lands.

Angeles National Forest

In order to accomplish the goals of the selected alternative, additional funding would be required, either through appropriations, partnerships, or philanthropy. The increased attention and a narrower management focus may encourage additional or reprioritized federal funding, over time, for the Angeles NF to achieve resource restoration and protection goals, as well as provide improved recreation, interpretation, and educational facilities, and programs.

The Angeles NF receives the majority of its funds through allocations appropriated by Congress. In FY2011, the Angeles NF received \$32 million in funding for the entire forest. Of this amount, 60%, or \$19.3 million, was budgeted for wildfire preparedness and fuels reduction, with the remaining 40 percent, or \$12.7 million, covering all other operations. Of this funding, \$2.9 million was appropriated for recreation, planning, resources, and wildlife management. Capital improvement funds, including facilities, trails, and roads maintenance totaled \$900,000 for the entire forest. When adjusted for inflation, the Angeles NF has had a continuing drop in non-fire operational funding since 1995. Within the study area, total funding for the Angeles NF for FY2011 is \$7.4 million (non-fire). Of this amount, \$1.7 million is allocated to recreation (700k), planning, resources, and wildlife management. Only \$540,000 is allocated to capital improvements including facilities, trails, and roads maintenance, \$78k of this is allocated for trail maintenance.

The Angeles NF does receive revenue from a variety of forest programs and users, especially use fees collected under the Recreation Enhancement Act (the Adventure Pass). This source of funding has become increasingly important, as it can be used for a wider range of purposes than reimbursable revenue, and has helped to supplement appropriated funds. However, the cost of enforcing and administering this program is almost equal to the revenue.

This study recommends that any resulting legislation provide for specific additional funding to be allocated each year for recreation, planning, visitor services, wildlife management, and resource protection. Without this legislative direction, the Angeles NF is not likely to experience an increase of appropriated funds to meet the objectives of the selected alternative.

Additional opportunities for increased funding exist from outside sources. Legislation could allow the USFS to accept direct donations and provide mechanisms for developing diverse partnerships with nonprofit fundraising, support or friends groups. The elevated visibility and attention of a new designation adjacent to the Angeles NF, coupled with an increased sense of identity for those living in the region, could enhance the ability of the Angeles NF to more successfully raise private funds and seek special appropriations for particular projects. Legislative guidance could also create new authorities to retain fees such as special use permits, etc. to fund forest operations and programs.

Environmental Assessment

Before taking an action, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to identify a range of alternatives for that action and to analyze the potential environmental impacts of that action, including any potential adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed action is implemented. The NPS prepared an environmental assessment (EA) for the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study to identify and analyze the potential environmental and socioeconomic consequences of each of the alternatives considered in the study.

The NPS evaluated the environmental consequences of each alternative on the following topics: biological resources, cultural resources, recreation use and visitor experience, socioeconomic, land use, and water resources.

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was completed for this document. The FONSI also contains a summary of public comments on the draft study report. The FONSI can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel>.

Next Steps

Transmittal of the final study report to Congress officially completes the special resource study process. Implementation of the selected alternative would require Congressional legislation. If Congress does not pass legislation to implement the study's recommendations, then the study would simply remain as a recommendation. If Congress passes legislation addressing the San Gabriel area, the legislation would be the guiding policy for the park unit, and would supersede the recommendations of the study report.

If Congress establishes a national park unit, the NPS would begin implementing the Congressional legislation. One of the first steps that the NPS would take would be to work with area partners on a management plan, including a broad vision for the park unit and more detailed guidance for implementation. This management plan would be completed with public involvement and appropriate environmental compliance.



Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority Preserve, NPS Photo



**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**

San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study
Park Planning and Environmental Compliance
333 Bush St., Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94104

HOW TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE FINAL STUDY REPORT AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

This document presents a summary of the final San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study. The final study report, including the draft report and environmental assessment, errata, and the Finding of No Significant Impact, is posted on the project web site at:

<http://www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel>

A public comment summary and NPS responses to comments are also available on the web site.

Limited printed or CD-ROM copies of the full draft report and errata are available. If you have not received a copy of the draft report and would like one, please contact us by mail or e-mail and provide your name and mailing address.

Contact Information

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United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

MAR 26 2013

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman, Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit to Congress the *San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study*. The study was completed pursuant to Public Law 108-42, signed in July 2003. The act directed the Secretary of the Interior to study the San Gabriel River Watershed and the San Gabriel Mountains to determine the significance of the area's resources and the suitability and feasibility of adding the area to the national park system. Responsibility for completing the study was delegated to the National Park Service (NPS).

The NPS finds that the resources evaluated through this study are nationally significant, suitable, feasible, and appropriate for NPS management, and that there is strong local support for NPS involvement in the area through partnerships.

The most effective and efficient alternative as determined by the NPS provides for the establishment of a San Gabriel unit of the nearby Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. This unit would provide the NPS and other land management agencies and organizations with guidance and direction to work together in new ways. Partnership arrangements among federal and state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, and area landowners would be the primary means to achieve the conservation, recreational, and educational goals of the San Gabriel unit.

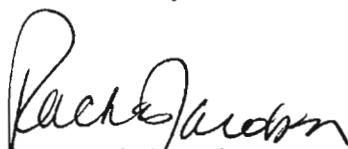
Under this alternative, which would expand the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the NPS and numerous other agencies and organizations with land and interests in the area would: 1) work collaboratively to protect significant resources, restore ecological communities, and improve recreational opportunities; 2) provide technical assistance to willing communities for conservation planning to extend open space connections and form a network of parks, habitats, and open spaces; and 3) offer new educational and interpretive opportunities. The Angeles National Forest (Angeles NF) would not be included in the San Gabriel unit. The NPS and the US Forest Service (USFS) would work in partnership through the Service First authority to achieve similar goals in the Angeles NF, and legislative guidance would provide additional support and authorities for the Angeles NF to steward resources and improve recreational opportunities. The full text of the most effective and efficient alternative can be found in the enclosed *Finding of No Significant Impact* (FONSI). The study included an extensive public involvement process with community members, non-profit organizations, private property owners, elected officials, and government agencies. Comments received during the study's public review period indicate strong support for NPS involvement in management of the area's resources. As directed in the study's authorizing legislation, the NPS

worked closely with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC), the Angeles NF and other federal, state, and local government entities; and the NPS considered regional flood control and drainage needs and publicly-owned infrastructure such as wastewater treatment facilities. Under the selected alternative the NPS would not have any land-use regulatory authority over lands that the United States does not own.

The Department of the Interior's preferred management option for these resources is establishment of a San Gabriel unit of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and collaborative management with the USFS through the use of existing Service First authorities. This recommendation is based on the determination that this alternative is the most effective and efficient alternative in protecting resources and providing visitor use and enjoyment, and it reflects the perspectives of the USFS and the public support for NPS involvement in the area.

An identical letter is being sent to the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Doc Hastings, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives; and the Honorable Edward Markey, Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives. The affected California delegation members will also receive a copy of the report and this letter.

Sincerely,



Rachel Jacobson
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish
and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Barbara Boxer
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
The Honorable Judy Chu
The Honorable Howard P. "Buck" McKeon
The Honorable Gary G. Miller
The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano
The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
The Honorable Edward R. Royce
The Honorable Adam B. Schiff
The Honorable Brad Sherman
The Honorable Linda T. Sanchez
The Honorable Paul Cook
The Honorable Tony Cardenas
The Honorable Gloria Negrete McLeod
The Honorable Henry Waxman
The Honorable Julia Brownley



San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study & Environmental Assessment

Finding of No Significant Impact
October 2012



***San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains
Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment***

California

October 2012

Introduction

The San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act (P.L. 108-042, July 2003) authorized the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a special resource study of (1) the San Gabriel River and its tributaries north of and including the city of Santa Fe Springs, and (2) the San Gabriel Mountains within the territory of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

The purpose of this special resource study is to determine whether any portion of the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains study area is eligible to be designated as a unit of the national park system. Through the study process, the NPS identified alternative strategies to manage, protect, or restore the study area's resources, and to provide or enhance recreational opportunities. The study conveys information to the U.S. Department of the Interior and Congress to aid in determining whether designation of a unit of the national park system is desirable and appropriate.

The National Park Service finds that the resources evaluated through this study are nationally significant, suitable, feasible and appropriate for NPS management. This document identifies the selection of the most effective and efficient alternative ("the selected alternative") and the basis for a determination that completion of the study results in no associated significant impacts on the human environment.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this study is to comply with the San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-042) which directed the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the area described above, in consultation with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and other appropriate governmental entities, and with consideration of regional flood control and drainage needs and publicly owned infrastructure such as wastewater treatment facilities.

The special resource study followed the process established by the National Park System New Area Studies Act (P.L. 105-391, 16 U.S.C. § 1a-5). This law requires that these studies be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321- 4347). At the beginning of the study process, the NPS initiated a notice of scoping that was published in the Federal Register on January 19, 2005 (70 FR 3064). Through the initial public scoping process, the NPS identified a range of issues to address through the study, as well as impacts of concern to the public.

This study is needed to provide the Secretary of the Interior and Congress with information on opportunities for management of the resources found within the study area. It identifies and analyzes alternatives for the management, administration, and protection of those resources, and evaluates their appropriateness for becoming a unit of the national park system.

Study Area

The study legislation directed the NPS to conduct a Special Resource Study of the following areas: (1) the San Gabriel River and its tributaries north of, and including, the city of Santa Fe Springs; and (2) the San Gabriel Mountains within the territory of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy. The National Park Service defined the area for study through examination of the study act's legislative history and intent and through the public scoping process.

The study area covers more than 1,000 square miles (over 700,000 acres) in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan region. It includes some of the most densely populated and diverse areas of the United States. Most of the study area is located in Los Angeles County (approximately 85%) and the remainder lies in Orange and San Bernardino counties. In addition to a portion of the San Gabriel River watershed, the study area also includes portions of the Los Angeles River, the Santa Clara River, and the Antelope Valley watersheds, as well as very small portions of the Santa Ana River and Mojave watersheds.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) manages approximately two thirds of the study area (450,000 acres in the San Gabriel Mountains) as part of the Angeles National Forest (Angeles NF). With the exception of private inholdings, permitted cabins, ski areas, roads, and flood protection structures and other utilities, the forest remains primarily undeveloped. In close proximity to highly urban areas, the forest provides a refuge for wildlife and recreational opportunities for the greater Los Angeles metropolitan region.

Over fifty communities are located in the study area, with approximately 1.5 million residents. The Los Angeles metropolitan region is home to over 16 million residents. The largest communities in the study area include Pomona and Santa Clarita, with populations near 150,000. The City of Palmdale is the largest community at the northern end of the study area with approximately 115,000 residents.

Evaluation of Nationally Significant Resources

The NPS has determined that two regions of the study area are nationally significant under the National Park Service New Area Studies Act criteria; the San Gabriel Mountains and the Puente-Chino Hills. The San Gabriel Mountains and foothills are nationally significant for their geologic resources, high biodiversity, dynamic river systems, and a long history of scientific study and discovery. The active mountain system has created scenic and unusual landscapes that support a high level of ecological diversity and contain a uniquely diverse assemblage of geologic resources and features. Nationally significant cultural resources include the Mount Wilson Observatory and San Dimas Experimental Forest. The Puente-Chino Hills contain a high level of biodiversity and outstanding examples of southern California communities, including coastal sage scrub, one of the most endangered plant communities in California, and the best remaining stands of California walnut-dominated forests and woodlands in their southern limit of distribution.

Evaluation of Suitability

This study concludes that portions of the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills, as described in the draft study report, are suitable for inclusion in the national park system, based upon an evaluation of the study area resources and their relative quality, character, and rarity. Together, the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills contain a combination of themes and resources not found in any national park unit or comparably managed area.

Evaluation of Feasibility

The study concludes that a collaborative partnership-based park unit, which respects the complex mix of land use, ownership, and regulatory authority in the study area, is feasible. Opportunities for collaborative management with local, state and federal managers to protect natural and cultural resources, to provide recreation, public access, interpretation and educational opportunities, and other compatible uses in a partnership-based park unit have been demonstrated to exist. A large traditional national park unit, owned and operated solely by the National Park Service, is determined to be infeasible.

Need for NPS Management

The study concludes that a collaborative management approach which includes a leadership role for the National Park Service is a superior management option for meeting the complex conservation and recreation needs of the study area. In particular, the NPS has the ability to work in a coordinated fashion, on a regional basis, to address equitable access to open space, protection of significant resources, and interpretation and education of significant resources. Existing NPS assistance programs are currently insufficient to address these needs in the study area.

Alternatives Analyzed

Four alternatives were analyzed in the *San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Draft Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment*. The alternatives are based on the purpose and need for the project and are consistent with existing laws, NPS policy and the special resource study legislation.

No Action Alternative: Continuation of Current Management

Public land management agencies and local governments would continue their land management, visitor services, public education, recreation and interpretive programs at approximately the current levels of activity and funding, according to current plans. Existing cooperative management efforts would continue. The National Park Service would have no role in the study area beyond the existing segments of two national historic trails, some ongoing technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, and limited financial assistance through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Alternative A: San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area

Congress would designate the San Gabriel Mountains unit of the Angeles National Forest (Angeles NF) as a National Recreation Area (NRA) that would continue to be managed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The designation would bring additional recognition, tools, and support to the Angeles NF in order to steward watershed resources and ecosystems, and improve recreational opportunities. The National Park Service would have no role in the NRA beyond a continuation of the informal partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and Santa Monica Mountains NRA.

Alternative C: San Gabriel Watershed National Recreation Area

Congress would designate the upper San Gabriel River watershed within the Angeles NF and a half-mile corridor around the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers within the study area as a National Recreation Area to be managed by a voluntary partnership of agencies and organizations with land and interests in the designated area. The primary roles of the NPS would be coordination of the partnership and taking a lead role in coordinating interpretive and educational messages about significant resources. Each partner and other jurisdictional authorities would retain land ownership, management, and decision-making authority for lands

that they own. The partnership would work to create new recreational and open space opportunities that are compatible with maintaining watershed values, water supply, flood protection, and habitat values.

Alternative D: San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area

Congress would designate the San Gabriel Mountains unit of the Angeles NF, adjacent foothill areas with ecological resource values, areas near the San Andreas Fault, portions of the western Puente Hills, and half-mile corridors along the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers as a National Recreation Area. The NRA would be managed much the same as described under alternative C, under a partnership comprised of agencies and organizations with interests in the area. The NPS role would be essentially the same as in alternative C, but with the addition of a technical assistance program to provide conservation and recreation planning assistance to interested public agencies, private landowners, and organizations beyond the NRA boundaries to create and connect parks, conserve habitat and provide new recreational experiences throughout the region.

Alternatives Considered But Dismissed

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NPS policy, alternatives may be eliminated from detailed study based on the following reasons (40 CFR 1502.14(a)):

1. Technical or economic infeasibility;
2. Inability to meet project objectives or resolve need for the project;
3. Duplication of other less environmentally damaging alternatives;
4. Conflicts with an up-to-date valid plan, statement of purpose and significance, or other policy; and therefore would require a major change in that plan or policy to implement; and
5. Environmental impacts would be too great.

Public review of preliminary alternatives revealed a high level of dissatisfaction for preliminary alternative B, the San Gabriel Parks and Open Space Network. Alternative B envisioned a network of public and private partners engaged in collaborative planning and information sharing, focused on open space, recreation, wildlife corridor, and interpretive opportunities. This alternative was dismissed for its inability to meet project objectives, as determined through agency and public input.

The Selected Alternative

Concept

The most effective and efficient alternative is primarily a combination of management concepts from alternative A (San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area) and alternative D (San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area), as presented in the *San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Draft Special Resource Study*. Some additional refinements have been made to reflect public concerns, provide for efficient management, and to take advantage of new authorities provided to the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) through the Service First authority (made permanent in December 2011).

The selected alternative would establish a San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area which would provide the NPS, and other land management agencies and organizations with guidance and direction to work together in new ways. Partnership arrangements among federal and state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, and area landowners would be the primary means to achieve the conservation, recreational, and educational goals of the San Gabriel unit. The Angeles National Forest (Angeles NF) would not be included in the San Gabriel unit. The NPS and USFS would work in partnership through

the Service First Authority and legislative guidance would provide additional support and authorities for the Angeles NF to steward resources and improve recreational opportunities.

Specifically, components of the selected alternative would include:

San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA (San Gabriel unit). The San Gabriel Mountains foothills, San Gabriel and Rio Hondo river corridors and the western Puente Hills (alternative D south of the Angeles NF) would be established as an additional unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA. The NPS and numerous other agencies and organizations with land and interests in the area would: 1) work collaboratively to protect significant resources, restore ecological communities, and improve recreational opportunities; 2) provide technical assistance to willing communities for conservation planning to extend open space connections and form a network of parks, habitats, and open spaces; and 3) offer new educational and interpretive opportunities.

Angeles National Forest. The selected alternative would also bring additional recognition, tools, and support to the Angeles NF in order to steward watershed resources and ecosystems and improve recreational opportunities. In lieu of a new designation for the Angeles NF, this guidance would: 1) reaffirm the primary importance of the Angeles NF in preserving watershed and natural resources, while continuing to provide for multiple use management; and 2) prioritize funding for resource protection, recreation, and education, and establish mechanisms to increase funding for facilities, maintenance, ecological restoration, visitor management; and offer new educational programming, and stewardship activities. This would be accomplished without a national recreation area designation on the Angeles NF.

Collaborative Federal Management. The NPS and USFS would collaborate through the Service First authority and other mechanisms to protect the significant resources of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains, provide high quality recreation and education opportunities, and assist the surrounding communities in providing community-based recreation and conservation opportunities. The NPS and the USFS would work together:

- To explore opportunities to protect and enhance interconnected ecosystems essential for long-term viability of significant natural resources.
- To help communities provide close-to-home outdoor recreation, conservation and education opportunities for their residents, as well as to better connect to the nearby national park and national forest areas.
- To provide an array of seamless outdoor experiences in the San Gabriel watershed and mountains.

Proposed Area

THE SAN GABRIEL UNIT

The San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA is shown on the attached map (p. 23) and would include:

- The San Gabriel Mountains foothill areas in the San Gabriel Valley with ecological resource values. Areas with ecological resource values include designated critical habitat for federally listed threatened or endangered species, and areas within one of the Los Angeles County proposed significant ecological areas;
- A half-mile corridor around the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers from the Angeles NF boundary south to Santa Fe Springs; and
- Portions of the western Puente Hills with ecological resource value and recreational potential (areas west of Harbor Boulevard). This primarily includes lands owned/or and managed by the Puente Hills

Habitat Preservation Authority and lands proposed by Los Angeles County to be included in the Puente Hills Significant Ecological Area. The Puente Hills Landfill would not be included in the boundary. However, at some time in the future, the NPS and the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority could enter into management agreements with the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County to provide recreational opportunities in this area.

The San Gabriel unit would include approximately 49,000 acres of land; approximately 37% of this area is already protected for conservation or recreation by existing agencies and organizations.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

The San Gabriel Mountains, within the Angeles NF, are also addressed in the selected alternative. However, no new designation would be applied to this area.

Management

SAN GABRIEL UNIT

The San Gabriel unit of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA would be managed in partnership with agencies and organizations with land and interests in the area. Agencies and organizations that own and manage land within the San Gabriel unit would continue to manage their lands according to their own policies and regulations. NPS policies would only apply to lands that the NPS acquires. As much of the land within the NRA is currently in public ownership and much of the remaining land is comprised of commercial and residential uses inappropriate for NPS management, land acquisition by the NPS would be limited.

The San Gabriel unit partners could include, but would not be limited to, the following agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, Los Angeles County, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority, the Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority, and the Watershed Conservation Authority. Local communities/cities could also participate in the partnership. Through cooperative management agreements, partners would be able to provide coordinated educational and recreational programming, and share funding, staff, and facilities. In existing public land areas, interagency agreements could augment agency staffing to manage heavily used areas providing higher levels of visitor services, education, and safety. Other partnerships could also be established, such as with community-based organizations and tribal groups.

NPS Role. The NPS would take a lead role in coordinating partnership-based activities within the San Gabriel unit. Through cooperative management agreements, the NPS could also provide educational, interpretive, law enforcement and other services to partner agencies. The NPS would also take a lead role in providing coordinated interpretative and educational messages about the significance of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains for existing nature centers, museums, park programs, etc.

The NPS would have no land use regulatory authority for lands that it does not own. As funding permits, the NPS would be authorized to acquire lands from willing sellers within the San Gabriel unit to protect significant resources or for operational purposes.

The NPS would offer technical assistance to interested public agencies, private landowners, and organizations to create and connect parks, conserve habitat, provide new recreational experiences, and foster a sense of

regional identity. The NPS could also assist in organizing volunteer programs within the San Gabriel unit and on the Angeles NF.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

The Angeles NF would continue to be managed by the USFS according to existing guiding policies. Additional guidance would authorize the USFS to enter into cooperative management agreements with local agencies and conservancies to protect biodiversity and watershed resources, interpret significant resources, enhance recreational opportunities, and provide more educational and interpretive opportunities within San Gabriel Mountains. In addition, the Angeles NF would have the ability to accept donations from philanthropic and partner organizations to improve facilities and resources.

Service First Authority. Legislative guidance would also direct the USFS and the NPS to engage in partnership efforts and interagency coordination to protect the significant resources of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains, provide high quality recreation and education opportunities, and assist the surrounding communities in providing community-based recreation and conservation opportunities. Such partnerships could be facilitated through the Service First authority and other mechanisms.

The laws creating the Service First authority (December 2011) give the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture the authority to establish programs involving certain land management agencies to:

- Conduct activities jointly or on behalf of one another;
- Collocate in Federal offices or leased facilities; and
- Make reciprocal delegations of their respective authorities, duties and responsibilities
- Make transfer of funds and reimbursement of funds on an annual basis, including transfers and reimbursements for multi-year projects.

The Service First authority provides for interagency operational efficiency in attaining shared goals and missions, allows agencies to develop programs and projects tailored to meet shared objectives, allows agencies to share equipment, facilities and other resources to accomplish mutually agreed-upon work, and allows the re-delegation of staff authorities, duties and responsibilities among participating Service First agencies (NPS, USFS, BLM, FWS). Execution of partnership efforts is achieved through a Service First agreement, which documents agency commitment to accomplish mutual interest. Allocation of specific funding can be identified to implement and accomplish programs and projects outlined in a Service First agreement.

Existing Agencies, Regulatory Authorities, and Land Use

SAN GABRIEL UNIT

Much of the land within the proposed San Gabriel unit (approximately 37%) is already protected by various agencies and organizations. The National Park Service recognizes that existing public agencies, private conservation organizations, and individuals successfully manage important natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities within the proposed San Gabriel unit. The NPS applauds these accomplishments and actively encourages the expansion of conservation activities by state, local, and private entities and by other federal agencies.

Retention of Local Land Use and Existing Regulatory Authorities. The designation of an NPS national recreation area unit would not establish additional regulatory or land use authorities over local governments. The NPS is not a regulatory agency. NPS land management policies and regulations would only apply to lands that the NPS acquires. The NPS would only consider acquiring land on a limited basis from willing sellers. The

selected alternative would respect existing general plans and local zoning, as well as state and local laws and policies for lands that are not federally owned.

Protection of Water Supply, Flood Protection, and Sanitation Infrastructure Facilities and Functions. The Los Angeles metropolitan region has highly complex systems of public infrastructure to transport and store local and regional water supplies. In addition, numerous facilities are necessary to treat wastewater and manage solid waste. Many of these facilities are located on or near the San Gabriel River. The San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-042) directed that the study consider regional flood control and drainage needs and publicly owned infrastructure such as wastewater treatment facilities. The study recommends that any resulting legislation ensure that infrastructure designed for flood protection, storage and transport of water supplies, treatment of water and wastewater, and management of solid waste would be unaffected by the designation. This includes exemption from 16 U.S.C. § 460l-22(c) (prohibition of solid waste disposal operations in national parks) for existing solid waste facilities and operations, such as landfills and transfer stations, within the San Gabriel unit.

The selected alternative would retain existing water rights. Management of water supply and treatment plants would continue under current authorities. The proposed San Gabriel unit designation would not entail any new or future beneficial uses or requirements for water supply, water quality, or air quality regulations.

Private Property Rights. Any legislation proposed to implement study recommendations should specify that eminent domain would not be used for land acquisition within the San Gabriel unit. The NPS would only consider acquiring land on a limited basis from willing sellers. Designation would not impact local land use authority over lands not owned by the NPS.

Fire Protection. Fire protection would remain the responsibility of existing federal, state, and local agencies (Los Angeles County, U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). The San Gabriel unit partnership could work together to take a pro-active approach to coordinated resource management to reduce catastrophic fires.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

U.S. Forest Service management of existing Angeles NF lands would continue. USFS policies would continue to be applied to management of these lands.

Education and Interpretation

SAN GABRIEL UNIT

Through new interpretive and educational programs, the NPS would engage people of all ages in learning about the significant natural and cultural resources within the San Gabriel watershed and mountains. Examples of interpretive messages would include the history and importance of water resources, regional biodiversity, the geological significance of the San Gabriel Mountains, Native American history and prehistory, the role of fire on the landscape, and early California settlement.

The NPS would coordinate a voluntary information network to partner with established environmental education centers, visitor centers, etc. throughout the watershed to help augment and enrich interpretive and educational programming related to the significance of the San Gabriel watershed and mountains. The primary role of the NPS within the San Gabriel unit would be to lead the effort to provide coordinated interpretive messages and educational programs. The NPS would also work with partners to develop accessible interpretive and educational materials, including multi-lingual information and signage, to reach broader audiences.

In addition to programs conducted within the San Gabriel unit, NPS staff would coordinate with local school districts and area youth organizations to conduct environmental stewardship programs and engage youth in learning about the natural world around them. When needed and as funding permits, new facilities and programs could be developed to support educational efforts. The NPS Junior Ranger program could be promoted for school-aged children. There are also opportunities to inspire youth about the rich cultural heritage of the region.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

The Angeles NF would be recognized for its nationally significant resources associated with the San Gabriel Mountains. Working through Service First agreements, the USFS and the NPS would provide more interpretive information about significant resources and offer new educational programs. Educational programs would emphasize to visitors the value of watershed resources and how to recreate in a way that is compatible with protecting such resources. New opportunities for educational programs associated with the San Dimas Experimental Forest would be explored.

Recreational Opportunities and Access

SAN GABRIEL UNIT

Within the San Gabriel unit, a variety of recreational opportunities would continue to be available to the public. Many communities in the region, however, lack appropriate access to park and recreational resources. Recreational uses and activities would be determined by the existing land management agency. The NPS and partner agencies would seek to improve recreational access and opportunities in urban areas that are deficient in recreation and park lands by offering assistance in planning for close-to-home recreational opportunities, better trail access, and improved public transportation options to recreational areas. Additionally, the NPS and partner agencies would explore opportunities to restore vacant or unused land to provide new recreational opportunities.

The NPS and partners would work together to target underserved and disadvantaged communities for engagement in the opportunities for and benefits of outdoor recreation. Children in communities that do not have adequate access to outdoor recreation tend to have higher rates of childhood diseases related to obesity such as diabetes. The NPS would conduct outreach to local communities, organizations, and schools to promote opportunities for healthy recreation in the San Gabriel unit.

The NPS would also work with partners to seek ways to improve the recreational experience in more heavily impacted areas by providing more education, improving facilities, improving maintenance and law enforcement, and enhancing visitor management to reduce impacts. Improved recreational experiences in more rural areas could focus on protecting the rural recreational experience by providing better trail connections and improved equestrian staging areas.

The voluntary information network would identify parks and sites with recreational and learning opportunities. This network would be expansive, including sites with recreational and learning opportunities associated with the San Gabriel River watershed, the Puente Hills, and the San Gabriel Mountains. At each site, visitors could find maps and guides linking one site with others pertaining to the same or related themes.

Many agencies are currently working to improve accessibility, as is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The NPS would work with partners to improve recreational access to the area's parks and public lands for persons with disabilities.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

Recreation is the primary use in the Angeles NF. With over 3 million annual visitors, the Angeles NF has one of the highest national forest visitation levels in the nation. Over the past ten years, funding for recreation, interpretation, and education has remained flat. Increased attention and focused management resulting from new legislative directives may encourage additional or reprioritized federal funding for enhancing recreation in the San Gabriel Mountains. This could include improved visitor management in heavily used recreational areas as a result of more forest rangers, better facilities, improved trail connections and trailheads, better educational efforts, and new approaches to manage visitation.

