

## **APPENDIX A SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS**

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In June and July 2007, the City of Monrovia posted an online survey to the City's website to determine public opinion regarding management priorities for the Hillside Wilderness Preserve and Hillside Recreation Areas. For both areas, survey respondents were asked to rank resource protection and restoration management strategies, and outdoor education and interpretation management strategies. The remaining questions solicited public opinion on: 1) the challenges of implementing their preferred resource protection and outdoor education/interpretation management strategies; 2) the benefits of recreational and educational activities to users; 3) potential conflicts between recreational users seeking resource-dependent experiences in the Project Area; 4) the consistency of their personal vision for the Project Area with the established mission, core values, and goals; and 5) the impact on adjacent neighborhoods of opening up the Project Area for new public preservation, education, and/or recreation programs.

A total of 72 surveys were submitted. The four questionnaire topics that involved the ranking of management strategies by importance resulted in valid responses<sup>5</sup> from only 1/3 of the total number of submissions. Therefore, the survey did not provide statistically accurate results but the comments provided by the respondents for the open-ended questions conveyed the key issues and management priorities for the Project Area. The survey results are summarized below.

**Conservation Issues.** The majority of respondents felt that conservation of natural resources within the Project Area, particularly the Hillside Wilderness Preserve, was a very high priority for its long term management. Community concerns about human impacts on the Project Area, and their suggestions on how conservation can best be accomplished, are described below.

*Restrict recreational use to the Hillside Recreation Area.* Many respondents felt strongly that recreational uses should be restricted to the Hillside Recreation Area and that the Hillside Wilderness Preserve should have limited or no public access.

*Impacts on the Project Area associated with increased public access.* Some community members expressed concern that increased public access and recreational use of the Project Area, particularly the Hillside Wilderness Preserve, could have substantial negative impacts on resources and on neighboring communities. Impacts of key concern included:

- user impacts to sensitive habitats and threatened species;
- an increased risk of wildfires;
- crime such as arson, vandalism, and littering;
- increased traffic and an increased demand for parking;

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<sup>5</sup> Responses were considered valid if they conformed to the instructions to rate each question on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least important.

- increased noise;
- human-wildlife conflicts such as mountain lion, bear, and rattlesnake encounters; and
- damage to natural resources caused by off-leash dogs.

*Natural resource protection, habitat restoration and threatened species protection.* Many respondents felt that the Project Area had unique natural resource values that should be protected and enhanced. A number of the comments suggested that habitat restoration should be incorporated into the long term management of the Project Area. Several people suggested volunteer restoration groups overseen by park staff to accomplish restoration goals. It was also suggested that special efforts be taken to protect threatened species within the Project Area, such as milk vetch.

*Environmental Education.* Quite a few people commented that environmental education fosters a conservation ethic that leads to greater protection of natural resources. Providing interpretive signage, protecting sensitive areas with volunteer outreach programs, adding staff and volunteers, and providing educational and interpretive programs were the suggested means of educating the public to promote conservation values.

**Public Access and Benefits to Users.** Many respondents felt that public access to the Project Area included benefits to users and the natural environment and should be maintained or expanded, as described below.

*Maintenance/expansion of public access.* In contrast to those who felt that the Project Area, particularly the Hillside Wilderness Preserve, should have limited or no public access, there were some respondents who felt that public access to the entire Project Area should be maintained or expanded. Many from this group commented that because the Project Area is funded by tax payer dollars and grants, it belongs to all City residents and therefore none should be denied access. Some respondents wanted access to more hiking trails, the enhancement of existing trails, or even the construction of additional trails. One person commented that they would not like any fees associated with use of the Project Area.

*Benefits to Users.* Respondents stated the following benefits of the recreational use of the Project Area:

- Exercise for increased physical health,
- Enhanced psychological and spiritual health,
- Educational value leads to greater conservation ethic, and
- Aesthetic enjoyment.

**Challenges to Project Area Management.** Respondents identified conflicts with adjacent property owners, conflicts between user groups, and shortages in funding and staffing as key challenges to management of the Project Area. The impacts on the Project Area associated with increased public access, as listed above, were mentioned repeatedly as key challenges to management.

*Conflicts with adjacent property owners.* Many respondents felt that a conflict existed between people who owned adjacent property and the larger community. Many people who own adjacent property oppose increased public access because they feel they would be negatively impacted by the increased

use. Others assert that the Project Area belongs to all City residents, and that adjacent property owners cannot deny access to the larger community.

*Conflicts between user groups.* Some people commented that there were potential conflicts between different user groups, particularly hikers and bikers. Some suggested that hiking and biking trails be kept separate to resolve this conflict.

*Funding and staffing shortages.* Many respondents felt that shortages in funding and staffing for implementation of management goals were the main challenges for the future management of the Project Area.