

TEJON RANCH CONSERVANCY

Ranch-wide Management Plan



VOLUME 3:
Public Access Plan



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter/Section	Page
1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1-1
1.1 Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement.....	1-1
1.2 Tejon Ranch Conservancy.....	1-6
1.3 Acquisitions.....	1-7
1.4 Dedicated Conservation Easements.....	1-7
1.5 State and Federal Uses.....	1-7
1.6 Ranch-wide Management Plan.....	1-7
1.6.1 Public Access Plan	1-9
1.6.2 Guidance on Preparation of the RWMP	1-9
1.6.3 RWMP Management Standards	1-10
1.7 Resource Agency Review of the RWMP and Public Access Plan.....	1-11
2 NATIONAL CONTEXT FOR PUBLIC ACCESS AT TEJON RANCH	2-1
2.1 Regional Context	2-2
2.2 Constituencies	2-2
2.3 Purpose and Uses of Conservation Fee Covenant	2-4
3 TEJON RANCH OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS	3-1
3.1 Historical Attributes of Conservation at Tejon Ranch.....	3-1
3.1.1 Conservation Attributes.....	3-1
3.2 Operational Constraints.....	3-3
3.2.1 Access Scheduling.....	3-3
3.3 Risk Management	3-4
4 CURRENT PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAM	4-1
4.1 Community Hikes and Drives	4-1
4.2 Citizen Science Program.....	4-4
4.2.1 Christmas Bird Count.....	4-4
4.2.2 Breeding Bird Blitz.....	4-4
4.2.3 Purple Martin Survey	4-5
4.2.4 Audubon California Chapters.....	4-5
4.2.5 California Native Plant Society.....	4-5
4.2.6 North American Field Herping Association	4-5
4.3 Service Projects.....	4-5
4.3.1 Los Angeles Conservation Corps.....	4-5

4.3.2	Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership Development	4-6
4.3.3	College Class and Boy Scout Projects.....	4-6
4.4	Environmental Education and Outreach	4-6
5	TEJON RANCH COMPANY PRIVATE RECREATIONAL USE	5-1
5.1	Introduction	5-1
5.2	Commercial Recreational Use.....	5-1
5.2.1	Organized Races.....	5-1
5.2.2	Corporate Retreats	5-2
5.2.3	Outdoor Adventures.....	5-2
5.2.4	Festivals.....	5-2
5.3	Commitment to Protecting Conservation Values.....	5-2
5.4	Guidelines for Planning Private Recreational Use.....	5-2
5.4.1	Planning	5-2
5.4.2	Performance.....	5-3
5.4.3	Safety Measures.....	5-4
5.5	Additional Guidelines for Commercial Recreational Use.....	5-4
5.5.1	General Guidelines	5-4
5.5.2	Construction	5-4
6	FUTURE CONSERVANCY PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAMMING	6-1
6.1	Introduction	6-1
6.2	Goals	6-2
6.3	Community Hike/Drive Program	6-2
6.3.1	Community Hikes.....	6-3
6.3.2	Community Drives.....	6-3
6.3.3	Community Hike Program 5-Year Operational Objectives.....	6-4
6.4	Bear Trap Canyon License Agreement	6-4
6.5	Volunteer Programs.....	6-4
6.5.1	Recruiting and Maintaining Volunteers.....	6-4
6.5.2	Training Docents.....	6-5
6.5.3	Deploying Docents.....	6-6
6.5.4	Service Opportunities.....	6-6
6.5.5	Volunteer Program 5-Year Operational Objectives.....	6-7
6.6	Citizen Science	6-7
6.6.1	Dedicated Citizen Science Events.....	6-7
6.6.2	Volunteer Citizen Science.....	6-8
6.6.3	Citizen Science 5-Year Operational Objectives	6-8
6.7	Outdoor/Environmental Education	6-8
6.7.1	Program Objectives.....	6-9

6.7.2	Program Development	6-9
6.7.3	Transportation Considerations	6-10
6.7.4	Outdoor/Environmental Education 5-Year Operational Objectives:	6-10
6.8	Other Conservancy Programming	6-10
6.8.1	Special Groups/VIP Access	6-11
6.8.2	Outreach and Communications	6-11
6.9	Program-wide Access Management Protocols	6-11
6.9.1	Administration	6-11
6.9.2	Safety	6-12
6.9.3	Environmental Protection	6-12
6.9.4	Adaptive Management	6-13
6.10	Activity-specific Access Management Protocols	6-13
6.10.1	Volunteer Docent AMPs	6-13
6.10.2	Service Trip AMPs	6-14
6.10.3	Environmental/Outdoor Education AMPs	6-14
6.10.4	Citizen Science AMPs	6-14
6.10.5	Volunteer Management AMPs	6-14
7	MAJOR PARTNERSHIPS OF THE RANCH-WIDE AGREEMENT	7-1
7.1	Pacific Crest Trail	7-1
7.1.1	Introduction	7-1
7.1.2	Background	7-1
7.1.3	Involved Parties	7-6
7.1.4	TU MSHCP Considerations in PCT Realignment	7-6
7.2	State Park Status	7-6
7.3	University of California Natural Reserve	7-7
8	PUBLIC ACCESS ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK	8-1
8.1	Developing a Framework for Tejon Ranch	8-1
8.1.1	Document Baseline Conditions	8-1
8.1.2	Identify Uncertainties and Indicators	8-2
8.1.3	Implement and Manage Public Access Activities	8-3
8.1.4	Monitor and Adapt Public Access Program	8-3
8.2	Zoning in Time and Space	8-4
8.2.1	Site Management	8-4
8.2.2	Visitor Management	8-5
8.3	Possible Monitoring Questions and Approaches	8-5
8.3.1	Adaptive Management AMPs	8-6
9	AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ACTION PLAN	9-1
9.1	Planning Context	9-1

9.1.1	TU MSHCP Constraints	9-1
9.1.2	Pre-existing Staging Areas.....	9-1
9.2	Action Plan	9-3
9.2.1	Amenities to Develop in the Short Term (3–5 years).....	9-3
9.2.2	Amenities to Develop in the Medium to Long Term (beyond 5 years).....	9-4
9.3	Typology Studies.....	9-5
9.3.1	Contemporary Recreation Amenity Design.....	9-6
9.3.2	Park Rustic/“Parkitecture”	9-7
9.3.3	Precedent Studies.....	9-8
10	REFERENCES	10-1

APPENDICES

Appendix A Summary of the Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement

FIGURES

Figure 1-1	Tejon Ranch and Land Management Designations for Surrounding Areas	1-2
Figure 1-2	Tejon Ranch	1-3
Figure 1-3	Ecoregions on and Around Tejon Ranch	1-4
Figure 1-4	Regional Population Density.....	1-5
Figure 1-5	Conservation Status and Land Uses on Tejon Ranch.....	1-8
Figure 1-6	TU MSHCP Covered Lands	1-12
Figure 2-1	Protected Lands within 100 Miles of Tejon Ranch	2-3
Figure 3-1	Original Ranch Boundaries (Ranchos)	3-2
Figure 4-1	Conservancy Public Access Programming Locations and Trip Types.....	4-2
Figure 4-2	Community Hikes and Distances.....	4-3
Figure 7-1	Pacific Crest Trail	7-2
Figure 7-2	Pacific Crest Trail Reroute Through Tejon Ranch.....	7-3
Figure 7-3	Pacific Crest Trail Current Route	7-4
Figure 7-4	Pacific Crest Trail Reroute Through Covered Lands.....	7-5
Figure 8-1.	Adaptive Management Framework for Public Access	8-2
Figure 9-1	Staging Areas.....	9-2
Figure 9-2	290th Loop Trail Proposed Location.....	9-4
Figure 9-3	The Africa Tree	9-5
Figure 9-4	Examples of Contemporary Recreation Amenity Design	9-6
Figure 9-5	Examples of Park Rustic Design.....	9-7
Figure 9-6	Precedent Examples	9-8

TABLES

Table 4-1	Hiking Routes.....	4-4
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMP	Access Management Protocol
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CBC	Christmas Bird Count
CCC	California Conservation Corps
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly California Department of Fish and Game)
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
Conservancy	Tejon Ranch Conservancy
ETUSD	El Tejon Unified School District
FIELD	Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership Development
GED	General Educational Development
ITP	Incidental Take Permit
KSACC	Kern Service and Conservation Corps
LACC	Los Angeles Conservation Corps
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
NAFHA	North American Field Herping Association
PCT	Pacific Crest Trail
PCTA	Pacific Crest Trail Association
Ranch	Tejon Ranch
Ranch-wide Agreement	Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement
RWMP	Ranch-wide Management Plan
SMAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SSI	Sustainable Sites Initiative
TMV	Tejon Mountain Village
TRC	Tejon Ranch Company
TU MSHCP	Tehachapi Uplands Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Program
UC	University of California
UCB	University of California, Berkeley

UCSB	University of California, Santa Barbara
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VIPs	visiting local or regional dignitaries
WCB	California Wildlife Conservation Board
WFA	Wilderness First Aid



1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Tejon Ranch (Figures 1-1 and 1-2) has held a special place in the minds of conservationists for generations. Its unique location at the intersection of four ecological regions (Figure 1-3), the importance of the Ranch as habitat for the iconic California condor and myriad other special-status species, and its pivotal position as a potential linkage between vast tracts of protected land all combine to make it one of the most ecologically significant single ownerships in North America. In recognition of that significance, the Tejon Ranch Company (TRC) and five of California’s leading environmental groups engaged in a 2-year process to find a new way to achieve conservation at Tejon Ranch. That effort culminated in the historic Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement (Ranch-wide Agreement) that was signed in June 2008. (A summary of the agreement is provided in Appendix A.)

The signing of the Ranch-wide Agreement was appropriately hailed and celebrated in the media as an historic achievement on many levels. First and foremost, the Ranch-wide Agreement set a conservation and land use plan for the entirety of the Tejon Ranch, the largest contiguous private property in California with some 270,000 acres (Figure 1-4). The Ranch-wide Agreement was also visionary in anticipating the scope and complexity of the conservation achievement by establishing the independent Tejon Ranch Conservancy (Conservancy) and a funding stream to ensure strong, perpetual stewardship of the Ranch. The nature of the Ranch-wide Agreement and the utilization of conservation easements as the vehicle for conservation are emblematic of perhaps the single most notable element of the Ranch-wide Agreement, extraordinary collaboration.

The TRC and the five “Resource Groups” that signed the Ranch-wide Agreement (Appendix A) chose a new path that sought collaboration over conflict and cooperation over litigation. That new way was centered on collaboration via the Tejon Ranch Conservancy to achieve numerous conservation and public access milestones in the first few years after signing of the Ranch-wide Agreement.

This Public Access Plan (Volume 3 of the four-volume Ranch-wide Management Plan) continues that spirit of collaboration, setting forth an extraordinary Public Access vision that balances the TRC’s Reserved Rights under the conservation easements with the goal of displaying the beauty, collaboration, and conservation values of Tejon Ranch to the public.

1.1 TEJON RANCH CONSERVATION AND LAND USE AGREEMENT

The Ranch-wide Agreement prescribed a plan for the conservation of 240,000 acres of Tejon Ranch, organized the Conservancy, and established guidelines to govern the long-term stewardship of and public access to the Conserved Lands (Appendix A). The following sections of Chapter 1 summarize major components of the Ranch-wide Agreement to provide context for this Public Access Plan. Terms defined by the Ranch-wide Agreement are indicated with capital letters. It is important to note that this RWMP covers the 207,000 acres of Tejon Ranch outside of the existing Tejon Ranch Commerce Center project area, the existing Tejon Ranch Headquarters area in Lebec, and proposed Development Areas of Centennial, Tejon Mountain Village (TMV), and Grapevine (Figure 1-3), although it is likely that the Conservancy will ultimately have stewardship and some Public Access responsibilities over conserved portions (33,000 acres) of the Development Areas.

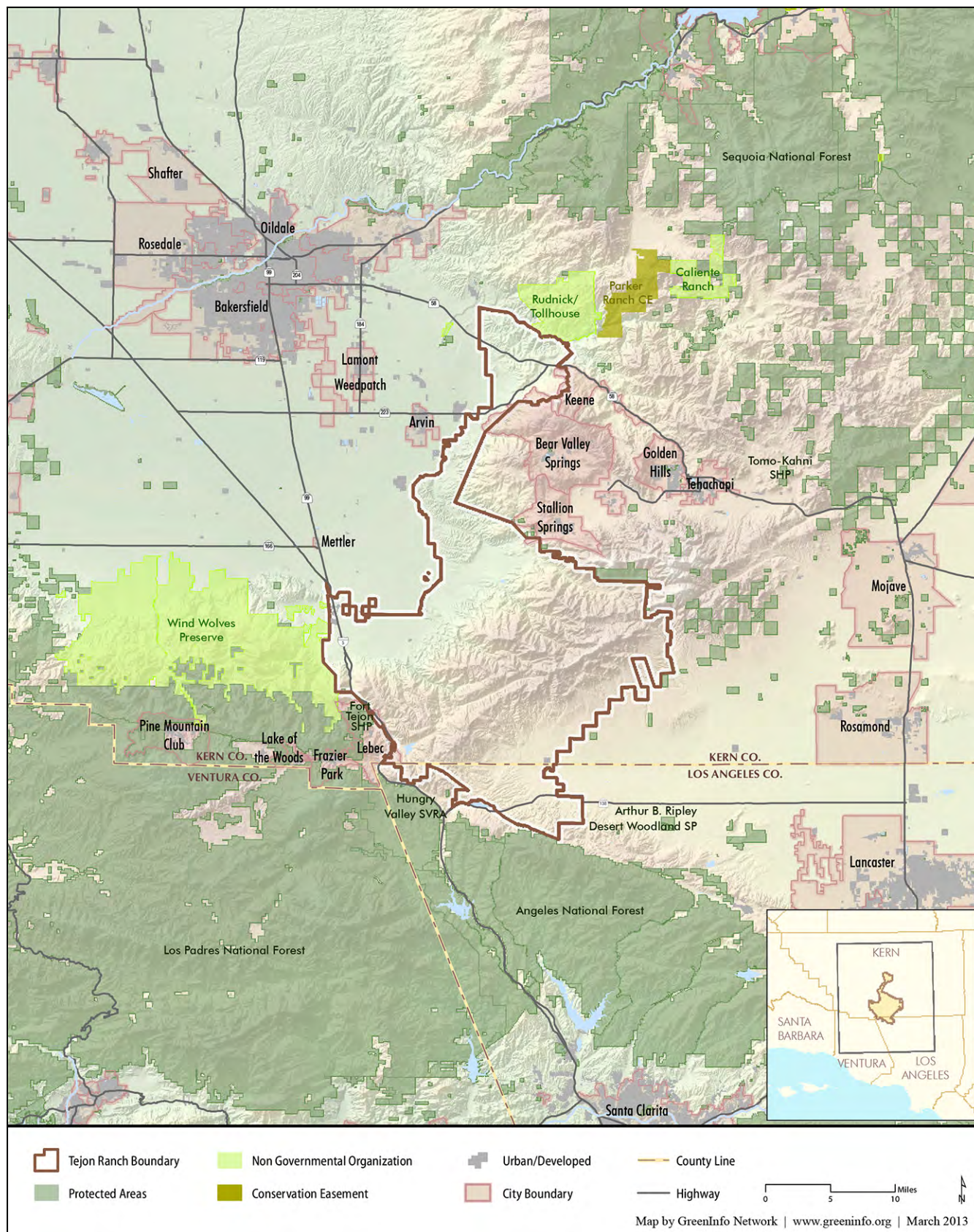
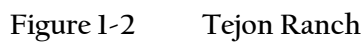


