

CITY OF MONROVIA

Hillside Wilderness Preserve and Hillside Recreation Area

Environmental Impact Report and Resource Management Plan

February 7, 2012



Background

- 84% of Monrovia voters approved Measure A
- Measure A adopted the Hillside Wilderness Preserve and Hillside Recreation zoning designations

Background

- 77% of Monrovia voters approved Measure B
- Measure B adopted the Special Open Space Tax (a base tax and maintenance tax) to generate \$10 million dollars over 30 years and \$80,000 Annually
- Proceeds can only be used for acquisition and maintenance of open space and recreational land

Background – Hillside Wilderness Preserve

This classification is designated for preserving open space left in its natural state including preservation of endangered habitats and species, wildlife habitats, and wildlife corridors; open space for passive recreation uses such as hiking and nature studies; utility easements and reservoirs; and nature centers and educational facilities. The Hillside Wilderness Preserve designation is only assigned to Land owned by or conveyed to a Public Trust or conservancy, and for lands with irrevocable offers to dedicate to the City.

Background – Hillside Recreation

- The classification “Hillside Recreation” is designated for public wilderness parks and private recreational camp facilities. Recreational uses such as hiking and riding trails, nature centers, educational and incidental facilities associated with outdoor recreation are permitted. Monrovia Canyon Park and Trask Boy Scout Camp are currently within this designation.

Background – Grants

- Wildlife Conservation Board/Monrovia Bond - \$17 million
- State Resources Agency - \$3.6 million
- Rivers Mountains & Conservancy- \$2 million
- State Habitat Conservation Fund - \$1.4 million

Background – Project Time Line

- January 20, 2009 – City Council approved the adoption of the Resource Management Plan (RMP)
- February 2009 – *City received a Notice of Intent to File a Law Suit*
- August 2009 – City Council rescinded the RMP

Background – Project Time Line

- September 2009 – City Council authorized Staff to solicit RFP for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- February 2010 – Authorized Agreement with PCR
- May 2010 – Signed Agreement with PCR
- Nov.4- Dec.10, 2010 – Notice of Preparation with 37 day public review period
- Nov. 17, 2010 – Public Scoping Meeting for Notice of Preparation

Background – Project Time Line

- Aug. 1 – Sept. 29, 2011 – 60 day review period for Draft Environmental Impact Report
- Nov. 9, 2011:
 - Final EIR to Planning Commission
 - Planning Commission recommends adoption of the Final EIR to City Council