Existing recreational opportunities would remain on the Angeles NF pursuant to USFS established rules and regulations. Future decisions regarding appropriate recreational opportunities would continue to be determined by the USFS, including administration of any recreational special use permits such as for recreational residences and ski areas.

New partnership opportunities may also assist the Angeles NF in fundraising for improved recreational experiences and planning for recreational connections (e.g. trails, bicycle paths). The NPS and USFS would partner and work together on recreational opportunities on the Angeles NF through Service First agreements. Such agreements allow the two agencies to share staff, funding, and offices to achieve mutual objectives.

Resource Protection (Ecological Communities and Cultural Resources)

The selected alternative would emphasize protecting significant resources associated with the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente Hills.

SAN GABRIEL UNIT

The NPS would facilitate opportunities to work in collaboration with resource management agencies and organizations to conserve and enhance resources through research, cooperative management, monitoring, and restoration. Ecological communities could be enhanced by additional scientific knowledge, expertise, and technical assistance.

The NPS and partner agencies would work together to identify opportunities to protect ecosystems and wildlife corridors. For example, the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills are refuges for rare and endangered species. These species need to be able to move to and from these open space areas, particularly in the case of wildfire events and for adaptation associated with climate change. Better ecosystem connectivity also fosters greater biodiversity. The NPS and partner agencies would seek to leverage additional funding for ecological restoration and wildlife habitat conservation efforts.

Coordinated cultural resource management would also be an emphasis. The NPS would seek to document, protect and interpret cultural resources within the San Gabriel unit. Such efforts would improve the ability of the NPS to develop interpretive materials and programming related to cultural resources.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

The Angeles NF would continue to balance use and resource protection in accordance with its multiple-use policy. Legislative guidance could affirm the original intent of the national forest to protect watershed resources. Legislation could bring additional, tools, and resources to the Angeles NF in order to steward the significant geological and biological resources associated with the San Gabriel Mountains. For example, the San Gabriel Mountains function as a refuge for many rare and endangered species. To protect the habitats and ecosystems associated with these species, the USFS could enter into management agreements with non-

federal agencies and organizations to protect habitat that spans multiple jurisdictional boundaries, providing opportunities for the dispersal of wildlife and plants within the forest and into other areas. Protection of habitat across the region would also benefit wildlife and plant adaptation to climate change. In general, a higher priority would be placed on ecological restoration.

The San Gabriel Mountains are rich in cultural resources including archeology, Native American resources, historic recreation sites, historic mining sites, architecture, and historic flood protection structures. New resources could be allocated to document, protect, and interpret cultural resources in the San Gabriel Mountains. Programs could be designed for the public to experience the cultural, historical, and spiritual value of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Operations and Maintenance

SAN GABRIEL UNIT

Existing agencies would continue to be responsible for the operation and maintenance of their lands and facilities. The NPS would be responsible for operations and maintenance of lands which it acquires.

Staffing. Given NPS budget constraints, it is likely that the San Gabriel unit would initially have a small staff, or rely on support from existing staff at Santa Monica Mountains NRA. However, funding would likely increase over time, subject to Congressional budget priorities. Soon after establishment, the NPS would complete a unit management plan that would identify park priorities, management emphases, and required NPS staffing for a 15-20 year timeframe.

Because the San Gabriel unit would be managed as part of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA and managed in partnership with other agencies, less staff would be required than what would be expected in a traditional national park. Partnership parks typically require staff to handle park coordination and outreach, assist partners with conservation planning, and provide interpretive and educational programs.

Based on comparisons of staffing levels for existing partnership parks of similar size and with small NPS landownership, the following types of staff might be recommended for the selected alternative. Some positions would be shared with the Santa Monica Mountains NRA staff based in Thousand Oaks, CA.

- Partnership Specialist
- Unit Manager
- Administrative Assistant
- Visitor Use Assistant
- Interpretive Park Rangers
- Law Enforcement Park Rangers
- Teacher Ranger
- GIS Technician
- Volunteer/Outreach Program Coordinator
- Education Program Specialist
- Cultural Resource Specialist
- Outdoor Recreation Planner/Community Planner
- Wildlife Ecologist
- Biological Technician

Through Service First or cooperative management agreements, the NPS and other partner agencies could share staff, facilities, and funding to assist in the operations and maintenance of heavily used visitor areas. For example, the NPS could provide rangers to supplement USFS staff in high use areas of the Angeles NF. The NPS and partner agencies could also leverage funding and resources to improve existing facilities or provide new facilities where necessary.

The NPS would coordinate new partnerships and facilitate the development of more volunteer programs to assist in the maintenance of facilities, preservation/restoration efforts, and interpretation of significant resources. Additionally, the NPS would provide opportunities for job training and conservation stewardship programs for youth and community members.

Land Acquisition. Lands within the San Gabriel unit would remain under their current jurisdictions, with each land management agency continuing to fund its own operations. Approximately 37% of the land in the proposed NRA is already protected for recreation and conservation by partner agencies (18,500 of approximately 49,000 acres). Much of the remaining lands are comprised of commercial and residential uses that would not be appropriate or feasible for NPS land acquisition. The NPS could request funding for land acquisition for acquisition of areas with resource significance such as a historic site or open space with native habitat. NPS land acquisition funding is extremely limited. Partner agencies may also pursue land acquisition within the San Gabriel unit. The NPS would be directed to identify priority parcels for acquisition (through donation or purchase) within two years of designation.

Operational and Visitor Facilities. Construction of new administrative facilities for NPS operations and management would not likely be required to support the proposed San Gabriel unit. Some staff and operational work could be accomplished at existing facilities within the Santa Monica Mountains NRA. However, given the distance to the San Gabriel Valley, an operational presence would also be necessary in the San Gabriel unit, particularly for education, outreach, and agency coordination positions. Given the existing amount of office space available in and near the proposed San Gabriel unit, it is likely that the NPS could share administrative and operational facilities with partner agencies or lease other office space available in the area. There may also be opportunities to adaptively reuse an historic building or property if the NPS acquired land that contained such facilities. The NPS could also use partner facilities or adaptively reuse buildings to provide visitor facilities. The Angeles NF and various local and state park and recreation agencies also operate and manage existing visitor facilities. If established, the NPS would identify specific operational and visitor facilities needs through a unit management plan.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

Legislative guidance may direct additional funding for operations and maintenance of the Angeles NF to provide more rangers and other staff in heavily used visitor areas. New volunteer programs would be developed to assist in the maintenance of facilities, preservation/restoration efforts, and interpretation of significant resources.

Use of the Service First authority would improve the customer service, effectiveness and efficiency of the NPS and Angeles NF in attaining shared goals by authorizing the two agencies to use each other's staff, equipment, facilities, and other resources, as appropriate, to accomplish mutually agreed-upon work.

Funding and Costs

The selected alternative would rely on the funding streams of partner agencies, as well as newly authorized NPS funding. Legislative guidance for the Angeles NF may authorize additional funding. Working in partnership with the NPS and other agencies, partners may be able to explore new fundraising opportunities to achieve

resource restoration and protection goals, as well as provide improved recreation, interpretation, and educational facilities and programs.

SAN GABRIEL UNIT

The NPS would need additional federal funding for its administrative, educational, technical assistance, and interpretive roles. In addition, the NPS and partner agencies could establish a fundraising organization, be a coordinating body for existing grant programs, and work together to leverage funds from a variety of sources (e.g. state bonds, Land & Water Conservation Fund) to increase and prioritize funding for projects and staff in the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains. Partner organizations could also work together to leverage private funding and donations.

NPS operating costs for national recreation areas vary widely, depending on the amount and type of resources managed, number of visitors, level of programs offered, safety and security issues, and many other factors. While no formal estimates of operating costs have been completed for this study, budgets from comparable NPS units illustrate the potential range. Boston Harbor Islands NRA, Chattahoochee River NRA, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, and Santa Monica Mountains NRA are all partnership-based NPS units comprised primarily of non-NPS lands. The annual operating base budgets for these units range from \$1.22 million to \$8.9 million. Based on the size of the area, and the types of services and assistance offered through the partnership, the cost of NPS operations for the San Gabriel unit could be expected to be \$1 to \$3 million. The operational budget would primarily fund salaries. Additional costs would include leasing or maintaining administrative space, interpretive and educational materials or media, and maintenance of any NPS-owned facilities or lands.

Planning and Implementation Projects. The San Gabriel unit would be eligible to receive funding for planning and projects through the NPS. For example, soon after establishment, the NPS could provide initial planning funds for a unit management plan which would define management priorities, more specific actions, and funding needs for the San Gabriel unit. The unit management plan would be completed in collaboration with partners. A unit management for the size and scale of unit proposed in the selected alternative would likely take 4 to 5 years to complete and could cost between \$500,000 and \$700,000. Additional NPS funding may also be available for specific projects such as trail planning and development and interpretive materials. A unit management plan would identify more specific implementation needs.

Many NPS partnership parks also rely on private fundraising through “friends” groups. The funds raised through these groups can be used to supplement the operating budgets of the partners. At Boston Harbor Islands NRA, for example, the Boston Harbor Island Alliance is a nonprofit organization authorized through legislation to raise and manage funds for facilities and programming on partner lands. In 2008, the Alliance spent \$2.25 million for visitor programming and capital improvements within the NRA on lands owned by state, federal, municipal, and private entities. In addition, the Alliance received \$5 million for environmental mitigation projects over several years, to be used on partner lands.

ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

In order to accomplish the goals of the selected alternative, additional funding would be required, either through appropriations, partnerships, or philanthropy. The increased attention and a narrower management focus may encourage additional or reprioritized federal funding, over time, for the Angeles NF to achieve resource restoration and protection goals, as well as provide improved recreation, interpretation, and educational facilities, and programs.

The Angeles NF receives the majority of its funds through allocations appropriated by Congress. In FY2011, the Angeles NF received \$32 million in funding for the entire forest. Of this amount, 60%, or \$19.3 million, was budgeted for wildfire preparedness and fuels reduction, with the remaining 40 percent, or \$12.7 million, covering all other operations. Of this funding, \$2.9 million was appropriated for recreation, planning, resources, and wildlife management. Capital Improvement funds which includes facilities, trails, and roads maintenance totaled \$900,000 for the entire forest. When adjusted for inflation, the Angeles NF has had a continuing drop in non-fire operational funding since 1995. Within the study area, total funding for the Angeles NF for FY2011 is \$7.4 million (non-fire). Of this amount, \$1.7 million is allocated to recreation (700k), planning, resources, and wildlife management. Only \$540,000 is allocated to capital improvements including facilities, trails, and roads maintenance, \$78k of this is allocated for trail maintenance.

The Angeles NF does receive revenue from a variety of forest programs and users, especially use fees collected under the Recreation Enhancement Act (the Adventure Pass). This source of funding has become increasingly important, as it can be used for a wider range of purposes than reimbursable revenue, and has helped to supplement appropriated funds. However, the cost of enforcing and administering this program is almost equal to the revenue.

This study recommends that any resulting legislation provide for specific additional funding to be allocated each year for recreation, planning, visitor services, wildlife management, and resource protection. Without this legislative direction, the Angeles NF is not likely to experience an increase of appropriated funds to meet the objectives of the selected alternative.

Additional opportunities for increased funding exist from outside sources. Legislation could allow the USFS to accept direct donations and provide mechanisms for developing diverse partnerships with nonprofit fundraising, support or friends groups. The elevated visibility and attention of a new designation adjacent to the Angeles NF, coupled with an increased sense of identity for those living in the region, could enhance the ability of the Angeles NF to more successfully raise private funds and seek special appropriations for particular projects. Legislative guidance could also create new authorities to retain fees such as special use permits, etc. to fund forest operations and programs.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The “environmentally preferred” alternative is the course of action that would best protect, preserve and enhance historic, cultural and natural resources, and that would cause the least damage to the biological and physical environment. The environmentally preferred alternative is not the same as an agency’s “preferred” or “most effective and efficient” alternative. The NPS has determined that alternative D would be the environmentally preferable alternative because it would protect natural and cultural resources, provide opportunities for recreation and visitation, realize greater economic benefits, and foster a broader framework for cooperative management over a larger area, as compared to the other alternatives, including the selected alternative. While the selected alternative would also provide these benefits, alternative D would provide them over a broader geographic area. However, because many of the same benefits could be realized under a more efficient management structure, alternative D was not selected as the most effective and efficient alternative.

Why the Selected Alternative Will Not Have a Significant Effect on the Quality of the Human Environment

The NPS has determined that the selected alternative can be recommended with no significant adverse effects on biological resources, cultural resources, recreation resources, socioeconomics, land use, or water resources.

This determination is based on the environmental impact analysis published in the draft study report which examined the effects of No Action and alternatives A, C, and D.

As defined in 40 CFR § 1508.27, significance of impacts is determined by examining the ten criteria below.

Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.

The NPS evaluated the potential environmental consequences of each alternative related to the following topics: biological resources; cultural resources; recreation use and visitor experience; socioeconomics; land use; and water resources. A range of minor impacts and beneficial effects is associated with the selected alternative (combination of alternatives A, C, and D).

Environmental effects would generally be beneficial. The impact analysis for all alternatives is necessarily broad to avoid speculation as to site-specific impacts, given the broad nature of the study. The outcome of the study is a recommendation to Congress. If Congress enacts the recommendations in this study, then specific actions would be developed and new environmental analyses would be undertaken prior to implementation. As with alternatives A, C, and D, the selected alternative would benefit biological resources by increasing opportunities for agencies to assist each other on restoration and conservation projects. Potential minor adverse effects due to increased recreational use would be mitigated through planning, visitor education, and staffing. Coordination of documentation, protection, and interpretation would benefit cultural resources. Collaboration between partners would also provide new recreational opportunities compatible with other values, such as flood protection and water supply. With enhanced or new recreation opportunities, small increases in visitation could have modest beneficial economic effects on surrounding communities. Park-poor communities would experience beneficial effects through collaborative planning for close-to-home recreation and improved access. There would be no effects on public and private land use and jurisdictional authority. Increased restoration efforts would have beneficial effects on water resources. Improved planning to align river recreation opportunities with the goals of flood protection, water quantity, and water quality, along with increased enforcement and visitor education, would mitigate the potential adverse effects of increased recreation.

The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

Selection of the most effective and efficient alternative will not adversely affect public health or safety. The study seeks to address public health and safety issues through its alternatives by fostering collaborative planning and management and increasing opportunities for healthful outdoor recreation. Because this level of study does not lend itself to meaningful environmental analysis of this topic, the topic was dismissed from additional analysis.

Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

Although situated in a large metropolitan region, portions of the study area contain wetlands, some prime farmlands, many historic and other cultural resources, ecologically critical areas, and an array of municipal, state, and federal park lands. These types of resources are among the values that the selected alternative would enhance and protect through coordinated planning, if Congress enacts the recommendations in the study, as well as additional funding and staffing. No adverse impacts to these resources have been identified.

The degree to which effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

No highly controversial effects, resulting from actions proposed in the alternatives, have been identified during either initial public scoping, preparation of the environmental assessment, or the public review period.

The vast majority of comments supported selection of alternative D, from which many of the management concepts of the selected alternative were retained. Objections to the action alternatives often focused on elements not contained within the alternatives presented to the public, or within the selected alternative. For example, many such comments expressed concern that an NPS national recreation area designation would transfer management and regulation of the Angeles National Forest to the NPS, an action not proposed in any alternative. Furthermore, the selected alternative does not propose a national recreation area overlay on the Angeles National Forest.

The degree to which the possible effects on the quality of the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

There were no highly uncertain, unique or unknown risks identified during either the preparation of the environmental assessment or the public review period.

The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The study does not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle because it only makes recommendations, based on completion of a prescribed evaluation process. These recommendations from the Director may be conveyed by the Secretary to the Congress. Development of specific actions responsive to the recommendation would require Congressional action and would subsequently be refined through a management planning process, including unit-specific environmental analysis, if established.

Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.

Other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions were analyzed for their potential to contribute to cumulative impacts in association with implementation of the selected alternative, if enacted by Congress. These include the cumulative effects of land use trends, including continuing development, urbanization, and population growth and demographic trends, both past and projected. The selected alternative seeks to ameliorate the adverse effects associated with these factors so that the overall level of cumulative impact under each impact topic would either be arrested or would decline as compared to the no action alternative. The effects of the selected alternative would comprise a very small component of these cumulative impacts, given the size and scope of the urban landscape within and surrounding the study area. Overall, the predominately beneficial impacts of the selected alternative, combined with the negligible to major adverse impacts from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, would not result in a significant cumulative adverse effect.

The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

Loss of historic sites from development, lack of documentation, and inadequate resource protection are continuing effects that the selected alternative seeks to remedy through increasing interagency coordination of cultural resource planning, protection, and documentation, as well as visitor education efforts. Overall, protection of historic structures and sites would be improved through the selected alternative. There would be no adverse effect or no effect on historic structures and identified cultural landscapes within the area of potential effect as a result of the selected alternative, beyond baseline conditions.

The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Increased restoration, interpretation and education, and inter-agency coordination of habitat protection would provide beneficial effects to threatened and endangered species. While the provision of new recreation opportunities holds the potential for additional impacts on wildlife and ecological communities, an emphasis on enhanced visitor education and coordinated planning, particularly with wildlife agencies, for recreation compatibility with watershed resource protection would keep adverse impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat to minor levels. This would result in a “may affect, but not likely to adversely affect” determination under the Endangered Species Act.

Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The selected alternative would not violate federal, state, or local environmental protection laws.

Public Engagement

Public Scoping

The NPS initiated public scoping for this study in January 2005. The scoping process included meetings with agencies, elected officials and organizations, public meetings and workshops, three newsletters, a web page, and written public comments. These sources were used to identify the issues, significant resources, ideas for alternatives, and impact topics to be considered for environmental analysis.

The NPS study team used a variety of methods to notify the public and stakeholders of the study initiation. On January 19, 2005, a Notice of Scoping was published in the Federal Register, formally initiating the comment period for public scoping. The comment period extended to May 20, 2005. The study team compiled a mailing list of 3,000 from partner agencies and mailed a newsletter to this list. This newsletter described the study process and announced the dates and locations of public scoping meetings held throughout the study area. Public meetings were held in Rosemead, Claremont, Diamond Bar, Downey, and Acton. During the public scoping period, the NPS received 65 comment letters and e-mails from individuals, agencies, cities, organizations and elected officials.

Input on the scope of the study was also provided by the approximately 175 people who attended public meetings hosted by the NPS. Additional input was gathered through meetings with various individuals, agencies, organizations, cities, and local elected officials. After scoping comments were received, the NPS published a second newsletter summarizing the comments. The majority of scoping comments were related to the study process and scope, opportunities, potential impacts, and important resources to consider.

Following the scoping period, the NPS conducted additional outreach by holding numerous meetings with cities, communities, government councils, and elected officials to refine the study boundary based on both public comments and legislative intent. A third newsletter was published describing changes to the study scope (scope revision).

Alternative Concepts

The study team released draft alternative concepts in a newsletter for public review in the summer of 2009. The public comment period was open from August to November 2009. The study team distributed over 3,000 newsletters to organizations and individuals on its mailing list, partner agencies, and at public and stakeholder meetings. A limited number of newsletters translated into Spanish were also distributed. The newsletter was

also available for comment on the National Park Service's Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website.

News releases announcing the availability of the alternatives newsletter and the public meetings schedule were distributed to local media, and several newspaper stories were published. The purposes of the newsletter were to: 1) present preliminary study findings; 2) present preliminary alternatives; and 3) solicit comments on the preliminary findings and alternatives. The newsletter also contained information on the date, time, and locations of public meetings that were held to solicit comments on the preliminary findings.

Between August and October 2009, the study team held six public meetings at locations throughout the study area including Diamond Bar, El Monte, Santa Clarita, Glendora, Palmdale, and Tujunga. All of the meetings were well attended by diverse groups of community members (approximately 450 total). In addition to the public meetings, the NPS study team held meetings with local, state and federal government agencies, organizations, communities, and Congressional offices.

The NPS received approximately 4,800 comments. Most of these comments were submitted via written letters and through e-mail. There were 205 unique letters and 4,600 form letters of five different types. The NPS received comments from 36 different agencies and organizations. The remainder was from individuals. The public meeting transcripts are also part of the public comments. A variety of views were expressed, but the majority of comments supported combining different aspects of the alternatives and having more NPS involvement and leadership. Some communities and agencies expressed concerns about loss of local control, or restrictions on their ability to carry out necessary functions. Other commenters expressed concerns about restrictions on recreational activities or impacts on their communities from increased recreational use. Better access to recreation and providing close to home opportunities were important goals for many commenters. Others expressed interest in furthering opportunities for connecting wildlife habitats and protecting watershed values. Following the comment period, the study team continued to meet with stakeholder groups and agencies to refine the alternatives.

Draft Report

In October 2011, the study team produced and distributed the Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment to elected officials, government entities, organizations and individuals on the mailing list for review and comment. Approximately 600 copies of the draft study report and 2000 copies of the newsletter were distributed through mail, email and at public meetings. Additional copies were available online.

Five public meetings were held between October 29, 2011 and November 17, 2011 in El Monte, Palmdale, Pomona, Santa Clarita, and Tujunga. Over 400 individuals participated in the meetings, including various elected officials and stakeholders. The NPS presented the study process and criteria used in the study, discussed the study results, and solicited comments. Copies of the draft study report were made available and participants were encouraged to submit comments by mail or through the PEPC website. The comment period ended February 13, 2012, after being extended twice. The NPS received over 12,000 comments. There were 822 unique letters and over 11,000 form letters. Comments were received from diverse groups, including conservation organizations, Latino organizations, local governments, elected officials, park and conservation agencies, recreational interests and organizations, and public works agencies, including water, sanitation, and flood protection.

COMMENT SUMMARY

Generally, public comments were in favor of a national recreation area designation with NPS involvement. The vast majority of comments supported alternative D, citing a desire for NPS involvement over a broad

geographic area and a need for additional funding support for the Angeles NF. Many others supported the no action alternative, often questioning the need for NPS management or expressing concern that NPS involvement could lead to increased closures, restrictions, and regulations. In comparison, support for alternatives A and C was slight.

Approximately 95% of the comments were submitted as a result of several organized campaigns in support of alternative D. Supporters of alternative D often expressed a belief that NPS involvement in the area could provide valuable assistance to public land agencies, including the Angeles NF, and to local communities, improving recreation access and experiences for residents and enhancing the protection of open space, wildlife corridors, and other natural resource values. Many of the comments supporting alternative D also recommended changes outside of the scope of the study, including inclusion of lands outside of the study area and designation of new wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers on the Angeles NF.

Many who supported no action were concerned that a national recreation designation would lead to increased recreation in areas that are already heavily impacted, such as the San Gabriel River Canyon. Although it was not proposed in any of the alternatives, supporters of the no action alternative were often concerned that an NPS national recreation area designation would transfer management and regulation of the Angeles NF to the NPS, resulting in changes to existing recreation opportunities and special uses. Similarly, a few agencies were concerned whether a designation would have regulatory impacts on flood protection, water supply, sanitation, vector control, fish and game management, and agency operations. Increasing funding and support for the Angeles NF to manage recreation, however, was a common desire expressed by many supporters of both alternatives D and no action.

A public comment and response report summarizing comments received by the National Park Service during the public comment period is available on the study website at www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel.

Agency Consultation

As required by law, the National Park Service sent letters to the following agencies and tribal organizations in November 2005 to notify them of the study process and to seek their input:

AGENCIES

- Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service
- Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
- Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
- California Department of Fish and Game
- State Historic Preservation Office

TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Alliance of Native Americans
- Cahuilla Band
- California Indian Council Foundation
- Chumash
- Coastal Gabrielino Diegueno
- Costanoan - Rumsen Carmel Tb

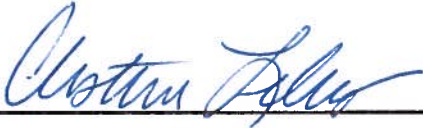
- Fernandeno / Tataviam Tribe
- Fontana Native American Indian Center, Inc.
- Gabrieleno/Tongva Tribal Council of San Gabriel
- Gabrielino - Tongva Nation
- Gabrielino - Tongva Springs
- Gabrielino – Tongva Tribe
- Gabrielino - Tongva Youth Council
- Gabrielino Band of Mission Indians of CA
- Ish Panesh United Band of Indians
- Juaneno Band of Mission Indians
- Kawaiisu Tribe
- Kitanemuk & Yowlumne Tejon Indians
- LA City/County Native American Indian Comm
- Los Coyotes Band of Mission Indians
- Owl Clan
- San Luis Rey Mission Band
- San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians
- San Manuel Tribal Administration
- Santa Rosa Band of Mission Indians
- Soboba Band of Mission Indians
- Tehachapi Indian Tribe
- Tejon Indian Tribe
- Ti'At Society
- Tongva
- Tumamait
- Urban Indian Council

Congress directed that the study would be conducted in consultation with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and other appropriate federal, state, and local governmental entities, along with consideration of regional flood control and drainage needs and publicly owned infrastructure such as wastewater treatment facilities. The National Park Service met with or distributed information to many regional, state, and federal agencies, as well as local governments, public utilities, and organizations, throughout the study process. During the public review period, the NPS received over fifty comments from agencies, organizations, local governments, private business, and elected officials. Alternative D received wide support from cities, county agencies, state agencies, and twenty-three members of Congress. Most of the management concepts described under alternative D are also found in the selected alternative.

Findings

The NPS has determined that completion of this special resource study and recommendation of the most effective and efficient alternative to the Director does not constitute an action that normally requires an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The findings of the study will not have a significant effect on the human environment and no major environmental impacts are foreseen. There are no significant adverse impacts on public health, public safety, threatened or endangered species, historic properties either listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or other unique characteristics of the region. No highly uncertain or controversial impacts, unique or unknown risks, significant cumulative effects, or elements of precedence were identified. Implementation will not violate any federal, state, or local environmental protection law. This determination also included due consideration of the supportive nature of the public comments and agency, tribal and county recommendations which were received. Based on the foregoing, it has been determined that an environmental impact statement is not required for this special resource study and thus will not be prepared.

Approved:



Christine S. Lehnertz
Pacific West Regional Director



Date



San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study & Environmental Assessment

Summary of Public Comments and Response
October 2012



Public Comment Summary and Response to Comments
Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains
Special Resource Study
and Environmental Assessment

October 2012

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I. Overview of Public Involvement

The National Park Service (NPS) released the *San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Draft Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment* (draft study report/EA) in October 2011. A 120-day public comment period closed on February 13, 2012, after two extensions. The original comment period from October 17 to December 16 was extended to January 9 due to a mailing delay, and was extended again in response to requests for more time. The NPS received approximately 12,000 comment letters about the draft study report/EA from many individuals, diverse groups, and several letter writing campaigns. The study team also held five public meetings in October and November 2011 at locations throughout the study area in El Monte, Palmdale, Pomona, Santa Clarita, and Tujunga. At each meeting, the study team gave a presentation describing the findings of the study and the alternatives. A question and answer session followed, after which the participants were asked to split into small groups where they could talk with a member of the study team, view posters showing the alternatives, and make comments which were recorded on flip charts. The meetings were facilitated by the study team, San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) staff, and additional NPS staff. The meetings were attended by approximately 400 participants.

Public Meetings

Participation in the public meetings to discuss the draft study report/EA was as follows:

| Location | Date and Time | Participants |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| El Monte | October 29, 2011, 1:00 p.m. | 146 |
| Palmdale | November 14, 2011, 7:00 p.m. | 40 |
| Pomona | November 15, 2011, 7:00 p.m. | 95 |
| Santa Clarita | November 16, 2011, 7:00 p.m. | 68 |
| Tujunga | November 17, 2011, 7:00 p.m. | 57 |
| TOTAL | | 406 |

Publicity / Press

A press release announcing completion of the draft study report/EA and a series of public meetings was sent to approximately 50 media contacts in southern California on October 17, 2011. From that time until the extended public comment period closed on February 13, 2012, media coverage about the draft study report/EA was primarily by the San Gabriel Valley Tribune, which wrote numerous articles. There were also posts about the draft study in a variety of internet blogs associated with recreation, the

environment, politics, communities, or business. Several other newspapers, a community radio station, a community television station, and a government policy journal also ran stories about the draft study report/EA.