Figure 1-1 Tejon Ranch and Land Management Designations for Surrounding Areas





Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2008

Figure 1-3 Ecoregions on and Around Tejon Ranch

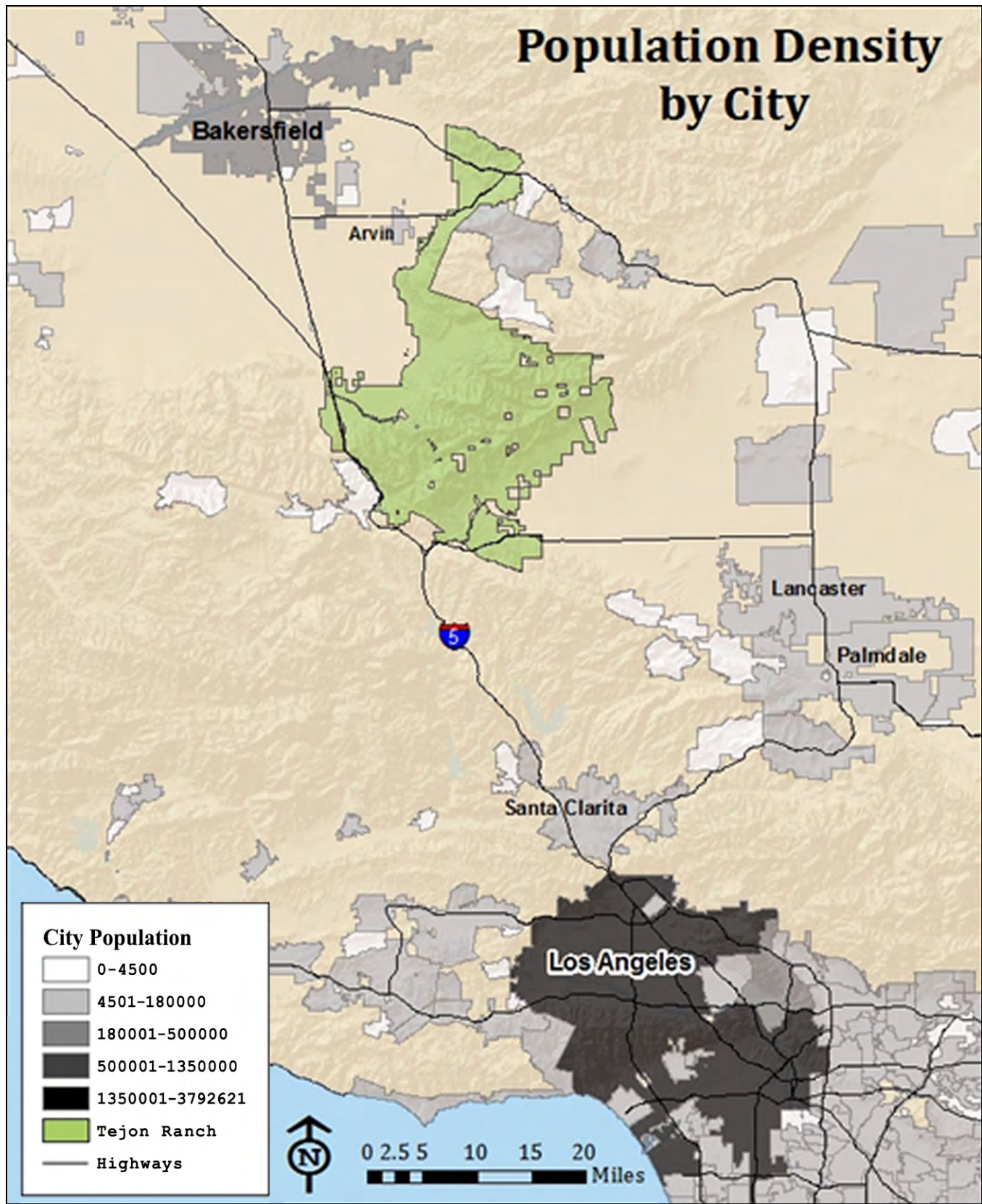


Figure I-4 Regional Population Density

1.2 TEJON RANCH CONSERVANCY

The Ranch-wide Agreement details the founding of the Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, including the mission, funding, articles of incorporation, and bylaws. The Conservancy has adopted the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices as the organizational and administrative guidance for the organization and has registered to be an Accredited Land Trust in the 2014 round of accreditation. The Conservancy is governed by a 12-member, independent Board of Directors. Long-term funding for the Conservancy's stewardship and Public Access Programs is accomplished through the recordation by TRC of a Conservation Fee Covenant on residential lots within the Development Areas of Centennial, TMV, and Grapevine. In recognition of the fact that TRC's developments may take years to realize, the Ranch-wide Agreement provides for interest-free payments, known as Advances, from TRC to the Conservancy. These payments fund the vast majority of Conservancy operations until 2022, when the transfer fees on residential sales are anticipated to be available to provide an adequate funding stream for Conservancy operations.

The mission of the Conservancy is to

preserve, enhance and restore the native biodiversity and ecosystem values of the Tejon Ranch and Tehachapi Range for the benefit of California's future generations. The Conservancy will work collaboratively with TRC to promote the long-term science-based stewardship of the Ranch and to provide for public enjoyment through educational programs and public access.

The Conservancy's vision is to lead the way in understanding and protecting the exceptional native biodiversity and ecosystem values of Tejon Ranch and the Tehachapi Range. By applying state-of-the-art conservation science and land management principles, the Conservancy envisions an interconnected landscape that protects and enhances the integrity of natural communities and ecosystem processes, such as the movement of wildlife through the region.

People and collaboration are also vital to the mission of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy. This Public Access planning process is an example of the extraordinary collaboration created by the Ranch-wide Agreement. Current and future generations of Californians will have the opportunity to visit and explore Tejon Ranch. Students and researchers are provided with a natural laboratory to deepen their understanding of the ecological significance of this landscape, which in turn will help the Conservancy to implement its stewardship mission. The Conservancy seeks to provide opportunities for environmental education and appropriate recreational uses that are vital to fostering an appreciation of wild places. Ultimately, the Conservancy's impact should reach far beyond the Tehachapi Range through these Public Access and environmental education programs.

The Tejon Ranch Conservancy is guided in all of its activities by a core set of values:

Conservation Science

Understanding and applying the best available conservation science is our foundation for stewardship, restoration, and protection of native biodiversity and ecosystem values.

Independence

The Tejon Ranch Conservancy is committed to maintaining our independence to help ensure the integrity of our actions.

Collaboration

The Tejon Ranch Conservancy was born out of an extraordinary collaboration. We seek to continue in that spirit by proactively seeking partnerships on key elements of our work.

Openness

The Tejon Ranch Conservancy is committed to a culture of openness in our activities and our decisions.

1.3 ACQUISITIONS

The Ranch-wide Agreement conveyed time-limited options to purchase conservation easements over five areas of the Ranch comprising 62,000 acres, referred to in the Ranch-wide Agreement as the Acquisition Areas. These five conservation easements, named White Wolf, Old Headquarters, Michener, Bi-Centennial, and Tri-Centennial (Figure 1-5), were purchased from the Tejon Ranch Company in March 2011 by the Tejon Ranch Conservancy with funding from the California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). The WCB is entitled to review the portions of the RWMP that apply to the Acquisition Areas to evaluate compliance with the terms of the easements.

1.4 DEDICATED CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

The Ranch-wide Agreement set forth a schedule of phased conservation easement dedications to the Conservancy for 135,000 acres of the Ranch (Figure 1-5), tied to TRC's achievement of "Development Milestones." As defined in the Ranch-wide Agreement, the first such Development Milestone was achieved on June 4, 2012, with the approval of regulatory documents for the TMV development project. Accordingly, TRC dedicated a conservation easement over the 37,099-acre TMV-A portion of Tejon Ranch in December 2012. Under the Ranch-wide Agreement, TRC also agreed to dedicate a 10,000-acre conservation easement over the viewshed corridor of the potential realignment of the Pacific Crest Trail through Tejon Ranch. That conservation easement dedication is anticipated to occur in summer 2013. The easements over the remaining 88,000 acres of conserved lands will be dedicated to the Conservancy in phases over a 30-year timeframe.

The remaining 33,000 acres of dedicated conservation easements under the Ranch-wide Agreement consist of open space within the Development Areas (Figure 1-2). These conservation easements will be linked directly to the regulatory review and approval of TRC's developments and are not subject to the planning in this RWMP. Subsequent RWMPs will address the management of these areas once the Conservancy holds an easement interest. Importantly, despite the 30-year timeline for the dedication of conservation easements, TRC agreed to manage the 207,000 acres of Conserved Lands outside of the Development Areas as though the easements already exist. Therefore, this RWMP treats the entirety of the lands conserved outside of the Development Areas in the Ranch-wide Agreement.

1.5 STATE AND FEDERAL USES

The Ranch-wide Agreement highlighted four potential state and federal partnerships on Tejon Ranch. The progress on three of these (Pacific Crest Trail, California State Parks, and University of California Natural Reserve) is detailed in this Public Access Plan. TRC also proudly donated 500 acres to the US Department of Veterans Affairs to establish the Bakersfield National Cemetery in the White Wolf section of Tejon Ranch (Figure 1-2).

1.6 RANCH-WIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Ranch-wide Agreement sets forth the process for preparing the RWMP, summarized briefly below, and embraces adaptive management as the approach for implementing stewardship and Public Access activities on Tejon Ranch. The Ranch-wide Agreement also sets forth the specific goals, parameters, and approval process for creating the RWMP. This included the requirement for TRC to prepare an Interim RWMP within 1 year of the signing date of the Ranch-wide Agreement. That first-of-its-kind plan focused mainly on documenting existing practices and was adopted by the Conservancy in 2009.

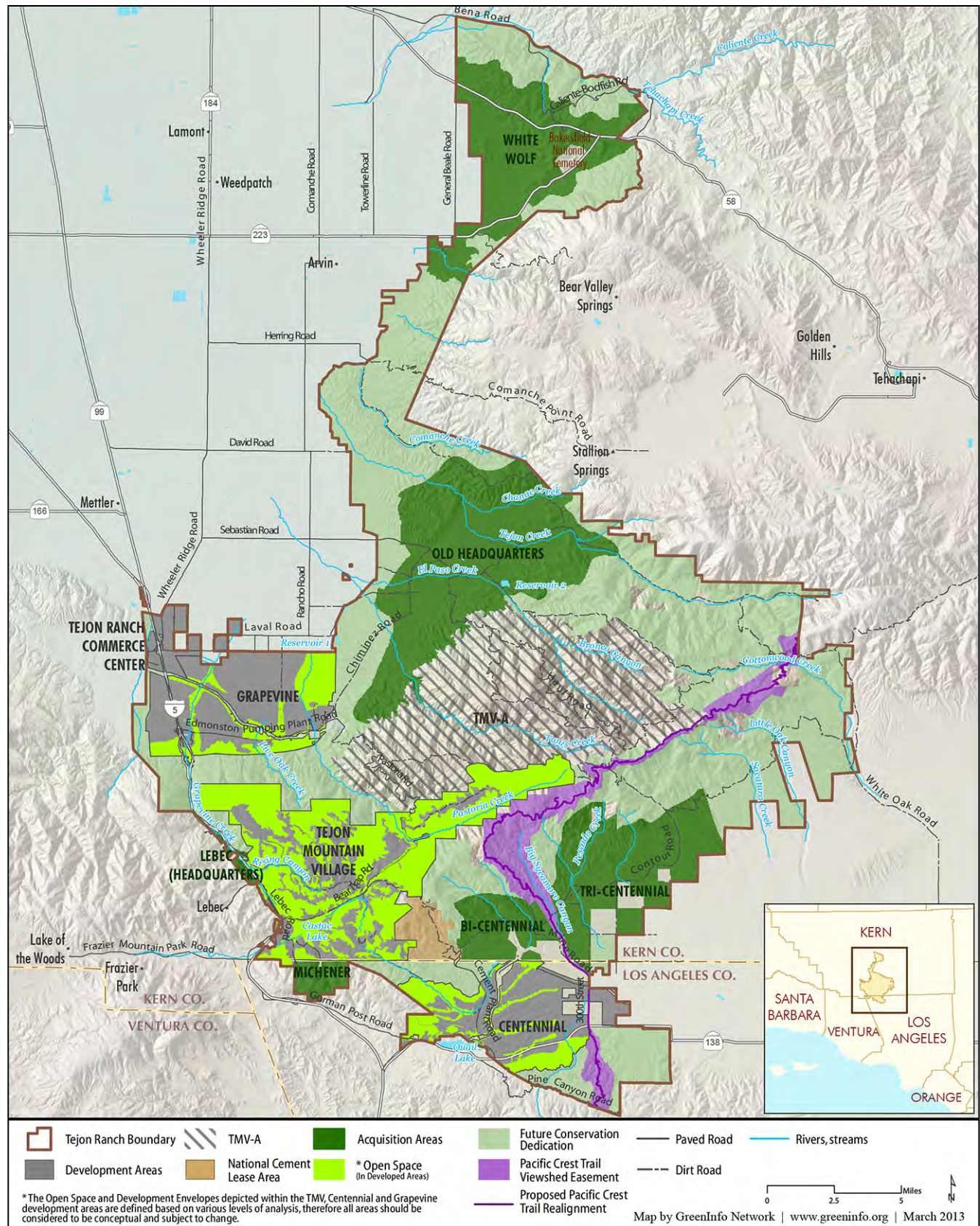


Figure I-5 Conservation Status and Land Uses on Tejon Ranch



Rainbow over Big Sycamore Canyon
(© J. Browne)

The Ranch-wide Agreement states that the Initial RWMP (this four-volume document, including this Public Access Plan) shall be completed 5 years after the signing of the Ranch-wide Agreement or by June 17, 2013. In recognition of the need for and benefits of the adaptive management process, the Ranch-wide Agreement directs the Conservancy to update the RWMP every 5 years. Under the Ranch-wide Agreement, this Initial RWMP clearly establishes the conservation and Public Access goals and objectives designed to preserve and enhance the Conservation Values on Tejon Ranch. The Ranch-wide Agreement calls for collaboration between the Conservancy and TRC in preparing the RWMP. This planning coordination generally occurs under the auspices of an Operations Committee comprising Conservancy and TRC staff members. The relevant staffs also meet and confer regularly to ensure the close coordination of access programs on Tejon Ranch.

1.6.1 PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

In recognition of the high priority of public access and public enjoyment of Tejon Ranch, the Ranch-wide Agreement set forth guidance on the goals for a Public Access Program as implemented by the Conservancy in cooperation with TRC. The Ranch-wide Agreement stated that the access program should be “significant and appropriate” as managed by the Conservancy. Also, in an express acknowledgment of the collaborative nature of Public Access Programming at Tejon Ranch, that Ranch-wide Agreement call for this plan to be “jointly and cooperatively” prepared in connection with the development of this RWMP. Components are to include the following:

- encouraging and facilitating access by the Public, including underserved communities and populations;
- selecting appropriate locations for Public Access, trails, and facilities consistent with the RWMP to preserve the Conservation Values of the Conservation Easement Area;
- coordinating such Public Access with the Reserved Rights so that such Public Access does not unreasonably interfere with Owner’s [that is, TRC’s] or other occupants’ operation of the Conservation Easement Area for the Reserved Rights; and
- entry and use guidelines to ensure the safety of the Public while on the Conservation Easement Area.

This Plan also is required to specifically address private recreational use and may “include authorization for such use (including commercial use) by Owner.” The Ranch-wide Agreement enables a specific approval process by TRC that is not to be withheld if the Public Access Plan is consistent with the Long-term Stewardship Standard (described below).

1.6.2 GUIDANCE ON PREPARATION OF THE RWMP

According to the guidance from the Ranch-wide Agreement on preparation of the RWMP, the RWMP shall:

- (a) Identify and assess the Conservation Values of the Conservation Easement Area and opportunities for protection, enhancement, and restoration of those Conservation Values.

- (b) Establish sustainable strategies for stewardship of the Conservation Easement Area, with appropriate provision for both the protection of the Conservation Values of the Conservation Easement Area and the continued use of the Conservation Easement Area for the Reserved Rights.
- (c) Establish reasonable and economically feasible conservation goals and objectives for the Conservation Easement Area, including goals and objectives with regard to the following:
 - i. Promotion and restoration of native biodiversity and ecosystem values
 - ii. Protection and enhancement of natural watershed functions and stream and aquatic habitat quality
 - iii. Maintenance of healthy, diverse native forests
 - iv. Protection of human life and property, public safety, and natural resource values from wildfire, recognizing that fire is a natural ecological process
 - v. Protection and appropriate restoration and interpretation of significant historic and cultural resources
 - vi. Protection of scenic vistas and rare visual resources
- (d) Achieve the RWMP goals and objectives through the establishment of BMPs [Best Management Practices] for permitted uses of the Conservation Easement Area; this can be accomplished by identifying appropriate Conservation Activities, monitoring programs, and research consistent with Paragraph 3 of Exhibit M [of the Ranch-wide Agreement] and providing flexibility to implement BMPs and Conservation Activities in an adaptive fashion, all in accordance with the applicable Management Standard.
- (e) Provide opportunities for significant, well-managed Public Access through a Public Access Plan developed in accordance with Section 3.11 of the Ranch-wide Agreement.
- (f) Establish environmental education and outreach programs, including maintaining relationships with local Native American groups.

TRC's Reserved Rights include Core Activities and Ranch Uses, which include ranching, filming, wildlife management, the Designated Uses and other activities on the Conserved Lands, as well as Groundwater Extraction. BMPs are practices and procedures established in the RWMP that apply to the exercise of these Reserved Rights, other than the Core Activities on the Conserved Lands.

Conservation Activities are activities that are determined to be necessary to further the Conservation Purpose, are consistent with the Long-Term Stewardship Standard, and are consistent with reasonable detail set forth in the RWMP. The Ranch-wide Agreement states that the Conservancy shall update the RWMP every 5 years after the Initial Period and as otherwise needed. In the update process, the Ranch-wide Agreement sets forth specific consultation and review requirements. Outside the 5-year update process, either the Conservancy or TRC can request an update, and the parties are expected to meet and confer in good faith on the need for and merits of the proposed changes.

1.6.3 RWMP MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

The Ranch-wide Agreement sets forth Management Standards that govern the extent of the Conservancy's mandate to set management practices (BMPs) affecting TRC's activities on the Ranch (i.e., the Reserved Rights). The Management Standards and the management practices under them describe measures and practices to maintain and enhance conditions on Tejon Ranch. Public Access Programs must be consistent with the Long-Term Stewardship Standard and Access Management Protocols described below.

Long-Term Stewardship Standard

The Management Standard governing the establishment of BMPs and Conservation Activities for the Conserved Lands is the Long-Term Stewardship Standard. This standard contains the following guidelines:

- (a) The Long-Term Stewardship Standard shall be at least as protective as the Interim Stewardship Standard that governed the preparation of the Interim RWMP.
- (b) The continued economic use of the Conserved Lands, as a whole, will be respected.
- (c) Over time the native biodiversity and ecosystem values of the Conserved Lands will be enhanced.
- (d) High-priority areas of particular sensitivity identified in the RWMP will be the focus of the Conservancy's Conservation Activities, and in such areas, the Conservation Purpose will take precedence over economic uses.
- (e) The enhanced biological and physical conditions resulting from previously approved Conservation Activities within such areas will be maintained.
- (f) Conservation Activities shall be carefully coordinated with TRC's use of the Conserved Lands and then-existing leases, easements, and other agreements.