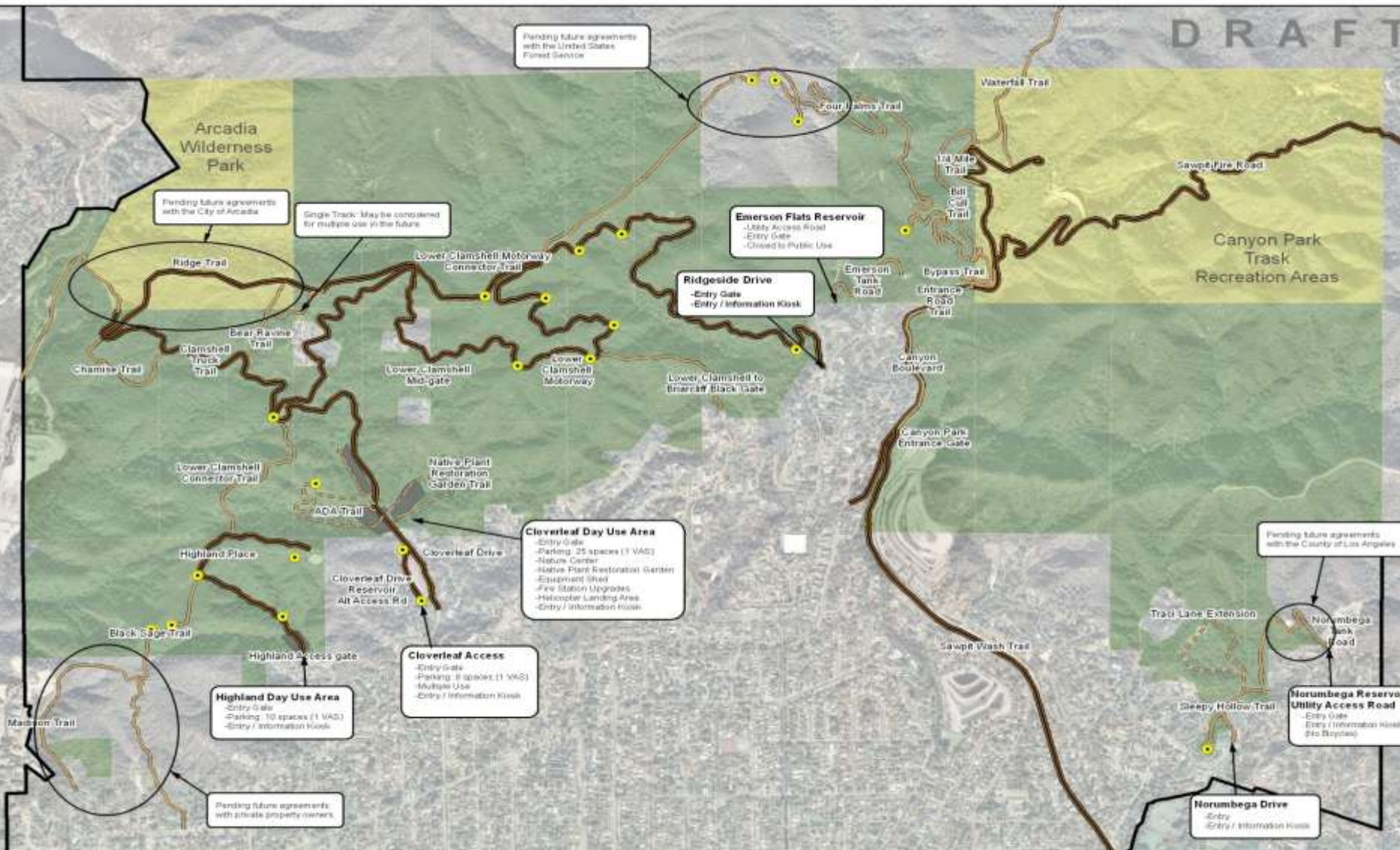
Background – Project Timeline

- Dec. 13, 2011 – RMP to Community Services Commission
- Community Services Commission recommends adoption of the Minimalist Plan Alternative 2 as studied in the EIR with additional recommendations re: rerouting the trail around Braunton's Milk Vetch, adhering to RMP Interpretive and Use Goals for education and signage

Background – EIR Project Area

- Project Area approximately 1416 acres
- Land encompasses:
 - Undeveloped land in the hillsides
 - Canyon Park
 - Trask Boy Scout Camp
 - Sawpit Reservoir

DRAFT



City of Monrovia

Wilderness Area Comprehensive Trail Map

● VistaPoint
 — Hiking
 — Multiple Use
 — New
 City Boundary
 Potential Use Area
 Hillside Recreation
 Hillside Wilderness Preserve

THIS MAP IS NOT A TRAIL GUIDE
 This map is conceptual and for general planning purposes only. Map information, location of existing and proposed trails and other program information shown are subject to change. This map does not convey any rights to the public to use any trail routes shown on this drawing; nor does this map exempt any person from trespassing charges.



* This map is for planning purposes only

Documents

- Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
- Resource Management Plan (RMP)

Initial Study

- Initial Study identified potential impacts in the following areas:
 - Biological Resources
 - Wildland Fires and Fire Protection Services
 - Noise
 - Traffic and Circulation
- Environmental Impact Report prepared

Environmental Impact Report

- Purpose of EIR is to provide information to decision makers and the public about potential, significant environmental effects of a proposed project before project approval.
- Certification of EIR does not approve project.

Environmental Impact Report

- Evaluates a “menu” of options that can be incorporated into the RMP.
- Identifies ways or mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential environmental impacts for each option.

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)

- Mitigation measures must be implemented to reduce potential impacts identified in EIR.
- MMRP establishes a systematic program to track implementation of mitigation measures.