Public Comments

The NPS received over 12,000 comments from individuals, agencies, elected officials, and organizations. Approximately 95% of the 12,000 comment letters received were submitted as a result of several organized campaigns. Most comments were submitted via written letters and e-mail. There were approximately 715 unique comment letters and over 11,000 form letters of 5 different types, several of which had multiple variations. Campaigns organized by the Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, the San Gabriel Mountains Forever Campaign, and Friends of the River accounted for the majority of the campaign comments submitted. The comments also include notes from the small group discussions held at each public meeting. Over one hundred comments were submitted in Spanish and translated for the record.

The NPS received comments from over 50 agencies, local governments, private businesses and organizations. Comments were also received from 25 elected officials, including a congressional delegation letter submitted by 23 members of Congress.

List of Agencies and Organizations Commenting

Organizations (28)

- Amigos de los Rios
- Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council
- Californians for Western Wilderness
- California Trail Users Coalition
- California Wilderness Coalition
- The City Project
- Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas (COFEM)
- Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA)
- The Conservation Alliance
- Friends of Coyote Hills
- Friends of the River
- Friends of the Whittier Narrows Natural Area
- Hills for Everyone
- National Forest Homeowners
- National Parks Conservation Association
- Pasadena Audubon Society
- Project Amiga
- Santa Clara River Watershed Conservancy
- San Gabriel Mountains Forever
- Santa Monica Trails Council
- Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

- Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter, San Gabriel Valley Task Force
- Sierra Club, Puente-Chino Hills Task Force
- Sierra Club, Southern California Forests Committee
- Sierra Madre Mountain Conservancy
- The Trust for Public Land
- The Wild Rivers Project
- The Wilderness Society

Professional Societies (1)

- Southern California Society of American Foresters (San Gabriel Chapter)

Local Governments and Community Associations (8)

- City of Claremont
- City of Diamond Bar
- City of Duarte
- City of Industry
- City of Monterey Park
- Crescenta Valley Community Association
- Hacienda Heights Improvement Association
- Juniper Hills Town Council

County Government (4)

- County of Los Angeles, Fire Department
- County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation
- County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works
- County of Los Angeles, County Sanitation Districts

Water Districts (3)

- The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
- Pasadena Water and Power
- San Gabriel Valley Water Association

Regional and State Agencies (7)

- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority
- San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC)
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District
- Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority

Elected Officials (25)

- California State Assemblymen, Tim Donnelly
- California State Senator, Bob Huff
- United States Representative, Karen Bass
- United States Representative, Xavier Becerra

- United States Representative, Howard Berman
- United States Representative, Lois Capps
- United States Representative, Judy Chu
- United States Representative, Sam Farr
- United States Representative, Bob Filner
- United States Representative, Janice Hahn
- United States Representative, Mike Honda
- United States Representative, Barbara Lee
- United States Representative, Zoe Lofgren
- United States Representative, Jerry McNerey
- United States Representative, Grace Napolitano
- United States Representative, Lucille Roybal-Allard
- United States Representative, Laura Richardson
- United States Representative, Linda Sanchez
- United States Representative, Adam Schiff
- United States Representative, Brad Sherman
- United States Representative, Pete Stark
- United States Representative, Maxine Walters
- United States Representative, Henry Waxman
- United States Representative, Lynn Woolsey
- United States Senator, Barbara Boxer

Federal Agencies (3)

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Forest Service – Angeles National Forest

Businesses (5)

- Aera Energy
- California Ski Industry Association
- Mountain High Resort
- Mt. Baldy Ski Lifts, Inc.
- National Ski Areas Association

Tribes (1)

- Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians

II. Summary of Comments Received

The comments on the *Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment* (draft study report/EA) covered a broad range of topics. The majority of the comments were either directly related to the study alternatives or to the primary topics of recreation management and resource protection which the alternatives were designed to address. The comments were entered into the National Park Service (NPS) Planning Environment and Public Comment database and analyzed. The following summary represents the full range of comments the NPS received. NPS responses to substantive comments are provided in the final section of this document, “Response to Substantive Comments on the *Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study/Environmental Assessment*.”

Acronyms

The following acronyms are commonly used throughout the comment summary:

ANF – Angeles National Forest
CA – California
BLM – Bureau of Land Management
EA– Environmental Assessment
LA – Los Angeles
NPS – National Park Service
NRA – National Recreation Area
OHV – Off-highway vehicles
RMC – Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
USFS – United States Forest Service

Study Process

Comments regarding the study process primarily pertained to suggestions for outreach, requests to extend the public comment period, outreach materials, and the study area extent. More outreach to schools and cities was suggested, along with more multicultural outreach strategies. Outreach to more stakeholder groups was also recommended, such as off-highway vehicle users. Some emphasized the importance of outreach to historical groups within the study area to ensure local cultural history is preserved and enhanced. It was also suggested that Native American stories and indigenous culture be incorporated into the planning process. There was a request for more public meetings on weekends as opposed to week nights due to evening traffic. There were multiple requests to extend the comment period, which was extended by the NPS from 60 to 120 days.

Regarding the products and outreach materials generated by the study team, some commenters felt the maps needed to be better linked to the text and to more clearly show which areas were included in each

alternative. Other commenters found the study to be well-written with informative outreach materials and noticed that previous public input had contributed to the development of the alternatives.

Some commenters felt that the Little Tujunga, Big Tujunga, and Arroyo River corridors as well as West Coyote Hills should be included in the study area, while others felt that San Antonio Canyon should not be included.

Resource Description

Comments on the resource description (Chapter 2) primarily included suggestions for technical corrections and additional information to be included in the study report (see errata for draft study report/EA).

Natural Resources

Climate and Topography. One comment suggested that the climate description explain the rain shadow effect on the north side of the San Gabriel Mountains. Comments on the topography description suggested corrections to the elevation of the highest peaks in the study area. One commenter suggested that the NPS further clarify use of the names “Mt. Baldy” and “Mt. Antonio.”

Water Resources. Comments on the water resources section primarily included technical corrections and suggestions for additional information about the Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam basins. Other commenters thought the word “watershed” needed to be better defined, and that Big Tujunga Canyon should be considered significant for contributing 14% of the water in the Los Angeles River. It was suggested that the watershed map include the broader Arroyo Seco watershed boundary within the Los Angeles River watershed.

Vegetation and Wildlife. Comments on vegetation and wildlife primarily included suggestions for additional information and corrections to descriptions of vegetation, habitat, and special status species. Other comments suggested that the study should mention extirpated species and be mindful of an ongoing scientific debate about how to classify coastal sage scrub. The availability of detailed vegetation mapping for the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority Preserve was also noted.

Cultural Resources

Comments on cultural resources requested clarification on historical dates and activities and associations of Native American groups. Some commenters also provided suggestions for additional information to be included in the study about Native American groups and viticulture and wine production that historically occurred in the San Gabriel Valley.

Recreational Resources

Suggested changes to the description of recreational resources were primarily correct or clarify management of recreational resources described. This included corrections for the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, the Whittier Narrows and Santa Fe Dam basins, the Puente Hills Habitat Authority

Preserve, the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel river bike trails, and the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historical Trail.

Cultural differences in recreation within the study area were also noted, such as the contrast between groups that routinely use the river heavily, and others that avoid or complain about crowded areas.

Significance

The majority of comments that the NPS received about significance expressed support and agreement with the study findings for national significance. There were also comments that expressed concern that some of the significance statements were overstated. For instance, one commenter felt that the “dynamic river systems” are actually very similar to river systems in other U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) areas. Another commenter believed that the importance of freshwater fishes in the study area was overstated. For others, the high number of homes, businesses and infrastructure in the study area seemed to contradict a finding of significance.

The NPS also received comments about additional resources that may be considered nationally significant including cultural resources related to the historical development of vineyards and citrus orchards and sites in the Puente Hills associated with the Portola Expedition.

Suitability

While many of the comments agreed that the study area was suitable for inclusion in the National Park System as a national recreation area, others thought that the amount of development within the study area suggested it was unsuitable, or that in comparison with other national parks across the country, it did not meet the standards of the NPS. For instance, some felt that the San Gabriel Mountains and the Angeles National Forest (ANF) do not meet suitability criteria because the multiple-use management policies are incompatible with NPS management policies.

Feasibility

Some commenters questioned the feasibility of implementing the action alternatives, given the current government deficit and economic crisis. Objection was expressed for federal spending for land acquisition in particular, noting difficulty in caring for federal lands as evidenced by the NPS maintenance backlog and staffing cuts. Others comments expressed concern that funding for a new NRA would be taken from other national parks, or from the ANF, and questioned whether any new money would be shared with ANF and benefit all areas of the ANF, not just the part within the study area.

Commenters who were optimistic about feasibility noted that a partnership structure could leverage more funding, and that innovative new sources of funds could be found.

Need for NPS Management

A large number of comments supported the need for NPS management in the study area. Expertise and assistance that commenters felt the NPS could provide included management of special status species, education and outreach programs, funding strategies, and experience with partnerships and collaborative management. Some commenters felt that adequate protection of the resources required NPS involvement as well as land acquisition. Others suggested that the NPS would be more successful at watershed protection than other agencies in the Los Angeles Region had been, could provide more resources to care for the area, and would attract additional revenue.

Other commenters felt there was not a need for NPS involvement and that an overlay by another government agency would be costly, inefficient, and would direct money to administration rather than to maintenance and operations. Some commenters stated that more analysis was needed to demonstrate the NPS could provide superior management, and that the findings were swayed to support the inclusion of NPS.

Alternatives

Overall Summary

Most of the comments received were about the study alternatives. The vast majority of comments supported alternative D, San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area, expressing a desire for NPS involvement over a broad geographic area and a need for additional funding for the Angeles National Forest. Many others supported Continuation of Current Management, the no action alternative, often questioning the need for NPS management or expressing concern that NPS involvement would lead to more restrictions. In comparison, support for alternative A, San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area, and alternative C, San Gabriel Watershed National Recreation Area, was slight.

The alternatives section of the comment summary begins with comments on items common to all alternatives, followed by comments on each alternative individually, including suggested changes for each alternative. Due to the large number of comments about alternative D, this alternative has additional subsections which include concerns, suggestions for management, suggestions for interpretive and educational opportunities, suggestions for boundary modifications, suggestions for additional designations, and suggestions for recreational opportunities and access.

Some of the local agencies that initially expressed concern about alternative D later expressed support when it was clarified that there would be no change to local regulatory authorities and jurisdictions. After the comment period had closed, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution supporting alternative D.

Actions Common to All Alternatives

The draft study report/EA described a series of actions common to all alternatives. Such actions acknowledged that under all alternatives local land use control and regulatory authorities would be

retained and that private property rights would not be affected. There was widespread agreement, both directly and indirectly, for the actions common to all alternatives (draft study report/EA, p. 164). One organization highlighted its agreement with three of these items: 1) retention of local land use and existing regulatory authorities; 2) protection of water supply, flood protection, and sanitation infrastructure facilities and functions; and 3) private property rights. For further reinforcement of existing regulatory authorities, another organization requested that specific language be added to the items common to all alternatives stating that administration and management of Recreation Forest System Lands would not change. Many of the concerns expressed in the comments are addressed in the statements common to all alternatives (See NPS Response to Substantive Comments).

Continuation of Current Management (No Action Alternative)

A number of commenters preferred the no action alternative. Preference for the no action alternative was primarily based on a desire for continued USFS management of the ANF. Some commenters felt that protection and expansion of recreation opportunities were a high priority in southern California, but that an NPS overlay on forest lands, as proposed in alternatives C and D, was unnecessary and lacked sufficient justification. These commenters also expressed concern that NPS involvement could lead to restrictions on access and use. Others felt that the USFS NRA designation in alternative A would create increased workloads for USFS staff due to extra layers of administration without clear benefits for USFS. Support for the no action alternative was also centered on concerns about increased government spending given the U.S. deficit and potential environmental impacts from increased recreation. Others felt the alternatives did not address certain problems such as illegal immigration or the need for more fire funding. Some commenters suggested that the USFS should be provided with additional funding without a national recreation area designation. Others noted a decline in services and recreational opportunities within the ANF over time, stating that funding was needed for fire suppression, managing riparian areas, rebuilding the ANF to a former level of service, and improving trail maintenance for safety and access. Some of these comments requested that funding go to USFS rather than to the NPS or a partnership.

Other Comments on Current Management

Current management of special use permits in the Angeles National Forest was supported, particularly for developed ski areas and recreation residences which these commenters urged should continue under USFS management.

Some commenters favored the USFS's multiple use mission, emphasizing economic use of natural resources, whereas other comments felt the NPS would take better care of the resources and the visitors. Concerns about current USFS management included: a need for greater enforcement of laws about littering; misinterpretation of laws about mining; destruction, closure, and decay of historic properties; use of non-native trees in restoration efforts; inadequate protection of forest resources; money being spent on a renovation of the Supervisor's office in Arcadia rather than in the field; problems with the Adventure Pass as a funding source; and more public engagement was needed.

Other commenters focused on the need to recruit volunteers to work on trails and restoration projects on the ANF. Some had previously offered to volunteer and had been turned away. Others were concerned about trail closures due to budget shortfalls, and offered to volunteer on trail maintenance projects to reopen areas such as the section of the Pacific Crest Trail near Mill Creek Summit. Others suggested that the USFS should address bark beetle impacts, control access, collect entry fees, and manage parking and public conduct near communities. Some commenters also expressed a desire that the washed out section of Highway 39 near Highway 2 be reopened for emergency purposes only.

Alternative A: San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area

Commenters in support of alternative A generally favored a continuation of USFS management over establishment of a unit of the national park system. Some commenters preferred alternative A because they opposed applying an NPS designation to private property without consent of landowners. Others wanted lands to remain under multiple use management, and expressed concern that the other alternatives would limit some types of recreation such as off-highway vehicle use. Many comments supporting alternative A recognized a need for more staff to properly protect, maintain, provide visitor services, and interpret the San Gabriel Mountains, but favored a simpler, less costly organization involving only one federal agency. Some comments supporting alternative A thought this was the no action alternative or said that current management was sufficient. Other comments noted that ANF had traditionally been used more for recreation than other uses, and converting to an NRA would be more consistent with that emphasis.

Suggested Changes to Alternative A

It was suggested that alternative A be expanded to describe the benefits of a USFS NRA in which non-traditional authorities would allow the USFS to enhance recreational opportunities in the San Gabriel Mountains. Other comments suggested that alternative A would only be viable if the USFS could receive additional funding and staffing. More specific suggestions for changes to alternative A included:

- monitoring San Gabriel Canyon for vandalism and gang activity
- the possibility of user fees to improve the area for fly fishing
- a desire to designate the West Fork of the San Gabriel River from Cogswell Dam to the highway as a catch and release fishing area
- a request to increase the number of trails used for mountain bikes and motorcycles
- adding plans for off-highway vehicle recreational development including expansion of motorized vehicle routes
- restoring educational and recreational opportunities previously offered in the Crystal Lake, Rincon, West Fork and East Fork areas
- granting new authorities to the USFS similar to those under NPS managed national recreation areas

Alternative C: San Gabriel Watershed National Recreation Area

The NPS received a relatively small number of comments about alternative C. Some commenters preferred alternative C because they felt that that alternative D was too large and exceeded the authorized parameters of the study. Others felt that the entrance to the San Gabriel Canyon is most in need of resources, and that areas not adjacent to the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo Rivers such as the Puente-Chino Hills seemed like separate units with different audiences. Some comments noted that the river corridor in alternative C was consistent with other NPS community planning efforts and the San Gabriel River Corridor Master Plan. Others expressed support for the concept of the San Gabriel Watershed NRA being managed by a voluntary partnership which retained local ownership and local land use authority.

Suggested Changes to Alternative C

The NPS also received comments with suggestions for changes to alternative C. It was recommended that in both alternatives C and D, the reopening of existing visitor centers in the ANF be identified as a priority. For example, the Chilao visitor center which features exhibits about the Chumash and local history has been closed for several years.

Other comments suggested that the boundaries of the San Gabriel Watershed NRA should not detract from the focus on the mountains. These comments were in favor of connecting the two ANF units to create a wildlife corridor, but were not in favor of including the Cucamonga Wilderness and areas to the north. Land acquisition along the San Gabriel River was viewed by some commenters as unnecessary. Due to potential conflicts with permits associated with waste management infrastructure, it was recommended that the sanitation facilities be excluded from any proposed NRA.

Some commenters felt that the concept of “cooperative management” is contradicted by the NPS having a lead role in management and were concerned about the implication that the NPS would have more influence over policies and direction.

Alternative D: San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area

The vast majority of comments on the study (over 95%) expressed a preference for alternative D, the San Gabriel Region NRA. Most of the commenters in support of alternative D stated that this alternative was preferred because it would provide greater conservation and protection of water resources, air quality, wildlife/wildlife corridors, and cultural resources. This perception was often based on the fact that alternative D had the largest NRA boundary with the potential to provide more visitor services over a greater area. Greater conservation of resources in the area was seen as important for future generations, particularly as the region’s population continues to rise. Most of the comments that supported alternative D also cited the potential for more recreational opportunities, particularly in urban areas that are deficient in outdoor recreation opportunities. Commenters also supported and valued NPS technical assistance towards creating a network of parks and open space. Many of these commenters cited the long-term public health benefits associated with improving outdoor recreation opportunities. Public comments also supported providing transit options for communities to better

access existing recreation areas. Greater interpretation and educational programs were also seen as an advantage of alternative D.

Many of the comments in support of alternative D saw value in NPS expertise and the potential for leveraging more funding for the area as a result of the designation. NPS expertise in education/interpretation, resource protection, partnerships and collaboration, visitor services, and technical assistance for planning and conservation were cited as needed services. Most commenters felt that additional funding that may result from the designation is needed to meet resource protection and recreation objectives. Numerous commenters also cited potential economic benefits from visitor spending and job creation as a rationale for supporting alternative D. Some comments specifically cited the economic benefits that the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area has provided for the region including millions of dollars in visitor spending and the creation of hundreds of jobs.

Many commenters cited the need for improvements to the ANF as their primary reason for preferring Alternative D. Comments cited deficiencies in ANF resources, particularly for management of intensely used visitor areas, and suggested that additional funding was needed to improve ANF visitor facilities such as restrooms, trash cans, and signage. A few commenters felt that more amenities and visitor facilities were needed on the northern side of the ANF. Other commenters recommended additional ANF funding for planning, law enforcement, restoration efforts, and resource protection.

Concerns about Alternative D

Some commenters could not support alternative D because they felt it would promote recreation in areas of the Angeles National Forest impacted by overuse. These commenters noted that impacts and waste from the current level of recreation is already excessive and impacts are occurring in residential areas from mountain bike traffic and congested parking near trailheads. Other commenters expressed concern that the designation could restrict existing uses or impose additional restrictions on special uses in the ANF.

Suggestions for NRA Management in Alternative D

The comments included a range of suggestions for the management of the San Gabriel Region NRA as described in alternative D. Suggestions were made in the following areas:

Ecosystem Protection and Watershed Management. Specific suggestions regarding protection of ecosystems and watersheds included reintroduction of species, providing additional funding for nonnative plant management, restoration for California steelhead, and greater protection of wildlife corridors. One comment suggested that the NRA develop a comprehensive plan for the protection of plants and wildlife. Some commenters felt that Big Tujunga Canyon should receive the same amount of management emphasis as the San Gabriel Canyon.

Oil and Gas Development/Mining and Minerals. Some commenters expressed a desire to see restrictions or bans on oil and gas development and mining. Specific concerns included proposed petroleum extraction in the Whittier Hills preserve and protecting a site where aggregate mining is

planned for development in the Santa Clarita area. Some commenters felt that implementation of alternative D should include a ban on strip mining.

NPS Roles. Comments suggested that the NPS have a maximum role within the NRA partnership. For some commenters this meant a stronger level of influence over policies and direction of the NRA. Some of these commenters suggested that NPS protection policies be applied over the multiple-use policies of the USFS while others suggested that NPS should fully administer lands within the NRA. Others had more specific suggestions for an NPS role including NPS taking the lead in education and interpretation and acquiring lands to prevent undesirable future development. Many comments expressed a desire to see the existing Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area serve as a model of successful cooperative management.

Partnerships. Some comments suggested specific agencies or organizations that should be included in the potential agency partners listed in alternative D. This included cities (Los Angeles and Whittier) and other agencies including Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

Law Enforcement. Comments suggested that improved security and law enforcement should be a management emphasis for alternative D, primarily in the San Gabriel Mountains

Job Training and Volunteer Programs. The NPS received a number of comments requesting that alternative D include job training and volunteer programs. Some commenters suggested that job training should be focused on youth and veterans. Such programs could include apprenticeships or internships. Others commented that the NRA workforces should reflect the diversity of the region. Volunteer programs were suggested for trail work, interpreters, docents, and maintenance.

Funding Priorities. A number of comments made suggestions for funding priorities should alternative D be implemented. Funding was specifically desired for resource protection, volunteer coordination and staffing, recreation, planning, wildlife management, and visitor services. More funding for the ANF was seen as necessary to meet the objectives of alternative D and some commenters requested that this be expressly stated. Some commenters discouraged using funds for visitor centers and buildings while others wanted assurances that funding for the proposed NRA would not detract from existing NPS units or from current ANF funding. One commenter suggested that mitigation funds should be made available to other nearby national forest canyons that may also receive increased visitor use including Deep Creek, Mill Creek, Lytle Creek, and Cajon Wash. Some comments suggested that no fees be charged for the NRA.

Suggestions for Interpretive and Educational Opportunities in Alternative D

Many of the comments in support of alternative D suggested specific management approaches for interpretation and education. The range of comments included broad programmatic suggestions, specific interpretive opportunities centered on topics or locations, and suggestions for interpretive media and facilities. There was broad support for an NPS role to coordinate interpretive and educational programs. Some suggestions for educational programs included providing information on the health benefits of recreation, wilderness survival, creation of living classrooms in the ANF, ranger-led programs

such as hikes and campfire talks, nature programs for children, and native gardens for learning. Other commenters suggested that alternative D educational and interpretive programs should emphasize preservation of cultural heritage, recognizing the cultural contributions of people of color, women, and Native Americans. Some commenters emphasized the importance of partnerships with local communities and communities of color in educational and interpretive efforts. A number of comments emphasized that the creation of a volunteer program could assist in providing interpretative and educational programs within the NRA.

Specific interpretative programs suggested in the comments include: interpretive geological tours in the San Gabriel Mountains and along the San Andreas fault; providing opportunities to educate visitors about the varied ecosystems represented in the NRA (desert to mountain to coastal environments); and making the San Dimas Experimental Forest a living history destination for forest visitors. Some comments suggested interpretation of specific cultural sites including Owen Brown's Grave site, the sites of World War II Japanese relocation assembly centers, the site of the original San Gabriel Mission, sites associated with the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, and sites associated with Native American heritage.

The NPS received many suggestions for specific types of facilities and interpretive media including kiosks, education centers, waysides, and signage. A number of comments emphasized a desire for culturally appropriate interpretive elements in multiple languages to engage more visitors to see national park lands and the NRA. Some suggested that priority should be given to providing staff to open existing visitor centers within the ANF, as opposed to constructing new facilities.

Suggestions for Boundary Modifications to Alternative D

The NPS received numerous comments requesting modifications to the boundary proposed in alternative D. The vast majority of comments recommended expanding the NRA boundary to include more wildlife corridors, additional national forest system lands, and more urban areas within the San Gabriel River watershed. A few comments suggested removing areas from the proposed boundary, including the Puente Hills, the Rio Hondo corridor, areas north of the ANF, and sanitation facilities such as active landfills.

The two areas that commenters most commonly suggested for inclusion in the San Gabriel Region NRA were the eastern Puente-Chino Hills and the eastern San Gabriel Mountains. Rationales for adding more of the Puente-Chino Hills included protection of the coastal sage scrub critical habitat, oak and walnut woodlands, and that area wildlife rely on broader habitat connections to Chino Hills State Park and the Cleveland National Forest. Other commenters suggested that inclusion of the larger Puente-Chino Hills corridor would facilitate completion of a trail network proposed for the area including the Schabarum-Skyline Trail. Some commenters raised concerns that the logic of not including the eastern Puente-Chino Hills does not correspond with the fact that the study notes that designation would not impact local and use authority, while other commenters suggested that alternative D be revised to recommend that the NPS be authorized to include the eastern Puente Hills administratively, without further legislative action, should they become available for purchase. Some comments questioned why the eastern San Gabriel Mountains were not included in the San Gabriel Region NRA. Comments specifically suggested that the

NRA be expanded to include the entire mountain range from SR-14 to I-15 including Ice House Canyon, Cucamonga Peak and Wilderness to the east. Expansion would allow for conservation of the entire mountain range and allow for better interpretation of the geologic significance of the San Gabriel Mountains.

The NPS also received numerous comments requesting that more urban areas be included in the alternative D boundary, including the entire San Gabriel River watershed. Specific suggestions include the Coyote Hills, the Montebello Hills, Eagle Rock, San Fernando, Highland Park, Pasadena, Sierra Madre, and expanding the river corridor in urban areas to include entire cities along the corridor. Other suggestions included the estuary of the San Gabriel River, Los Cerritos wetlands, Seal Beach, and river corridors that run south of Whittier Narrows. It was noted that areas south of Whittier Narrows are the most densely populated region in California after San Francisco.

A number of areas adjacent to the alternative D boundary were recommended for inclusion. Some commenters suggested including the northern unit of the Angeles National Forest in the NRA based on concerns that this portion of the national forest could become orphaned, unfunded, and poorly managed. A few commenters suggested that the San Gabriel Region NRA should be contiguous, or include connections to the Santa Monica Mountains NRA including the Rim of the Valley Trail. Other adjacent areas recommended by commenters for inclusion in the NRA were the Verdugo Mountains and the San Antonio Creek Watershed.

Some commenters wanted to see the NRA concept presented in alternative D expanded to include broader areas in southern California such as the San Bernardino National Forest, Bureau of Land Management lands, California State Parks, County Wilderness parks, the Palomar Mountains, and the San Jacinto Mountain area.

Several commenters recommended that certain areas be removed from the NRA boundary described in alternative D. The Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County requested that active landfills and other sanitation facilities be removed from NRA proposals to avoid plans and permits that would be detrimental to the Sanitation Districts' mission. Some residents in the Antelope Valley area requested that private lands north of the ANF be removed from the San Gabriel Region NRA. Some commenters suggested that the NPS should remove the Puente-Chino Hills and Rio Hondo areas since they are not geographically close to the San Gabriel Mountains.

Suggestions for Additional Designations to accompany Alternative D

The NPS received numerous comments requesting additional designations for the San Gabriel Region NRA. Many of the comments requested the establishment of new or expanded wilderness areas in the San Gabriel, Castaic, and San Bernardino Mountains. Such areas included Red Mountain, Red Rock Mountain, Fish Canyon, Condor Peak Proposed Wilderness, Castaic Proposed Wilderness, Cucamonga Wilderness additions, Sheep Mountain Wilderness additions, and San Gabriel Wilderness additions. A few commenters stated that they did not want to see additional wilderness designations or expansions in the study area. Also recommended were Wild and Scenic River designations for Middle Lytle Creek; the West, North and East Forks of the San Gabriel River; and San Antonio Creek from the upper slopes of

Mount San Antonio. Some commenters also recommended Wild and Scenic River designations for rivers in the San Bernardino National Forest.

Suggestions for Recreational Opportunities and Access for Alternative D

The NPS received a wide range of comments pertaining to recreational opportunities and access within the San Gabriel Region NRA. Numerous comments requested that alternative D strongly emphasize the need for more parks and better recreational access for communities or neighborhoods that are currently deficient in such opportunities. Some commented that this emphasis is consistent with the NPS “Call to Action” priority to have the NPS “fully represent our nation's ethnically and culturally diverse communities.” A few comments suggested that Azusa Canyon be the focus of new recreational facilities such as improved trails and paths.

A number of commenters requested more specificity about the types of recreational uses that would be permitted in alternative D. Some commenters suggested that alternative D include stronger language indicating that multiple-use of trails, including hikers, equestrians, runners, and cyclists, would be the goal for new trail projects, as well as for trail restoration projects. Some commenters were concerned that an NRA designation could restrict recreational uses. Other commenters suggested that in cases where resource protection necessitates a recreational use or activity to be discontinued, that viable alternative locations for those same uses or activities should be provided so as not to diminish already limited recreational resources. One commenter suggested that more fishing opportunities are needed on streams such as Big Tujunga and Pacoima Canyon.