Access Management Protocols

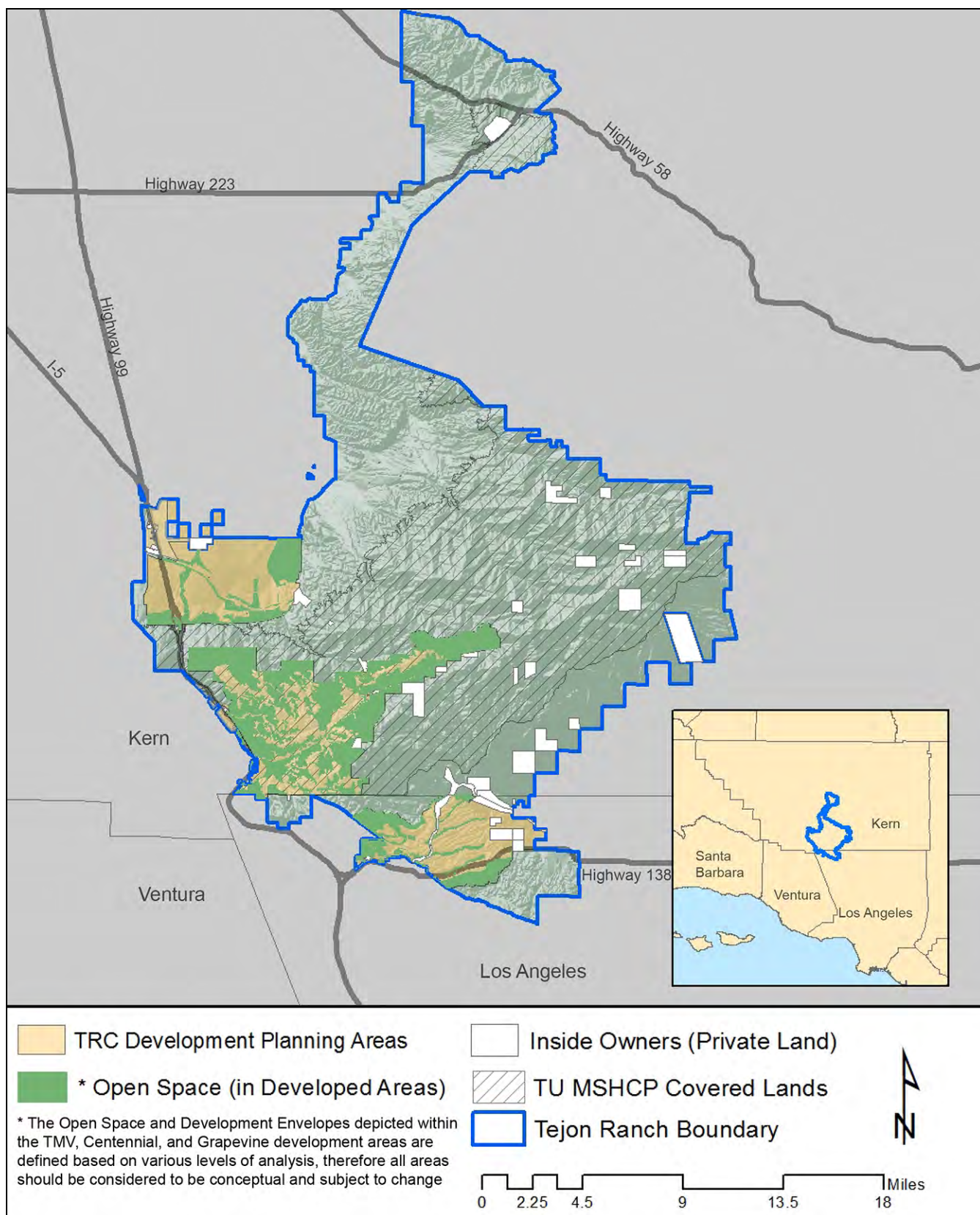
To clearly define the means by which the Conservancy will adaptively manage the Public Access Program, this plan defines a series of Access Management Protocols (AMPs). These AMPs are distinct from BMPs in that they are intended to guide the Conservancy's implementation of the Public Access Plan and Public Access Programs. The AMPs provide both universal guidance and program-specific guidance to the Conservancy's Public Access Programs.

1.7 RESOURCE AGENCY REVIEW OF THE RWMP AND PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

As set forth in Volume 1, the WCB and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) both have certain review rights over the RWMP.

WCB Review

WCB rights of review were established as a condition of the \$15.7 million grant funding the acquisitions of conservation easements over White Wolf, Old Headquarters, Michener Ranch, Bi-Centennial, and Tri-Centennial Acquisition Areas. WCB retained a right of review of the Conservancy's RWMP for those geographic areas. The Conservation Easements covering these Acquisition Areas contain specific provisions for the review by WCB of the Reviewable Aspects of the Conservancy's RWMP, including the Public Access Plan. Essentially, these easement sections provide for the geographic scope and the timing of review by WCB.



Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2013

Figure 1-6 TU MSHCP Covered Lands

USFWS Review

On April 30, 2012, USFWS issued an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Federal Endangered Species Act in association with the Tehachapi Uplands Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (TU MSHCP), which applies to a portion of the Conserved Lands consisting of 141,000 acres (Covered Lands). The permit and the TU MSHCP require review and approval by USFWS of the Conservancy's RWMP, including the Public Access Plan, as it pertains to the Covered Lands, during the permit term. Additionally, USFWS has retained a perpetual right of review and approval over, the portion of the Conservancy's Public Access Plan related to the Covered Lands. The USFWS review is limited to the geographic area covered by the permit and is specifically intended to provide USFWS the right to ensure the plan's consistency with the TU MSHCP, any recorded Conservation Easements, and the federal Endangered Species Act.

The TU MSHCP analyzed certain "Covered Activities," including recreation, and the permit allows restricted private recreational use by TRC and public recreational use, consisting of Conservancy-led tours, on the Covered Lands. To expand public recreational use on TU MSHCP Covered Lands to additional uses considered in the Ranch-wide Agreement and discussed further herein, the TU MSHCP requires that development of any future potential recreational facilities, such as relocation of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail onto Covered Lands, or establishment of a State Park or University of California Natural Reserve on the Covered Lands, are not Covered Activities under the TU MSHCP. Any such additional Public Access use would require review and approval in writing by USFWS that such use is consistent with the preservation of the Conservation Values of the TU MSHCP Mitigation Lands and would be required to obtain any necessary authorization under the federal Endangered Species Act.

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2 NATIONAL CONTEXT FOR PUBLIC ACCESS AT TEJON RANCH

Conservationist Aldo Leopold once asserted that trying to achieve conservation through protection of public lands alone is akin to trying to keep dry with half of an umbrella. Private land, therefore, provides critical opportunities to protect high-quality habitat, native biodiversity, and traditional ways of life. As one of the largest contiguous, privately-owned open spaces in the American West, Tejon Ranch provides an extraordinary opportunity to share the importance of private, working lands for conservation. The Conservancy feels strongly that, as members of the public experience the working lands and the collaborative nature of the Ranch-wide Agreement at Tejon Ranch, their understanding of and investment in conservation will deepen.

Since World War II, outdoor recreation has increased enormously in popularity (Cordell and Betz 2000, Cordell and Super 2000). Among the many factors that have contributed to this rise, three in particular—increased affluence, use of automobiles, and the flexibility of telecommuting/working from home—have been cited as allowing people to easily access and even live near recreational opportunities (Nickerson and Black 2000, Cordell and Super 2000, Zinser 1995). The National Park Service reports that, in 2011, visitation to national parks, national monuments, national historical areas, and national seashores accounted for \$30.1 billion in spending and \$13 billion of revenue benefitting the local economies surrounding these protected areas. Such factors, combined with changing population centers and demographics, have made outdoor recreation a focal area for planning and economic development throughout the country (Zinser 1995).

Despite its traditional popularity, outdoor recreation has fallen under question in recent years. Authors such as Richard Louv have argued that U.S. children are decreasing their time outdoors, begging the question of whether outdoor recreation will still be increasing in popularity in 15–20 years. Increasingly urban/suburban populations and poor funding for outdoor recreation programs have caused many authors to challenge the idea that participation in outdoor activity has continued to grow across all demographics. Others assert that participation has increased only among those who have the means to afford travel and leisure time. Indeed, the National Visitor Use Monitoring Program data from the Angeles National Forest in 2006 reveals that its typical visitors were white males ages 40–49, coming from households whose average income is between \$50,000 and \$150,000. An examination of visitation across the national forest system shows that the Angeles National Forest likely reflects national trends. The well-known societal decline in outdoor recreation in certain communities, as well as limitations on funding and programming, led to an intentional focus in the Ranch-wide Agreement to target “under-served communities” in the Public Access programs.



Angels Crest (© Scot Pipkin)

In an effort to address some of the issues surrounding outdoor recreation and its availability in the United States, the Obama Administration sparked the America’s Great Outdoors initiative in 2010. This campaign set forth goals for increasing visitation to and participation in this country’s open spaces. Particular emphasis in the initiative focused on providing opportunities for young people, the *importance of private lands as providers of outdoor recreation*, increased science-based management of open spaces, and the importance of creating a culture of stewardship among U.S. citizens (Creek 2011). As one of the largest private conservation landscapes with access programs in the United States, the Conservancy has an extraordinary opportunity to demonstrate the role of private lands conservation, environmental education, and Public Access Programs.

2.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The perspectives of environmental justice and the tenets of the America's Great Outdoors initiative have particular relevance for central and southern California, a region that is celebrated for its natural beauty yet is home to one of the densest, most extensive urban areas in the country. With more than 22 million residents, southern California clearly has a vast pool of potential visitors. Fortunately, within 100 miles of the Tejon Ranch boundary are 8 million acres of open space (both public and private) identified as being "Open Access" (Figure 2-1). On these lands, anyone can visit and participate in outdoor recreation, either for no cost or for a small fee. An additional 400,000 acres of open space in this area are considered "Restricted Access," meaning that the public can visit only during certain periods, usually only with the express consent of the land manager. Finally, 40,000 acres of protected lands within 100 miles of the Tejon Ranch boundary allow no Public Access whatsoever.

Given the abundance of open space available for southern and central Californians to enjoy outdoor recreation (about 8 million acres within 100 miles of Tejon Ranch), the Conservancy recognizes that the additional 240,000 acres at the Ranch, while containing rich cultural and natural history, presents a nominal addition to the available acreage for traditional recreation. Instead, by taking guidance from recent studies and the private lands focus of the America's Great Outdoors initiative, the Conservancy will explore opportunities to help generate a new private lands model for outdoor recreation. This emphasis also recognizes the extremely difficult agency funding situation, which likely precludes any major new public lands additions during the life of this RWMP.

Tejon Ranch's location—at the transition between metropolitan southern California and more rural farming communities of the Central Valley—provides potential to attract visitors who may be missing opportunities to experience open spaces. The Conservancy believes that, by focusing its efforts on actively attracting underserved and disadvantaged populations, it may help foster a culture of conservation and stewardship throughout central and southern California.

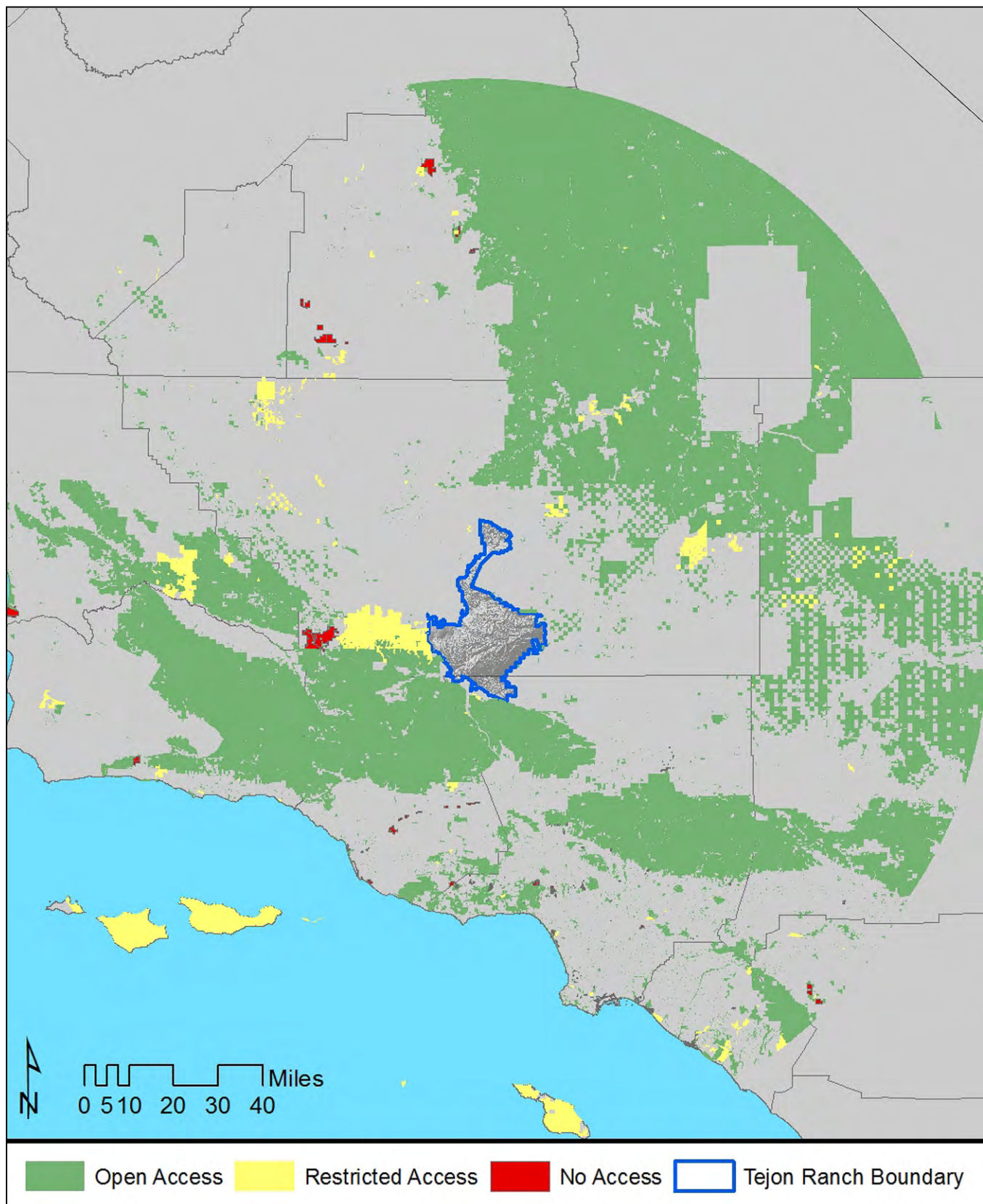
Conservancy-led efforts to develop outdoor education and programming may also encourage proper recreation habits when visitors enjoy other outdoor recreation. By focusing its efforts on the private lands context and stewardship-based activities, the Conservancy believes it can provide meaningful Public Access that not only helps meet the demand in this popular region, but also supports national and regional calls for a new kind of recreation experience.

2.2 CONSTITUENCIES

The Ranch-wide Agreement states that Public Access on Tejon Ranch will be "significant and appropriate," and that the Ranch-wide Management Plan will include language "encouraging and facilitating access by the Public, including to underserved populations."

Clearly, the Ranch-wide Agreement was drafted with the intent that the Tejon Ranch Conservancy will provide a great deal of Public Access to the property. However, such aspirations need to be tempered with an understanding that the Conservancy, with only one staff member dedicated to Public Access, will likely need to prioritize certain constituencies for the duration of this planning period.

Indeed, a survey conducted by the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) Bren School of Environmental Management shows that the Conservancy has already begun to attract a certain type of user. The results illustrate that, for its first 5 years, the Tejon Ranch Conservancy's Public Access programming has been most attractive and accessible to Caucasian visitors ages 55 or greater, with an average annual household income of \$50,000–100,000. A quick comparison of this profile to the U.S. Forest Service's National Visitor Use Monitoring program data from nearby forests show that this same demographic is making the most use of southern California's national forests. To this end, it appears that, even in its infancy, the Conservancy is attracting visitors from the populations most likely to participate in outdoor recreation.



Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2013

Figure 2-1 Protected Lands within 100 Miles of Tejon Ranch

In particular, the Conservancy has worked to engage a specific subset of recreationists who are interested in participating in citizen science and stewardship activities. It is hoped that, by offering events that are focused on Conservancy science activities and natural history training, the Public Access Program will begin to attract visitors who may be uninitiated in outdoor recreation. By participating in Conservancy-led activities, these users may gain knowledge and skills that will allow them to be more comfortable participating in outdoor recreation on their own and provide them with the ability to do so responsibly.

A similar line of logic informs the Conservancy's approach to underserved populations. By creating programs that introduce underserved groups to conservation science and outdoor recreation, the Conservancy hopes to increase the general level of environmental awareness and stewardship in southern California. One of the biggest challenges the Conservancy has met in attempting to provide access to underserved populations is providing a definition of "underserved." While this term has been carefully defined in the fields of public health and social work, it has not received the same treatment in the field of outdoor recreation. For instance, if "underserved" is measured by time spent in the outdoors, most Americans would be considered underserved. However, there is clearly a socio-economic component that inspired the inclusion of this term in the Ranch-wide Agreement. For this reason, the Conservancy will focus on the following groups as underserved populations for the next 5 years of Public Access planning:

- youths ages 16–19;
- Hispanic populations in Los Angeles, the Antelope Valley, and the southern San Joaquin Valley; and
- low-income households.