Planning Commission Review

- Reviewed at public meeting on November 9, 2011
- PC review limited to review of EIR and MMRP and compliance with CEQA.
- Review of the RMP not under the purview of PC.

Planning Commission Review

- Determined that potential impacts were properly identified.
- Proposed mitigation measures were adequate.
- Legal requirements of CEQA were met.
- Adopted PCR2011-11 recommending that the City Council certify the EIR and adopt the MMRP

Resource Management Plan

- Designed to be a living document
- Provides the framework and guiding principles
- Addresses Grant requirements for reasonable public access
- Implementation of RMP enhancements contingent upon available resources

Resource Management Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

Provide stewardship of the Hillside Wilderness Preserve and Hillside Recreation Area natural resources.

Resource Management Plan

CORE VALUES

- A unique historical resource for the community
- Resources shall be preserved for future generations
- Support and promote stewardship of the natural resources

Resource Management Plan

CORE VALUES

- A commitment to fiscal responsibility for the operation and protection
- A commitment to provide opportunities for citizen input in the decision making process

Resource Management Plan

GOALS

- Natural Resources – Environmental and Viewshed Protection
- Outdoor and Nature Education
- Fire Safety
- Passive Recreation



Goals - Natural Resources

- BIO-1: Acquire remaining open space that strengthens the ecological functioning of the Project Area as funding permits.
- BIO-2: Maintain all populations of native plants and wildlife with special emphasis on management of locally, uncommon, sensitive State-or federally-listed threatened or endangered species and other sensitive resources.

Goals - Natural Resources

- BIO-3: Enhance and restore degraded habitats in the Project Area.
- BIO-4: Implement monitoring programs designed to identify ecosystems threats and guide adaptive management of the Project Area by tracking the health, function and integrity of habitats and ecological processes.

Goals - Natural Resources

- BIO-5: Encourage university-level research to address unanswered fundamental biological questions.
- BIO-6: Develop an in-house data storage and analysis system.
- BIO-7: Develop a protocol for handling wildlife interactions.

Goals - Cultural and Visual Resources

- CULT-1: Protect and preserve important cultural resources.
- CULT-2: Preserve and interpret the Rankins' Grave Site as a significant historic site for the education and enjoyment of visitors.
- CULT-3: Follow established protocol if human remains are encountered during ground disturbing activities in the Project Area.

Goals- Cultural and Visual Resources

- CULT-4: Record, identify, and preserve paleontological resources if found in the Project Area.
- VISU-1: Protect and enhance views and distinctive landscape features that contribute to the setting, character and visitor experience of the Project Area.

Goals – Outdoor and Natural Education

INTERP-1: Enhance public stewardship, appreciation of the value of the Project Area, and conservation issues in general consistent with the biological objectives of the Project Area.



Goals – Outdoor and Natural Education

INTERP-2: Provide a trail system that promotes and enhances public enjoyment and appreciation of the natural, cultural, and scenic resources.



Goals – Fire

- Maintain Public Safety
- Efficiently Respond to Emergency Calls
- Effectively Mitigate Emergencies



Goals – Fire

- Response
- Preparedness
- Mitigation
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)



Goals – Fire

RESPONSE:

- Mutual Aide
- Automatic Aide / Station coverage
- Unified response
- Department training and standards
- Operational Plans



Goals – Fire

PREPAREDNESS:

- Chipper Program
- Fuel Reduction Program
- Fire Patrols and Increased Staffing
- Area Closure Policies
- Phos-Check Spraying
- Emergency access/egress strategies
- Signage
- Wilderness Fire Station



Goals – Fire

MITIGATION:

- Brush abatement program
- Monrovia Municipal Code
- Emergency Operations Center



Goals – Fire

CWPP:

- Fuel Reduction
- Buffer Zones
- Clearance Practices
- Management of Native vs. Non Native species
- Structure/Threat assessments
- Evacuation Planning
- Public Education



Goals – Fire

Specifics of RMP that Enhance Fire Safety:

■ Define Use of Station 103

- Improved Facility
- Fire Apparatus Storage Facility
- Improved Water Supply
- Helicopter Landing Pad

■ Emergency Access

- Cloverleaf Drive (west side of reservoir)
- Highland Place Turn-around

■ Reducing Intensity of Fire

- Rapid, all weather, automatic early detection system
- Lookout Towers
- Phos-check & other fuels treatment
- Removal of non-native vegetation

Goals- Passive Recreation

- USE-1: Provide a trail system that protects natural resources of the Project Area.
- USE-2: Enforce protection of the varied resources and promote an enjoyable and safe environment for users.
- USE-3: Create a trail system that provides a broad public benefit by accommodating diverse users and user abilities, consistent with the Mission, Core Values, and Goals.