Environmental Assessment

Level of Analysis

Comments on the environmental assessment primarily included suggestions for supplemental information and additional analysis or consideration of impacts on recreational uses and opportunities, socioeconomics and environmental justice, local land use and existing regulatory authorities, biological resources, and water resources. Some commenters called for completion of a full environmental impact statement, extension the comment period, or preparation of a supplemental environmental assessment. Additional impact topics suggested for analysis included floodplains and greenhouse gases. Several suggested that the indirect and unforeseen impacts of as-yet-unwritten legislation implementing the alternatives should be addressed. Criticisms of the analysis also included subjectivity and a lack of consistency across alternatives, making it difficult for the reader to compare them. Others were pleased that the analysis addressed social equity, human health, economic vitality and job creation, and cultural and spiritual values, in addition to resource impacts.

Recreation Use and Visitor Experience

Some commenters felt that alternative D would have the most beneficial impacts on recreational opportunities. Others expressed concern that a NRA designation would restrict access to recreation. In particular, they were concerned that USFS roads would close, hunting would be restricted to

accommodate more visitors, permit systems would be instituted, and additional wilderness designations would occur. Off-road vehicle use, hunting, rock collecting, gold mining, and downhill skiing were among the activities that some commenters felt were most jeopardized by an NRA designation and in need of greater attention in the impact analysis.

A concern was expressed about whether the recreation residence special use permits in the Angeles National Forest would continue to be administered by the USFS in the same way under the action alternatives, and about potential impacts if there was a change. This concern was raised for recreation residences in San Gabriel Canyon, Big Santa Anita Canyon, Tujunga Canyon and elsewhere in ANF. It was suggested that recreational cabins represent historic and cultural values. Some commenters and requested that any resulting legislation should specify that management of these permits would continue under USFS policy as in the past.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice

Some commenters felt that the economic benefits of an NRA designation were not adequately described in the draft study report/EA. Others saw negative economic impacts from increased bureaucracy related to future commercial and public activities including mining, communication towers, utilities, film production, skiing, and a general increase in federal regulation.

Commenters generally supported the environmental justice impact analysis in the draft study report/EA. Those who commented on environmental justice felt that alternative D best addressed this issue, primarily by the potential increase in recreation opportunities and open space in park-poor urban areas. These commenters felt that more such opportunities would contribute healthier and safer communities, as well as greater equity between different demographics in the Los Angeles region. Some commenters provided additional data and information supporting beneficial impacts related to socioeconomics and environmental justice.

Land Use, Regulatory Authorities, and Jurisdiction

Many commenters were concerned about the effect of an NRA designation on local land use control and existing agency authorities. They felt that these potential impacts should be explored further in the analysis. Some felt that designation would give the NPS some degree of control over local land use decisions through the imposition of new regulations and restrictions. Some initially concerned agencies later expressed support for an NRA after the formal comment period based on clarification that there would be no changes in jurisdiction or to operations and infrastructure essential for public health and safety.

Different USFS and NPS Policies. Some commenters were concerned that an NRA designation on USFS land would transfer management from USFS to the NPS resulting in undesirable changes such as loss of hunting and fishing opportunities; discontinuing special events such as the Angeles Crest 100 Mile Run; closing the packing station at Chantry Flat; discontinuing privately owned services such as Newcomb Ranch; or not allowing permits for recreational cabins.

Some commenters expressed a preference for USFS management based on experience with existing national park units that restrict hunting, fishing, and off-road vehicle use; confusion over management by multiple jurisdictions at Santa Monica Mountains NRA; conflict over commercial use such as oyster harvesting at Point Reyes National Seashore; and high visitation, facility development and fees at Yosemite and Grand Canyon national parks. Other commenters were concerned that a change to NPS management would lead to entrance booths and fees on forest highways. Some did not believe an NPS NRA would allow USFS to retain management of the forest. These commenters felt that assurances to the contrary were insufficient, and the initial designation would evolve in scope and authority over time.

Transportation Infrastructure. Concern was expressed that the alternatives would have impacts on transportation infrastructure, roads and other projects such as the East-West Freight Corridor. Some commenters felt that assurances in the study that the alternatives would not affect existing agencies providing these services were not specific enough or farsighted enough to overcome future NPS regulations and restrictions brought about by a new designation.

Water Supply, Flood Protection, and Sanitation Facilities. Several agencies expressed concern that their missions related to flood protection, water supply, water quality, and hydro- electric power would be impacted by an NPS designation. These commenters were concerned about potential conflicts of interest, such as regulation of dam operations to serve biological resources or recreational needs which could conflict with water delivery to water rights holders. Another noted that the City of Pasadena is contractually obligated to maintain the Azusa Conduit to be able to deliver water and requires access to the conduit for inspection, maintenance and repair. One comment noted that recreation areas at the Santa Fe and Whittier Narrows dam basins are currently managed by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, and that additional management by any agency would require review by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Office of Counsel to prevent conflicts with flood risk management requirements. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers expressed concern that the study did not address the congressionally authorized purpose of the dam basins, and the fact that these lands are subject to flooding at any time. The comments also pointed out that the lack of ditching on both sides of the roads in the river corridor contributes to the problem of flooding.

Access. Some commenters were concerned about the ability of communities and agencies to build and maintain needed infrastructure, freely access their project sites, extract important mineral resources, or keep up financially with new requirements or needs associated with changing uses. A few commenters desired that the alternatives not limit access to residents, mining interests, and recreationists.

Future NPS Land Acquisition. Some agencies expressed concern that restrictions on land acquired by the NPS may interfere with their ability to accomplish their missions either by preventing access or by eliminating sources of funding. These commenters were concerned that future NPS land acquisition could: 1) indirectly prevent access to public hunting and fishing on non-NPS land; 2) limit agency access to monitor and manage wildlife populations, particularly where mechanized travel might be necessary; or 3) create a gap in vector control measures that could threaten public health.

Partnership Approach. The complexity of decision-making and oversight by multiple land management partners was cited as a potential impact on local land uses. One commenter felt the partnership approach would give too much influence and authority to non-governmental organizations.

Private Lands. Some commenters expressed concern about use of eminent domain, regulation, and easements would affect a large number of farms, ranches, and single family homes. Comments expressed concerns that private lands could be acquired through eminent domain. There was also a concern that willing sellers may not be offered reasonable compensation based on a past example in which a landowner was offered less than the appraised value.

Some commenters were concerned that if these properties were acquired by the federal government there would be a loss of property tax revenue which would affect funding for local services such as schools, fire, and police.

Other concerns centered on how road access may be changed by an NRA which may limit the ability of inholders or emergency responders to access private property within the ANF, or limit the ability of inholders to maintain these roads with heavy equipment. Some commenters were concerned that if some of the alternatives were implemented, permits would need to be purchased to enter the ANF near their home or that there would be entrance fees if the area became a national park.

Some commenters acknowledged that the study made it very clear that the NPS is not recommending acquisition of private property through eminent domain. These commenters expressed support for explicit language prohibiting the use of eminent domain to be included in any legislation resulting from the study. Other comments also suggested strong, irreversible language to protect property rights and access to private property within the proposed area.

Impacts on Biological and Water Resources

Some commenters were concerned that designation would lead to increased visitation which, in turn, would increase adverse impacts on natural resources. Wildfire, pollution, waste, compromised water resources, and the introduction of exotic species were all cited as examples of impacts that would follow from increased recreation and have adverse impacts on biological resources.

Comments on Other Topics

Government Cost and Funding

Some commenters thought that an NRA might be an unfunded mandate because the alternatives would be very expensive to implement. Others thought that new sources of funding may be found such as different types of passes or Homeland Security, but the potential for new fees was also a concern. A number of comments said the funding should go to the existing management of the ANF, to pay for outreach, the existing trails system, managing the area's high visitation, and re-opening closed areas. Some expressed concern that funding was being spent on the study process rather than on-the-ground improvements.

Other commenters noted a willingness to contribute funds through hunting and fishing licenses or tax increases. There was a concern that the ability to contribute through hunting and fishing licenses might be lost with NPS involvement if these activities became prohibited.

Protecting natural resources was also seen as an important use of government funds. Some suggested that fire protection funding should be separate from general operational funding.

Roles and Partnerships

It was recommended that the NPS and USFS implement a Service First initiative to carry out shared resource management objectives and provide the enhanced recreational opportunities suggested by the study. More collaboration between NPS and USFS on the study was also recommended. Other comments suggested that the study further describe the envisioned partnership in terms of whether it would be managed by a private or governmental entity and who the entities in the partnership would be. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority was recommended as one of the agencies that would contribute to the cooperative management in the study area. Efforts to protect the Puente Hills Habitat Authority Preserve from oil drilling, and the programs of the Santa Clara River Watershed Conservancy were also seen as compatible with the partnerships proposed in the study. Some commenters felt there should be a stronger role for wildlife management agencies. Other commenters felt that local organizations in general, such as historical societies partnering on education and conservation corps partnering on jobs, should be included and the study should specify that the NRA will invite local input into the partnership. There were also commenters who felt that multi-agency joint powers authorities are not always effective, particularly in the area of law enforcement. Questions were raised about how partner disagreements would be resolved and the role of NPS and other partners with volunteer groups such as the Friends of the Angeles. Santa Monica Mountains NRA and Boston Harbor Islands NRA were noted as good models for partnerships and cooperative management.

Natural Resource Protection

A variety of comments focused on different aspects of natural resource protection:

Vegetation. Comments on vegetation management stated that tree planting in the area of the Angeles National Forest burned by the 2009 Station Fire should be a restoration priority and that tree planting in general was important for carbon capture, shade, and water storage.

Wildlife. Comments on wildlife noted the importance of providing habitat to keep animals from coming into urban areas, and to maintain healthy wildlife populations. Some comments suggested creating habitat connections between the Whittier Hills and the Whittier Narrows, for both wildlife and recreation. Other comments supported wildlife corridors and protection of foothill resources in San Dimas, and habitat linkage between the San Gabriel Mountains and the Santa Susana Mountains. The comments noted the role of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills in the movement of plant and animals populations between the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains. It was also noted that wildlife would benefit from a protected wildlife corridor near Newhall and San Fernando passes that would cross Highway 5 and Highway 14.

Fisheries. Other comments expressed concern about protecting fisheries. It was pointed out that the rainbow trout population below Morris Dam to the Fish Creek confluence qualifies the region as a cold water fishery which is subject to minimum flow requirements. Dead fish observed in the lower reach of Roberts Canyon Creek raised the question about whether fertilizer or other contaminants from developed areas west of the 39 near Encanto were affecting this area. Some commenters suggested that the genetics of the rainbow trout be assessed to ascertain whether they are native and to consider appropriate management, such as the possible discontinuation of mining on the East Fork of the San Gabriel River. Others felt that fisheries are the most neglected resource in the San Gabriel Mountains.

Fire Management. Some comments expressed concern that the NPS and USFS had different fire management philosophies and questioned whether the NPS would be supportive of the aggressive fire suppression and prevention strategies practiced by the USFS. Other comments felt that the NRAs proposed for both the San Gabriel Mountains and Rim of the Valley would create a potential fire hazard and the National Park Service would not clear vegetation on NPS land or allow other land owners to clear brush either. Some commenters felt that the alternatives should include a comparison of fire risk based on different levels of activity in the study area. General concern was also expressed about the threat of fire, with commenters wanting a quick response, a comprehensive fire program, and a unified fire protection / prevention plan to provide more resources. Other comments felt the study should include more detail on the fire history and the effects of fire in the study area, noting that the discussion of geology was much more in depth than the discussion of fire which also seemed of high importance in the study area. Fire protection concerns expressed in the comments included high insurance premiums for homeowners adjacent to public open space regardless of jurisdiction because vegetation is not cleared on federal, state, county or city land and these governments are not held liable for damage from fires that move across their land. Continued road maintenance for both residential and emergency access was also highlighted as a concern. Some comments requested assurance in any resultant legislation that current levels of fire protection would not be reduced in the creation of an NRA.

Water Quality. Some commenters emphasized that protecting increasingly threatened water resources is vital to environmental health and should be a high priority. Some commenters noted trash in the river, frequent bathing in some areas, and algae blooms as key water quality concerns. These problems include trash deposited at the mouth of the San Gabriel River on Seal/Huntington Beaches, surges of trash during storm events, and regular spills from a factory north of Whittier affecting birds and fish. The comments suggested that aerial surveys of the river during storm events could identify algae as an indicator of run-off with the greatest threat to water quality due to trash with high biological content. Mining pits were also identified as a possible contributor to algae growth. Complaints about the odor from the algae in the water during the summer of 2011 when water quality was exceptionally poor and the need to treat algae-contaminated water with reverse osmosis were discussed. Other comments suggested that water leaving the watershed may need to be filtered before it enters the ocean. Finally, some comments identified groundwater contamination from the Morris Dam superfund site above Azusa in the San Gabriel Valley as an ongoing concern, partly due to cancer increases in Covina and Azusa, especially breast cancer. A public meeting with a panel of speakers to address health issues, the dam cleanup, drinking water supply and other environmental safety was also requested.

Resource Protection in General. A series of general comments about natural resources expressed a desire for better air quality, better health, natural beauty, more parks and green areas, wild places for children, water conservation, protection of rivers and vegetation from contamination, more fire lookouts, more respect for forest laws, minimizing human impacts, education about critical habitat and animal migration patterns, planting trees, and protection of habitat, mountains, the river, open space for the Los Angeles area, California's natural resources, and interconnected ecosystems which are threatened by fragmentation by piecemeal development.

The comments also expressed the following concerns:

- Keep corporations away from the environment to protect it.
- Resource protection is more important than recreation.
- There is a lack of vector control on federal lands
- Graffiti, trash and impacts from gold prospectors need to be addressed.
- Avoid building facilities in ecologically sensitive resource areas.
- Noise pollution from low flying planes is increasing in the study area.
- Regular biological monitoring is needed to manage invasive pests such as the goldspotted borer. Visitors should not take contaminated firewood into the mountains.
- The leasing of burned forest land to Southern California Edison for development of geothermal grids should address potential environmental impacts. If people should not live within 2 miles of a grid, what about impacts to other species?

Recreation Management

A variety of comments focused on different aspects of recreation management:

Engaging Youth. The comments expressed a need to engage younger generations in different ways including social media because they are the future users of the study area.

Overuse and Existing Impacts. Multiple concerns about overuse were expressed including problems of spray paint, trash, illegal fires, poaching, building rock dams in the river to create pools, damage from gold mining, lack of proper maintenance, and heavy impacts by visitors along Highway 39. Problems identified in the Big Tujunga region were trash, homeless occupation, and wildlife corridors closed by private property owners.

The comments also expressed concern about mountain bike riders in Turnbull Canyon, Hellman Park, Beverly Boulevard, and in the City of Whittier which now has an ordinance prohibiting the use of public sidewalks for mountain biking. It was noted that in addition to crowding sidewalks, mountain bike riding in the City of Whittier had created noise nuisance such as night riding when bikes are being loaded back onto vehicles, and riders talking about their experience. A safety concern was also expressed about the length of time mountain bikers parked their vehicles at the intersections of local streets.

Dispersal. Some commenters suggested developing a small park at the base of the mountains with toilets, benches, and possibly a pool to disperse some groups from going to the mountains to swim and

cook. Others noted that water parks could provide cost effective recreation and adding a public plunge to an existing park or enlarging an existing park may reduce crowding at Whittier Narrows Dam Recreation Area.

Equestrian Use. Some comments expressed that it was important to allow horses on trails and to generally to be equestrian community friendly, similar to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

Off-Highway Vehicles. Other comments expressed concern that there was no mention of off-highway vehicle (OHV) access in the alternatives and a desire to see OHV access included. It was also recommended that the proposed NRA plan for the needs of the large OHV user group in the Los Angeles area. Others asked why off road vehicles would be allowed if the goal is to preserve the environment.

Access. Some comments expressed a desire for more recreational connections between the mountains and the valley, including pedestrian and bicycle access routes. Concerns about access included the lack of adequate parking, the need for a transit to trails program to provide access for the many people without cars, river access for school children, concern about closures to protect a plant or animal, entrance stations with fees on the Angeles Crest and Angeles Forest Highways typical of other national parks, and the need to reopen recreational areas that had been closed. The comments recommended non-discrimination among users from different areas, and pointed out that North Orange County is a densely populated, park poor area in needs of resources, particularly south of Santa Fe Springs. Other commenters wanted to see locked gates for roads into the Angeles National Forest for recreational use.

Concessions. It was suggested that an NRA designation could lead to an increase in concessionaires. Some commenters felt that concession services could make it harder and more expensive to use some areas such as Little Rock Dam where personal model boats can no longer be used, and a fee is now charged.

Hunting. Some commenters felt that hunting should not be allowed in the San Gabriel Mountains due to concerns about safety with a large human population using the area, and other concerns about species conservation and wildlife viewing opportunities. Other commenters were concerned that NPS management policy would prohibit hunting as well as possession of firearms within NPS units and that an NPS NRA would take away the right to hunt in the national forest. The comments also pointed out the value of hunting in managing wildlife populations, preserving heritage, and promoting support for land conservation.

Education and Interpretation. Some comments saw value in connecting children and families to nature, or using outdoor recreation as an extension of the classroom in formal education. The need for signs in multiple languages for Asian Pacific Islanders and other communities was noted. Plant and tree identification tags were also recommended, but it was also noted that signs and tags may be subject to graffiti and vandalism. It was also suggested that writing for the public about the vegetation of the San Gabriel Mountains, including the study, should use common names rather than scientific terms, in order to be more understandable.

Enforcement and Illegal Activity. Concerns about illegal activity ranged from comments about vandalism in the San Gabriel Mountains, particularly in the West Fork and Heaton Flats on the East Fork—to fears about visiting the ANF because of the potential for personal property damage. Increased enforcement and more stringent penalties were recommended to protect visitors to the ANF as well as flora and fauna. There was a concern about water contamination from frequent bathing, and other hazards from the large number of cooking devices being used in a small area.

Visitor Services. The comments recommended improved signage, access, and ADA compliance in the study area. There was also a concern expressed about how trails along creeks would be managed when they get washed out. The Nature Center Associates facilities were recommended as an example for visitor services.

Other Recreational Uses and Services. Other comments requested specific recreational uses and services such as:

- a place for military service and veterans to relax and recreate
- benches
- trash cans
- a small store
- activities for children and more places to play
- mountain bike access to trails
- restrictions on recreational mining
- a fast-food restaurant
- more bathrooms
- more recreational opportunities closer to where people live

III. Response to Substantive Comments on the Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study / Environmental Assessment

The study team reviewed all comments submitted on the *Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment* (draft study report/EA). The following substantive comments were organized and analyzed by topic areas that correlate with sections of the draft study report/EA. The study team grouped similar comments before providing the National Park Service response. A substantive comment is defined by NPS Director's Order 12 (DO-12, Section 4.6A) as one that does one or more of the following:

- questions, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in the environmental analysis
- questions, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of environmental analysis
- presents reasonable alternatives other than those presented in the environmental analysis
- causes changes or revisions in the proposal

Comments that contain substantive points regarding information in the draft study report/EA or comments that need clarification are extracted below. Concern statements have been developed to summarize the comments. Corrections to the draft study report/EA are included in an errata document that is available on the study website. The final recommendations for the study are included in the *Final Recommendations* summary document and are also documented in the Finding of No Significant Impact (October 2012). The draft study report/EA, errata to the draft study report, and the *Finding of No Significant Impact* together complete the study process.

Resource Description

Public Concern: The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority Preserve (Preserve) would be better classified as a “wilderness park” in the recreation description of the draft study report/EA. The entire Preserve seems to meet the definition of a wilderness park given in the draft study report/EA, which is defined as “large, undeveloped open spaces that provide passive recreational opportunities and protect habitat for wildlife.” The Puente Hills Preserve is currently mentioned under County and Regional Parks on page 84, the definition of which focuses on recreation.

Response: Although the Preserve may be managed similarly to wilderness parks, the study only refers to those parks specifically named as such in this category. The errata for the draft study report/EA reflects an expanded the definition of county and regional parks to include areas that focus on passive recreation and wildlife management.

Public Concern: Page 89 describes the Juan Bautista De Anza trail as being “planned” through the Puente Hills to coincide with the Skyline/Schabbarum Trail. However, page 115 states that “a recreational route of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail follows the popular Skyline Trail which traverses the Puente-Chino Hills.” Please resolve this inconsistency in the text on page 89, as well as on the Trails, Bikeways and Scenic Highways map on page 87 (as well as other maps) which shows the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail as a “general historical” route north of the existing Skyline/Schabbarum Trail.

Response: The map on page 87 shows the official route of the national historic trail. Because the recreational routes overlap with other existing trails, they are not shown as part of the national historic trail on the Trails, Bikes, and Scenic Highways Map on page 87. The text on page 89 has been corrected in the errata for the draft study report/EA to reflect that the recreational trail is no longer in the planning phase.

Public Concern: Plant associations and communities should be described in addition to species.

Response: The errata for the draft study report/EA include corrections and additions to the vegetation description.

Public Concern: Coastal sage scrub is mentioned throughout the study without acknowledging a scientific debate about how scrub dominated by lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*) or laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*) should be classified.

Response: The study report relies on existing vegetation inventories and surveys conducted by federal, state, and local land management agencies that have documented locations for coastal sage scrub throughout the study area.

Public Concern: Writing for the public, the study should use common names rather than scientific names and botanical terminology.

Response: The draft study report/EA uses both scientific and common names. Scientific names are important to document because common names for species can differ.

Public Concern: The Native American groups described for the study should be corrected to include the two branches of the Gabrielino - the Tongva in the east and Los Angeles Basin, and the Fernandeno in the west, including the San Fernando Valley. The Tataviam lived more in the Santa Clarita Valley and north of the San Fernando Valley. Missing entirely are the Serrano, who lived throughout the San Gabriel Mountain range.

Response: Corrections to the description of Native American groups in the draft study report/EA have been included in the errata. A very brief description of the Serrano was included in the draft study report/EA on page 54, under the section, Other Native American Groups.

Public Concern: The subject of viticulture, wine, brandy, and fresh grapes were important from the time of Mission San Gabriel to Prohibition in 1920 and should be documented in the study. Products of the grape became supreme between the 1860s and 1886. Pierce's Disease killed most southland vineyards during the mid-1880s. Fruit and nut orchards were planted thereafter.

Response: Comment noted. The cultivation of vineyards is discussed on page 61 of the draft study report/EA under the section, Agriculture. The draft study report/EA errata acknowledges that this industry ended during the mid-1880s, primarily due to Pierson's disease.

Public Concern: On page 60, under Gold Mining, correct American discovery of gold to 1848.

Response: Page 60 acknowledges that the recognized American discovery of gold was in 1848. However, the study also acknowledges that gold was identified in Placerita Canyon in 1842.

Public Concern: Page 57 and 58 - There are two separate dates given for mission secularization: at the time of Mexican rule (1821, p. 57) and 1833 (p.58).

Response: The 1821 date refers to Mexican independence from Spain. The Secularization Act was passed in 1833.

Public Concern: Page 58, second column, second paragraph, clarify in which valley (San Gabriel?) sheep raising became an important industry.

Response: Raising sheep was an important industry in the San Gabriel Valley.

Public Concern: Prehistoric Landscapes - A listing of known Native American village sites within the study area could help to better define this section.

Response: The figure on page 54, Native American Groups in the Region, includes a listing of known Native American village sites within the study area.

Public Concern: In the discussion of recreation on pages 64-66 there is no discussion of the recreation resources of Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam Basins, including the development, acreage, or operation, and maintenance.

Response: Pages 64-66 describes historic recreation resources only. A description of the recreation resources associated with the Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam Basins is included on page 84. Additional information on these sites has been included in the errata for page 84 of the draft study report/EA.

Public Concern: The document fails to adequately address the Congressionally authorized purpose of Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Dam Basins.

Response: Errata for the draft study report/EA include the Congressionally authorized purpose of the Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam Basins.

Public Concern: The species tables in the Appendices contain errors in nomenclature. NPS should also verify that state and federal listings are current.

Response: The species tables have been corrected and updated in the errata for the draft study report/EA using the most recent state and federal listings, as of September 2012.

Public Concern: In Chapter 2, mention is made of the fact that Mt. San Antonio is also known as Mt. Baldy, yet in Appendix B of the Appendices section, the location of species mixes the usage. For example, the location of the “Laguna Mountains jewel flower” is given as both “Mt. Baldy” and “Mount San Antonio.” (p. 272) It should be noted that the “locations” indicated are said to refer to “U.S. Geological Survey topographic map quadrangle (USGS quad) names in most cases” (p. 277) Nevertheless, if Mt. Baldy and Mt. San Antonio are the same place, confusion is introduced by using them interchangeably or jointly.

Response: In the body of the draft study report/EA Mt. San Antonio is used exclusively. Only in the species tables which refer to location by USGS quad are the names Mt. Baldy and Mt. San Antonio both used. It should be noted that the USGS quad called Mt. Baldy includes the Mt. Baldy Village area. Mt. San Antonio peak is included in the USGS quad by that name.

Significance

Public concern: Some resources that were not identified in the draft study report /EA may be nationally significant including: 1) the development of orange and lemon groves, vineyards and wineries in the study area; and 2) significant sites in the Puente Hills associated with the Portola Expedition.

Response: The study found sufficient resource significance to meet the criteria for a recommendation to Congress. If the preferred alternative is implemented, further assessment of natural and cultural resources would be conducted.

Public concern: The significance of the river systems and waterways in the study area is overstated. These resources are similar to those found at other United States Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) sites.

Response: The NPS found that area’s unique geology and topographical conditions create river systems that are quite different from other national forests and BLM sites in California. San Gabriel Mountains river segments that remain free and flowing have been determined by the USFS to meet eligibility criteria for Wild and Scenic River designation. The highly erosive, steep slopes of the San Gabriel Mountains produce dynamic river systems with rich habitat such as alluvial fan sage scrub and riparian areas. These river systems contain some of the best remaining examples of alluvial fan sage scrub, and provide habitat for rare and sensitive species.

Public concern: The importance of freshwater fishes in the study area is overstated in the study.

Response: This finding is based on information provided in the Biodiversity Atlas, produced by the California Department of Fish and Game in 2003..

Public concern: The extensive amount of development in the study area south of the forest boundary seems to contradict a finding of significance.

Response: Within the study area, two areas were found to be nationally significant, the San Gabriel Mountains and the Puente-Chino Hills. Extensively developed areas were not found to be nationally significant (see Chapter 3 of the draft study report/EA).

Suitability

Public concern: The study area does not meet the standards of the NPS. The multiple land uses within the San Gabriel Mountains and Angeles National Forest is in conflict with NPS policies.

Response: While not all portions of the study area meet NPS criteria for a new park unit, the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills were found to contain nationally significant resources which are suitable for inclusion in the national park system. Suitability analysis evaluates the uniqueness of natural and cultural resources relative to resources that are already protected in the NPS system.

Public Concern: The suitability findings were swayed to support the inclusion of the NPS.

Response: To be considered suitable for addition to the national park system, an area must represent a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the national park system, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies; tribal, state, or local governments; or the private sector.

Based upon evaluation of the study area resources and their relative quality, character, and rarity, the National Park Service has determined that the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente-Chino Hills portions of the study area are suitable for inclusion in the national park system. Together, the two areas contain a combination of themes and resources not found in any national park unit or comparably managed area. If similar resources were already included in the NPS system, the study area would have been found unsuitable. For details about the basis for this conclusion, refer to Chapter 4, Suitability, in the draft study report/EA (pp. 123-148).

Need for NPS Management

Public Concern: More analysis is needed to demonstrate the NPS could provide superior management for the study area.

Response: The study determined that a collaborative or partnership-based management approach which includes a leadership role for the NPS is a superior management option for meeting the complex conservation and recreation needs of the study area. The NPS has the ability to work in a coordinated fashion, on a regional basis, to address the current lack of equitable access to open space and to protect significant resources. Existing land management agencies have specifically requested assistance from the NPS to address some of these issues (see draft study report/EA, p. 157). NPS management over other individual agencies is not proposed.

Study Process

Public Concern: There should be more collaboration between NPS and USFS on the study.

Response: The NPS worked in partnership with the Angeles National Forest on many aspects of the study, including resource evaluation and alternatives development.

Public Concern: Funding is being spent on planning rather than on-the-ground improvements in the study area.

Response: NPS was directed by Congress to complete the study. The funding allocated to the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study is small when compared to the on-the-ground needs that have been identified. If Congress were to implement the selected alternative, funding would be allocated toward specific management actions to protect the area's resources and to provide opportunities for public enjoyment.

Alternatives

Concerns Relating to the Range of Alternatives

Public Concern: None of the alternatives provide new authorities, funding, or resources to increase the effectiveness of ANF management.