In addition to these populations, the Conservancy will actively engage with the local mountain communities of Lebec, Frazier Park, Lake of the Woods, Pinon Pine Estates, and Pine Mountain Club. These populations are particularly important because their proximity to Tejon Ranch makes them more able to participate in Conservancy volunteer activities, such as becoming docents.

Although the ultimate intent of the Conservancy is to provide Public Access opportunities to as many individuals as possible, limited staff availability and the private lands context of Tejon Ranch make it necessary to focus on certain populations. While in the last 5 years of programming the Conservancy has successfully attracted the most likely visitors, the Tejon Ranch Conservancy will make a concerted effort to attract uninitiated, underserved, and local visitors in the next 5 years.

2.3 PURPOSE AND USES OF CONSERVATION FEE COVENANT

As described in Section 1.2, long-term funding for the Conservancy's stewardship and Public Access Programs is accomplished through the recordation by TRC of a Conservation Fee Covenant on residential lots within the Development Areas of Centennial, TMV, and Grapevine. Although Tejon Ranch Company's TRC's developments (Grapevine, Tejon Mountain Village and Centennial) are not expected to have residents in the immediate future, the Conservancy fully expects to develop programming that will directly benefit those residents. In accordance with the rules governing transfer fees, residents will be important constituents to work with and make aware of the Conservancy's mission, goals, and objectives. Strategies to encourage this level of interaction and create a direct benefit include: providing an opportunity for TMV/Grapevine residents to sign up for Public Access events before they have been made available to the general public; creating programming that will exclusively benefit Tejon Ranch residents, such as hikes in the Conserved Lands next to the development area(s); and, actively recruiting residents to participate in the Conservancy docent program. We believe that, through active engagement with the residents of Tejon Ranch, the Conservancy can reinforce the commitment to protecting natural resources which that was the foundation of the 2008 Ranch-wide Agreement.



3 TEJON RANCH OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

3.1 HISTORICAL ATTRIBUTES OF CONSERVATION AT TEJON RANCH

Tejon Ranch has been an important part of the California story since long before the arrival of Europeans. Various Native American groups inhabited the spring-fed Tehachapi Mountains for millennia. As Europeans arrived, they established early control and influence through the mission system. When Mexico achieved independence, it continued the Spanish *rancho* system to encourage settlement of the lands of Alta California. In the wake of the U.S. victory in the Mexican-American War, land grants from the days of Mexican *ranchos* were recognized. General Edward Fitzgerald Beale saw an opportunity to take advantage of his country's new influence over the region. Over the course of 11 years (1855–1866), Beale purchased four *ranchos* (La Liebre, El Tejon, Los Alamos y Agua Caliente, and Castac) (Figure 3-1) to form a property with boundaries approximately the same as today's Tejon Ranch. Beale grazed sheep, and later cattle; hosted a camel-mounted corps for the U.S. Army; and farmed the fertile San Joaquin Valley.

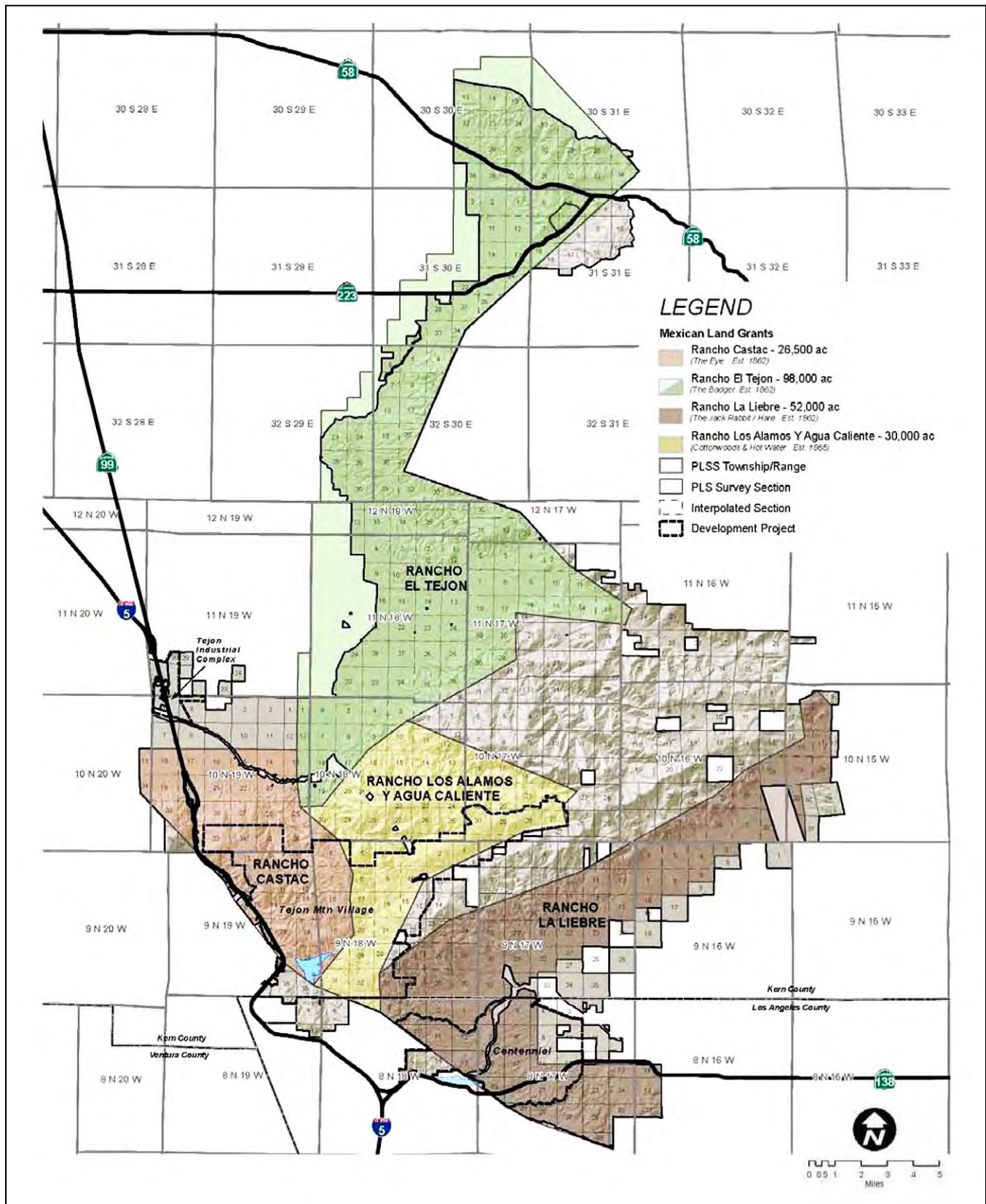
In 1912, Beale's son Truxton sold Tejon Ranch to a group of Los Angeles investors, led by *Los Angeles Times* publisher Harry Chandler and developer Moses Sherman. Under such ownership, Tejon Ranch remained a working cattle ranch and private hunting reserve, continuing its existence as a remote property with minimal disturbance. In the mid-1990s, the majority shares of the Tejon Ranch Company were acquired by equity funds and TRC started to diversify its interests.

Today, Tejon Ranch looms large in the California collective conscience, mostly as a mysterious landscape of oaks, canyons, and wildflowers surrounding the Grapevine section of Interstate 5. This is a land of transition, the gateway from south to central in California. These images, plus myriad historical sites (ranging from bedrock mortars to nineteenth-century homesteads, the California Aqueduct, and some of the earliest power lines to crisscross the West) combine to punctuate Tejon Ranch's significance to historians.

3.1.1 CONSERVATION ATTRIBUTES

While Tejon Ranch's immense size and strategic location have made it an integral piece of California's historic and geographic puzzle, this confluence of geographic, climatic, and geologic factors contributes to its ecological significance. Situated at the divide between four of California's ecoregions and with more than 6,000 feet of elevation, the Ranch supports a rich assemblage of biodiversity. The east/west alignment of the Tehachapi Mountains, which make up the heart of Tejon Ranch, create a corridor of diverse habitats providing connectivity between vast areas of protected lands in the Inner Coast Ranges and the Sierra Nevada. Volume I of this RWMP provides a complete treatment of the conservation values of Tejon Ranch.

It is evident that Tejon Ranch's cultural and natural history are sufficiently rich to make it an outstanding destination for recreation and interpretive programming. This fact is confirmed by the overwhelming response the Conservancy receives from posting upcoming trips online. Within hours, many events fill up to their 30-person capacity. Unlike public lands, whose amenities Americans have become accustomed to experiencing at will, the private lands context of Tejon Ranch makes planning and deploying Public Access Programs more complex. The fact that TRC owns this property creates a situation wherein access is a privilege, rather than a right. In the oppositional language of opportunities and constraints, it is easy to presume that—because of the private lands context—Public Access on Tejon Ranch is constrained for either the Tejon Ranch Company (for which profitability may be affected by unmanaged guests) or the public. However, this presumption fails to consider the suite of benefits afforded by allowing Public Access onto private property.



Source: Tejon Ranch Company 2008

Figure 3-1 Original Ranch Boundaries (Ranchos)

Increasingly, planners, managers, and conservationists are turning to private lands (and especially working lands) for the protection of species, natural communities, ecosystem services, and historic significance. Over the last few decades, the use of conservation easements has emerged as an effective land protection tool to perpetually protect such conservation interests while enabling continued use and enjoyment by the landowner. Private lands conservation is now a critical piece of efforts to simultaneously protect sensitive habitat by conservation managers and compatible uses, such as ranching and hunting, by the landowner. The stewardship of conservation easements is a collaborative effort, with conservation organizations and landowners working side by side.

The Ranch-wide Agreement and its conservation easements are truly extraordinary because of their strong focus on enabling the Conservancy to run Public Access Programs on the private Tejon Ranch, consistent with resource agency and permit requirements. This creates an outstanding opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of conservation easements and private lands collaboration. In this sense, the benefit of providing Public Access to Tejon Ranch goes far beyond sharing the Ranch's ecology, history, and landscapes. The Conservancy is committed to building a Public Access Program that also provides visitors an opportunity to observe how private lands conservation functions and why it is integral to the future of environmental conservation.

3.2 OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

The Conservancy's Public Access Program must respect the economic uses of TRC's Reserved Rights and must not unreasonably interfere with the operations of the Ranch Uses. They must also be conducted consistent with the state and federal Endangered Species Acts and permits held by TRC. Ranching, filming, and hunting in particular present tangible considerations for how the Conservancy's access programs are implemented. These considerations compel the need for open lines of communication and collaboration, and the Conservancy and TRC have developed processes to stay coordinated and safe while access events are occurring.

3.2.1 ACCESS SCHEDULING

The Conservancy has worked diligently to communicate, plan, and collaborate Public Access Program with TRC. As stated in the Ranch-wide Agreement, the Conservancy must provide 10 days' notice when requesting access for a Public Access event. In most cases, the Conservancy tries to exceed this timeframe by requesting access for events weeks and even months in advance. By doing so, it is hoped that any issues that may compromise a given event can be dealt with in a timely and efficient manner.



Lupine and poppies (© Michael White)

In addition to this event-by-event planning process, the Conservancy shares its annual Public Access goals with TRC. Before the spring wildflower season, staff members from the Conservancy and TRC conduct an annual planning meeting in which the Conservancy shares its vision for Public Access in the upcoming year. This meeting involves reviewing any Public Access events that may already be on the calendar and sharing other events that are envisioned but not yet requested. Where conflict may arise between the Conservancy's proposed Public Access calendar and TRC's Reserved Rights, the two parties work to find a mutually acceptable solution.

Due to the extent of wildlife management activities, the biggest potential conflict (and concomitant need for coordination) between Conservancy Public Access and TRC activities is with hunting. For this reason, Conservancy and TRC staff to discuss the timing and geography of hunting activities in relation to Conservancy Public Access. As mandated in the Ranch-wide Agreement, the Conservancy's standard is to not "unreasonably interfere" with TRC hunting activities. While the structure of TRC's hunting program makes it difficult to

predict exactly when and where hunting will occur, frequent meetings enable the Conservancy and TRC to identify zones and seasons in which the Conservancy's Public Access programming is least likely to interfere with hunting activities.

As a result, before requesting access to a given site on the property, Conservancy staff can check to make sure the proposed event will not take place at a time when hunting is likely to be occurring in that area. The Conservancy will continue to request approval for events at least 10 days in advance as before, but can now do so with increased confidence that a given access request will be approved.

Communication between the Conservancy and TRC remains open for final scheduling. Throughout this Public Access planning process, great care is taken to make information known to key staff from both organizations. When a Conservancy Public Access event is finalized, a calendar invitation is sent to all Conservancy staff members, as well as staff of TRC's Wildlife Management and Land and Resource Planning departments.

In addition, access scheduling for the Condor Study Area within the TU MSHCP Covered Lands will be subject to prior scheduling and coordination with the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist.

3.3 RISK MANAGEMENT

Public Access and outdoor recreation activities present an inherent level of risk associated with participation. A landowner or manager can be intimidated by considering the consequences of a visitor incurring injury or trauma. At first glance, excluding Public Access and recreation may appear to be the only effective means of avoiding liability. In reality, a combination of California statute and best practices serves to dramatically minimize such responsibility.

The California Recreational Use Statute (Civil Code Section 846) establishes the degree of care for which landowners are held responsible when hosting visitors for recreational purposes. In addition to this legal protection, various guiding principles exist that, when instituted, reduce the risk of liability even further. The Conservancy's Access Management Protocols have been designed with an eye toward the standard measures that access programs implement to help manage risk.

The Conservancy will continue to use experience to refine and develop an understanding of risk management protocols and procedures. Public Access at Tejon Ranch takes place in a remote and rural context that places a premium on well-considered management of risk. These risk management plans could be revisited annually, biannually, or as part of the 5-year Public Access planning process. Doing so will ensure that the Conservancy is staying abreast of advances in the field of recreation management.



4 CURRENT PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAM

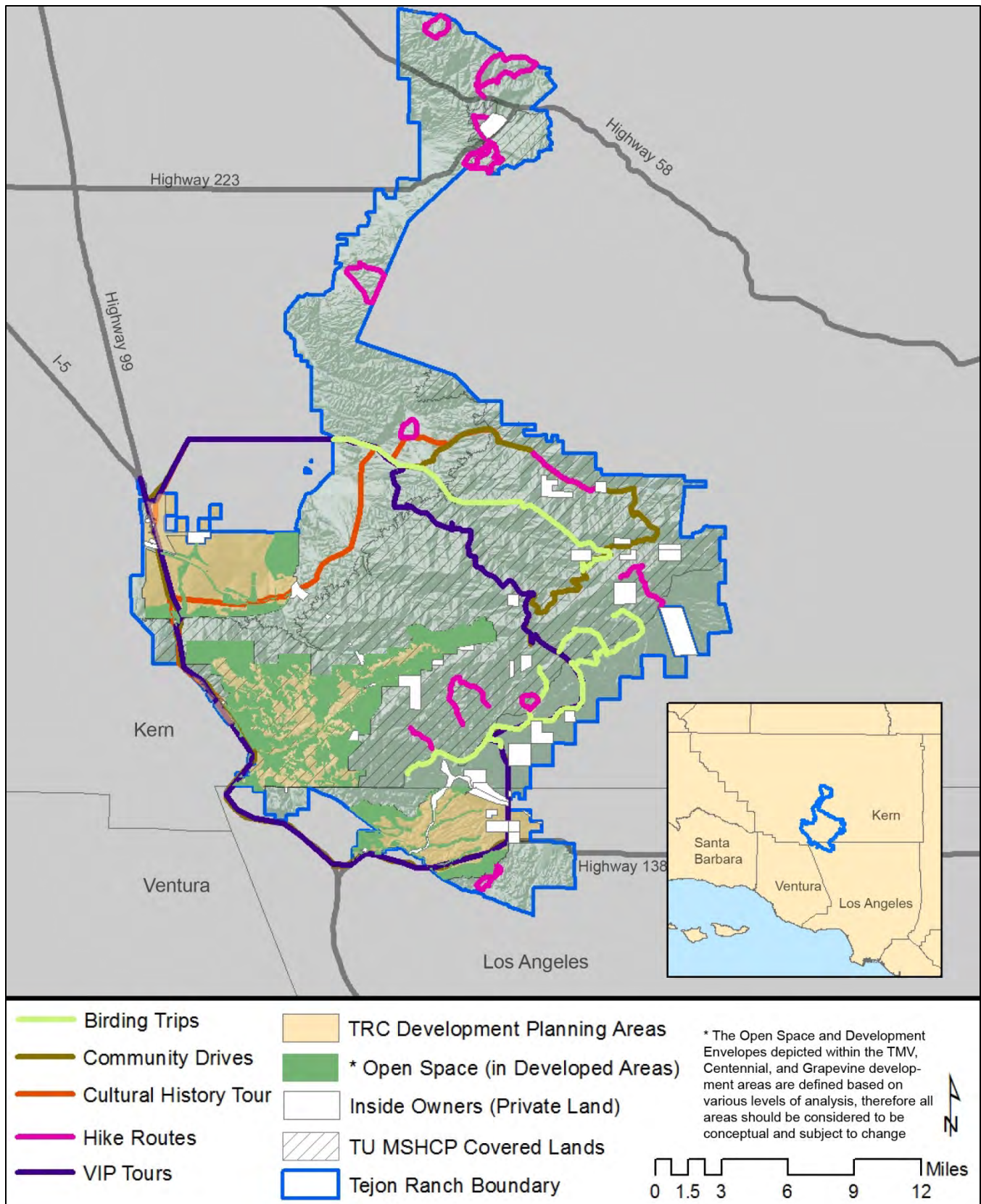
According to the language of the Ranch-wide Agreement, “significant and appropriate access to the Conservation Easement Area by the Public shall be provided and managed by the Conservancy, for the benefit of the people of the State of California.” Over the first 5 years of its existence, the Tejon Ranch Conservancy has tried to meet this mandate by regularly providing guided trips to more than 4,000 visitors to Tejon Ranch in close cooperation with the Tejon Ranch Company (Figure 4-1). Because the Conservancy is required to run Public Access Programs that do not “unreasonably interfere” with TRC’s operations, all Conservancy events are approved by TRC at least 10 days in advance. Additionally, Conservancy Public Access Programs are subject to the BMPs and the provisions outlined in this volume for the Conservancy’s recreational use; all programs that utilize the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, including the Condor Study Area, will be subject to permit conditions, as required in the TU MSHCP Permit, and the permitted and prohibited uses within the Condor Study Area and other Covered Lands Conservation Easements.