Goals- Passive Recreation

- USE-4: Accommodate trail amenities that maintain the natural character of the land, enhance resource protection and contribute to the enjoyment of open space.
- USE-5: Accommodate public access that is sensitive to adjacent residential uses.

Goals- Passive Recreation

- MAINT-1: Maintain facilities in the Project Area to ensure that biological resource values are maintained and that management activities are supported.
- MAINT-2: Remove, litter, trash and debris that may attract non-native wildlife and reduce the aesthetic values of the Project Area.

Project Alternatives

- 1. No Project/No RMP
- 2. Minimalist Plan
- 3. Reduced Trails Network
- 4. Project as Studied in the EIR

Project Alternatives

Alternative No. 1 – No Project/No RMP

- RMP would not be implemented
- No physical changes to the Project Area
- Existing on-site trails would continue to operate as they do currently
- RMP long-term goals, objectives, and management guidelines would not be implemented

Project Alternatives

Alternative No. 2 – Minimalist Plan

- Similar to the original RMP Project
- Addition of fire-related components and physical improvements
- No significant environmental impacts
- Formalizes access points:
 - Highland Access
 - Cloverleaf Access
 - Ridgeside Access
 - Sleepy Hollow Access

Project Alternatives

Alternative No. 3 – Reduced Trails Network

- Alternative would not include the portion of the Lower Clamshell Motorway near private in holdings
- Lower Clamshell Motorway Connector Trail, north of the private in holdings and the eastern and western segments of the Lower Clamshell Motorway would be available for public use
- Day use options would be developed under this alternative
- Includes fire-related safety components and improvements

Project Alternatives

Alternative No. 4 – Project Based on EIR

- Includes Project components studied in the EIR
- Parking lots & security lighting at Highland Avenue - Cloverleaf Drive access
- Picnic areas at Highland Avenue - Cloverleaf Drive access
- Vistas on the Lower Clamshell Motorway - Highland Avenue access
- A kiosk at the Lower Clamshell Motorway – Cloverleaf Drive access
- Bike racks at each access
- Drinking fountains at each access

Project Alternatives

Cont. Alternative No. 4 – Project Based on EIR

- Restrooms at the Cloverleaf Drive access
- A complete analysis of future trail connectors
- Re-route the Cloverleaf Road west of the Cloverleaf Water Reservoir
- A Nature Center at Wilderness Preserve Station 103
- A Native Plant Garden at Wilderness Preserve Station 103
- Includes fire-related safety components and improvements

Community Services Recommendation to City Council

- Alternative No. 2 – Minimalist Plan as studied in the EIR with the following:
- Recommendation not to open the loop of the Lower Clamshell Motorway to public access where Brauton's Milk Vetch is located until the proper mitigation measures are implemented.
- Recommend adhering to Interpretative Goals and Objectives and Use Goals and Objectives regarding education and signage ensuring all Monroviaans have access to information and use of the Wilderness Preserve

Options

The City Council has the following options to consider:

- **Option 1** - No Project/No RMP
- **Option 2** - Minimalist Plan
- Option 3 - Reduced Trails Network
- Option 4 - Project as Studied in the EIR
- Option 5 - Commission and Staff Recommendation to City Council

Recommendation

- Adopt Resolution No. 2012-07 with the additional recommendations not to open the loop of the Lower Clamshell Motorway to public access where the Braunton's milk vetch is present until further evaluation to ensure that the proper mitigation measures are implemented, and adhering to the Interpretative Goals and Objectives and Use Goals and Objectives regarding education and signage to ensure all Monroviaans have access to information and use of the Wilderness.

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