Response: All of the action alternatives presented in the draft study report/EA included recommendations for new authorities and funding for the USFS (see pages 172-173, p. 176, and p.183), as does the selected alternative.

Public Concern: If legislation is introduced to enact any of the action alternatives, we believe it should include specific language that would: 1) protect local water supply, water quality and water rights; 2) protect and preserve all water and waste water facilities (both publicly and privately owned) within the designated area and exclude them from NPS or federal agency jurisdiction; 3) preserve facility access to waterways and rights of way for water and waste water facility maintenance and infrastructure improvement; 4) prevent NPS interference with flood control and maintenance activities; and 5) clearly delineate the lands which would fall within the national recreation area, to identify specific parcels of land, rather than a broad land designation.

Response: The study recognizes that the Los Angeles metropolitan region has highly complex systems of public infrastructure to transport and store local and regional water supplies. No alternative presented would change existing water rights, water supply operations, water treatment operations, flood protection efforts, or other agency functions necessary to maintaining public infrastructure essential for public health and safety.

All of the proposed alternatives, including the selected alternative, would retain existing water rights. Management of water supply and treatment plants would continue under current authorities. An NRA designation would not entail any new or future beneficial uses or requirements for water supply, water quality, or air quality regulations.

The broad land designations identified for alternatives evaluated in the study, if enacted by Congress, would not change land use or local regulatory authorities, but would define an area in which the NPS would be authorized to acquire land at some point in the future. NPS management policies would only apply to land acquired by the NPS. This study further recommends that any implementing legislation stipulate that water supply and transport infrastructure would continue to be operated and regulated by existing agencies and would not be affected by the NRA designation (draft study report/EA, p. 164).

Public Concern: None of the alternatives deal with the issues of public hunting, trapping, or fishing on land within the NRA.

Response: Under all of the alternatives evaluated in the draft study report/EA, the Angeles National Forest (ANF) would continue to be managed by the USFS. Hunting and trapping would continue to be permitted by the USFS and regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game. On lands outside of the ANF, hunting would only be restricted on lands acquired by the NPS. NPS land acquisition would be limited. For private lands and lands owned by other agencies or jurisdictions within an NRA, those entities that currently own or regulate such lands would also continue to determine whether or not hunting or trapping would be allowed. The alternatives evaluated in the study do not recommend specific prohibitions on fishing.

Public Concern: Alternatives C and D do not justify the role of the NPS or adequately explain problems with existing USFS management. Many of the proposed actions can be accomplished with partnerships rather than changing ANF management.

Response: All of the alternatives evaluated in the draft study report/EA would retain ANF management and emphasize partnerships. Public scoping and stakeholder involvement indicated that NPS assistance for collaborative management and regional planning, coordinated interpretation and education, and technical assistance for conservation and recreation planning could contribute to improving recreational opportunities and conservation of significant resources. Please refer to the Need for NPS Management section of the draft special resource study for more information on this topic (See draft study report/EA, p. 157).

Angeles National Forest management challenges are documented throughout the draft study report/EA. A summary of ANF challenges and demands is provided on page 94 of the draft study report/EA. Primary management challenges include increasing demands for recreation and reduced budgets for recreation, staffing, and facility maintenance.

Public Concern: An NPS NRA designation overlaying the Angeles National Forest would narrow its multiple use management to a recreation focus.

Response: In all of the alternatives evaluated, the U.S. Forest Service would continue to manage the ANF according to its multiple-use policies. An NRA designation would be a means to provide more guidance, tools, and support to improve recreational experiences and protect significant resources.

Public Concern: An overlay of a second federal agency designation on the Angeles National Forest (ANF) would be costly, inefficient, and would direct money to administration rather than to maintenance and operations.

Response: The selected alternative does not recommend an overlay or additional designation for the Angeles National Forest.

Public Concern: An NRA designation which creates a unit of the NPS system will lead to new restrictions. Comments expressed concern that existing recreation uses such as off-road vehicle use, recreational cabins in the ANF, mountain biking, equestrian use/packing stations, hunting and firearm possession, rock collecting, gold mining, and skiing could be jeopardized by an NRA designation. Other concerns included road closures, mining restrictions, tougher air quality standards, discontinuation of special uses such as races and filming, and restrictions on communications facilities and other infrastructure.

Response: An NRA designation would not prevent such uses on existing public lands. Existing land management agencies within the NRA alternatives would continue to determine what uses are appropriate in their respective jurisdictions. For example, the USFS would continue to determine

appropriate uses on ANF lands and manage according to its multiple-use policy. NPS management policies would only apply to lands acquired by the NPS.

Public Concern: In a partnership based NRA, how would partner disagreements be resolved?

Response: Partnership decisions would not be binding. Ultimately, each agency would be the decision-maker for its own jurisdiction.

Public Concern: Creating a San Gabriel NRA may be an unfunded mandate.

Response: State, local and private landowner/organization participation in the NRA would be voluntary. The study recommends NPS funding levels that would be needed for administration of alternative D.

Public Concern: Implementation of the alternatives could be costly. The federal government should not increase spending during a time of extreme deficit.

Response: The study identifies NPS funding needs associated with the selected alternative. If Congress were to authorize any of the study recommendations, actual funding would be determined by Congress within the broader federal budgetary process.

Public Concern: The alternatives do not address ANF issues associated with illegal immigration and the need for more fire funding.

Response: These issues are beyond the scope of the special resource study. The purpose of the study is to determine whether any portion of the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains study area is eligible to be designated as a unit of the national park system.

Public Concern: The NRA designation may result in new user fees.

Response: Fees would remain under the jurisdiction of existing agencies. For example, the USFS would continue to collect fees for the Angeles National Forest. There are currently no entrance fees for NPS sites in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA). However, there are fees for camping in the SMMNRA and special use permits for activities such as filming and special events on NPS-owned lands.

Public Concern: The proposed action alternatives do not do enough to increase environmental protection.

Response: The action alternatives and the selected alternative would increase environmental protection through increased education, law enforcement, restoration, and a framework for coordination of conservation efforts by multiple agencies and organizations.

Public Concern: The proposed action alternatives will lead to unnecessary development and commercialization including more concessions.

Response: Extensive development and commercialization is not recommended in any of the alternatives presented in the draft study report/EA. If Congress were to implement the study recommendations, a management plan would be developed to define management priorities and specific actions needed.

Public Concern: Cooperative management seems in contradiction with the NPS having a lead role.

Response: Under cooperative management, each agency would retain responsibility for its own decision-making. The lead role of the NPS would primarily involve coordination and administration of the partnership.

Public Concern: Reopening visitor centers in the Angeles National Forest should be a priority for a national recreation area.

Response: The selected alternative suggests that the NPS and USFS could collaborate on interpretive and educational opportunities, which could include opening visitor centers that are currently closed due to lack of funding or staffing availability.

Public Concern: The NPS has a less aggressive fire protection strategy than the USFS.

Response: The USFS would continue to manage fire protection on the Angeles National Forest. The NPS would be the lead on lands owned and managed by the NPS. Federal, state and local agencies regularly collaborate and work together on fire protection efforts.

Public Concern: There should be a unified fire protection response plan.

Response: Under all of the alternatives evaluated in the study, fire protection would remain the responsibility of existing federal, state, and local agencies (Los Angeles County, U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). If the selected alternative were implemented, the NPS and partner agencies could work together to take a pro-active approach to coordinated resource management to reduce catastrophic fires (draft study report, p. 164).

Public Concern: Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County's active landfills and other sanitation facilities should be removed from NRA proposals to avoid plans and permits that would impact the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County's mission.

Response: The Puente Hills Landfill is not included in the boundary of the selected alternative. None of the other sanitation facilities within the boundary of the selected alternative would have additional permitting requirements. The draft study report/EA recommends that any implementing legislation ensure that existing sanitation facilities and operations such as landfills

and water treatment plants, would not be affected by any resulting designation (see draft study report/EA, p. 164).

Alternative A Concerns

Public Concern: The USFS does not have the same resources and authorities that the NPS has to manage an NRA.

Response: Alternative A includes recommendations for additional funding, staffing, and authorities for the USFS to manage an NRA. The selected alternative makes similar recommendations that would provide for more effective management by the ANF without an NRA designation. Through use of the Service First Authority, the NPS and the USFS could share staff, funding, and coordinate on management efforts.

Public Concern: Alternative A should include plans for off-highway vehicle recreational development.

Response: The alternatives evaluated in the study are broad in nature and do not recommend specific actions for any type of recreational use. If alternative A, or any other alternative were implemented, the U.S. Forest Service could consider developing such a plan.

Alternative D Concerns

NRA Management Concerns (Alternative D)

Public Concern: The San Gabriel Region NRA (Alternative D) should prevent oil and gas development and strip mining.

Response: Designation of an NRA would not change or alter existing mineral rights. The laws and policies of existing agencies (including federal, state, and local governments) will continue to apply to management of mineral development (draft study report/EA, p. 164). NPS policies would only apply to land that NPS acquires.

Public Concern: Alternative D should emphasize preservation of the watershed including a management focus on waterways and creeks.

Response: Alternative D and the selected alternative include many of the same watershed-based recommendations as alternative C which recommends a river-based NRA that would raise the visibility of the San Gabriel watershed, new educational and interpretive opportunities along the river and throughout the watershed, and improved river-based recreation (see draft study report/EA, p. 175).

Public Concern: The NPS should fully engage the public into the management plan development process.

Response: If a national park unit is established, the NPS would prepare a management plan in collaboration with partner agencies, and with opportunities for public involvement.

Public Concern: Private property in the mountains should be protected.

Response: The draft study report/EA recommends that any legislation proposed to implement this study should specify that eminent domain would not be used for land acquisition within the NRA. The NPS would only consider acquiring land on a limited basis from willing sellers. Designation would not impact local land use authority over lands not owned by the NPS (draft study report/EA, p. 164).

Public Concern: The San Gabriel Region NRA should provide for improved security and law enforcement/rangers in the San Gabriel Mountains.

Response: Alternative D and the selected alternative recommend staffing which includes law enforcement park rangers. Through Service First or cooperative management agreements, the NPS and other partner agencies could share staff, facilities, and funding to assist in the operations and maintenance of heavily used visitor areas. For example, the NPS law enforcement rangers could supplement USFS staff in high use areas of the ANF.

Public Concern: There should be maximum role for the NPS within the formal NRA partnership.

Response: In alternative D and in the selected alternative, the NPS would take a lead role in coordinating partnership-based activities. Through cooperative management agreements, the NPS could also provide educational, interpretive, law enforcement and other services to partner agencies.

Public Concern: Ecological restoration and other resource management goals should be emphasized in the NRA proposed in alternative D. Specific suggestions included species re-introduction and a focus on enhancing ecological interconnectivity.

Response: Ecological restoration and resource management are key components of Alternative D and the selected alternative. If Congress were to designate an NRA, a management plan would be developed to define management priorities and specific actions related to resource management.

Public Concern: The NRA management in Alternative D should focus on controlling overcrowding and damage to the land from overuse.

Response: If Congress were to designate an NRA, a management plan would be developed to define management priorities and specific actions needed. The NPS and agency partners could work together to reduce crowding, improve visitor experience, and protect natural resources.

Public Concern: The NRA in alternative D should purchase privately owned cabins and rent them to the public or perhaps build more cabins.

Response: Under all of the alternatives evaluated in the study, the recreational cabin program on the Angeles National Forest would continue to be managed by the USFS.

Public Concern: The alternatives should state that if resource protection necessitates a recreational use and activity be discontinued, viable alternative locations for those same uses or activities must be provided so as not to diminish already limited recreational resources. Multiple-use including hikers, equestrians, trail runners, and cyclists should be the goal of any new trail project.

Response: If Congress were to implement the study recommendations, opportunities for more multiple-use trails and maintaining areas to accommodate a wide range of recreational users could be explored.

Public Concern: Additional agencies or organizations should be included in the NRA partnership including Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority (WCCA), the Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority (MRCA), and cities such as Whittier, the City of Los Angeles and others.

Response: The selected alternative identifies WCCA and MRCA among the potential NRA partners, and suggests that cities and communities could also be partners.

Public Concern: The NRA should work to control impacts from development and urbanization.

Response: Impacts from continued development and urbanization would continue to be addressed through the local government land use planning process under current jurisdictions (draft study report/EA, p. 164). However, if the selected alternative is implemented, partner agencies could work together to address the needs for open space in the San Gabriel region.

Public Concern: Alternative D should emphasize that existing uses will be maintained and local jurisdictions will maintain current roles and authority.

Response: All of the alternatives in the draft study as well as the selected alternative retain local land use and existing regulatory authorities as well as state and local laws and policies for lands that are not federally owned (draft study report/EA, p. 164). NPS management policies would only apply to lands that the NPS would acquire.

Public Concern: If the NRA is implemented, mitigation funds should be made available to other nearby USFS canyons that may also receive increased use such as Deep Creek, Mill Creek, Lytle Creek, and Cajon Wash.

Response: If Congress enacts the selected alternative, then comprehensive proactive planning to address the possibility of new recreational impacts would accompany development of specific

actions. This would include additional analysis of any potential impacts and identification of mitigation measures to address such impacts.

Public Concern: NPS should acquire small pieces of available land which to prevent development that could impact resources.

Response: If Congress were to implement the selected alternative, the NPS would be authorized to acquire lands from willing sellers (as funding permits) to protect significant resources or for operational purposes. The NPS would be directed to identify priority parcels for acquisition (through donation or purchase).

Public Concern: Local governments included in Alternative D should be offered an “opt out” opportunity.

Response: The designation of an NPS national recreation area would not establish additional regulatory or land use authorities over local governments (draft study report/EA, p. 164). All local government participation would be voluntary.

Public Concern: Alternative D should include language specifying that the administration and management of Recreation Residence Special Use Permits within the project area shall continue pursuant to established U.S. Forest Service Rules and Regulations.

Response: U.S. Forest Service management and ownership of existing Angeles National Forest lands would be maintained in all of the alternatives. U.S. Forest Service policies would continue to be applied to management of these lands (draft study report/EA, p. 164). This would include administration and management of forest special use permits.

Cultural Resources Concerns (Alternative D)

Public Concern: Alternative D should focus on identifying and interpreting important cultural resources.

Response: Each of the alternatives evaluated in the draft study report include recommendations for interpretive and educational programs. If Congress were to implement the selected alternative, specific programs would be developed through implementation planning.

NRA Boundary Concerns (Alternative D)

Public Concern: The boundaries of alternative D exceeded the authorized parameters of the study.

Response: Alternative D is primarily within the area Congress authorized the NPS to study. The San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act (PL 108-042, 2003) directed the National Park Service to

conduct a special resource study of 1) the San Gabriel River and its tributaries north of and including the city of Santa Fe Springs, and 2) the San Gabriel Mountains within the territory of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC). A few small portions of the San Gabriel unit of the Angeles National Forest that fell outside the study boundary were included in the NRA alternatives evaluated in the study in order to make the NRA correspond to the forest boundary.

Public Concern: The boundaries of the NRA proposed in Alternative D should be expanded to include important related areas. Areas suggested include:

- The entire San Gabriel Mountain Range from SR-14 to I-15, including Ice House Canyon, Cucamonga Peak and Wilderness. Expansion would allow for better interpretation of the geologic significance of the San Gabriel Mountains.
- Connections to the Santa Susana and Santa Monica Mountains. Some comments suggested making the San Gabriel Region NRA contiguous with an expanded Santa Monica Mountains NRA including the Rim of the Valley Trail.
- Wildlife connection to the Castaic Mountains to facilitate protection of the corridor from urban encroachment.
- The lower San Gabriel River watershed (areas outside of the study area) including the estuary of the San Gabriel River, Los Cerritos wetlands, Seal Beach, and river corridors that run south of Whittier Narrows. The entire Puente-Chino Hills corridor to Chino Hills Park and/or the Cleveland National Forest including protection of the coastal sage scrub critical habitat, rare oak and walnut woodlands, and wildlife which rely on the broader corridor.
- Surrounding urban areas including entire cities along the river corridor and / or more San Gabriel Valley communities to provide access to recreation and open spaces. Specific suggestions included: a connection between San Gabriel River/Whittier Narrows and Puente; the Montebello Hills; Eagle Rock; Highland Park; Pasadena; and Sierra Madre Foothills
- The Santa Clara River drainage.
- The Coyote Hills including wildlife connections to the Puente Hills.
- The northern unit of the Angeles National Forest so this unit of the national forest would not become orphaned and inadequately funded.
- Broader areas in southern California including the San Bernardino National Forest, BLM lands, state parks, county wilderness parks, the Palomar Mountains, and the San Jacinto Mountain area.
- The Verdugo Mountains.
- The San Antonio Creek watershed.

Response: The alternative D NRA boundaries primarily include areas that were determined nationally significant and that meet feasibility criteria for stakeholder, landowner, and agency support. The boundaries of alternative D cannot extend beyond the area that Congress intended the NPS to study. However, alternatives C and D and the selected alternative, all allow the NPS to provide technical assistance to communities beyond proposed NRA boundaries for planning,

interpretation and education. Some of the areas suggested for an expanded alternative D NRA boundary are being addressed through the Rim of the Valley Corridor Special Resource Study (connections to the Santa Susana and Santa Monica Mountains).

Public Concern: The northern boundary of Alternative D should be moved south to the existing Angeles National Forest boundary.

Response: The selected alternative does not include the ANF or the areas north of the forest in the proposed NRA boundary.

Public Concern: The study offers no reason why developed areas that cannot contribute to the goal of improved recreation would be included in the NRA boundary.

Response: A half-mile corridor around the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers, south to Santa Fe Springs was used as a proposed boundary in urban sections of the NRA boundary proposal because these areas are within a 10 minute walk to the rivers thus providing the potential for collaboration on providing close to home recreation opportunities, river access, and educational outreach.

Public Concern: If the study recommendations are not implemented, the NPS should consider a study to look at the Puente Hills, Coyote Hills, San Jose Hills and Santa Ana Canyon together.

Response: The NPS conducts special resource studies only as directed by Congress.

Staffing and Job Program Concerns (Alternative D)

Public Concern: Alternative D should include a robust jobs program and a strong volunteer program. The job program could be coordinated through school programs, religious and educational institutions, and educational organizations. Some commenters suggested that the job program be focused on youth and veterans, while others suggested that job programs enrollment should reflect the diversity of the region. Some suggested that this be part of a “Forest Conservation Corps” program or a “River Ranger Program.” Some commenters felt that volunteers could assist with trail work, docents for trail hikes leaders, trail restoration, interpreters, staff visitor centers, and assist in general maintenance of the area.

Response: Alternatives C and D and the selected alternative all include recommendations for volunteer programs, job training, and employment opportunities. If a designation is implemented by Congress, such opportunities and programs would be determined through further implementation and management planning.

Public Concern: Alternative D should provide more staffing for the management of recreational users.

Response: Alternative D and the selected alternative include recommendations for NPS staffing including park rangers and visitor use assistants. Alternative A recommends additional funding for USFS staff in the ANF.

Funding Concerns (Alternative D)

Public Concern: Adequate funding should be provided to properly achieve objectives of alternative D. However, the proposed NRA should not detract from funding from existing NPS sites or from current ANF funding. Funding priorities stated included personnel to coordinate volunteers, management of nonnative species. Some commenters discouraged funding to be used for new buildings or interpretive centers. Other commenters felt that the need for additional funding specifically for the ANF should be acknowledged.

Response: Funding requirements for NPS management have been identified in alternatives C and D and the selected alternative. All of the study alternatives, including the selected alternative recommend additional funding for the needs of the ANF.

Public Concern: Alternative D should include language to provide for public-private partnerships to leverage funding for the NRA.

Response: All of the alternatives evaluated in the study, including the selected alternative, recommend opportunities for leveraging funding through public-private partnerships.

Recreational Access and Opportunities Concerns (Alternative D)

Public Concern: Alternative D should include recommendations for improved accessibility to recreation areas, including public transit opportunities and improved accessibility for the disabled and the elderly. Specific recommendations included establishment of a transit to trails program, providing shuttles for visitors to the ANF or shuttles connecting downtown Los Angeles or other major transit linkages such as the Metro Gold Line, and working with partners to establish bus routes on weekends and holidays to enhance access, air quality, and the overall visitor experience.

Response: Alternatives C and D and the selected alternative all include recommendations for improved transportation to recreational area destinations and improving overall accessibility for the elderly and disabled. It should be noted that agencies are currently working to improve accessibility as is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Public Concern: Alternative D should include recommendations for a network of parks and trails along the urban river corridors that would connect to the San Gabriel Mountains. Specific suggestions include trail networks along the urban river corridors and in the Puente Hills and a technical assistance program to provide more opportunities for protection open space and providing and healthy recreation opportunities.

Response: Alternative D and the selected alternative include recommendations for a technical assistance program to achieve a network of parks and open spaces that could include connections to the San Gabriel Mountains.

Public Concern: Alternative D should include more specific management recommendations related to recreation sites and opportunities. Specific recommendations included: 1) use of previously impacted sites for new recreational opportunities, and 2) better usage of recreation spaces in urban areas to take the pressure off of impacts to the ANF, 3) specifying opportunities for fishing, motorized recreation, bicycling, trail siting, and use of dirt roads for bikes, horses and hiking, 4) consideration of green streets with safe access to recreation areas, and 5) providing family recreation opportunities on the north side of the ANF.

Response: Site specific planning and evaluation of new recreational opportunities and uses would be determined through additional management planning if an NRA were established by Congress.

Public Concern: Not all communities or neighborhoods in the study area have adequate access to recreational opportunities. Alternative D should provide for equitable access to recreation sites consistent with NPS's Call to Action which states that the NPS should "fully represent our nation's ethnically and culturally diverse communities."

Response: Alternatives C and D and the selected alternative would seek to improve recreational access and opportunities in urban areas that are deficient in recreation and parking lands by offering assistance in planning for close-to-home recreational opportunities.

Other Designations Suggested in the Public Comments

Public Concern: Alternative D should include the establishment of additional wilderness areas and designation of new Wild and Scenic Rivers. Specific areas suggested for wilderness designation included Red Mountain, Red Rock Mountain, Fish Canyon, Condor Peak proposed Wilderness, Castaic proposed Wilderness additions, Cucamonga proposed Wilderness additions, and Sheep Mountain proposed Wilderness additions. Wild and Scenic River recommendations included Middle Fork Lytle Creek, the north, east, and west forks of the San Gabriel River, San Antonio Creek from the upper slopes of Mt. San Antonio, and rivers in the San Bernardino National Forest.

Response: Recommendations for wilderness establishment and designation of new Wild and Scenic Rivers are beyond the scope of the special resource study. Recommendations regarding

wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers on national forest system lands would be the decision of the USFS.

Public concern: The Mount Wilson Trail should be designated as a National Historic Trail due to its role in creating a nationally significant observatory.

Response: National Historic Trail establishment requires Congressional designation following completion of a trail feasibility study which would also need Congressional authorization.

Environmental Assessment

Public Concern: Some commenters felt that a complete EIS is needed because of potential large impacts to area landowners, economic activity, and public access. Other comments expressed concern that the impact analysis is too subjective for a study of this size and importance.

Response: The NPS analysis has not identified significant impacts to area landowners, economic activity, and public access due to completion of the study. The selected alternative primarily recommends partnership approaches and minimal amount of land acquisition by the NPS. The conclusion of this study has produced a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which supports that an EA is the sufficient level of analysis. Please refer to the FONSI for additional information.

Given the broad nature of the study, the impact analysis must also be broad, by necessity, and avoid speculation as to site-specific types of impacts. The outcome of the study will be a recommendation to Congress. Any actions implementing study recommendations would be subject to appropriate environmental analysis (See draft study report/EA, p. 201).

Public Concern: There is no discussion regarding greenhouse gases (GHG). In November 2007 and August 2008, the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that a NEPA document must contain a detailed GHG analysis.

Response: Completion of the study does not itself affect greenhouse gas emissions, nor does it propose specific management actions which would affect greenhouse gas emissions therefore this topic was dismissed. The outcome of the study will be a recommendation to Congress. If Congress enacts the recommendations, then specific actions will be developed in a comprehensive planning process and new environmental analyses would be undertaken prior to implementation (See draft study report/EA, p. 201).

Effects on Recreation Use and Visitor Experience

Public Concern: The NPS should prepare a supplemental environmental assessment to adequately assess potential significant impacts to recreation, including ski areas and other special uses on the ANF that were not addressed in the current EA.

Response: The administration of ski area permits and other special uses would not change due to completion of this study or if Congress enacts the recommendations described in the study. In all alternatives presented in the study, U.S. Forest Service management and ownership of existing ANF lands would be maintained and U.S. Forest Service policies would continue to be applied to management of these lands (draft study report/EA, p. 164). This includes continued U.S. Forest Service management of recreational uses and special use permits. The selected alternative does not include a designation for the ANF. The study report has been revised to acknowledge that ski areas are the largest commercial providers of recreation on the ANF (see errata for the draft study report/EA).

Public Concern: Future NPS policy governing this area will potentially exclude hunting or fishing opportunities. The ability to support conservation through hunting and fishing licenses would cease if hunting and fishing are not allowed.

Response: For all of the alternatives considered in the study, including the selected alternative, existing land management agencies and private landowners, if enacted by Congress, would continue to determine which recreational activities are appropriate, including hunting, fishing, and trapping. Hunting and trapping on the Angeles National Forest would continue to be overseen by the U.S. Forest Service and the California Department of Fish and Game. NPS policies on hunting would apply only to lands acquired by the NPS. In the SMMNRA, hunting is not permitted on lands owned by the NPS. The alternatives evaluated in the study do not make any recommendations regarding fishing.

Public Concern: The study does not adequately explain how the alternatives would increase recreation or provide new water-based recreation opportunities. The action alternatives could lead to more traffic in areas that are already congested and create more overcrowded trails, especially on weekends.

Response: The study alternatives discuss general ways to improve and enhance recreational opportunities in the study area such as facility improvement, new trails, additional staff (rangers and interpreters), monitoring efforts, and cooperative planning. If the recommendations described in the study are enacted by Congress, specific recreational uses would continue to be determined by existing agencies according to their own policies and guidance.

Examples of approaches suggested to address recreational needs in the area include working collaboratively to foster new recreational opportunities that are compatible with maintaining watershed values, water supply, flood protection, habitat values, and quality visitor experiences.

The NPS and partner agencies could also explore opportunities to restore vacant or unused land in urban areas to provide new recreational opportunities close to where people live. If the selected alternative is enacted by Congress, a management plan would be developed to guide the NPS and partner agencies in considering recreation alternatives through a process that would include environmental analysis and public involvement opportunities.

Public Concern: The action alternatives will lead to more traffic in areas that are already congested and create more overcrowded trails, especially on weekends.

Response: All of the alternatives recommend planning efforts to better manage the current level of visitation and plan for the future so that the recreational use will be better dispersed among more locations in order to improve resource protection and the visitor experience.

Public Concern: The Recreation Residence Special Use Permits in the ANF are well managed and should not be changed. Recreation residences in San Gabriel Canyon, Big Santa Anita Canyon, Tujunga Canyon and elsewhere in ANF, represent historic and cultural values which may be threatened by an NPS NRA designation.

Response: Under all the alternatives evaluated, including the selected alternative, Recreation Residence Special Use Permits in the ANF would continue to be managed by the USFS.

Effects on Water Resources

Public Concern: Floodplain management impacts are not discussed, as required by Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management.

Response: Given the broad nature of the study, the impact analysis must also be broad, by necessity, and avoid speculation as to site-specific types of impacts. No specific actions would be undertaken within a floodplain due to completion of this study therefore this topic was dismissed. The outcome of the study will be a recommendation to Congress. If Congress takes action, then new environmental analysis would be undertaken prior to specific implementation actions. The Los Angeles Department of Public Works and the Army Corps of Engineers would be active partners in any further planning or implementation actions that could affect floodplain management.

Public Concern: Increased recreation in the river corridor could impact water quality, water supply, and flood protection. There is concern that mitigation through visitor education and additional staff described in the impact analysis would not alleviate these issues. Particular concern was raised about impacts on sediment management efforts.

Response: If no action is taken, existing threats and impacts to area water resources would continue. These already existing factors are presented in the affected environment for the draft study report. Although a new emphasis on river-based recreation holds the potential for additional

impacts on water resources downstream, with appropriate applied management through education and outreach, additional staffing and law enforcement, and application of best management practices to mitigate nonpoint sources of sediment or other pollutants, adverse impacts would likely be minor. The abatement of impacts from recreation would be heavily dependent upon monitoring, education, and applied management (draft study report/EA, p. 243).