At the beginning of every Public Access event, trip leaders take time to orient visitors using maps. This intentionally leads to a discussion of the Ranch-wide Agreement, its conservation and development implications, and the formation of the Conservancy as an independent nonprofit organization. As the event proceeds, trip leaders take advantage of having access to representatives from both TRC and the Conservancy, who spend time discussing Ranch history, the intricacies of the Ranch-wide Agreement, and its implementation. Most visitors are duly impressed at the scope and complexity of the agreement, and particularly with the level of partnership and collaboration that exists between TRC and the Conservancy. As a major milestone of the Ranch-wide Agreement, the establishment of conservation easements over the Acquisition Areas and the recent dedication of conservation easements over TMV-A are highlighted. In 2012 and early 2013, a great deal of discussion has taken place surrounding the RWMP process and the Conservancy’s stewardship vision for the next 5 years.

In an effort to provide the level of Public Access envisioned in the Ranch-wide Agreement, the Tejon Ranch Conservancy has established several programs to bring the public onto Tejon Ranch; these are described in detail below. The Conservancy is proud of its partnerships to create service project opportunities with the Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC) and the Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership Development (FIELD). Already, this relationship with LACC has allowed the Conservancy to remove significant amounts of invasive plants from the property. To meet the target of providing access for underserved populations, the Conservancy has hosted several outdoor education events, including working with the Deb’s Park Audubon Center in Los Angeles. Additionally, the Conservancy annually hosts multiple trips for area dignitaries and service projects with local organizations.

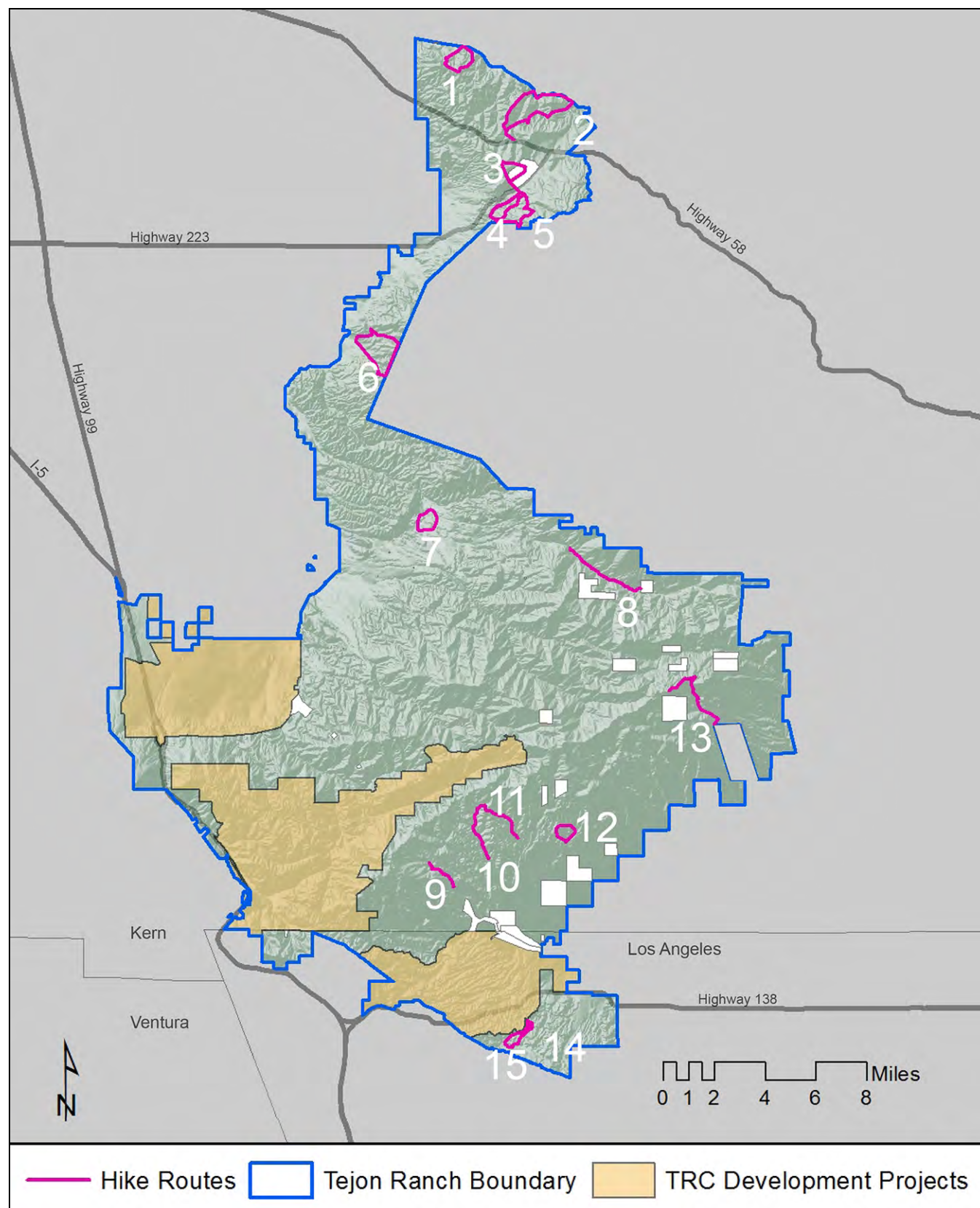
4.1 COMMUNITY HIKE AND DRIVES

As a means to provide access for all, the Conservancy instituted its Community Hike program in 2009. Typically, the Conservancy schedules 15–30 events through this program every year, with at least half of those taking place between March and June. The emphasis during these months is on wildflower viewing on both the San Joaquin Valley and Antelope Valley fringes of the property. Such events attract a broad range of participants, including wildflower enthusiasts, photographers, hikers, occasional international visitors, and dedicated naturalists. Other common Community Hike events take place in selected canyons of the Ranch (e.g., Tejon, Los Alamos, Big Sycamore). These hikes are mostly up-and-back trips and attract a very similar group to participants in the wildflower walks. Figure 4-2 illustrates the locations and distances of community hikes.



Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2013

Figure 4-1 Conservancy Public Access Programming Locations and Trip Types



Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2013

Figure 4-2 Community Hikes and Distances

Table 4-1 Hiking Routes			
Map Number	Hike Name	Hike Type	Distance
1	White Wolf–Caliente Creek	Loop	3.3 miles
2	White Wolf–Bodfish Road	Loop	8 miles
3	White Wolf Corrals	Loop	3.25 miles
4	White Wolf–Bear Mountain – long route	Loop	5.4 miles
5	White Wolf–Bear Mountain – short route	Loop	4.15 miles
6	Comanche Point – Sheep Trail	Loop	5.5 miles
7	Monte Field	Loop	2.6 miles
8	Tejon Canyon	Out and Back	3.5 miles (one way)
9	Los Alamos Canyon	Out and Back	1.5 miles (one way)
10	Big Sycamore Canyon	Out and Back	2.5 miles (one way)
11	Bronco to Big Sycamore Canyon	Loop	5 miles with shuttle
12	Antelope Canyon	Loop	2.25 miles
13	Liebre Twins	Out and Back	4 miles (one way)
14	Liebre Adobe – short route	Loop	2 miles
15	Liebre Adobe – long route	Loop	3.5 miles

Driving tours have also been offered as a means to allow improved access to the high country, which, due to road conditions, has a limited accessible season (June–October). Driving tours also provide access for individuals who may have difficulty participating in a hike. In fall 2012, the Conservancy began leading cultural history driving tours, which focus on sites on the San Joaquin Valley side of the Ranch.

4.2 CITIZEN SCIENCE PROGRAM

Since the Conservancy’s inception, providing access for citizen scientists has been a cornerstone of its Public Access Program. The constituencies of dedicated birders, herpetologists, and botanists have emerged as the most consistently dedicated and enthusiastic populations to visit Tejon Ranch. During the spring event season, the Conservancy calendar is typically split between community hikes and drives and citizen science events. Beyond this, citizen scientists have been helping the Conservancy discover the ecological riches of Tejon Ranch through a broad range of events, such as those described below.

4.2.1 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Beginning in 2008, the Conservancy initiated a Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Tejon Ranch. The CBC is part of an international effort organized by the National Audubon Society for the last 112 years. Thus, the Conservancy has joined the largest volunteer-based citizen science endeavor in history. CBCs provide valuable baseline data on wintering populations of birds.

4.2.2 BREEDING BIRD BLITZ

The Conservancy’s Breeding Bird Blitz adopts a modified CBC model and is performed in late May. The Breeding Bird Blitz is not part of any national or regional survey effort, although the data collected are often shared with eBird (a volunteer online data management system managed through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology).

4.2.3 PURPLE MARTIN SURVEY

The Conservancy utilizes the help of citizen scientists to perform regular surveys for purple martin (*Progne subis*) in June. The Tehachapi Mountains represent perhaps the most significant natural oak cavity nesting populations in California (Airola and Williams 2008). To date, volunteer scientists have documented more than 20 breeding pairs of purple martins on the Ranch annually. Typically, these Conservancy-sponsored citizen science events attract between 15 and 30 volunteer scientists covering most of Tejon Ranch.



Purple Martin (© G. Smith)

4.2.4 AUDUBON CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS

In addition to the Conservancy-organized bird surveys, local bird watching groups such as Audubon Society chapters also assist with collecting citizen science data. These groups typically come to the Ranch during spring migration (late March–May) in the hopes of enjoying the migration of dozens of species through the Ranch. Such efforts are often focused on the Antelope Valley side of the Ranch, where canyons tend to support migrating birds. Some groups, such as the Southwest Bird Study Club, prefer to focus their efforts on the same canyon from year to year. This helps the Conservancy by providing consistent spatial data collection and knowledgeable observers. At the end of a birding trip, participants compile a list of the day's species, with numbers of individuals observed (if possible), and upload the data to eBird.

4.2.5 CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Another group that routinely assists with citizen science is the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). As with the Audubon Society, different CNPS chapters will come to the Ranch to look for particular species. Often, emphasis is placed on rare and endemic annual plants that occur across the Ranch. CNPS groups have assisted the Conservancy in discovering new populations of certain plants, as well as helping to clarify plant taxonomy.

4.2.6 NORTH AMERICAN FIELD HERPING ASSOCIATION

The Conservancy has partnered with citizen scientists to perform herpetological surveys (studying reptiles and amphibians) on the Ranch. These efforts have involved the North American Field Herping Association (NAFHA). This group typically comes to the Ranch three times a year to search for reptiles and amphibians. Each trip is focused on a different portion of the Ranch (San Joaquin Valley, high country, Antelope Valley). This partnership has provided valuable data for the Conservancy, with most observations of rare reptiles and amphibians on the Ranch occurring during NAFHA field trips. In 2012, NAFHA and the Conservancy collaborated to develop a more robust methodology for examining the occurrence and distribution of herpetiles.

4.3 SERVICE PROJECTS

In addition to training volunteer docents, the Conservancy provides Public Access through service trips. As a working ranch for more than 150 years, Tejon Ranch has accumulated piles of unused equipment, fencing, and other infrastructure. With the help of volunteer organizations and individuals, the Conservancy seeks to remove, relocate, or repurpose these items. Through service events, volunteers are able to experience the partnership between TRC and the Conservancy firsthand, as well as improve habitat for wildlife movement and water quality. Major service project partnerships are described below.

4.3.1 LOS ANGELES CONSERVATION CORPS

Since 1986, LACC has worked to provide employment and educational opportunities for at-risk youth and has become the largest nonprofit urban conservation corps in the nation. As the name implies, most of these efforts are focused on providing participants with knowledge and skills in the field of natural resource conservation. With highly regarded programs in renewable energy, urban forestry, and back-country work, LACC is a regional

leader in providing conservation services. Of particular interest to the Conservancy are LACC's exemplary resume and the group's reputation for removing invasive species, restoration work, and trail building and maintenance.

As a certified Conservation Corps, LACC has the personnel to safely handle and apply herbicides, as well as operate heavy equipment and machinery such as chainsaws. Through its partnership with Native Range, LACC is able to effectively plan for and engage in restoration activities such as the removal of tamarisk (*Tamarix* sp.) from creeks. For these reasons, LACC has emerged as a clear partner to assist the Conservancy with major restoration projects.

4.3.2 FARMWORKER INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

FIELD is a Tehachapi-based nonprofit organization whose mission is "To promote economic and social prosperity in rural communities for Latinos, working people, and their families" (FIELD 2013). FIELD seeks to achieve this mission by providing education and employment training opportunities for the San Joaquin Valley farming communities of Tehachapi and Arvin. Despite their proximity to Tejon Ranch and the southern Sierra, these residents generally have surprisingly little knowledge of the incredible natural history that surrounds them. Over the last several years, FIELD has begun to focus on training individuals to enter the "green collar" job sector, with specific career training in natural resources and solar installation through the development of the Kern Service and Conservation Corps (KSACC).

In working with the LACC and the KSACC (operating through FIELD), the Conservancy is able to meet significant conservation objectives, as well as provide access to the property for underserved populations. Through these efforts, the invasive plant tamarisk (*Tamarix* sp.) has been treated and removed from approximately 5 miles of Tejon Creek. Forthcoming projects with these organizations include the removal of weeds from rangeland, disassembly of old ranch infrastructure, and cleanup of abandoned homesteads.

4.3.3 COLLEGE CLASS AND BOY SCOUT PROJECTS

In a project that took place in November 2012, a group of students from the Whitman College (Washington) Semester in the West removed barbed-wire fence and homestead equipment from the confluence of Canyon del Gato Montes and Agua Escondida. Future service projects through academic institutions may include construction of recreation infrastructure, such as picnic areas and trails.

In early 2012, the Conservancy benefitted from the service of an Eagle Scout project. Three picnic tables are now available at the Madsen Cabin in Big Sycamore canyon as a result of these efforts. Such an improvement has had an extremely positive impact on user experience during hikes to this area. The Conservancy anticipates engaging local troops for work on visitor kiosks, trail maintenance, and other conservation work.

4.4 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Tejon Ranch Conservancy recognizes that children—particularly those in rural and inner-city settings—are well documented as representing an underserved population for high-quality environmental education. For this reason, the Conservancy has made it a priority to identify and collaborate with organizations that work with this constituency. Despite that desire to emphasize these populations, the Conservancy has had limited success in achieving an appreciable scale for these trips.

Early on, the Conservancy partnered with the Audubon Center at Deb's Park in northeastern Los Angeles. Through this collaboration, the Conservancy was able to host three events in which inner-city youth were able to come to Tejon Ranch and participate in interpretive activities. The Conservancy hopes to organize more such trips in the future.

In spring 2012, the Conservancy developed an “Introduction to Plant Identification” course, which was held in Big Sycamore Canyon. This event was designed as a first attempt to deepen Conservancy programming in the environmental education arena.

The Conservancy is also actively collaborating with LACC and FIELD. Through these relationships, the Conservancy has trained two cohorts of continuing education high school students from the Arvin farm-working community as interpretive docents. These docents, in turn, lead interpretive hikes for their peers and other members of their community. FIELD staff have communicated that participation in the docent program has led to increased graduation rates and student success.

Finally, the Conservancy has sought to become a resource for local school groups. Although funding difficulties and a lack of established partnerships with faculty and administrators have made it challenging to establish regular events with local schools, the Conservancy has made inroads toward establishing long-lasting relationships. In particular, the Foothills High School (Bakersfield) Alpine Club is establishing an annual visit to Tejon Ranch during the spring. Additionally, Conservancy staff members have been working to develop a relationship with the local El Tejon Unified School District (ETUSD). While the Conservancy has yet to host an event with ETUSD, staff members volunteer as judges for the annual ETUSD Science Fair. Such outreach will ideally help to establish the necessary relationships for expanding the Public Access Program.



Cloudy day over Tejon Canyon (© Scot Pipkin)

In addition to work with local primary and secondary schools, the Conservancy has engaged closely with local university students to provide hands-on environmental education experiences. Every year, the Conservancy hosts a few undergraduate classes for day hikes. In 2010 and 2012, the Whitman College (Washington) Semester in the West program came to Tejon Ranch as part of a semester-long curriculum. In 2010, students helped tag Joshua trees; in 2012, they removed approximately 1.5 miles of barbed-wire fence from Canyon del Gato Montes. This year marks the first time that Tejon Ranch Conservancy is accepting undergraduate interns for the summer field season. The Conservancy has previously supported graduate students from UCSB and the University of California, Berkeley.

As a young organization that is still establishing itself as a resource, Tejon Ranch Conservancy has made it a priority to make presentations for local community groups and potential partners. Since 2008, Conservancy staff members have given talks for dozens of Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and CNPS chapters; ETUSD faculty and staff; and symposia in Frazier Park, Lancaster, and Pine Mountain Club. Through these efforts, the Conservancy has tried to not only share an excitement for private lands conservation and the collaboration that it entails, but also to identify key individuals who may have the time and inclination to establish long-term partnerships with the Conservancy.