If Congress enacts the selected alternative, then comprehensive proactive regional planning to address the possibility of new recreational impacts would accompany development of specific actions. This would include additional analysis of any potential impacts to water supply and water quality during planning and implementation and would identify the most environmentally appropriate places for river-based recreation through consultation with water resource management entities.

Effects on Biological Resources

Public Concern: The study does not explain how wildlife would be protected while increasing recreation. Increased recreation could lead to biological impacts that were not adequately addressed.

Response: The action alternatives evaluated in the study include recommendations to enhance or improve the quality of recreational opportunities in the area. This may or may not result in an increase in visitation or recreation. The level of impact would depend on the specific actions proposed by subsequent planning. If the selected alternative is implemented, specific actions for implementation would be developed in a management plan, along with environmental analysis and public involvement, to guide the NPS and partner agencies in considering any recreation enhancements. Wildlife protection would be considered in any such implementation planning.

Public Concern: Increased recreational access to the mountains will increase the occurrence of human-caused wildfires resulting in impacts to biological resources.

Response: If Congress enacts the recommendations in this study, the potential for increased recreation opportunities, in areas where previous use has been light or non-existent, could result in a minor adverse effect on natural resources, including through human-caused wildfires. The level of impact would depend on the specific actions proposed by subsequent planning. This would be mitigated through visitor education programs, and monitoring (draft study report/EA, p. 247). In particular, monitoring and education about daily fire danger levels could target specific types of recreation. In the selected alternative, the NPS and partner agencies could work together to take a pro-active approach to coordinated resource management to reduce catastrophic fires.

Public Concern: The NPS cites reservoirs as the cause of Spineflower loss, dams as the cause of the decline of the Santa Ana sucker, and flood control and channelization as the cause of the decline of the least Bell's vireo. These characterizations give people the mistaken impression that these structures should not be maintained and kept operational for their many public health, water supply, and safety functions. Also, there is evidence that these outcomes are not the direct result of these factors.

Response: Threats to federal and state listed species are described to document the affected environment for such species for the environmental assessment. This information was compiled from existing sources of data on the various species. No alternative evaluated in the study would change existing water supply operations or flood protection infrastructure. The study recommends that any resulting legislation ensure that infrastructure designed for flood protection, storage and transport of water supplies, treatment of water and wastewater, and management of solid waste would be unaffected by the designation.

Public Concern: The alternatives need to address the implications of mortality sink characteristics of the wildlife corridors recommended in Alternative D.

Response: A mortality sink is habitat in which reproduction is insufficient to balance local mortality. The alternatives in the draft study propose inter-agency coordination to protect and enhance the function of corridors.

Socioeconomic Effects

Public Concern: The study should include more information about regional economic benefits of recreation; restoration programs; and impacts on property values. In addition, the subsection on Environmental Justice should include more background information on the federal requirements regarding environmental justice, as well as data pertaining to minority and low-income populations within the study area.

Response: The economic benefits of special designations, including national parks, are documented on pages 228-229 of the draft study report. Although more recent information on the benefit of national parks in California and southern California have been made available since publication (2009 data versus 2008) the differences would not change the likely effects of the national recreation area designations evaluated in the draft study report.

Additional information has been provided in the errata for the draft study report regarding environmental justice and minority and low-income populations within the study area.

Public Concern: Designation of an NRA would preclude mineral exploration and mining as it would be incompatible with the NPS mission leading to tremendous economic impacts. The study area contains some potentially high value and strategically important mineral resources, as well as sources of aggregate material important to local development and public works.

Response: Under all alternatives, the USFS, BLM, private landowners, and other agencies, would continue to be responsible for decisions about mineral rights and exploration on lands which they manage. NPS policies about mineral rights would only apply to lands that the NPS owns (2006 NPS Management Policies, section 8.7). If the recommendation for designation were enacted by Congress, the NPS would only acquire lands (and any associated mineral rights if applicable) on a limited basis from willing sellers (See also “Retention of Local Land Use and Existing Regulatory Authorities,” draft study report/EA, p. 164).

Effects on Regulatory Agencies, Local Jurisdictions, Land Use, and Private Property

Regulatory Agencies, Local Jurisdictions, and Land Use

Public Concern: Involvement of the NPS and an NRA designation could increase regulatory controls impacting existing agencies and jurisdictions. Specific concerns included increased federal government control over local government, an expansion of agencies responsible for land use planning, and concern that a new designation would allow non-government organizations to influence local land use decisions.

Response: If enacted by Congress, the designation of an NPS NRA would not establish additional regulatory or land use authorities over existing agencies and local governments. NPS management policies would only apply to land acquired by the NPS.

Public Concern: An NRA designation would impact the ability of state and federal agencies to build new facilities and infrastructure including communication towers, utilities, and transportation improvements.

Response: If enacted by Congress, the designation of a NPS NRA would not establish additional regulatory or land use authorities over other state and federal agencies and local governments. NPS land management policies and regulations would only apply to lands that the NPS acquires. The NPS would only consider acquiring land on a limited basis from willing sellers. In addition, no alternative presented would change existing water rights, water supply operations, water treatment operations, flood protection efforts, or other agency functions necessary to maintaining public infrastructure essential for public health and safety (draft study report/EA, p. 164).

Public Concern: Increased visitor use of infrastructure maintained by non-federal agencies, including county roads on the Angeles National Forest, would require additional maintenance and spending by those agencies not accounted for in the impact analysis.

Response: If the study recommendations were enacted by Congress, subsequent implementation plans and actions would address road usage and maintenance needs. The level of use of roads in the Angeles National Forest (ANF) is already high due to existing visitation levels. Substantial increases are not anticipated as a result of any of the alternatives proposed in the draft study report/EA. The selected alternative recommends exploration of alternative transportation options to the ANF which has the potential to reduce visitor use of roads.

Public Concern: Agencies providing flood protection, water storage and conveyance, and sanitation functions expressed concern that under an NRA, the ability of state and federal agencies to build new flood control, water supply, and wastewater systems and facilities could be limited by additional regulation.

Response: The study recognizes that the Los Angeles metropolitan region has highly complex systems of public infrastructure to protect the region from flood damage and for the transport and storage of local and regional water supplies. In addition, numerous facilities are necessary to treat wastewater and manage solid waste. None of the alternatives would change existing water rights, water supply operations, water treatment operations, flood protection efforts, or other agency functions necessary to maintaining public infrastructure essential for public health and safety if enacted by Congress. In all alternatives considered in the study, the USFS would continue to issue special use authorizations and permits related to public infrastructure on the Angeles National Forest.

All of the proposed alternatives, including the selected alternative, propose retention of existing water rights. Management of water supply and treatment plants would continue under current authorities. An NRA designation would not entail any new or future beneficial uses or requirements for water supply, water quality, or air quality regulations. NPS management policies would only apply to land acquired by the NPS. This study recommends that any implementing legislation ensure that existing sanitation facilities and operations such as landfills and water treatment plants, would continue to be operated and regulated by existing agencies and would not be affected by the NRA designation (draft study report/EA, p. 164).

Public Concern: The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) expressed concern that it could lose regulatory authority on lands acquired by the NPS, limiting their ability to freely access, monitor, or manage wildlife populations, particularly where mechanized travel is necessary to facilitate wildlife management objectives.

Response: If the recommendations of this study were enacted by Congress, NPS regulatory authority within an NRA would only apply to lands that the NPS would acquire. The need for land

acquisition by the NPS would be small, targeted for protection of significant resources, and subject to available funding.

For lands that the NPS would acquire and manage, NPS management policies direct the NPS to:

- cooperate with other agencies to ensure that the delineation of critical habitat, essential habitat, and/or recovery areas on park-managed lands provides needed conservation benefits to the total recovery efforts being conducted by all the participating agencies;
- cooperate with other agencies, states, and private entities to promote candidate conservation agreements aimed at precluding the need to list species;
- determine all management actions for the protection and perpetuation of federally, state, or locally listed species through the park management planning process, including consultation with lead federal and state agencies as appropriate (2006 NPS Management Policies, section 4.4.23).

The Santa Monica Mountains NRA has a long history of cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game to protect resources, including adherence to local and state regulations. This includes coordinating with CDFG for environmental review and permitting, as well as entering into agreements and memoranda of understanding when necessary. This type of cooperation and coordination would continue within the San Gabriel unit if Congress were to implement the selected alternative.

Public Concern: The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District is concerned that property owned/managed by NPS would be outside the jurisdiction of any vector control agency; this may substantially impact public health of residents in areas near NPS land. A further concern is that wildlife corridor protection efforts may not consider potential risks from increased human-wildlife interactions to both human and animal health.

Response: NPS Management Policies require that the NPS work to identify public health issues and disease transmission potential in the parks and to conduct park operations in ways that reduce or eliminate these hazards. The NPS public health program uses the consultation services of commissioned officers of the U.S. Public Health Service (2006 NPS Management Policies, 8.2.5.5, Public Health Program). The NPS generally coordinates with local agencies such as the San Gabriel Mosquito and Vector Control District. Were the study recommendations to be implemented by Congress, the NPS would manage vegetation for any lands which it acquires.

Protection of wildlife corridors would be conducted through implementation planning in cooperation with existing agencies and organizations and with opportunities for public input.

Public Concern: Class I air standards for a national recreation area will have a negative impact on private industry in the study area and could impair the ability of the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles' ability to provide the essential public services to their customers.

Response: Only a small number of national park units are considered Class 1 airsheds under the Clean Air Act. Class 1 air standards only apply to NPS areas over 6,000 acres that were in existence beginning in August 1977. The San Gabriel Wilderness Area in the Angeles National Forest is an existing Class 1 area. The selected alternative does not recommend designations for areas that meet these criteria. Designation of an NRA, if enacted by Congress, would not impose additional air quality regulations on local industry. However, the NPS would minimize air pollution emissions associated with NPS park operations. The NPS, along with other affected land managers and public and private landowners, would have the option of commenting on new source permit applications and local air pollution control plans.

Private Property Rights

Public Concern: NPS might acquire land from unwilling sellers through eminent domain. Landowners may not be fairly compensated if land is acquired. Related comments include:

NPS designation should not be applied without the consent of property owners.

Language prohibiting acquisition by eminent domain and protecting private property rights should be included in any legislation resulting from the study.

Change in ownership from private land to public land will reduce property tax revenue which will affect local services and lead to higher property taxes for others.

Road access and road maintenance will be impacted, affecting protection and enjoyment of private property.

Response: The alternatives recommend that any legislation proposed to implement the recommendations in this study should specify that eminent domain would not be used for NPS land acquisition. The NPS would only consider acquiring land on a limited basis from willing sellers. Designation would not impact local land use authority over lands not owned by the NPS (see draft study report/EA, p. 164). The ANF would continue to be managed by the USFS under all of the alternatives evaluated in the report. No change in ownership, regulations or land use would be imposed by designating an NRA.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study & Environmental Assessment

Errata
October 2012



San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study & Environmental Assessment

Errata October 2012

The following errata provide factual corrections, additions, and revisions to the *Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment (draft study report/EA)*, dated September 2011. Changes to the draft study report/EA, and references to the page number where the change has occurred are provided. The reader must have access to a copy of the draft study report/EA in order to fully understand the changes.

Additional copies of this document and the September 2011 report can be downloaded from the internet at www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel. Printed copies are also available on request from the address below.

National Park Service
Attn: San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study
333 Bush Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94104

INTRODUCTION

The following document includes errata that correct and add factual information to the September 2011 *Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment* (draft study report/EA). Attach this document to the draft study report/EA to comprise a full and complete record of the environmental impact analysis. The NPS did not identify any changes that would result in the determination of significant impacts. A Finding of No Significant Impact was completed for the study in October 2012.

Underlined text is new information added to the draft report, while text struck out is deleted.

Executive Summary

Page vii, second column, third paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

In early 2006, the NPS refined the study area to add portions of the Rio Hondo ~~River~~ watershed and to remove cities within the Gateway Cities Council of Governments jurisdiction.

Page ix, first column, High Levels of Biodiversity, first bullet, revised as follows:

The topographically and geologically diverse mountains contain high levels of biodiversity. The plant communities in the San Gabriel Mountains provide habitat for ~~67~~ 76 plant species and ~~105~~ 77 wildlife species considered sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Page 5, fourth paragraph, fourth sentence, revised as follows:

Mission Vieja, the original site of the San Gabriel Mission, is located on the Rio Hondo ~~River~~.

Page 8, first column, third paragraph, second sentence, revised as follows:

The revised scope refined the study area to include portions of the Rio Hondo ~~River~~ and removed from the study area the cities within the Gateway Cities Council of Governments jurisdiction as was intended in the legislation.

Page 10, Related Plans and Studies, revised to add the following related plans and studies:

Coyote Creek Watershed Management Plan (2007)

Prepared by the County of Orange, the Coyote Creek Watershed Management Plan provides a framework for improving watershed management practices in the Coyote Creek watershed. The intent of the plan is to provide planners, developers, and residents with tools to transform their communities through strategies for water conservation and green infrastructure. The plan encourages inter-jurisdictional projects and planning to promote open lines of communication, cooperation, and collaboration between agencies for improved management of shared resources.

Upper Santa Clara River Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (2008)

The Upper Santa Clara River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) examines current and future water-related needs, identifies regional objectives for water-related resource management, develops strategies to address identified needs, and then evaluates and offers various projects to meet the regional objectives. The purpose of the IRWMP is to integrate planning and implementation efforts and facilitate regional cooperation, with the goals of reducing water demands, improving operational

efficiency, increasing water supply, improving water quality, and promoting resource stewardship over the long term.

Rim of the Valley Corridor Special Resource Study

In 2008, Congress authorized the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a “special resource study” of the Rim of the Valley Corridor surrounding five valleys in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties of southern California. The valleys specifically mentioned in the authorizing legislation include the San Fernando, La Crescenta, Santa Clarita, Simi, and Conejo Valleys. The purpose of this special resource study is to determine whether any portion of the Rim of the Valley Corridor study area is eligible to be designated as a unit of the national park system or added to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The study will also explore other ways that private or governmental entities can protect resources and provide more outdoor recreation opportunities.

Chapter 2 Resource Description

Page 14, second paragraph, revised to add a new sentence to the end of the paragraph:

San Gabriel Mountains foothill communities generally extend to at least 1,600 feet in elevation.

Page 14, second column, first paragraph, third sentence, revised as follows:

Within the study area, the Puente-Chino Hills reach heights over 1,400 feet ~~1,388 feet at Workman Hill north of Whittier.~~ Beyond the study area, the Chino Hills reach over 1,700 feet at San Juan Hill (1,781), located in Chino Hills State Park.

Page 28, first column, fifth paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

The Rio Hondo ~~River~~ formerly meandered across the basin as a channel to the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers.

Page 28, first column, sixth paragraph, revised as follows:

The Los Angeles River and San Gabriel River watersheds are hydrologically connected by the Rio Hondo ~~River~~ through the Whittier Narrows Reservoir. Much of the Rio Hondo ~~River~~ and its tributaries have been channelized and paved. Dams in the Rio Hondo drainage area include the Eaton, Sierra Madre, Big Santa Anita, and Sawpit Dams (LADPD 2006b; California Coastal Conservancy 2001).

Page 30, first column, sixth paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

Extensive flood protection and water conservation systems were constructed by Los Angeles County and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers throughout the first half of the 20th century.

Page 32, first column, after second paragraph, revised to add new paragraph:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has approved the Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam Basins for water supply and conservation as a third purpose of basin use. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prepared a report in 1999 recommending the use of the basins for limited water conservation, the holding of storm water for groundwater recharge, and for release to spreading basins once the initial detention basin recharge had occurred. Whittier Narrows Dam Basin is currently being re-assessed for water conservation with a local sponsor, the Water Replenishment District, and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

Page 32, second column, at the end of the second paragraph, revised to add new sentence:

The recycled water groundwater replenishment activities use the San Gabriel River for conveyance of recycled water and make use of the facilities that comprise the San Gabriel River Water Conservation System.

Page 39, first column, second paragraph, third sentence, revised as follows:

Common species include ceanothus, manzanita, ~~huckleberry oak~~, mountain mahogany, ~~toyon~~, and California buckthorn.

Page 39, first column, second paragraph, following the third sentence, revised to add new sentence:
Subdivisions within the montane chaparral on south facing slopes at low elevation have been identified as Upper Sonoran Zone, Madrean Oak-chaparral zone, Madro Tertiary, Cismontane, and Lower montane.

Page 39, first column, fourth paragraph, third sentence, revised as follows:

Large complexes of oak woodland are found in Powder Canyon, Hacienda Heights, Brea Canyon, and Tonner Canyon.

Page 39, first column, fifth paragraph, second sentence, revised as follows:

Dominated by the southern California black walnut, which grows 10 to 30 feet high, walnut woodlands are common on the hillsides of Powder, Brea, and Tonner canyons where they form some of the best developed examples of their type south of Ventura County in southern California and represent the state's last remaining extensive stand of southern California black walnut.

Page 40, first column, second paragraph, second sentence, revised as follows:

Dominant species include canyon live oak, Pacific madrone, ponderosa pine, sugar pine, Sierra juniper, and incense-cedar. Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) occurs on the south facing slope of Mt. Wilson.

Page 40, second column, last paragraph, last sentence, revised as follows:

~~Small~~ Areas of freshwater marsh are found in Puente Hills valleys (none of substantial size), along major drainages in the San Gabriel River watershed, in scattered locations along the shorelines of reservoirs and natural lakes in the San Gabriel Mountains, along slow-flow portions of the river and tributaries within the upper Santa Clara River, adjacent to artificially created impoundments used to water livestock, and in scattered ponds and irrigation ditches throughout the Antelope Valley.

Page 41, first column, last paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

The diverse range of plant communities in the study area contains suitable habitat for ~~77~~ 76 plant species considered sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered. Of these ~~77~~ 76 species, 53 are endemic (See Tables B1 and B2 in Appendix B).

Page 41, second column, second paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*) is an annual grass associated with vernal pool systems in Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Diego Counties.

Page 43, first column, third paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

A high concentration of sensitive wildlife is present in the study area, which provides habitat for approximately ~~116~~ 77 species considered sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered (See Tables B1 and B3 in Appendix B).

Page 43, first column, fourth paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

Arroyo toads (*Bufo ~~microscaphus~~-californicus*) are found in seasonal pools and streams where natural disturbance is common.

Page 43, first column, last paragraph, heading revised as follows:

California Condor ~~(FT)~~(FE)

Page 43, first column, last paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

Suitable habitat for condors (*Gymnogyps californianus*) includes foothill rangeland and forest in remote areas where the birds can roost and nest in tall trees and on cliffs.

Page 43, second column, second paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) occupy desert scrub habitat in California, Nevada, Arizona, and southwestern Utah.

Page 43, second column, third paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

Mountain yellow-legged frogs (*Rana muscosa*) are diurnal frogs that occupy shaded streams with cool water from springs or snowmelt.

Page 43, second column, fourth paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

The Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo belii pusillus*) inhabits riparian woodlands with tall trees and shorter thick shrubs.

Page 44, first column, first paragraph, revised to add new sentence to the end of the paragraph:

Least Bell's vireo have been observed at the Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam basins.

Page 44, first column, second paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

California red-legged frogs (*Rana ~~aurora~~ draytonii*) inhabit shrubby riparian areas and deep, slow moving water.

Page 47, first column, fourth paragraph, heading revised as follows:

Santa Ana Sucker ~~(FE)~~(FT)

Page 47, first column, fourth paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

The Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus s-antaanae*) is endemic to the Los Angeles River, the San Gabriel River, and the Santa Ana River.

Page 47, second column, first paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

Southern steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss ~~irideus~~*) are winter-run steelhead whose native habitat occurs in basins along the southern California coast.

Page 48, first column, second paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

Existing significant ecological areas in the study area include Tonner Canyon/Chino Hills, ~~Power~~ Powder Canyon/Puente Hills, Whittier Narrows Dam County Recreation Area, Sycamore and Turnbull Canyons, Buzzard Peak/San Jose Hills, Santa Clara River, Santa Fe Dam Floodplain, *Dudleya Densiflora* and *Gallium Grande* populations (San Gabriel Canyon), San Dimas Canyon, San Antonio Canyon Mouth, Big Rock Wash, Little Rock Wash, Desert Montane Transect, and the Rio Hondo Wildlife Sanctuary.

Page 52, Overview of Cultural Resource Box, last bullet, revised as follows:

In addition, there are 106 sites that need to be reevaluated to determine whether they have potential for listing ~~on~~ in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register, or local listing/designation.

Page 53, first column, first paragraph under *Native American Groups*, revised as follows:

Tongva (Gabrielino)

The Tongva and Gabrielino names refer to the native languages of groups associated with the Los Angeles River, lower San Gabriel River, and lower Santa Ana River drainages, and Santa Catalina and San Clemente Islands (NPS 2010). The Tongva were the predominant native group in the Los Angeles basin from the time of their settlement to their incorporation into the Spanish missions. The Tongva arrived around 2,500 B.P. (before present day), slowly displacing the indigenous Hokan speakers. The Tongva, with the exception of the Chumash, became “the wealthiest, most populous, and most powerful ethnic nationality in aboriginal southern California” (Bean and Smith 1978, Robinson 1991). The Tongva were also known as Gabrielinos because of their incorporation into Mission San Gabriel.

Page 53, second column, second paragraph, revised to remove text:

~~The Tongva territory and other areas where they had activities included Los Angeles County south of the crest of the San Gabriel and Santa Monica Mountains, half of Orange County and the islands of San Clemente, San Nicolas, and Santa Catalina (Bean and Smith 1978; Kroeber 1976).~~

Page 53, second column, last paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

The Tataviam territory was located to the north and west of the Tongva and was centered in the ~~San Fernando Valley~~ Santa Clarita Valley (Kroeber 1976) (King and Blackburn 1981).

Page 56, first column, first paragraph, after the third sentence revised to insert new sentence:

Although the exact location of the campsite is undetermined, diaries documenting the Portola Expedition reference a campsite located within Brea Canyon, uphill from Brea Creek.

Page 57, first column, second paragraph, heading, revised as follows:

Mission San Fernando Rey de Espana

Page 57, first column, second paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

Mission San Fernando Rey de Espana (Mission San Fernando), founded in 1797, helped to relieve the long journey between missions San Gabriel and San Buenaventura (in Ventura).

Page 57, first column, second paragraph, citation (Englehardt 1908) is moved to the end of the fourth sentence.

Page 58, second column, fourth and fifth paragraphs, revised as follows:

~~William Workman, John Rowland, and Juan Matias Sanchez, who arrived in California along the Old Spanish Trail, were granted Rancho La Puente and Rancho La Merced. In 1842, the 48,000-acre Rancho La Puente ~~went~~ was granted to John Rowland and William Workman (Cleland and Dumke 1966; King 1990 and 1975).~~

In 1850, Workman purchased Rancho La Merced. The 2,300-acre, triangular-shaped land grant was situated near the site of Mission Vieja. Workman later sold his half of Rancho La Merced to his ranch manager, Juan Matias Sanchez. Workman purchased Rancho La Merced (also known as Rancho Mission Vieja), a 2,300 acre land grant situated near the site of Mission Vieja, from Dona Casilda Soto (original

~~grantee) in 1850. In 1851, Workman gave partial interest of Rancho La Merced to son-in-law Francisco Temple and Juan Matias Sanchez. The Sanchez Adobe still remains and is a historic site in the city of Montebello.~~

Page 62, first column, first paragraph, revised to insert sentence at the end of the paragraph:

Pierce's Disease killed most area vineyards during the mid-1880s. Fruit and nut orchards were planted thereafter.

Page 65, first column, fifth paragraph, last sentence, revised as follows:

With the assistance of other relief agencies such as the Work ~~Projects~~ Progress Administration (WPA), the CCC were responsible for constructing many of the roads, campground facilities, and trails in the Angeles National Forest.

Page 70, first column, second paragraph, third sentence, revised as follows:

The 1936 act and a subsequent flood control act passed in 1938 called for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to work with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District on future flood control efforts.

Page 70, first column, third paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

Flood control structures were built by the Department of Public Works and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam).

Page 84, first column, second paragraph, revised as follows:

~~The Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation manages numerous parks throughout the study area. Regional and county parks are typically larger in scale than local and community parks. However, some county parks function as local and community parks for unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County while others function as large regional parks that offer many types of recreation opportunities to a large service area. It should also be noted that some regional and county parks emphasize passive recreational opportunities and protection of wildlife habitat. The Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation manages numerous parks throughout the study area. The County of Orange manages Craig Regional Park which spans the cities of Brea and Fullerton.~~

Page 84, second column, after end of first paragraph, revised to add new paragraph:

The Congressionally authorized purpose of Santa Fe Dam and Whittier Narrows Dam Basins is flood control. However, the Flood Control Act of 1944 provided for the development of recreation amenities of interest to the public. Whittier Narrows Dam Basin is 2,826 acres with 1,258 acres outgranted to the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (County) and 120 acres to the City of Pico Rivera for recreation purposes. Santa Fe Dam Basin is 2,554 acres and 836 acres is outgranted to the County and 186 acres is outgranted to Kare Youth League for recreation purposes. Both the Whittier Narrows Dam Basin and Santa Fe Dam Basin recreation areas have significant wildlife areas that are also operated and maintained by the County. Management of the areas for recreation and wildlife is done with the understanding that the primary purpose and responsibility is flood control (flood risk management). Many of the recreation amenities within each basin have been developed in partnership between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the County. The County has also developed many amenities on their own, subject to approval by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has established regulations guiding the development of any recreation amenities in the basins, including limitations on types of structures that may be built within certain flood-year elevations.

Page 85, second column, second paragraph, last sentence revised as follows:

Equestrian facilities are also located in Pico Rivera at adjacent to Bicentennial Park and Whittier Narrows.

Page 89, second column, first paragraph, last sentence, revised as follows:

The recreational route is of the national historic trail currently planned through the Puente Hills to the Whittier Narrows area, and will coincide with the follows a portion of the Schabarum/Skyline Trail and a portion of the Rio Hondo River Bike Trail.

Page 91, first column, second paragraph, revised as follows:

There are several types of bicycle paths and trails available in the study area. Class 1 bikeways feature off-street, bi-directional paved paths designated for cyclists. The San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo River trails are examples of Class 1 bike paths. The San Gabriel River from Santa Fe Dam to Whittier Narrows Dam is a flood control channel. Bike paths along flood control channels are located on access roads on top of the levees which were constructed for the operation and maintenance of the flood control channel. These bike paths are a secondary purpose to channel maintenance. As such, these trails are subject to closure at any time for the purpose of the operation and maintenance of the channel as needed. The maintenance of the bike trails is the responsibility of the County. These river bike trails also serve as regional trails and greenways, connecting communities and park areas. Los Angeles County's San Gabriel River bike trail extends from the southern border of the Angeles National Forest in Azusa, all of the way to the Pacific Ocean. The total trail length is 39 miles. This trail includes access points from most major streets and direct access to 15 parks. The Rio Hondo River Trail links to the San Gabriel River Trail via the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area and converges with the Los Angeles River Trail near Downey, just south of John Anson Ford Park. The Whittier Greenway Trail is a 5-mile bicycle/pedestrian trail which replaced an abandoned right-of-way of the old Pacific Electric Railway.

Page 92, second column, second paragraph, second sentence revised as follows:

Approximately 25 acres of the 86-acre Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Gardens, ~~managed by California Polytechnic University, Pomona,~~ are within the study area.

Chapter 3 Significance

Page 103, first column, second paragraph, first sentence revised as follows:

The wide range of vegetation types in the San Gabriel Mountains provides habitat for ~~67~~ 76 sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered plant species. Federally listed threatened (FT) or endangered (FE) plants include: Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*) (FE), slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*) (FE), Branton's milk-vetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*) (FE), thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*) (FT), and California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*) (FE).

Chapter 6 Alternatives

Page 165, first column, last paragraph, last sentence, revised as follows:

Other agencies that manage land include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management, Los Angeles County Parks, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, the Puente Hills Landfill Native Habitat Preservation Authority, and local governments.

Page 167, second column, second paragraph, last sentence, revised as follows:

Regulatory and management agencies responsible for flood control and sanitation include the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts.

Page 167, second column, fourth paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE): The Los Angeles District of the ACOE has jurisdiction over various flood protection facilities within the San Gabriel River Watershed.