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5 TEJON RANCH COMPANY PRIVATE RECREATIONAL USE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Tejon Ranch Company employees, guests, and invitees enjoy permitted access to Tejon Ranch for a wide range of recreational uses. These uses include activities throughout the year and have occurred at fluctuating rates from year to year as TRC staff levels, charitable activities, community outreach, or business operations have varied. This access serves various constituencies from the communities surrounding the Ranch, as well as national and international invitees. As prescribed in the Ranch-wide Agreement, this Public Access Plan addresses management of TRC's continued private and commercial recreational use.

The Ranch-wide Agreement outlines that, while private recreational use is a Reserved Right, it must be exercised in accordance with the BMPs established in Volume 2 of this RWMP; refer to that volume for a more complete treatment of TRC's Private Recreational Use. Commercial Recreational Use (defined further below), which TRC has managed and will continue to manage, must be managed in accordance with the guidelines for such uses as outlined in this volume.

In addition to these BMPs for Private Recreational Use, all Private and Commercial Recreational Uses that utilize the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, including the Condor Study Area, will be subject to permit conditions, as required in the TU MSHCP Permit, and the permitted and prohibited uses within the Condor Study Area and other Covered Lands Conservation Easements. The annual planning coordination process for Public Access ensures that any conflicts between various uses will be identified and avoided or minimized.

5.2 COMMERCIAL RECREATIONAL USE

In addition to the Conservancy-managed Public Access Programs and Private Recreational Uses described above, TRC will continue to provide employees, guests, and invitees with access for Commercial Recreation Ranch-wide for a range of activities such as organized races, corporate retreats, snow sports, outdoor adventures, and festivals. TRC will permit and manage Commercial Recreational Use of the Conservation Easement Area in direct consultation with the Conservancy and consistent with any restrictions in the TU MSHCP. Such use will at a minimum be in accordance with the general Public Access guidelines established in this Public Access Plan. Commercial Recreational Use can generally be classified as formal and organized in nature and may include large numbers of guests; utilization of associated temporary or permanent support facilities; and a business incentive for the Company, typically represented by entry fees paid by activity participants. While specific plans have not been prepared for the future, some potential commercial recreational uses are described below.

5.2.1 ORGANIZED RACES

The Ranch has supported, through sponsorships, nonprofit organizations that promote outdoor programs locally and statewide. Additionally, in certain instances, TRC has offered the Ranch as a venue free of charge for races sponsored by such organizations. These larger organized races would stage and end within the Development Areas on the Ranch. Many of the participants would walk, run, or ride mountain bikes on ranch roads. These events can number from one to five per year and may increase in the future as an increasing number of people are attracted to outdoor activities. To the extent possible, the uses will be limited to the Development Areas of Tejon Ranch. Any use of the Conserved Lands will be subject to the prior written approval of the Conservancy and restrictions to prevent off-road use by participants or organizers outside the Development Areas.

5.2.2 CORPORATE RETREATS

Similar to social gatherings (described with other private recreational uses above), this category has primarily been defined to include business-related barbecues, lunches, dinners, cocktail parties, and meetings. This use sometimes requires temporary facilities or the use of permanent Ranch facilities. The typical group is up to 25, and these events usually take place at TRC's facilities, such as the Cazador and Venado cabins, High Desert Hunt Club, and Old Headquarters Picnic Grounds. The frequency has been about 10 events a year but could decrease in the future as more facilities become available in the developments.

5.2.3 OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Ranch guests have expressed interest in mountain biking, mountain boarding, and photography/video contests that have become part of their Tejon Ranch experience. Some examples are action video/photography and wildlife video/photography. Currently, no commercial events of this nature are planned in the Conserved Lands. Accordingly, any new event of this classification will be planned in direct consultation with the Conservancy.

5.2.4 FESTIVALS

Over the years, equestrian events and cultural celebrations have been an important part of TRC's relationship with the local community. Events in the past have mostly been equestrian in nature, although there have been requests locally for historical reenactments and cultural events. Although the events are low in frequency (fewer than 10 per year), they may attract a considerable number of attendees. These events will primarily occur in development areas.

5.3 COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING CONSERVATION VALUES

In implementing its Private Recreational Use and Commercial Recreational Use activities, TRC will apply BMPs as outlined in Volume 2 of this Initial RWMP and, with respect to the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, will coordinate with the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist to comply with the TU MSHCP permit and related conservation easements. The BMPs will generally apply to the areas of planning, education, performance, resource protection, and safety. TRC will permit and manage Commercial Recreational Use of the Conservation Easement Area in direct consultation with the Conservancy for activities not specifically covered by the Reserved Right of Private Recreational Use. Most importantly, the following BMPs (described in detail in Volume 2) are designed to guide TRC in avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating environmental and ecological impacts during the planning process to ensure that no significant impairment of the Conservation Values of the Conserved Lands results from these activities.

5.4 GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING PRIVATE RECREATIONAL USE

The following sections provide a brief summary of BMPs that apply to private recreational use. The full list and description of these BMPs is provided in Volume 2 of this RWMP.

5.4.1 PLANNING

The following BMPs will guide planning of recreation activities by TRC:

BMP PRU-1: TRC will coordinate with Ranch Operations and the Conservancy to ensure that activities are scheduled to avoid conflicts with other uses.

BMP PRU-2: TRC will ensure that guests follow appropriate Ranch access permitting procedures prior to accessing the Ranch.

BMP PRU-3: TRC will designate areas for activities based on environmental conditions in the area, appropriateness for the activity type, and any TU MSHCP permit or associated conservation easement restrictions, where applicable.

5.4.2 PERFORMANCE

TRC will implement the following BMPs to guide the performance of private recreational use activities:

BMP PRU-4: TRC will require that guests proceed on designated roads and trails and use designated facilities; off-road uses will be allowed only where not prohibited and deemed appropriate for the type of activity.

If guests are found to be in violation of this requirement and such violation results in environmental damage, TRC may take appropriate action, including requiring the violator to fund the restoration of damaged areas to natural, pre-damaged condition, or may rescind the guest's current and future access to the Ranch.

BMP PRU-5: TRC will require that guests perform activities in accordance with access permit conditions and additional conditions placed on activity performance by TRC; violations of such will be dealt with as above.

BMP PRU-6: TRC will provide orientation information to guests regarding applicable environmental requirements and restrictions, such as the lead ammunition ban and micro-trash (bits of refuse and litter attractive to condors) collection and management requirements.

BMP PRU-7: As appropriate, TRC will require that a TRC representative monitor private recreational activities.

BMP PRU-8: TRC will investigate any complaint received from any employee, lessee, or third party concerning any alleged guest violation of any requirements for avoiding impacts to California condors and will immediately notify USFWS of such complaint (as required under the federal Endangered Species Act). TRC will cooperate with USFWS in investigating and taking appropriate action in response to such a complaint.

BMP PRU-9: Within the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, TRC will hire a full time staff biologist (the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist) to monitor uses and enforce restrictions on the Covered Lands.

BMP PRU-10: Within the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, TRC will provide employees and guests with educational information, reviewed annually, regarding acceptable activities in open space areas, including recreational activities, pet restrictions, and wildlife restrictions, including prohibition on collecting individual animals or plants. The educational information will specifically include material on California condor occurrence on the Ranch, prohibited behaviors if perched or feeding condors are found, and threats to condors provided by recreational users and other visitors such as micro-trash and disturbance.

BMP PRU-11: Within the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, access to the Condor Study Area will be limited and regularly monitored by the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist (at least once a month).

BMP PRU-12: Within the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, trail use will be restricted between 0.25 and 0.5 mile from an active primary or active alternate golden eagle nest during the nesting season (February 1 through June 1). Trail use may be allowed during the nesting season, if the project biologist or USFWS-approved Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist has determined that the nest has become inactive and/or trail use would not affect nesting golden eagle.

BMP PRU-13: Within the TU MSHCP Covered Lands, recreation activities within 500 feet of an active nest during the white-tailed kite breeding season (March through September) will be prohibited until all young have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest for survival.

5.4.3 SAFETY MEASURES

TRC will implement the following BMPs to ensure the safety of guests while visiting the Ranch:

BMP PRU-14: TRC will brief guests as necessary on Ranch conditions and remind guests to monitor the weather to ensure that guests are prepared to access the Ranch. Such briefings may include guidance on clothing to wear.

BMP PRU-15: TRC will brief guests on appropriate safety gear to obtain prior to accessing the Ranch.

BMP PRU-16: TRC may require guests to carry a GPS locator unit.

5.5 ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL RECREATIONAL USE

TRC shall implement the following additional guidelines in planning for new Commercial Recreational Uses to ensure protection of Conservation Values.

5.5.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES

TRC will perform general activities in accordance with the following activities:

- (a) Commercial Recreational Uses shall not significantly impair Conservation Values at the site of the use or in adjacent areas.
- (b) Effort shall be taken to minimize, to the extent feasible, impacts from temporary or permanent proposed facilities.
- (c) Uses shall be coordinated with existing Ranch and Conservancy access activities to reduce potential for conflicts.
- (d) TRC shall consult with the Conservancy on additional measures that may be appropriate at the time of planning a new Commercial Recreational Use; this consultation process will take place from the early stages of planning, ensuring that the planning process is conducted mindful of resource constraints.



The Monte (© Mike White)

5.5.2 CONSTRUCTION

For construction of temporary or permanent facilities incidental to commercial recreational access uses, TRC will perform construction activities in accordance with the following BMPs:

- (a) Construction will comply with relevant permits and permit conditions.
- (b) Construction will be planned to reduce impacts to sensitive natural resources.

- (c) Construction impacts will be limited to a minimal area around the construction site. TRC routinely implements standard measures to avoid and minimize impacts during construction, including the following:
- i. TRC will ensure that maintenance activities during construction include regular efforts to eliminate micro-trash on and near all work sites.
 - ii. TRC does routinely implement standard measures to avoid and minimize impacts in and around construction sites. Additionally there are requirements of the TU MSHCP that regulate this activity within the Condor Study Area and the Covered Lands regarding avoiding construction impacts on condors and other covered species.
 - iii. TRC prohibits the spilling or disposal of vehicle fluids (e.g., antifreeze, oil, and other lubricants) at construction sites.
 - iv. No debris, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete or washing thereof, oil, other petroleum products, or other organic material from any construction will be allowed to enter into, or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall or runoff into, riparian and wetland areas.
 - v. When construction operations are completed, any excess materials or debris will be removed from the work area.
 - vi. Construction workers will be required to cease any behavior that constitutes an attractive nuisance or otherwise presents an unreasonable and avoidable danger to California condors upon direction by TRC.
 - vii. Nighttime lighting at construction sites is restricted to those circumstances permitted or necessary for equipment maintenance and public safety and security. All lighting will be downcast and aimed away from adjacent natural habitat areas to the extent feasible.
 - viii. Dust control measures shall be implemented in compliance with South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 403d (SCAQMD 2005).

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6 FUTURE CONSERVANCY PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAMMING

6.1 INTRODUCTION

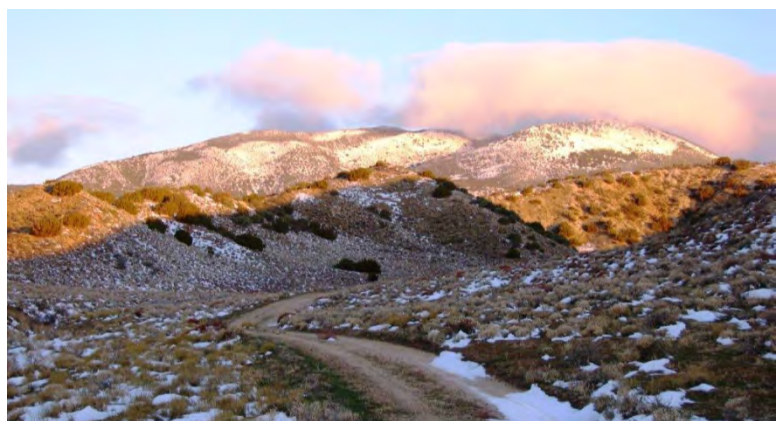
For its first 5 years, the concept of discovery has been a central theme in the work of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy. Now that increased access to this extraordinary Ranch is available for research and recreation, the Conservancy is discovering additional aspects of Tejon Ranch that make it so unique. Along with new species research, observing phenomena that had previously been undocumented, and exploring new models for land management in a working lands context, the Conservancy has begun to realize the power of this place in the public imagination and is investigating ways to share it with others.

At the end of most Public Access events, participants often refer to frequent trips along Interstate 5 (I-5) and the associated wonderment at what lies beyond the monument signs bearing the Tejon Ranch brand. For many participants, visiting Tejon Ranch provides a better understanding of California as a whole, in terms of both natural and cultural history. The Conservancy is proud to share such significant experiences with visitors. With more than 100,000 daily drivers moving past Tejon Ranch on I-5 and millions of people living in the Los Angeles Basin, there is no shortage of potential participants who have similar feelings.

While the Conservancy can never hope to engage and educate every single individual who drives through the Ranch, it is important to be aspirational about the Conservancy's ability to bring the public onto Tejon Ranch. To date, the Conservancy has done a noteworthy job of trying to meet this call by providing opportunities for the public to share in the thrill of discovery. However, given the size and potential of this landscape, more can be done.

For the next 5 years, Public Access through Tejon Ranch Conservancy will continue to emphasize themes of wildflower viewing and citizen science, but additional work will be done to develop more robust opportunities for hosting students and underserved populations. Service projects will emphasize the private, working lands context of Tejon Ranch and will allow the public to see how closely TRC and the Conservancy work together.

Given the context and significance of Tejon Ranch, it is easy to envision its incredible potential for Public Access. However, in light of the Conservancy's small staff size, it will be important to expand these programs deliberately and strategically. The current level of Public Access is near the Conservancy's staffing capacity. For this reason, developing a strong corps of volunteer docents is one of the most urgent components of the Public Access Program. An iterative approach to building this program will not only yield the highest quality events, but will also provide the greatest benefit to the natural resources of Tejon Ranch. Beyond merely increasing visitation, the Conservancy wishes to build on the excitement of discovery and help foster a culture of stewardship centered on this magnificent part of California's heritage.



The Antelope Valley on Tejon Ranch in winter (© A. Jones)

The following goals provide the scope of the Conservancy's Public Access Program for the next 5 years under this Initial RWMP.

6.2 GOALS

The goals identified below were adopted in September 2012 by the Conservancy Board of Directors and represent the basis for the Conservancy's access programs over the next 5 years:

- (a) Establish significant, diverse Public Access programs/activities on Tejon Ranch that are compatible with the Conservancy's conservation goals.
- (b) Raise awareness about and demonstrate the extraordinary partnership between the Conservancy and Tejon Ranch Company in providing Public Access opportunities on a private working Ranch.
- (c) Identify sensitive resource areas and design appropriate Public Access activities that avoid negative impacts.
- (d) Provide underserved populations with an opportunity to experience Tejon Ranch's natural processes, habitats and working landscapes.
- (e) Identify and develop Tejon Ranch Conservancy's unique regional niche in Public Access programming.
- (f) Develop environmental education curricula that are informative, culturally relevant and promote strong land stewardship.
- (g) Continue to collaborate with the Pacific Crest Trail Association, U.S. Forest Service and Tejon Ranch Company on a realignment of the Pacific Crest Trail on Tejon Ranch.
- (h) Continue to focus reasonable efforts to establish a California State Park on Tejon Ranch.
- (i) Collaborate with the University of California Natural Reserve System to explore long-term research opportunities Tejon Ranch.
- (j) Develop and implement Public Access Programs to Bear Trap Canyon under the terms of the license agreement with Tejon Ranch Company.
- (k) Initiate planning to establish a visitor center and permanent office space for the Conservancy.
- (l) Enhance and promote the Conservancy identity through the design of Public Access facilities on Tejon Ranch.
- (m) Develop a robust volunteer program focused on interpretation, stewardship and citizen science.
- (n) Maximize visitor safety in a remote outdoor setting.
- (o) Identify adaptive management measures specific to Public Access to protect biodiversity.

6.3 COMMUNITY HIKE/DRIVE PROGRAM

To date, Tejon Ranch Conservancy's Community Hike/Drive program has focused largely on providing opportunities for any participant interested in Tejon Ranch to see the property. As the survey results discussed in Chapter 2 illustrate, user satisfaction with this program is generally extremely high. Although this model generates rosters of diverse interests, from dedicated photographers to wildlife enthusiasts to motivated fitness hikers, it becomes challenging for trip leaders to manage groups of such disparate interests. Often, a group will begin walking together, only to have the hiking enthusiasts quickly push ahead while the photographers and wildflower watchers move more slowly. This often leads to a situation wherein the hiking group spreads out over a long distance, leaving trip leaders to communicate via radios. While the Community Hike/Drive program has been an overwhelming success over the last 5 years, more can be done to improve user satisfaction and provide diverse programming.

6.3.1 COMMUNITY HIKES

The situation described above suggests that the Conservancy might consider changing how it operates the Community Hike/Drive program for the next 5 years. As volunteer docents begin to add capacity to the programs the Conservancy hosts, different themed hikes may emerge. For instance, some participants are more interested in getting exercise outdoors than participating in focused nature study. For this reason, it may be useful to develop a hiking series specifically focused on strenuous hiking over longer distances.

Likewise, developing walks dedicated to nature study (e.g., plant identification, bird identification, herpetology, geology) or photography may increase overall user satisfaction and encourage situations where the hiking group stays closer together. Such activities will serve to meet the Conservancy's goals of promoting stewardship, encouraging citizen science, and developing Tejon Ranch Conservancy's regional niche in Public Access programming. Given the property's size, location, and diversity, it would be difficult to identify a more appropriate site for educating the public about California's unique natural history. Furthermore, creating such a level of diversity in the Community Hike/Drive program may entice participants to enroll in the docent program.

By creating a recruitment opportunity that is focused on natural history, the Conservancy can ensure that potential docents are interested in activities compatible with both the Public Access and conservation science goals of the organization. Such an approach may also provide opportunities for data collection and create a trajectory by which participants may become familiar with Tejon Ranch through Community Hikes/Drives, learn more about natural history through focused trips, and continue participating in Conservancy activities as docents or citizen scientists.

Finally, the community hikes in the TU MSHCP Covered Lands will only be done in accordance with the terms of the TU MSHCP and access to the Condor Study Area will be undertaken in coordination with the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist.

6.3.2 COMMUNITY DRIVES



Burrowing owl (© G. Smith)

Driving tours have also emerged as some of the most in-demand programs that the Conservancy offers, largely because these trips allow visitors to observe a transect of the entire property. These tours also extend the seasonality of Public Access because they allow easier access to the Tehachapi Mountains high country in the summertime, when the San Joaquin and Antelope Valleys are extremely hot and exposed. In the case of the Cultural History Tours, the use of vehicles allows visitors to see a diversity of artifacts and gain a deeper understanding of the millennia of human habitation on Tejon Ranch. However, due to Conservancy vehicular constraints, only 10 people are able to sign up for each event.

While the Conservancy intends to continue the Cross-Ranch Driving Safaris and Cultural History Tours, it may be useful to explore the possibility of obtaining high-occupancy 4-wheel-drive vehicles such as the Pinzgauer. Not only would the addition of these vehicles allow the Conservancy to more easily meet the demand for such tours, but their use may also reduce wear-and-tear on the field vehicles that are currently being used. Beyond providing a unique opportunity to share the entire property with visitors, driving tours represent a Public Access use compatible with the Tejon Ranch Company's Reserved Rights. Because vehicles travel only on roads and represent a discreet disturbance, it may be easier to lead trips through hunting leases, past calving pastures, and even around filming operations with minimal disturbance. Once past areas where TRC's activities are taking place, the vehicles can stop and allow passengers to walk around, take photos, or have a meal.

As with the Community Hikes, driving tours provide great potential for the Conservancy to integrate conservation science activities with recreational activities without making them the focus of the event. Keeping track of bird lists using eBird could easily be done from the vehicle. Additionally, since driving tours cover so

much space, it may be appropriate for trips to make note of feral pig sightings. Recording the number of individuals, where they were seen, sex, and age could help the Conservancy understand how many pigs are on the Ranch and where they are. The data could be recorded into iPads.

Community drives in the TU MSHCP Covered Lands will only be done in accordance with the terms of the TU MSHCP and access to the Condor Study Area will be undertaken in coordination with the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist.

6.3.3 COMMUNITY HIKE PROGRAM 5-YEAR OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- (a) Continue to focus the Community Hike program on spring wildflower viewing.
- (b) Continue to coordinate Public Access events with TRC ranch operations.
- (c) By the end of Year 2, diversify the Community Hike program to include focused natural history trips.
- (d) By the end of Year 1, establish a series of cross-Ranch driving tours for the summer months.
- (e) Continue to develop new hiking loops and events. Attempt to introduce at least one new event per year through Year 5.

6.4 BEAR TRAP CANYON LICENSE AGREEMENT

The Ranch-wide Agreement placed special emphasis on access to Bear Trap Canyon by creating a specific provision that “the Conservancy shall manage Public Access to Bear Trap Canyon through the use of docent-led tours consistent with the terms of the Public Access Plan.” Section 3.11(c) of the Ranch-wide Agreement goes on to specify various provisions that would guide Conservancy programs in Public Access. These provisions include the requirements from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW’s) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for the Tejon Mountain Village project and the TU MSHCP, and they govern the administration, type, frequency, and size of Public Access Programs. All of these provisions were codified in the Bear Trap Canyon License Agreement that was executed between TRC and the Conservancy in May 2013 (included in Appendix B of this volume).

6.5 VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

6.5.1 RECRUITING AND MAINTAINING VOLUNTEERS

Within this Public Access Plan, the Conservancy has outlined a variety of ways in which volunteers can assist with Conservancy activities. To date, close to 150 individuals have donated their time and energy to advance Tejon Ranch Conservancy’s science and Public Access Programs. The Conservancy recognizes that these volunteers have a variety of choices when it comes to where and when they want to volunteer. Tejon Ranch, being relatively far from most population centers in southern California, is not located conveniently for most people to travel to for volunteer activities. However, given the landscape context and history of Tejon Ranch, having access to this property has been a major motivating factor for volunteer recruitment. Indeed, the Conservancy expects that gaining increased access to Tejon Ranch will continue to be a galvanizing factor in encouraging people to volunteer their time with the Conservancy.

It is important to recognize, however, that increased access alone will not be sufficient to continually recruit and retain volunteers. To achieve these objectives over the long term, the Conservancy will employ a number of volunteer-focused strategies. Broadly, these strategies can be placed into four categories: recruitment, management, recognition, and retention. Over time, it is expected that the Conservancy’s approach will change as particular groups of volunteers become more or less active and as organizational needs evolve.

Community Docents

Since 2010, Tejon Ranch Conservancy has been developing a program through which members of the local community can be trained as volunteer docents. The intention of this program has been to develop a corps of community members who are qualified to lead programs on Tejon Ranch. To achieve such qualification, it is expected that docents have a high level of knowledge in four main categories:

- Tejon Ranch natural history,
- Ranch-wide Agreement,
- Tejon Ranch Operational Protocols,
- Site restrictions from the WCB Conservation Easements, the USFWS TU MSHCP and related permit and conservation easement requirements, and for Bear Trap Canyon only, the CDFW ITP experiential education and group management, and
- first aid and emergency protocols.

Beyond increasing the Conservancy's capacity for offering Public Access events on the property, it is hoped that volunteer docents will be active community champions for Tejon Ranch Conservancy. Additionally, through the process of training and leading trips, docents will increase their environmental literacy and natural history skills. In this way, the development and training of volunteer docents represents an opportunity for the Conservancy to establish its regional recreational niche and encourage a culture of stewardship.

FIELD Youth Docents

Since 2011, the Conservancy has been working to develop a program for training FIELD students as volunteer docents on Tejon Ranch. Using FIELD's Arvin Learning Center as a home base, the goal of this program is to raise environmental awareness concerning the conservation significance of this landscape among the farming communities along the San Joaquin Valley side of Tejon Ranch.

Once FIELD docents have been trained, they will lead culturally relevant tours that incorporate bilingual lessons. It is envisioned that the California Naturalists curriculum (described under "Training Docents" below) will provide the basis for natural history training. One of the advantages of using this curriculum is that, because it has been developed by the University of California Extension program, students can receive school credit for participation. In this way, the docent training program may be a means for students to not only acquire crucial leadership skills, but also to complete General Educational Development (or GED) courses.

6.5.2 TRAINING DOCENTS

Although the Conservancy has provided natural history and first aid training for a small group of individuals, no standardized curriculum has yet been developed for training and recruiting docents on a regular basis. For this reason, the Conservancy has decided to adopt the newly developed California Naturalists curriculum. Developed by the University of California Extension, California Naturalists is a 10-week, 40-hour course designed to provide a strong understanding of California's unique geography, geology, flora and fauna, and environmental issues. The California Naturalists curriculum has a built-in flex week, during which the host organization can focus on issues specific to the site. During this week, Tejon Ranch Conservancy classes will focus on the Ranch-wide Agreement, WCB Conservation Easements, the USFWS TU MSHCP and related conservation easements, and for docents in Bear Trap Canyon, the CDFW ITP. Information about the unique land management model on Tejon Ranch will also be presented informally throughout the docent training.

In addition to attending weekly 2.5-hour-long classes and three field trips, California Naturalists students are expected to complete a capstone service project to benefit the host organization. These projects can range from construction of a loop trail or installation of interpretive signs to developing curriculum or starting a regular Saturday morning natural history hike. While it is expected that Tejon Ranch Conservancy docents will attend the California Naturalists course (unless they already have sufficient natural history training), it is not expected that all attendees of California Naturalists will become Conservancy docents. In this way, hosting the course will

provide a community resource and a forum to share the unique circumstances surrounding the natural history and land management of Tejon Ranch.

6.5.3 DEPLOYING DOCENTS

Once docents have achieved sufficient natural history training (through California Naturalists or by other means, such as a Bachelor's degree in a related field), undergone the Tejon Ranch Conservancy site-specific training, and completed the minimum first aid training, they will be ready to participate as Trail Assistants. In this capacity, docents will help lead groups but will remain subordinate to the Group Leader. Before becoming a Group Leader, volunteers will be required to serve as Trail Assistants on at least three events.

Volunteers who have completed the requisite training and completed their tenure as Trail Assistants will also be evaluated as Group Leaders before leading trips independently. At first, the evaluation process will be conducted by the Public Access Coordinator. As docents lead more trips, a process will be developed by which Group Leaders may reach a Senior Docent level, capable of evaluating and promoting Trail Assistants. This hierarchy of Trail Assistant, Group Leader, and Senior Docent be utilized to encourage the acquisition of skills and to ensure consistent, high-quality programming.

6.5.4 SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Service opportunities present one of the most exciting and unique ways for members of the public to witness the incredible partnership between the Conservancy and Tejon Ranch Company. In particular, service projects allow visitors to understand the private, working lands context of Tejon Ranch, because of TRC's Reserved Rights to continue its private ranching, agriculture, filming, mining, and oil extraction activities on the property. This creates a slightly different context for land management than what one might find on federal land (controlled by U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, or National Park Service), or other private conservation land (managed by The Nature Conservancy or other land trusts). Instead of approaching these rights as being incompatible with (or even antithetical to) Public Access, service trips provide an opportunity for visitors to observe firsthand how conservation activities can prove mutually beneficial to conservation values and ranching practices.



Volunteers removing barbed wire fence
(© Scot Pipkin 2012)

By employing volunteer service groups, the Conservancy in cooperation with TRC may efficiently complete tasks such as removal of fences, disassembly of unused cattle pens and construction of new site amenities. Such activities will have the conservation benefits of improving wildlife movement, allowing for habitat restoration, and mitigating exposure to potentially hazardous materials (such as barbed wire and loose metal). Beyond cleanup projects, there are opportunities for volunteer service groups to assist the Conservancy with construction of Public Access amenities such as ramadas and picnic tables. It is hoped that participants in such activities will have a sense of ownership over what has been built. Opportunities may arise for volunteers to occasionally monitor such developments and ensure that they are being treated properly.

While hosting volunteer service trips will undoubtedly benefit Tejon Ranch Conservancy, TRC, the landscape, and the volunteers themselves, there are potential safety risks involved. Old ranching equipment, for instance, is often rusty, sharp, and deteriorating. Lifting and removing such debris poses an immediate safety risk to potential volunteers. In addition, disassembly of ranching infrastructure and construction of Public Access infrastructure will involve the use of specialized tools, including power tools. For these reasons, it will be imperative that the Conservancy and TRC develop appropriate protocols to ensure volunteers' safety. Certain volunteer groups may be more compatible with service activities than others. The Conservancy will be cognizant of these issues and ensure that the activity proposed is at an appropriate level of difficulty and risk for the assisting volunteer group.

Volunteers should be made aware of the dangers inherent in service work on a ranch, and special participant forms may need to be devised.

Opportunities for service projects will be identified collaboratively between the Conservancy and TRC, and if within the Covered Lands, the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist. In particular, the Conservancy's Public Access Coordinator will be in close contact with the Wildlife Management Department at TRC. Already, informal discussions have yielded a list of at least six projects that would benefit Ranch operations and advance the mission of the Conservancy.

6.5.5 VOLUNTEER PROGRAM 5-YEAR OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- (a) By the end of Year 1, have a fully developed docent training curriculum that includes emergency procedures, group management protocol, and training manual that includes the elements discussed above.
- (b) By the end of Year 5, have 30 trained volunteer docents that each participate (leading or assisting) in 30 trips annually.
- (c) Employ the California Naturalists program as the basis for natural history training.
- (d) Develop or borrow curricula that train docents in areas such as group management and safety.
- (e) By the end of Year 2, have an established program for training and employing FIELD docents based on the California Naturalists Program.
- (f) By the end of Year 5, each FIELD docent will participate in four trips annually.
- (g) Provide at least two volunteer service opportunities each spring and three each fall.
- (h) By the end of Year 5, integrate FIELD and community docents into the Public Access Program.
- (i) Encourage docents to participate in the iNaturalist website to keep in touch, share observations, and assist with identification.

6.6 CITIZEN SCIENCE

Since the founding of Tejon Ranch Conservancy, citizen science has emerged as one of the primary ways to bring the public to Tejon Ranch. The Conservancy is keenly interested in cultivating this program because the efforts of citizen scientists will increase understanding of this place, but also because citizen science programs allow Tejon Ranch Conservancy to promote stewardship and environmental awareness among the community. For the next 5 years, citizen science activities will figure prominently in the Conservancy's Public Access programming. It is envisioned that citizen science will be promoted by Tejon Ranch Conservancy at three levels: dedicated citizen science events, volunteer citizen science (informal activities folded into non-science events), and community science outreach.

6.6.1 DEDICATED CITIZEN SCIENCE EVENTS

As in the Conservancy's first 5 years, dedicated citizen science trips will be a significant focus of the Public Access Program. Tejon Ranch Conservancy will continue to sponsor its annual CBC, BBB, and purple martin survey activities, in addition to hosting data collecting groups such as Audubon and CNPS chapters and NAFHA trips. In addition to continuing these events, the Conservancy will spend the next 5 years developing and deploying citizen science protocols in several areas, including coordination with the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist for trips within the TU MSHCP Covered Lands. Once appropriate and desired metrics have been identified, the Conservancy can begin to design specific protocols in which to engage citizen scientists. It will be important that these protocols are relatively quick, easy to perform, and require little training. The strength of citizen science lies in its potential to generate vast amounts of data, for long periods of time, and with high sampling frequency, not necessarily in its ability to create extremely detailed or sophisticated data sets.

6.6.2 VOLUNTEER CITIZEN SCIENCE

Volunteer citizen science may also be a useful tool for professional researchers seeking to use Tejon Ranch as a laboratory. Citizen scientists may even be able to participate in projects that help inform adaptive management concerning ranching BMPs and Conservation Activities. At a time when project funding is extremely competitive, partnerships such as these may stand out as opportunities to maximize cost effectiveness. Utilization of volunteer citizen scientists in such a way may represent a model that other land managers in the region would want to adopt.

The Conservancy may also be able to promote citizen science outside of the boundaries of Tejon Ranch itself. Encouraging citizen scientists in the neighboring community will lead to the development of data sets that can be compared to those developed on the Ranch. If maintained for a long enough period, such projects may yield valuable information about the effects of microclimate on bird populations, weather patterns, plant productivity, and a host of other metrics. El Tejon Unified School District (ETUSD) has three schools adjacent to Ranch boundaries (elementary, middle, and high school). If the Conservancy were to partner with ETUSD in establishing on-campus citizen science projects (e.g., breeding bird surveys, acorn monitoring, weather monitoring, wildlife camera monitoring, invasive species mapping), students would be able to learn scientific research protocols in a familiar environment. If they were to then visit Tejon Ranch to assist with data collection, they would already be comfortable with the protocols, more able to enjoy the landscape, and possibly more appreciative of the similarities and differences between Conservancy study sites and their school campus study sites. Similar projects can be undertaken with the local community.

6.6.3 CITIZEN SCIENCE 5-YEAR OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- (a) Continue working with Audubon, bird clubs, CNPS, and NAFHA groups.
- (b) By the end of Year 1, enlist citizen science groups to develop spring wildflower quadrats based on Conservancy protocols.
- (c) Keep eBird checklists for all Conservancy trips (managed by Trip Leader).
- (d) By the end of Year 2, work with TRC to develop an appropriate and effective role for citizen scientists to assist the Conservancy's monitoring of ecological conditions throughout different areas of the Ranch.
- (e) By the end of Year 1, enlist citizen scientists to collect GPS and/or photo points of pig damage and sightings with associated data sheets.
- (f) By the end of Year 3, develop weed identification and mapping protocols.
- (g) By the end of Year 5, have 15 citizen science trips per year.

6.7 OUTDOOR/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Over the last decade, a growing body of literature has addressed the lack of access by young people to natural environments. Phrases such as “nature deficit disorder” and “No Child Left Inside” highlight the immediacy of this issue. Youth, therefore, represent a significant underserved population in the context of environmental awareness and exposure to conservation science. The Conservancy believes that this is a high-priority demographic group, as outdoor education programs will likely affect future policy making and stewardship. Given the fact that 68% of 2012 Public Access Survey respondents were 55 years of age and older, the Conservancy clearly needs to increase its reach to younger populations.

The Conservancy also recognizes that its outdoor education efforts will not exist in a vacuum. Other local organizations already provide extensive outdoor educational opportunities for the community. In particular, Wind Wolves Preserve hosts interpretive outdoor education for school groups. Although that curriculum is designed for all ages, most of the programming is focused on students in kindergarten through grade 7. The

Conservancy may be able to develop more robust middle school and high school curricula to supplement what is already being done effectively by its neighbor.

6.7.1 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Development of youth programs may be accomplished through increased emphasis on participation in conservation science activities. As the Conservancy develops and enacts its RWMP, there will be no shortage of data to collect and analyze. Potential projects have already been identified as being appropriate for students of various ages, ranging from acorn mastings observations to stream studies documenting the effects of tamarisk (*Tamarix* sp.) removal in Tejon Creek. Such observations can be tailored to meet science standards at various grade levels, providing real-world, hands-on opportunities for students to participate in the scientific process.