Page 167, second column, fourth paragraph, last sentence, revised as follows:

The ACOE has agreements with the Los Angeles County Department of Recreation for its management of the recreational lands around the Santa Fe Dam, ~~Puddingstone Reservoir~~, and Whittier Narrows Dam basins.

Page 168, second column, second bullet, revised as follows:

Lashbrook Park is located along the east bank of the Rio Hondo bike trail within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction.

Page 175, second column, second paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

The NRA partnership could include, but would not be limited to, the following agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, Los Angeles County, and the Watershed Conservation Authority.

Page 185, first column, first paragraph, first sentence, revised as follows:

The NRA partnership could include, but would not be limited to, the following agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the Puente Hills Landfill Native Habitat Authority, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, Los Angeles County, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and the Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority.

Page 191, Map: Alternative D San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area: A Partnership Linking Significant Resources and Recreation/ Area Detail – River Corridor and Puente Hills, revised as follows:

The parcel shown in the Puente Hills within the alternative D boundary as owned by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is now owned by the City of Whittier and should be colored orange on the map to reflect city ownership.

Chapter 7 Environmental Consequences

Page 205, Table 12, Row 1, Second Column, revised to include additional language:

No specific actions will be taken in a floodplain due to completion of this study. The outcome of the study will be a recommendation to Congress. If Congress takes action, then new environmental analysis would be undertaken prior to specific implementation actions that may affect floodplains.

Page 205, Table 12, revised to include new row:

| Mandatory Topic | Discussion and Rationale | Disposition |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) | <u>Completion of the study does not itself affect greenhouse gas emissions, nor does it propose specific management actions which would affect greenhouse gas emissions. If Congress takes action, then new environmental analysis would be undertaken prior to specific implementation actions that may affect (GHG).</u> | <u>This topic is dismissed from further analysis</u> |

Page 225, 2nd column, following last paragraph, revised to include additional demographic information about minority and low income populations:

Minority and Low Income Populations

In February of 1994, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*. The Executive Order identifies agency responsibilities:

To the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, and consistent with the principles set forth in the report on the National Performance Review, each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States and its territories and possessions, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Commonwealth of the Marianas Islands.

The Council on Environmental Quality provided *Environmental Justice: Guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act* in December 1997 to assist federal agencies in addressing environmental justice in their NEPA procedures. This guidance defines low-income population, minority, and minority population as follows:

Low-income population: Low-income populations in an affected area should be identified with the annual statistical poverty thresholds from the Bureau of the Census' Current Population Reports, Series P-60 on Income and Poverty. In identifying low-income populations, agencies may consider as a community either a group of individuals living in geographic proximity to one another, or a set of individuals (such as migrant workers or Native Americans), where either type of group experiences common conditions of environmental exposure or effect.

Minority: Individual(s) who are members of the following population groups: American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian or Pacific Islander; Black, not of Hispanic origin; or Hispanic.

Minority populations should be identified where either: (a) the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent or (b) the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis. In identifying minority communities, agencies may consider as a community either a group of individuals living in geographic proximity to one another, or a geographically dispersed/transient set of individuals (such as migrant workers or Native American), where either type of group experiences common conditions of environmental exposure or effect. The selection of the appropriate unit of geographic analysis may be a governing body's jurisdiction, a neighborhood, census tract, or other similar unit that is to be chosen so as to not artificially dilute or inflate the affected minority population. A minority population also exists if there is more than one minority group present and the minority percentage, as calculated by aggregating all minority persons, meets one of the above-stated thresholds (CEQ 1997).

Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau for 2010 for 49 communities in the study area, 41 communities had a minority population greater of than 50%; eight communities had a minority population of less than 50%. Data was not available for Bradbury, Irwindale, and Industry communities. Minorities represented from 23% to 96% of the population in those 49 communities. Individuals identified as members of minority groups totaled nearly 2.1 million people in the 49 communities, 74% of total study area population (U.S. Census Bureau 2012).

The total population of the 49 communities for which data was available was approximately 2.8 million (Note: some of the 2.8 million may fall outside of the study area as many of the communities are only partially included), with 74% representing minority groups, and 11% being below the poverty level. About 11% of the people in the study area had incomes below poverty level. In 22 out of 49 communities in the study area more than 10% of the population is below poverty, with the percent of the population within each community below poverty level ranging from 4.1 to 20.7%.

Page 242, first column, third paragraph, last sentence, revised as follows:

This would be done in partnership with water agencies, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Chapter 8 Consultation and Coordination

Page 218, second column, second paragraph, second sentence revised as follows:

However, county averages can mask dramatic disparities in access to green space within the county (The City Project 2007 and 2011).

Page 219, first column, fourth paragraph, second sentence revised as follows:

Recent studies have found that statewide, Los Angeles County is one of the most disadvantaged counties in terms of access to parks and open space for children and people of color (The City Project 2007 and 2011, Trust for Public Land 2004).

Page 220, second column, second paragraph, last sentence revised as follows:

These ethnic groups are 12-15 times more likely to have less park acreage per capita when compared to Whites (Sister, C., Wilson, J.P., and Wolch, J. 2008, The City Project 2007 and 2011).

Page 255, second column, Public Scoping Stakeholder Meetings, fourth bullet, revised as follows:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Page 259, second column, U.S. Department of Interior, add to list:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Page 259, second column, U.S. Department of Agriculture, delete from list:

- ~~U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service~~

Page 259, second column, U.S. Department of Commerce, delete from list:

- ~~U.S. Environmental Protection Agency~~

Page 259, second column, add to end of column:

U.S. Department of Defense

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Page 261, first column, County Government, Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation, add to list:

Whittier Narrows Recreation Area

Page 261, second column, Water Supply Agencies and Organizations, revised to add the following agencies:

- Water Replenishment District of Southern California
- Central Basin Municipal Water District
- Three Valleys Municipal Water District
- Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Appendices

Appendix B: Species Tables (pages 268-286) have been revised as follows to reflect current species listings by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Angeles National Forest Sensitive Species list:

Appendix B: Species Tables

Table B1: Federal and State Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|---|--|----------------|----------------|--|
| Plants | | | | | |
| <i>Astragalus brauntonii</i> | Braunton's milk-vetch (endemic) | Closed-cone coniferous chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland | FE | None | Azusa, Mount Wilson |
| <i>Berberis nevinii</i> | Nevin's barberry (endemic) | Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, riparian woodland | FE | CE | Sunland, Glendora, Pasadena, Mint Canyon, San Fernando, Mount Baldy |
| <i>Brodiaea filifolia</i> | thread-leaved brodiaea (endemic) | Valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools, flood plains, coastal sage scrub | FT | CE | Glendora |
| <i>Dodecahema leptoceras</i> | slender-horned spineflower (endemic) | Chaparral, cismontane woodland, alluvial fan coastal scrub | FE | CE | Azusa, Mount Wilson, Pasadena, Cajon, Agua Dulce, Mint Canyon, San Fernando, Sunland |
| <i>Orcuttia californica</i> | California Orcutt grass | Vernal pools, wetlands | FE | CE | Western San Gabriel Mtns., Soledad Basin |
| Fishes | | | | | |
| <i>Catostomus santaanae</i> | Santa Ana sucker | Clear, cool, gravelly and rock streams | FT | SSC | Acton, Azusa, Agua Dulce, Condor Peak, Crystal Lake, Glendora, Mount Baldy, Mount San Antonio Sunland, Waterman Mountain, East Fork San Gabriel River, Cattle Canyon, Creek and Bear Creek |
| <i>Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni</i> | Unarmored threespine stickleback | River or creek pools and backwaters with sand or mud bottoms | FE | CE / <u>FP</u> | Acton, Agua Dulce, Mint Canyon |
| <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> | Southern steelhead (<u>southern California populations</u>) | Freshwater streams connecting to the ocean | FE | SSC | (<u>southern ESU evolutionary significant unit - historic</u>) |
| Amphibians | | | | | |
| <i>Ananyrsus (=Bufo) californicus</i> | Arroyo toad | Rivers with shallow gravelly pools adjacent to sandy terraces | FE | SSC | Agua Dulce, Chilao Flat, Little Rock Creek |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Rana aurora draytonii</i> | California red-legged frog | Dense shrubby riparian vegetation associated with deep, still or slow-moving water | FT | SSC | Sleepy Valley, San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Rana muscosa</i> | mountain yellow-legged frog | <u>Creeks with permanent water in at least some portion of the reach, streams, rivers, perennial creeks, permanent plunge pools within intermittent creeks and pools, and their associated riparian and upland habitat.</u> Ponds, tanks, lakes, and streams at moderate to high elevations | FT FE | SSC CE or CT candida-te | Crystal Lake, Mount Baldy, Pacifico Mountain, Valyermo, Glendora, Juniper Hills, Condor Peak, Mount San Antonio, Mount Wilson, Sunland, Chilao Flat, Pasadena, Waterman Mountain, San Gabriel Mountains |
| Reptiles | | | | | |
| <i>Gopherus agassizii</i> | Desert tortoise | Desert oases, riverbanks, washes, dunes rocky slopes | FT | CT | Northern edge of the San Gabriel Mountains. |
| Birds | | | | | |
| <i>Buteo swainsoni</i> | Swainson's hawk | Open grasslands, riparian systems | S FSS | CT | Rose Hills |
| <i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i> | Western yellow-billed cuckoo | Riparian areas | FC | CE | Baldwin Park, El Monte, Ontario, Whittier, Near Cattle Canyon, historic record from San Gabriel River (1951) |
| <i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> | Southwestern willow flycatcher | Riparian areas, willow thickets, mountain meadows | FE | None | Agua Dulce, Pasadena, El Monte, Mount Wilson |
| <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | American peregrine falcon | Cliff faces, wetlands, woodlands, other forested habitats, cities, agricultural areas | FSS | CE (de-listed, see Table B3) | Pasadena |
| <i>Gymnogyps californianus</i> | California condor | Foothill and rangeland forest | FE | CE / FP | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Haliaeetus leucoccephalus</i> | Bald eagle | Woodlands forests, grasslands, wetlands | FSS | CE / FP | San Gabriel Valley |
| <i>Poliioptila californica californica</i> | Coastal California gnatcatcher | Coastal sage scrub | FT | None | Arcadia, Baldwin Park, Claremont, El Monte, La Habra, Mint Canyon, Mount Wilson, Ontario, Sunland, San Dimas, San Jose Hills, Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden Bio Bernard Field Station, Puente Hills, Yorba Linda |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|------------------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|---|
| <i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> | Least Bell's vireo | Riparian areas | FE | CE | Azusa, El Monte, Fish Canyon, Tassel Canyon, Whittier Narrows, Tonner Canyon, Yorba Linda |
| Mammals | | | | | |
| <i>Spermophilus</i> <i>Xerospermophilus mohavensis</i> | Mohave ground squirrel | Low desert with scattered brush, sandy or gravelly soil | FSS | CT | Mescal Creek, Littlerock, Palmdale, Valyermo (areas just north or adjacent to the study area) |
| Species with potential to occur in study area | | | | | |
| <i>Ammospermophilus nelsoni</i> | <u>Nelson's antelope squirrel</u> | <u>sandy loam soils, widely spaced alkali scrub vegetation, and dry washes</u> | <u>None</u> | <u>CT</u> | <u>N/A</u> |
| <i>Dipodomys merriami parvus</i> | <u>San Bernardino kangaroo rat</u> | <u>Alluvial fans, floodplains, washes, and nearby upland areas with similar sandy or gravelly soils and sage-scrub vegetation.</u> | <u>FE</u> | <u>None</u> | <u>N/A</u> |
| <p>FE = Federally-listed Endangered FT = Federally-listed Threatened CE = State-listed Endangered CT = State-listed Threatened FSS = Forest Service Sensitive <u>Species List for Angeles National Forest (2011)</u> SSC= Species of Special Concern. The California Department of Fish and Game applies this status to animal species not listed under the Federal and California endangered species acts that are declining at a rate that might require listing or have historically low population counts that are threatened. FP = Fully Protected. <u>This list is a result of the California Department of Fish and Game's first efforts in the 1960's to identify and protect rare animal species. Most species on this list were later listed under state or federal endangered species laws, but some remain on the Fully Protected list.</u></p> <p>Sources: , USFS 2011, CDFG 2008a and 2011a, 2011b</p> | | | | | |

Table B2: Rare and Sensitive Plant Species

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------|---|
| Abrams' alumroot (endemic) | <i>Heuchera abramsii</i> | Upper montane coniferous forest | FW FSS | None | 4 | Mount San Antonio |
| alkali mariposa lily | <i>Calochortus striatus</i> | Chaparral, Mojavean desert scrub, chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps | None FSS | None | 1B | Waterman Mountain |
| alpine sulfur-flowered buckwheat (endemic) | <i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i> var. <i>minus</i> | Subalpine coniferous forest, upper montane coniferous forest | FW None | None | 4 | Mount San Antonio |
| Big Bear Valley woollypod (endemic) | <i>Astragalus leucolobus</i> | Lower montane coniferous forest, Pinyon and juniper woodlands | FSS | None | 1B | Mount San Antonio, Telegraph Peak, Mescal Creek |
| Brand's star phacelia | <i>Phacelia stellaris</i> | Coastal dunes and scrub, upper montane coniferous forest | Candidate FC | None | 1B | El Monte |
| California muhly (endemic) | <i>Muhlenbergia californica</i> | Chaparral, coastal scrub, meadows and seeps, lower montane coniferous forest | FW None | None | 4 | San Gabriel Mountains: Big Rock Creek, San Antonio Canyon, Devil's Canyon |
| Southern California <u>black</u> walnut | <i>Juglans californica</i> var. <i>californica</i> | Southern oak woodland | None FW | None | 4 | San Gabriel Mountains, Puente Hills, San Jose Hills |
| Coulter's goldfields | <i>Lasthenia glabrata</i> ssp. <i>coulteri</i> | Marshes and swamps, playas, vernal pools | None | None | 1B | Mount Wilson, Pasadena, La Habra, Whittier |
| Crested milk-vetch (endemic) | <i>Astragalus bicristatus</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest | FSS | None | 4-3 | San Gabriel Mountains |
| Davidson's bush mallow (endemic) | <i>Malacothamnus davidsonii</i> | Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, riparian areas | FW None | None | 1B | Glendora, Yorba Linda |
| Davidson's saltscale | <i>Atriplex serenana</i> var. <i>davidsonii</i> | Coastal bluff scrub, coastal scrub (alkaline) | None | None | 1B | Mescal Creek, Condor Peak, Sunland |
| Duran's rush (endemic) | <i>Juncus duranii</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps | FW None | None | 4 | San Gabriel Mtns., Dorr Canyon, NW slope of Mt. Burnham. Lodgepole Picnic San Gabriel Mtns., Little Rock Creek, ca 1 mi downstream from Cooper Creek., Angeles Crest Hwy; |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|--------------|------|--|
| Engelmann oak | <i>Quercus englemannii</i> | Chaparral, cismontane woodland, riparian woodland, valley and foothill grassland | None | None | 4 | Monrovia, Pasadena, Pomona |
| Ewan's cinquefoil (endemic) | <i>Potentilla glandulosa</i> ssp. <i>ewanii</i> | Lower montane coniferous forest, near seeps and springs | None FSS | None | 1B | Crystal lake |
| fragrant pitcher sage (endemic) | <i>Lepechinia fragrans</i> | Chaparral | FW FSS | None | 4 | San Gabriel Mountains: Switzer's Camp, Mount Wilson |
| fringed grass-of-parnassus | <i>Parnassia cirrata</i> var. <i>cirrata</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps | None FSS | None | 1B | Glendora, Mount San Antonio, Crystal Lake |
| gray monardella (endemic) | <i>Monardella cinerea</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest, subalpine coniferous forest | FW None | None | 4 | Mount San Antonio |
| Greata's aster (endemic) | <i>Symphyotrichum greatae</i> (formerly <i>Aster greatae</i>) | Broadleafed upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, riparian woodland | None | None | 1B | Mount Baldy, Glendora, Azusa, Mount Wilson, Pasadena, Mount San Antonio, Juniper Hills, Waterman Mountain, Crystal Lake, Pacifico Mountain, Acton, Condor Peak, Chilao Flat, Agua Dulce, San Fernando, Sunland |
| Hall's monardella (endemic) | <i>Monardella macrantha</i> ssp. <i>hallii</i> | Broadleaf upland forest, Chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, valley and foothill grassland | FSS | None | 1B | Mount Baldy |
| hot springs fimbriatylis | <i>Fimbristylis thermalis</i> | Meadows and seeps (alkaline), hot springs | None | None | 2 | Glendora, Crystal Lake |
| intermediate mariposa lily (endemic) | <i>Calochortus weedii</i> var. <i>intermedius</i> | Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland | None | None | 1B | La Habra, San Dimas, Yorba Linda, Claremont |
| Jepson's bedstraw (endemic) | <i>Galium jepsonii</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest | FW <u>None</u> | None | 4 | Mt. Waterman, Pacifico Mountain |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|---|--|-----------------------|--------------|------|--|
| Johnston's bedstraw (endemic) | <i>Galium johnstonii</i> | Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, Pinyon and juniper woodland, riparian woodland | FW None | None | 4 | San Gabriel Mountains: Granite Mountain, Roundtop Mountain, Divide between W Fork Bear Creek and Devils Canyon, horse flats |
| Johnston's buckwheat (endemic) | <i>Eriogonum microthecum</i> var. <i>johnstonii</i> | Subalpine coniferous forest, upper montane coniferous forest | FSS | None | 1B | Mescal Creek, Mount San Antonio |
| Kern Canyon clarkia (endemic) | <i>Clarkia xantiana</i> ssp. <i>parviflora</i> | Cismontane woodland, Great Basin scrub | None | None | 1B | Valyermo |
| Laguna Mountains jewelflower (endemic) | <i>Streptanthus bernardinus</i> | Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, | FSS | None | 4 | Mt. Baldy, Glendora, Telegraph Peak, Mount San Antonio, Waterman Mountain, Crystal Lake, Pacifico Mountain |
| lemon lily | <i>Lilium parryi</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, riparian forest, | FSS | None | 1B | Pacifico Mountain, San Gabriel Mountains: Little Rock Creek, Prairie Forks, Alder Gulch, Burkhart trail, Big Cienega spring, |
| many-stemmed dudleya (endemic) | <i>Dudleya multicaulis</i> | Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland | FSS | None | 1B | Mt. Baldy, Ontario, Claremont, Glendora, Azusa, Baldwin Park, San Dimas, Mount Wilson, Pasadena, El Monte |
| Mason's neststraw (endemic) | <i>Stylocline masonii</i> | Chenopod scrub, Pinyon and Juniper woodland | None | None | 1B | Acton |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|------------------------|--------------|------|---|
| mesa horkelia (endemic) | <i>Horkelia cuneata</i> ssp. <i>puberula</i> | Chaparral, Coastal sage scrub, cismontane woodland | None FSS | None | 1B | Mt. Baldy, Ontario, Glendora, Azusa, Claremont, Baldwin Park, San Dimas, Mount Wilson, Pasadena, El Monte |
| Mojave phacelia (endemic) | <i>Phacelia mohavensis</i> | Cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, Pinyon and juniper woodland | FW None | 4 | 4 | San Gabriel Mountains: Sulphur Springs, Granite Mountain, Camp Verdugo Pines |
| mountain oxytrope (endemic) | <i>Oxytropis oreophila</i> var. <i>oreophila</i> | Alpine boulder and rock field, subalpine coniferous forest | None | None | 2 | Mount San Antonio |
| Mt. Gleason's Indian paintbrush | <i>Castilleja gleasonii</i> | Lower montane coniferous forest, pinyon and juniper woodlands | None FSS | CR | 1B | Waterman Mountain, Pacifico Mountain, Chilao Flat, Acton, Condor Peak |
| ocellated humboldt lily (endemic) | <i>Lilium humboldtii</i> ssp. <i>ocellatum</i> | Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, riparian forest, coastal scrub | FW | None | 4 | Mt. San Antonio, Mt. Baldy, Glendora, Azusa, Crystal Lake, Condor Peak, Chilao Flat |
| Orcutt's linanthus | <i>Linanthus orcuttii</i> | Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, pinyon and juniper woodland | None | None | 1B | El Monte, Mount Wilson |
| Palmer's mariposa lily (endemic) | <i>Calochortus palmeri</i> var. <i>palmeri</i> | Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps | FSS | None | 1B | Chilao Flat |
| Parish's gooseberry (endemic) | <i>Ribes divaricatum</i> var. <i>parishii</i> | Riparian woodland | None | None | 1B | Whittier, Pasadena, El Monte |
| Parry's spineflower (endemic) | <i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>parryi</i> | Chaparral, coastal scrub, | None FSS | None | 3 | Mount Wilson, Claremont, Pasadena, Mount Baldy, Ontario |
| Peirson's lupine (endemic) | <i>Lupinus peirsonii</i> | Joshua tree woodland, lower and upper montane coniferous forest, pinyon and juniper woodland | None FSS | None | 1B | Valyermo, Juniper Hills, Crystal lake, Chilao Flat |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--------------|------|--|
| Peirson's morning-glory (endemic) | <i>Calystegia peirsonii</i> | Chaparral, chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, lower montane coniferous forest, valley and foothill grasslands | None | None | 4 | <u>N/A</u> |
| pine green-gentian (endemic) | <i>Swertia neglecta</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest, pinyon and juniper forest | FSS <u>None</u> | None | 4 | Waterman Mtn, Crystal Lake, Chilao Flat |
| Plummer's mariposa lily (endemic) | <i>Calochortus plummerae</i> | Granitic, rocky areas in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, lower montane, coniferous forest, valley and foothill grassland | FSS | None | 1B | Claremont |
| rayless ragwort | <i>Senecio aphanactis</i> | Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub | None | None | 2 | San Dimas |
| Robinson's pepper-grass | <i>Lepidium virginicum</i> var. <i>robinsonii</i> | Chaparral, Coastal scrub | None | None | 1B | Azusa, Ontario, Mt. Wilson |
| Rock Creek broomrape (endemic) | <i>Orobanche valida</i> ssp. <i>valida</i> | Chaparral, Pinyon and juniper woodland | None <u>FSS</u> | None | 1B | Mount Baldy, Telegraph Peak, Valyermo |
| rock monardella (endemic) | <i>Monardella viridis</i> ssp. <i>saxicola</i> | Chaparral, Lower montane coniferous forest | FSS | None | 4 | San Dimas |
| round-leaved boykinia | <i>Boykinia rotundifolia</i> | Lower montane coniferous forest | W | None | n/a | Mount San Antonio (Day Canyon in San Gabriel Mountains) |
| Salt Spring checkerbloom | <i>Sidalcea neomexicana</i> | Chaparral, Coastal scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, Mojavean desert scrub, playas/alkaline, mesic | None | None | 2 | Ontario, Claremont |
| San Antonio Canyon bedstraw (endemic) | <i>Galium angustifolium</i> ssp. <i>gabrielense</i> | Chaparral, Lower montane coniferous forest | FW <u>None</u> | None | 4 | Mt. Waterman, Mt. Lowe, Mt. San Antonio |
| San Antonio milk-vetch (endemic) | <i>Astragalus lentiginosus</i> var. <i>antonius</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest | FSS | None | 1B | San Antonio, Telegraph Peak, Valyermo |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|--|---|------------------------|--------------|------|---|
| San Bernardino aster (endemic) | <i>Symphyotrichum defoliatum</i> | Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, marshes and swamps, Valley and foothill grassland | None FSS | None | 1B | Ontario, San Dimas, Mount San Antonio, Telegraph Peak, Crystal Lake |
| San Gabriel bedstraw (endemic) | <i>Galium grande</i> | Broadleafed upland forest, chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest | FSS | None | 1B | Azusa, Mount Wilson |
| San Gabriel linanthus (endemic) | <i>Linanthus concinnus</i> | Chaparral, lower and upper montane coniferous forest | None FSS | None | 1B | Mount Baldy, Mount Wilson, Pasadena, Mescal Creek, Pacifico Mountain, Mount San Antonio, Telegraph Peak, Valyermo, Waterman Mountain, Crystal Lake, Chilao Flat |
| San Gabriel Manzanita (endemic) | <i>Arctostaphylos gabrielensis</i> | Chaparral | None FSS | None | 1B | Pacifico Mountain |
| San Gabriel Mountains dudleya (endemic) | <i>Dudleya densiflora</i> | Chaparral, Coastal scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest | None FSS | None | 1B | Glendora, Azusa |
| San Gabriel Mountains sunflower (endemic) | <i>Hulsea vestita</i> ssp. <i>gabrielensis</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest | FW FSS | None | 4 | Pacifico Mountain, Mount San Antonio, San Gabriel Mtns, Head of Bad Canyon |
| San Gabriel River dudleya (endemic) | <i>Dudleya cymosa</i> ssp. <i>crebrifolia</i> | Chaparral | FW FSS | None | 1B | Azusa |
| San Jacinto Mountains daisy (endemic) | <i>Erigeron breweri</i> var. <i>jacintus</i> | Subalpine coniferous, upper montane coniferous forest | FW None | None | 4 | Mt. San Antonio, Crystal Lake |
| scalloped moonwort | <i>Botrychium crenulatum</i> | Bogs and fens, lower montane coniferous forest, Meadows and seeps, marshes and swamps | None FSS | None | 2 | Telegraph Peak, Crystal Lake |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------|--------------|------|---|
| short-joint beavertail (endemic) | <i>Opuntia basilaris</i> var. <i>brachyclada</i> | Chaparral, Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland | None FSS | None | 1B | Mount San Antonio, Mescal Creek, Telegraph Peak, Valyermo, Juniper Hills, Pacifico Mountain, Mint Canyon, Newhall, Ritter Ridge, Palmdale |
| short-sepaled lewisia | <i>Lewisia brachycalyx</i> | Lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps | None | None | 2 | Mount San Antonio |
| slender mariposa lily (endemic) | <i>Calochortus clavatus</i> var. <i>gracilis</i> | Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland | None FSS | None | 1B | Mount Baldy, Glendora, Azusa, Crystal Lake, Agua Dulce,, Mint Canyon |
| slender silver-moss | <i>Anomobryum julaceum</i> | Broadleaved upland forest, lower montane coniferous forest, North Coast coniferous forest | None | None | 2 | Waterman Mountain |
| Sonoran maiden fern | <i>Thelypteris puberula</i> var. <i>sonorensis</i> | Meadows and seeps | None FSS | None | 2 | Azusa, Mount Wilson |
| southern alpine buckwheat (endemic) | <i>Eriogonum kennedyi</i> var. <i>alpigenum</i> | Alpine boulder and rock field, subalpine coniferous forest | None FSS | None | 1B | Mount San Antonio, Crystal Lake |
| southern jewel-flower | <i>Streptanthus campestris</i> | Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, pinyon and juniper woodland | FSS | None | 1B | N/A |
| southern skullcap (endemic) | <i>Scutellaria bolanderi</i> ssp. <i>austromontana</i> | Chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest | None FSS | None | 1B | El Monte |
| southern tarplant | <i>Centromadia parryi</i> ssp. <i>australis</i> | Marshes and swamps, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools | None | None | 1B | Yorba Linda, Sunland |
| Tehachapi ragwort | <i>Packera ionophylla</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest | FW None | None | 4 | Los Angeles County |
| thread-leaved brodiaea (endemic) | <i>Brodiaea filifolia</i> | Valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools, flood plains, coastal sage scrub | FT | 1 | 1B | Glendora |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | CNPS | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|-------------------------|---|----------------------|--------------|------|---|
| urn-flowered alumroot | <i>Heuchera elegans</i> | Lower montane coniferous forest, Riparian forest, Upper montane coniferous forest | FW FSS | None | 4 | Falls Canyon (ANF) |
| woolly mountain-parsley (endemic) | <i>Oreonana vestita</i> | Lower and upper montane coniferous forest, subalpine coniferous forest | FW FSS | None | 1B | Mount San Antonio, Mount Baldy, Telegraph Peak, Waterman Mountain, Crystal Lake |
| <p>CNPS=California Native Plant Society. The California Native Plant society has developed an inventory of rare and endangered plants that are native to California.</p> <p>1B= Plants considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. This includes all plants eligible for state listing and those that must be considered while preparing CEQA documents.</p> <p>2= Plants considered rare in California but more common elsewhere. This includes all plants eligible for state listing and those that must be considered while preparing CEQA documents.</p> <p>3= More information is need for this plant</p> <p>4= Limited distribution (Watch List)</p> <p>CE=State Endangered CT= State Threatened CR= State Listed Rare FC = Federal Candidate FE = Federal Endangered FT = Federal Threatened FW= Watch List on federal lands based on USFS Region 5 southern California forests Sensitive Species List FSS = Forest Service Sensitive List</p> <p>N/A = Specific location data not available.</p> <p>Sources: CDFG 2006 and 2010 2011a; USFS, 2005 2011, Calflora 2007, CNPS 2007 and 2011</p> | | | | | | |

Table B3: Rare and Sensitive Animal Species

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|---|--|----------------|--------------|---|
| Insects | | | | | |
| <i>Callophrys mossii hidakupa</i> | San Gabriel Mountains elfin butterfly | Larval host plant is a sedum spathulifolium | FSS | None | Mount Baldy |
| <i>Diplectrona californica</i> | California diplectronan caddisfly | Streams, lakes and ponds | FSS | None | Ontario, San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Incisalia mossii hidakupa</i> | San Gabriel Mountains Moss' elfin butterfly | Rocky outcrops, cliffs where stonecrop grows | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Paleoxenus dohrni</i> | Dorhn's elegant eucnemid beetle | Transition zone forests, higher elevations on incense cedar | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Plebejus saepiolus aureolus</i> | San Gabriel Mountains blue butterfly | Host plant is sedum saphthufolium. Northern Coastal Scrub, Douglas-Fir Forest, Yellow Pine Forest, Red Fir Forest, Mixed Evergreen Forest, Chaparral | FSS | None | Mescal Creek, Mount San Antonio |
| <i>Plebulina emigdionis</i> | San Emigdio blue butterfly | Forest openings, at streamsides, in meadows and alpine fell-fields, from cool coastal areas to upper elevations of the California Mountain Ranges | FSS | None | Range includes Bouquet and Mint Canyons/ Los Angeles County |
| <i>Plebejus saepiolus ssp.</i> | San Gabriel Mountains greenish blue butterfly | Forest openings, at streamsides, in meadows and alpine fell-fields | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| Gastropods (snails, slugs, and abalone) | | | | | |
| <i>Glyptostoma gabrielense</i> | San Gabriel chestnut | N/A | None | None | Azusa |
| <i>Helminthoglypta fontiphila</i> | Soledad shoulderband | N/A | None | None | Pacifico Mountain, Action |
| <i>Helminthoglypta vasquezi</i> | Vasquez shoulderband | N/A | None | None | Agua Dulce |
| Note: Gastropod species listed above are included on the California Department of Fish and Game's special animals list, also referred to as the list of "species at risk" or "special status species." Other gastropod species identified for the study area that are narrow endemics that may be added to the special animals list in the future include: <i>Helminthoglypta petricola sangabrielis</i> , <i>Paraloma caputspinulae</i> , <i>Helminthoglypta petricola zechae</i> , and <i>Helminthoglypta tuduculata convicta</i> (Magney 2012). | | | | | |
| Fishes | | | | | |
| <i>Gasterosteus aculeatus microcephalus</i> | partially armored threespine stickleback | Slow water creeks along the California coast | FSS | None | Santa Clara River |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|---|--|------------------------|--------------|--|
| <i>Gila orcutti</i> | Arroyo chub | Pools and runs of headwater creeks and small to medium rivers | FSS | SSC | Agua Dulce, Azusa, Crystal Lake, Mount Baldy, Mount San Antonio, Sunland, Waterman Mountain, Glendora, North East and West Forks of San Gabriel River, Big Mermaids Canyon Creek, Bear Creek |
| <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> (hatchery stock) | Rainbow Trout | Cold headwaters, creeks, small to large rivers, cool lakes, estuaries | None | None | San Gabriel River upper watershed |
| <i>Rhinichthys osculussp. 3</i> (endemic) | Santa Ana speckled dace | Requires permanent flowing streams, shallow cobble and gravel | FSS | SSC | Azusa, Condor Peak, Crystal Lake, Glendora, Sunland, Waterman Mountain |
| Amphibians | | | | | |
| <i>Aneides lugubris</i> | Arboreal salamander | Valley-foothill hardwood, valley-foothill hardwood conifer, chaparral, mixed conifer, oak and sycamore woodlands | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains, Puente-Chino Hills |
| <i>Batrachoseps gabrieli</i> (endemic) | San Gabriel Mtns slender salamander | Bigcone spruce, pine, white fir, incense cedar, canyon live oak, black oak, and California laurel | FSS | None | Crystal Lake, Mount Baldy, Mount San Antonio |
| <i>Ensatina eschscholtzii croceata</i> | yellow-blotched ensatina salamander | Coniferous habitats, montane hardwood habitats, mixed chaparral | FSS | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains, Pacifico Mountain |
| <i>Ensatina eschscholtzii</i> | Monterey ensatina salamander | Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, mixed conifer, montane hardwood, montane hardwood-conifer | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Spea hammondi</i> | Western spadefoot toad | Grassland, vernal pools, chaparral, pine-oak woodlands, areas of sandy or gravelly soil in alluvial fans, washes and floodplains | FSS None | SSC | La Habra, Mint Canyon, San Gabriel Mountains, Whittier, W Puente Hills |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <i>Taricha torosa</i> | Coast Range newt | Moist woodlands | None | SSC | Azusa, Condor Peak, Glendora, Mount Baldy, Pasadena, Waterman Mountain, San Gabriel Mountains, Claremont |
| Reptiles | | | | | |
| <i>Actinemys marmorata pallida</i> | Southwestern Pacific-pond turtle | Coastal dunes, valley-foothill, chaparral and coastal sage scrub | FSS | None | West Fork of the San Gabriel River |
| <i>Anniella pulchra</i> | California legless lizard | Coastal dune, valley-foothill, chaparral and coastal scrub habitats | FSS | SSC | Palmdale, Pacifico Mtn., Mount Baldy |
| <i>Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri</i> | coastal western whiptail | Valley-foothill hardwood, valley-foothill hardwood-conifer, juniper, chaparral, valley-foothill riparian, mixed conifer. | FSS None | None SSC | Baldwin Park, Condor Peak, Chilao Flat, Mount Wilson, San Dimas, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Charina trivirgata</i> | rosy boa | Rocky chaparral-covered hillsides and canyons, desert habitat with good cover | FSS | None | Mount Wilson, Pacifico Mtn |
| <i>Charina trivirgata roseofusca</i> | Coastal rosy boa | Rocky chaparral-covered hillsides and canyons, desert habitat with good cover | FSS | None | Coastal slopes of the San Gabriel Mountain |
| <i>Crotalus ruber</i> | red-diamond rattlesnake | Chaparral, woodland and arid desert habitats in rocky areas with dense vegetation | SC None | SSC SSC | Chino Hills (near Yorba Linda and Telegraphy Canyon), Puente Hills, Yorba Linda |
| <i>Diadophis punctatus modestus</i> | San Bernardino ringneck snake | Open, relatively rocky areas with valley-foothill, mixed chaparral, and annual grass habitats | SC FSS | None | Big Dalton Canyon, Glendora Mtn. Road, Puente-Chino Hills |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|---|--|-----------------------|--------------|---|
| <i>Emys (Glemmys) marmorata pallida</i> | Southwestern pond turtle | Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, irrigation ditches | FSC FSS | SSC | Ritter Ridge, Azusa, Agua Dulce, La Habra, Sleepy Valley, Sunland, Pasadena, Waterman Mountain, El Monte and Glendora quads, San Gabriel River, Browns Gulch, Yorba Linda |
| <i>Eumeces skiltonianus</i> | Western skink | Grassland, woodlands, pine forests, sagebrush, chaparral | FSC | None | Puente Chico Hills, San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Lampropeltis zonata parvirubra</i> | California mountain kingsnake (San Bernardino population) | Moist woods, coniferous forests, woodland and chaparral | FSC FSS | SSC | Glendora, San Dimas, Little Dalton Canyon, Big Dalton Canyon |
| <i>Lampropeltis zonata multifasciata</i> | Coast mountain kingsnake | Rocks and boulders near streams | FSS | None | Mount San Antonio |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Phrynosoma coronatum</i> (blainvillii population) (= <i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>) | Coast (San Diego) horned lizard | Coastal sage scrub, riparian areas, valley-foothill hardwood | <u>FSS</u> | SSC | Acton, Agua Dulce, Baldwin Park, Crystal Lake, Mescal Creek, Mount Baldy, Palmdale, Pacifico Mountain, Valyermo, Ritter Ridge, Mt. Wilson, Condor Peak, Claremont, El Monte, Sunland, Mint Canyon, Sleepy Valley, Pasadena, Waterman Mountain, Thompson Creek, Eaton Canyon, Heaton Flat, East Fork San Gabriel River, Tonner Canyon/Chino Hills, Bonelli Regional Park, Yorba Linda |
| <i>Phrynosoma coronatum</i> (frontale population) | Coast (California) horned lizard | Coastal sage scrub, riparian areas, coniferous forest, broad leaf woodlands | S | SSC | Mescal Creek, San Gabriel River, Sycamore Canyon in the Puente Hills |
| <i>Salvadora hexalepis virgulata</i> | Coast patch-nosed snake | Coastal chaparral, desert scrub, washes, sandy flats, and rocky areas, bush desert flats, sagebrush | <u>FSC</u> <u>None</u> | SSC | Yorba Linda |
| <i>Sceloporus graciosus vandenburgianus</i> | Southern sagebrush lizard | Chaparral, pine, and Douglas fir forests | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Thamnophis hammondi</i> | Two-striped garter snake | Near permanent water or intermittent streams with rock beds | <u>FSC</u> <u>FSS</u> | <u>None</u> <u>SSC</u> | Agua Dulce, Azusa, Glendora, Mint Canyon, Mount Wilson, Ritter Ridge, Pacifico Mountain, Juniper Hills, Sleepy Valley, Little Rock Creek, San Gabriel River |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Birds | | | | | |
| <i>Accipiter cooperii</i> | Cooper's hawk | Oak woodlands, riparian areas | None | SSC | Baldwin Park, Palmdale, Puente Hills (Tonner Canyon), Bonelli Regional Park, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> | Northern goshawk | Oak woodlands, riparian areas | <u>FSS</u> | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Accipiter striatus</i> | Sharp-shinned hawk | Woodlands, riparian areas, chaparral (foraging), scrublands | FSS | SSC | Puente Hills, Bonelli Regional Park |
| <i>Aegolius acadicus</i> | Northern saw-whet owl | Mature riparian and oak woodlands | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Agelaius tricolor</i> | tricolored blackbird | Freshwater marshes and riparian areas | None | None <u>SSC</u> | Palmdale, Ritter Ridge, Yorba Linda, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Aimophila ruficeps canescens</i> | southern California rufous-crowned sparrow | Steep, rocky areas within coastal sage scrub and chaparral, prefers recently burned areas | FSS | SSC | Mount Baldy, Puente Hills, San Dimas, Bonelli Regional Park |
| <i>Alectoris chukar</i> | Chukar | Arid, rocky annual grassland and brush/scrub habitat with water available | FSS | None | Mojave desert vegetation associations (range) |
| <i>Amphispiza belli</i> | Bell's sage sparrow | Dense, dry chamise chaparral with scattered bunches of grass | FSC | SSC | Yorba Linda, western edge of Mojave Desert |
| <i>Anthus rubescens</i> | American pipit | Annual and perennial grassland, wet meadows, cropland and pasture | FSS | None | Various locations in Los Angeles County |
| <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> | Golden eagle | Mountains, desert, and open country, grasslands, deserts and savannas | None | <u>SSC</u> <u>FP</u> | Big Dalton drainage area, Tonner Canyon/Chino Hills region, Bonelli Regional Park |
| <i>Asio flammeus</i> | Short-eared owl | Prairies, marshes, dunes, tundra | None | SSC | Bonelli Regional Park |
| <i>Asio otus</i> | Long-eared owl | Riparian and live oak woodlands | <u>FSS</u> <u>None</u> | SSC | Yorba Linda |
| <i>Aythya americana</i> | Redhead | Open water with freshwater marsh vegetation | None | SSC | Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Buteo regalis</i> | Ferruginous hawk | Rivers, lakes, and coasts; open tracts of sparse shrubs and grasslands, and agricultural areas during winter | None | SSC | Bonelli Regional Park |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|---------------------------------|---|----------------|--------------|--|
| <i>Gallipepla californica</i> | California quail | Chaparral | FSS | None | Puente-Chino Hills |
| <i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis</i> | coastal (San Diego) cactus wren | Coastal sage scrub, vegetation with thickets of prickly pear or cholla cactus | None | SSC | La Habra, Puente Hills, Yorba Linda |
| <i>Carduelis lawrencei</i> | Lawrence's goldfinch | Oak woodland, chaparral | FSS | None | Puente-Chino Hills |
| <i>Cathartes aura</i> | Turkey vulture | Habitat with cliffs or large trees for nesting or roosting | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Catharus bicknelli</i> | Swainson's thrush | Riparian woodland habitat | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountain foothill canyons |
| <i>Catharus guttatus</i> | Hermit thrush | Arid, rocky annual grassland and scrub where water is available | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Chaetura vauxi</i> | Vaux's swift | Redwood and Douglas fir | FSS None | SSC | Big Dalton Canyon |
| <i>Chordeiles minor</i> | Common nighthawk | Riparian habitat, oak woodland, bigcone Douglas fir, freshwater marsh | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Cinclus mexicanus</i> | American dipper | Fast flowing montane rivers and streams | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Circus cyaneus</i> | Northern harrier | Coastal salt marshes, freshwater marshes, grasslands, agricultural fields, desert and brushland | None | SSC | Puente Hills, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Cistothorus palustris clarkae</i> | Clark's marsh wren | Freshwater marsh with dense reedbeds | None | SSC | Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Contopus cooperi</i> | Olive-sided flycatcher | Riparian, oak woodland, bigcone Douglas fir | FSS None | None SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Cypseloides niger</i> | black swift | Steep, rocky, often moist cliffs and crive or caves on sea cliffs, deep canyons | FSS None | SSC | Mount Baldy, Mount Wilson, Santa Anita Canyon, Wolfskill Falls |
| <i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i> | Yellow warbler | Riparian woodlands, montane chaparral, mixed conifer habitats | FSS None | SSC | Big Dalton Canyon, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Elanus leucurus</i> | White-tailed kite | Grasslands with scattered trees, near marshes along highways | None | SP FP | San Jose Hills, Tonner Canyon/Chino Hills, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Empidonax wrightii</i> | Gray flycatcher | Riparian, oak woodland, bigcone Douglas fir, mixed chaparral | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Falco mexicanus</i> | prairie falcon | Grassland, savanna, rangeland, agricultural fields, and desert scrub, cliff ledges | FSS | SSC | Valyermo, Acton, Agu Dulce, Tonner Canyon/Chino Hills |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|----------------------------------|---|----------------|--------------|---|
| <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | Peregrine falcon | Cliff faces, wetlands, woodlands, other forested habitats, cities, agricultural areas | FSS | FP | Pasadena |
| <i>Geothlypis trichas</i> | Common yellowthroat | Riparian | None | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains, Puente-Chino Hills, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Glaucidium gnoma</i> | Northern-pygmy owl | Valley-foothill hardwood, mixed-conifer, valley-foothill riparian, montane-riparian | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains, Eaton Canyon |
| <i>Icteria virens</i> | Yellow-breasted chat | Riparian areas | FSS None | SSC | Baldwin Park, La Habra, Puente Hills, Bonelli Regional park, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Ixobrychus exilis</i> | Least Bittern | Dense reeds with permanent water | None | SSC | Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> | Loggerhead shrike | Valley-foothill riparian areas, open habitats with scattered shrubs, perches | FSS None | SSC | Puente Hills, Bonelli Regional Park, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Megascops kennicottii</i> | Western-screech owl | Riparian areas, Joshua tree and mesquite groves, open pine and pinyon-juniper forests | FSS | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Melospiza lincolnii</i> | Lincoln's sparrow | Riparian areas, bogs, wet meadows | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Oporornis tolmiei</i> | MacGillivray's warbler | Valley-foothill riparian, coastal Douglas-fir, montane-riparian, desert riparian | FSS | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Oreortyx pictus</i> | Mountain quail | Montane habitats and seasonally in open-conifer and deciduous woodlands and forest, chaparral | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Otus flammeolus</i> | Flammulated owl | Coniferous habitats from ponderosa-pine to red-fir forests. | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> | Osprey | Rivers, lakes, and coasts, mixed-conifer. | FSS | SSC | Bonelli Regional Park |
| <i>Patagioenas fasciata</i> | Band-tailed pigeon | Oaks and conifer oak woodlands. | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Picoides albolarvatus gravirostris</i> | Southern white-headed woodpecker | Lodgepole-pine and red-fir habitat | FSS | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Piranga rubra</i> | Summer tanager | Desert riparian areas with willows and thickets | FSS None | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Progne subis</i> | Purple martin | Valley foothill, montane hardwood, montane-hardwood conifer, riparian habitat | FSS None | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Sphyrapicus thyroideus</i> | Williamson's sapsucker | Lodgepole pine, red fir, Jeffrey pine | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Stellula calliope</i> | Calliope hummingbird | Ponderosa pine, hardwood-conifer, riparian areas, aspens | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i> | California spotted owl | Oak and conifer habitats | FSS | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Tachycineta bicolor</i> | Tree swallow | Open areas, usually near water, including fields, marshes, shorelines, and wooded swamps with standing dead trees | FSS | None | Bonelli Regional Park, San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Toxostoma lecontei</i> | Le Conte's thrasher | Open desert wash, desert scrub, alkali scrub, desert succulent scrub, nests in wash habitat | None | SSC | Mescal Creek, Palmdale, Ritter Ridge |
| <i>Vermivora ruficapilla</i> | Nashville warbler | Oak woodlands | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Vermivora virginiae</i> | Virginia's warbler | Arid, shrubby, mixed conifer, pinyon-juniper, mountain chaparral | FSS | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains-Blue Ridge |
| <i>Vireo gilvus</i> | Warbling vireo | Montane hardwood, montane-conifer, mixed conifer, ponderosa pine, montane chaparral | FSS | SSC | Whittier Narrows, Puente Hills, San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Vireo plumbeus</i> | Plumbeous vireo | Pinyon-juniper, lodgepole pine, Jeffrey pine | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Vireo vicinior</i> | Gray vireo | Pinyon-juniper, juniper, chamise-redshank chaparral | FSS | SSC | Little Rock Creek |
| <i>Wilsonia pusilla</i> | Wilson's warbler | Montane riparian, foothill riparian, aspen, lodgepole pine | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains, Whittier Narrows |
| <i>Zenaidura macroura</i> | Mourning dove | Grassland, cropland, pasture, riparian, low-elevation conifer, desert habitats, open chaparral | FSS | None | Puente Hills, San Gabriel Mountains |
| Mammals | | | | | |
| <i>Antrozous pallidus</i> | Pallid bat | Grasslands, tree cavities, rock crevices, manmade structures | FSS | SSC | Azusa, Acton, Baldwin Park, El Monte, Glendora, Mount Wilson, Ontario, San Dimas |
| <i>Bassariscus astutus</i> | Ringtail Ring-tailed cat | Mixture of forest and shrublands in association with riparian areas and rocky areas | FSS None | None FP | Historic to San Dimas and San Gabriel Canyons |
| <i>Chaetodipus fallax fallax</i> | northwestern San Diego pocket mouse | Sandy herbaceous areas, sagebrush, scrub, annual grassland, chaparral and desert scrubs. | None | SSC | Mount Baldy, Ontario |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|--------------|---|
| <i>Chaetodipus fallax pallidus</i> | pallid San Diego pocket mouse | Open brushlands and scrub habitats | None | SSC | Valyermo, Juniper Hills, Mescal Creek |
| <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> | Townsend's big-eared bat | Caves, tunnels for roosting and vegetation and mesic edges for feeding, sub-alpine and alpine habitats | S <u>FSS</u> | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Erethizon dorsatum</i> | Porcupine | Montane conifer, Douglas-fir, alpine dwarf shrub, wet meadow | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Euderma maculatum</i> | Spotted bat | Arid deserts, grasslands, mixed conifer | FSS <u>None</u> | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Eumops perotis californicus</i> | Western mastiff bat | Grasslands, tree cavities, rock crevices, manmade structures | S <u>None</u> | SSC | Azusa, Baldwin Park, La Habra, Pasadena, Whittier, El Monte, Glendora, Mount Wilson, Ontario, San Dimas |
| <i>Lasiurus xanthinus</i> | Western yellow bat | Check status with state and CNDDB. Valley foothill riparian, desert riparian, desert wash | None | SSC | Azusa, Baldwin Park, Ontario, Pasadena, San Dimas |
| <i>Lepus californicus bennettii</i> | San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit | Open brushlands and scrub habitats | FSS <u>None</u> | SSC | Baldwin Park, Bonelli Regional Park |
| <i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i> | Western small-footed myotis | Arid, woody and brushy uplands near water | FSS | None | Mescal Creek |
| <i>Myotis evotis</i> | Long-eared myotis | Coastal areas | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Myotis thysanodes</i> | Fringed myotis | Grassland, oak savanna, riparian areas, oak woodland, pinyon-juniper, valley-foothill woodland | FSS | None | Waterman Mountain |
| <i>Myotis volans</i> | Long-legged myotis | Woodlands, forests, chaparral, coastal scrub | FSS | None | Waterman Mountain |
| <i>Myotis yumanensis</i> | Yuma myotis | Arid caves, tunnels, buildings, open forests with water | FSS | None | Glendora |
| <i>Neotamias speciosus speciosus</i> | Lodgepole chipmunk | Closed canopy forest with sparse undercover including Jeffrey pine, mixed conifer, and red fir | FSS | None | Mount San Antonio, Waterman Mountain |
| <i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i> | San Diego desert woodrat | Rock outcrops, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and pinyon-juniper woodland | SG <u>None</u> | SSC | San Gabriel Canyon, Azusa, Mount Baldy, Ontario, Claremont |
| <i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i> | big free-tailed bat | Roosts in cliffs and crevices | None | SSC | Azusa, Baldwin Park, Ontario, San Dimas |

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Habitat | Federal Status | State Status | Documented Study Area Locations* |
|---|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|--|
| <i>Odocoileus hemionus</i> | Mule deer | Pine forest but also contain openings, meadows, and riparian habitats | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Ovis canadensis nelsoni</i> | Nelson's bighorn sheep | Open areas of low-growing vegetation for feeding, with close proximity to steep, rugged terrain for escape, lambing, and bedding | FSS | FP | Azusa, Crystal Lake, Glendora, Mount Baldy, Mount San Antonio, Waterman Mountain |
| <i>Puma concolor</i> | Mountain lion | Foothills and mountains | FSS | None | Puente Chico Hills, San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Sorex (monticolus?)</i> | San Bernadino dusky shrew | Valley foothill and montane riparian habitat, woodland, chaparral, grassland, and wetland habitats | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Spilogale gracilis</i> | Western spotted skunk | Canyon streams, rocky cliffs, arid valleys, forest and woodland habitats | FSS | SSC | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <i>Taxidea taxus</i> | American badger | Grasslands, parklands, farms, forest glades, meadows, marshes, brushy areas, hot deserts, mountain meadows, open chaparral, and riparian zones | FSS None | SSC | Baldwin Park, Pasadena, San Dimas |
| <i>Ursus americanus</i> | Black bear | Mature, dense vegetation, and on sheltered slopes | FSS | None | San Gabriel Mountains |
| <p>With the exception of insect species, all animal species listed in the table are included on the California Department of Game's special animals list, also referred to as the list of "species at risk" or "special status species."</p> <p>FC = Federal Candidate for Listing FE = Federally-listed Endangered FT = Federally-listed Threatened CE = State-listed Endangered CT = State-listed Threatened FSS = Forest Service Sensitive Species SC= Species of Concern. Species of concern is an informal designation of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. It refers to those species believed to be in decline or in need of concentrated conservation actions as species of concern. SSC= Species of Special Concern. The California Department of Fish and Game applies this status to animal species not listed under the Federal and California endangered species acts that are declining at a rate that might require listing or have historically low population counts that are threatened. FP = Fully Protected. This list is a result of the California Department of Fish and Game's first efforts in the 1960's to identify and protect rare animal species. Most species on this list were later listed under state or federal endangered species laws, but some remain on the Fully Protected list. **Listed in the California Natural Diversity Database</p> <p>N/A = Specific data not available. Sources: CDFG 2006 and 2010, USFS 2005 and 2011, CDFG 2008a and 2011b, Magney 2012</p> | | | | | |

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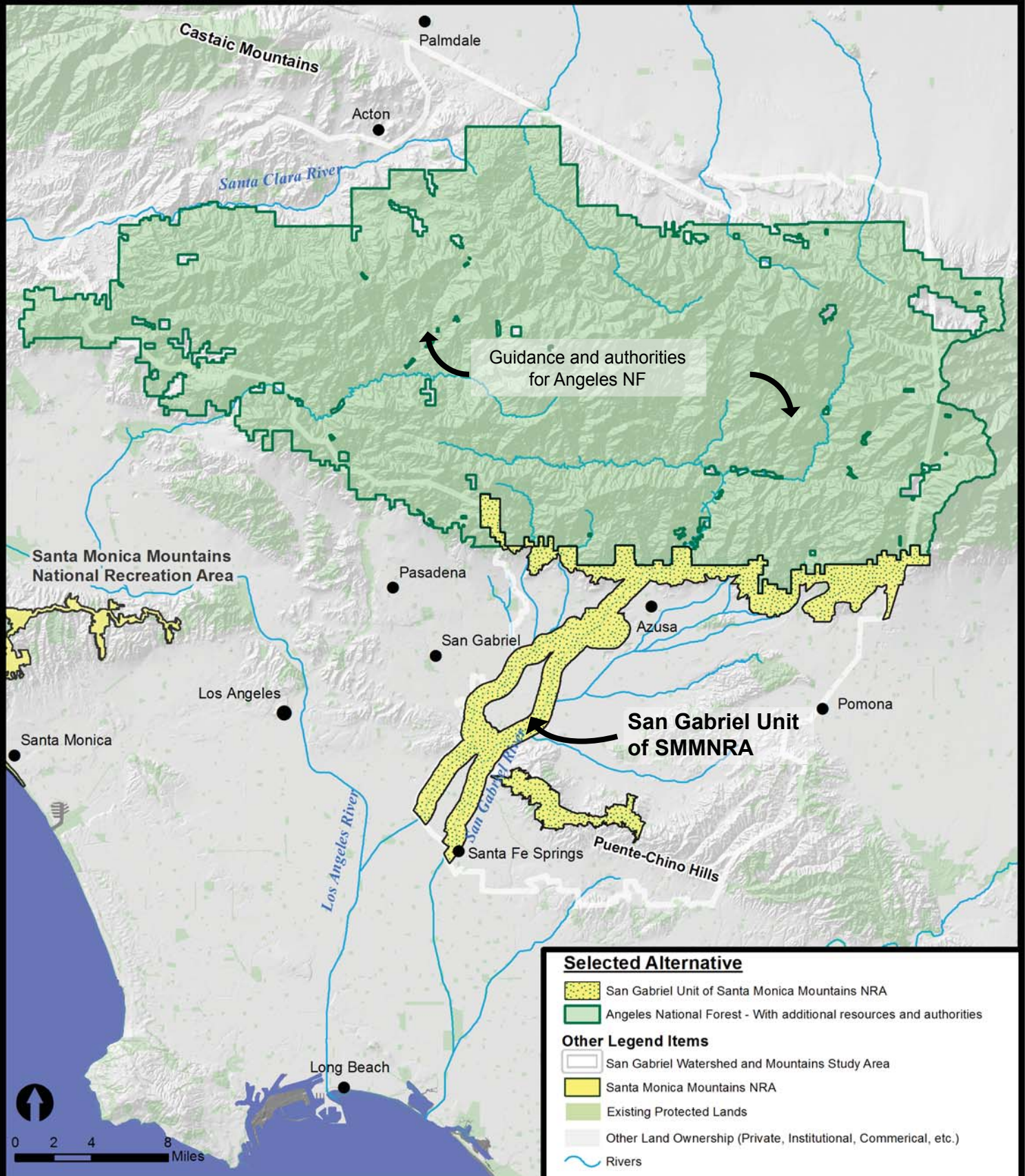
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Selected Alternative



San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study



National Park Service, Pacific West Regional Office
October 2012
The NPS makes no warranty, express or implied, related to the accuracy or content of this map.

Sources: Existing Protected Lands, CPAD 1.8, ©July 2012
GreenInfo Network - www.calands.org, Selected Alternative
and Study Area (NPS), Rivers (National Hydrography Dataset, USGS).