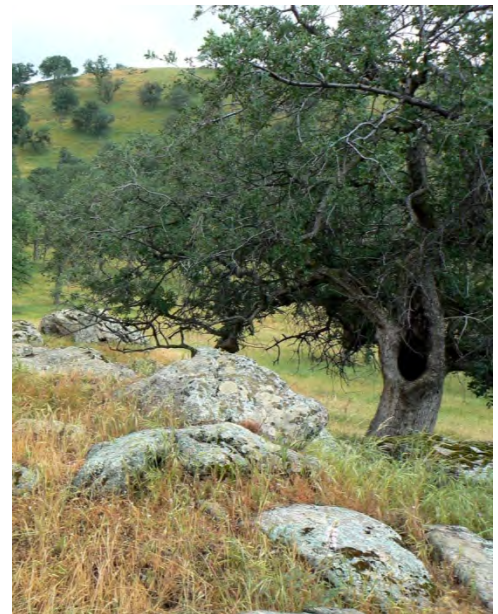
One of the great advantages of the Conservancy's long-term work is that students will be able to continually return to monitor the experiment. A particular stand of oaks or reach of Tejon Creek may become the monitoring responsibility of a specific cohort of students, with their inquiry becoming more advanced as they progress through their studies. Alternatively, a teacher may decide he or she likes a particular area and may choose to perform the same experiment annually with each new class of students. Such activities could easily be used to meet nearly all of the objectives for the California State Science Standards category of "Investigation and Experimentation."

While providing opportunity for students to participate in the Conservancy's conservation science program may be of interest to many groups, some teachers might prefer to have their students take an interpretive walk. For this reason, it will be important to begin developing curricula that align with State Science Standards. Initial investigation suggests that such interpretive walks may help meet learning objectives in the Biology/Life Sciences (Ecology, Evolution, Physiology) and Earth Sciences (Dynamic Earth Processes, Biogeochemical Cycles, California Geology) categories. Additionally, having a corps of volunteer docents to assist with leading school groups during the week will be crucial for establishing the capacity to regularly host environmental education programs.

6.7.2 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Still other teachers may be interested in visiting Tejon Ranch for its aesthetic and historic qualities. Programs may easily be developed that allow students to photograph, paint, or understand the cultural history of the property. To ensure that such programs do not stray far from the Conservancy's mission, they should be designed to incorporate themes of conservation science, land conservation, and stewardship. Data collection opportunities provide an example of how to do this. To effectively communicate how a protocol should be executed, useful instructions for student investigators must be developed. There may be opportunity to invite a local high school's audio-visual club to come to the Ranch and film an instructional video to be posted online. That way, any class that is planning to come to Tejon Ranch and help with that task will be able to see what is expected of them before setting foot on the property. This particular example would help ensure that students understand data collection methods, and it would also create opportunities for students to communicate across schools and explore information-sharing techniques.

Because Tejon Ranch has so much to offer the local community's schoolchildren, it will take some time to fully realize what the Tejon Ranch Conservancy Outdoor/Environmental Education program will encompass. It will also be important to recognize that, in this capacity, the Conservancy's primary objective will be to offer programs that support the efforts of teachers and administrators. As time passes and this program grows, there may be need to change the focus of some of the events or to add different event topics. For these reasons, it will be



Blue oaks (© Mike White)

important to design the Outdoor/Environmental Education program in a way that maintains flexibility in content while ensuring that it is of high quality, engaging, and supports learning objectives.

Although Tejon Ranch presents extraordinary opportunities for outdoor and environmental education, there are also constraints that may delay the implementation of an extensive program. The most apparent of these constraints involve transportation to and around Tejon Ranch. Because of the property's remote location, most school groups will need to secure appropriate transportation to Tejon Ranch. At a time when schools are decreasing their field trip transportation budgets, the Conservancy has decided to implement a Transportation Fund, whereby interested teachers may apply for grants to help defray the cost of bringing students onto Tejon Ranch.

6.7.3 TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Beyond merely transporting groups of students to Tejon Ranch, a successful Outdoor/Environmental Education program must have the ability to transport them *throughout* the Ranch. For instance, Monte Field has been identified as one of the most likely locations at which to host educational trips, given its proximity to a paved road, the presence of a creek, and the fact that conservation activities (tamarisk removal) have taken place there. However, the roads that connect Monte Field to the nearest paved road can be notoriously difficult to navigate, especially for a school bus. Actually getting students to Monte Field may prove challenging during much of the year. With the help of docents, the Conservancy may be able to establish various learning stations, so that not all students are in the same place at the same time. That way, the bus can let students off at Sebastian gate and one or more groups can be taken to a learning station at Monte Field, while others attend stations that are closer to the paved road, with the groups rotating during the visit.

At a time where teachers are being asked to increase their effectiveness despite plummeting budgets and resources, the Conservancy wishes Tejon Ranch to serve as a living laboratory. By promoting real-life scientific inquiry, educational experiences on the Ranch can inspire critical thinking in young people. Through established connections between the Conservancy and university researchers, it may be possible to organize symposia at which students are able to discuss the scientific process or explore current research. Ultimately, the desire is to encourage a new generation of conservation-minded citizens through outdoor education.

6.7.4 OUTDOOR/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION 5-YEAR OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- (a) By the end of Year 1, establish key partnerships with educational institutions. By the end of Year 1, identify key science activities that would benefit from service projects and initiate pilot program(s).
- (b) By the end of Year 3 achieve capacity for 10 school groups in a given season.
- (c) By the end of Year 2, have a developed curriculum for grades 9–12 that can be taught by volunteer docents.
- (d) By the end of Year 3, have a developed curriculum for grades 6–8 that can be taught by volunteer docents.
- (e) By Year 3, provide \$5,000 in the Transportation Fund.
- (f) By Year 5, provide \$7,500 in the Transportation Fund.

6.8 OTHER CONSERVANCY PROGRAMMING

In addition to the programs described above, the Conservancy regularly hosts one-time events for visiting local or regional dignitaries (VIPs) and special-interest groups. These events, while functionally similar to typical Community Hikes/ Drives, often incorporate additional activities that distinguish them from the rest of the Conservancy's Public Access Program. This section describes the breadth of these additional activities and how they will operate through this 5-year planning period.

6.8.1 SPECIAL GROUPS/VIP ACCESS

On numerous occasions, important partners, potential donors, members of the media, and other potential allies wish to make arrangements to explore the Ranch. In these cases, the Conservancy makes an effort to accommodate the group's or individual's specific interests and needs. Often, this means providing an in-depth tour of the property. Such activities are conducted in a similar fashion to other Conservancy programming, and the primary difference may be the locations visited.

In many cases, these events last for multiple days, with guests staying in TRC housing and receiving catered meals. When special groups and VIP trips last multiple days, the Conservancy coordinates even more closely with TRC to ensure that guests are provided the necessary amenities to be comfortable, without infringing on the Reserved Rights of TRC. This often means that TRC staff members are closely involved with the event and participate in tours, meals, and leisure activities.

6.8.2 OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Although the focus of Tejon Ranch Conservancy's Public Access Program is on sharing the property with visitors, the Conservancy recognizes that circumstances make it difficult for all potential constituents to visit Tejon Ranch. For this reason, the Conservancy will continue to establish its online presence through social media, such as Facebook and its blog, and make presentations to partner groups. It will also be important to update the Conservancy website regularly with news, events, and up-to-date reports.

6.9 PROGRAM-WIDE ACCESS MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS

Listed below, the Tejon Ranch Conservancy Access Management Protocols (AMPs) provide an overview of how the Public Access Program will be managed to maximize user satisfaction and protect the precious resources on the Ranch and comply with all resource agency permitting requirements and conservation easement restrictions.

6.9.1 ADMINISTRATION

- (a) Community hikes and drives hosted by the Conservancy shall meet at a specified time and place determined at least one week prior to the event.
- (b) Conservancy events will operate at a maximum ratio of 15 participants to 1 leader.
- (c) Participants must sign Participant Agreement Permit.
- (d) Within Covered Lands participants will be provided with educational information regarding acceptable activities in open space areas, including recreational activities, pet restrictions, and wildlife restrictions, including prohibition on collecting individual plants and animals. The educational information will specifically include material on California condor occurrence on the Ranch, prohibited behaviors if perched or feeding condors are found, and threats to condors provided by recreational users and other visitors such as micro-trash and disturbance.
- (e) At the beginning of an event, leaders will orient participants, explain the day's itinerary, and briefly describe the Ranch-wide Agreement.
- (f) Event schedules will be closely coordinated with Tejon Ranch Company to avoid interfering with Ranch operations such as filming, hunting, and calving.
- (g) Unaccompanied minors must have an access permit signed by a parent or guardian before entering the property.
- (h) Trip leaders must carry and utilize GPS locator units throughout the event.
- (i) Event leaders will carry handheld radios at all times during an event.
- (j) All volunteers on Tejon Ranch must fill out a volunteer waiver before assisting with any projects.

- (k) The Conservancy will recognize the efforts of volunteers and thank and/or reward them accordingly.
- (l) Before driving a Conservancy vehicle, volunteers must have a current, valid California driver's license on file with Tejon Ranch Conservancy.

6.9.2 SAFETY

- (a) Hikes will have at least one leader at the front of the line and one at the back.
- (b) Each hike leader is required to carry a first aid kit.
- (c) Leaders shall regularly perform "head counts" to ensure that all participants are accounted for and within eyesight.
- (d) At least one hike leader for each outing will have up-to-date Wilderness First Aid (WFA) and CPR training.
- (e) Cars will be parked in such a manner as to reduce fire hazard during the dry season.
- (f) No smoking will be permitted during Tejon Ranch Conservancy events on Tejon Ranch.
- (g) All Conservancy vehicles will be equipped with a fire extinguisher, shovel, tow rope, first aid kit, emergency information packet, extra toilet paper, paper towels, and any other safety equipment mandated by the TRC Wildlife Management Department.
- (h) During events where participants will be using tools, such as service projects and restoration trips, the event leader will ensure that proper equipment is available and that participants are trained in the safe and effective handling of said tools.
- (i) To avoid conflict with hunters, the Conservancy will place "Hike in Progress" signs on roads that are being used for Public Access events. Where the road network makes it strategically difficult to communicate to nearby hunters by means of signs, notices will be posted in sign-in boxes to inform hunters of Public Access activity.

6.9.3 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- (a) In planning for Public Access events, infrastructure, and amenities, the Conservancy will assess the potential presence of special-status species through field surveys and documented records.
- (b) Hikes will take place on Ranch roads, with the possibility of single-track trails being built in the future. Participants will be asked to stay on the designated right-of-way.
- (c) No harassment of wildlife or livestock will be tolerated.
- (d) If an event requires driving from the designated gathering spot, participants shall be encouraged to carpool in an effort to reduce the number of vehicles on Ranch roads at any given time.
- (e) As much as possible, opportunities for citizen science will be incorporated while maintaining the informal, relaxed atmosphere of the current Public Access Program. For instance, groups may use iPads to keep a list of bird species encountered during an event and group leaders may adopt an end-of-trip practice of discussing what bird species were observed.
- (f) Participants will be encouraged to walk only on durable surfaces and leaders will identify sensitive resources to avoid.
- (g) Trail use on Covered Lands will be restricted between 0.25 and 0.5 mile from an active primary or active alternate golden eagle nest during the nesting season (February 1 through June 1). Trail use may be allowed during the nesting season, if the project biologist or USFWS-approved Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist has determined that the nest has become inactive and/or trail use would not affect nesting golden eagle.

- (h) Recreation activities on Covered Lands within 500 feet of an active nest during the white-tailed kite breeding season (March through September) will be prohibited until all young have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest for survival. The active nest will be mapped on appropriate maps.
- (i) On Covered Lands, recreational activities, particularly organized events, in areas where condors are known or expected to occur, will be closely regulated to minimize any effects that could disturb feeding or roosting condors. Such regulation can include the dissemination of information regarding condors through access permits, monitoring by the USFWS-approved Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist, and potential setbacks for localized roosting and feeding behaviors near a carcass location.
- (j) Public Access to and use of the Condor Study Area authorized by the Public Access Plan will be planned in accordance with the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist, and monitored and enforced by TRC or the Conservancy. In accordance with the AMPs listed above, visitors to the Ranch are required to register before entering. Additionally, access events will be restricted based upon California condor use of the Condor Study Area as determined by the USFWS-approved Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist and USFWS. TRC and the Conservancy also reserved the right to prohibit future access by anyone not following AMPs, access permit terms, or the direction of staff and tour guides.
- (k) All groups will be instructed to avoid disturbing livestock and wildlife.
- (l) All groups will be instructed to pack out all trash and wrappers.
- (m) Cutting across switchbacks will not be tolerated.
- (n) Hiking on steep terrain without the presence of a road or trail should be avoided.
- (o) Where possible, events should avoid disturbing seeps, springs, and other water.
- (p) Where there are no bathroom facilities, docents will ensure that participants dispose of human waste in accordance with Leave No Trace standards.

6.9.4 ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- (a) Photo monitoring points will be established at highly used and potentially sensitive sites to ensure that resource conditions do not become degraded.
- (b) The Conservancy will continually assess Public Access Program to ensure that the program is reaching target audiences, offering desirable events, and providing high-quality experiences.
- (c) The Conservancy will identify and engage with academic partners to develop appropriate Adaptive Management strategies for both the social and biophysical components of Public Access on Tejon Ranch.

6.10 ACTIVITY-SPECIFIC ACCESS MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS

6.10.1 VOLUNTEER DOCENT AMPs

- (a) The Conservancy will develop emergency protocols that docents must understand before leading events.
- (b) Before leading events, volunteer docents will be required to undergo extensive training on natural history, first aid/safety, Ranch-wide Agreement, resource agency requirements, and education, as well as site-specific training.
- (c) Docents will operate under the supervision of Tejon Ranch Conservancy or TRC staff until they have reached a mutually agreed-on level of training. Both the Conservancy and TRC need to approve docents.
- (d) Docents will be followed by Conservancy staff annually to ensure appropriate content, safety practice, and communication.

- (e) Docents will be asked to provide regular feedback in the form of informal check-ins and formalized surveys.

6.10.2 SERVICE TRIP AMPS

- (a) For service projects that have met with TRC approval, the Conservancy will ensure that a clear group leader is identified who understands the purpose, need, and techniques for the project (may be TRC staff, partner staff, or Conservancy staff).
- (b) For service projects, the Conservancy will ensure proper training for all participants.
- (c) The Conservancy will coordinate with TRC staff (and the Tejon Ranch Staff Biologist with respect to the Covered Lands) on all service projects and Conservation Activities.
- (d) In planning for service projects and Conservation Activities, the Conservancy will assess environmental conditions and other planning considerations before commencing activity.

6.10.3 ENVIRONMENTAL/OUTDOOR EDUCATION AMPS

- (a) Conservancy staff and docents who wish to work with school groups must have their fingerprints cleared by the county of students' origin.
- (b) Trip sizes will be limited to maximize participant experience and learning and to minimize potential environmental harm.
- (c) Curricula will be developed or borrowed that apply to the California State Science Standards.
- (d) The Conservancy will identify appropriate areas for students to engage in guided exploration.
- (e) While hiking, groups should stay on the trail or road. If opportunity arises for a teachable moment off-trail and the hike leader has determined that stepping off trail will not constitute a safety threat, or cause undue impact to the resource including nesting birds, as indicated in Section 6.9.3, "Environmental Protection," the group may step off the trail.

6.10.4 CITIZEN SCIENCE AMPS

- (a) Channels will be developed to ensure that all data collected are made available to the participating groups, the Conservancy, Tejon Ranch Company, and where applicable, the public.
- (b) While collecting data, investigators must be careful not to trample plants, encourage invasive species, adversely affect wildlife, or unduly cause erosion.

6.10.5 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT AMPS

- (a) Recruitment
 - i. The Conservancy will strive to attract motivated, conservation-minded individuals as volunteers.
 - ii. The Conservancy will focus initial volunteer recruitment efforts on local populations.
 - iii. Key constituencies for volunteers, such as retired teachers and community leaders, will be identified.
 - iv. Volunteer opportunities will be advertised to the mailing list and Facebook page.
- (b) Management
 - i. Proper training will be provided for volunteers' respective tasks.

- ii. The Conservancy will maintain a working database of volunteers, their roles, and the hours they have spent assisting the Conservancy.
- iii. Volunteer handbooks and other materials will be developed that outline job descriptions and expectations of the various volunteer roles on Tejon Ranch.

(c) Recognition

- i. Conservancy staff members who work with volunteers will regularly send thank-you e-mails, cards, and other forms of recognition.
- ii. Special recognition will be provided for volunteers who have provided the greatest numbers of hours on an annual basis.
- iii. The Conservancy will host special volunteer recognition trips/events.
- iv. An annual volunteer newsletter will be sent outlining the work volunteers have done for the Conservancy.

(d) Retention

- i. The Conservancy will develop opportunities for volunteers to advance in their roles (e.g., after working a certain number of events, docents will qualify to become Lead Docents and have increased responsibility).
- ii. The Conservancy will host social events where volunteers can get to know one another.
- iii. Volunteers with long tenure may be sent to conferences or meetings on behalf of the Conservancy.

All active volunteers will have the opportunity to work regularly on the Ranch.

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7 MAJOR PARTNERSHIPS OF THE RANCH-WIDE AGREEMENT

7.1 PACIFIC CREST TRAIL

7.1.1 INTRODUCTION

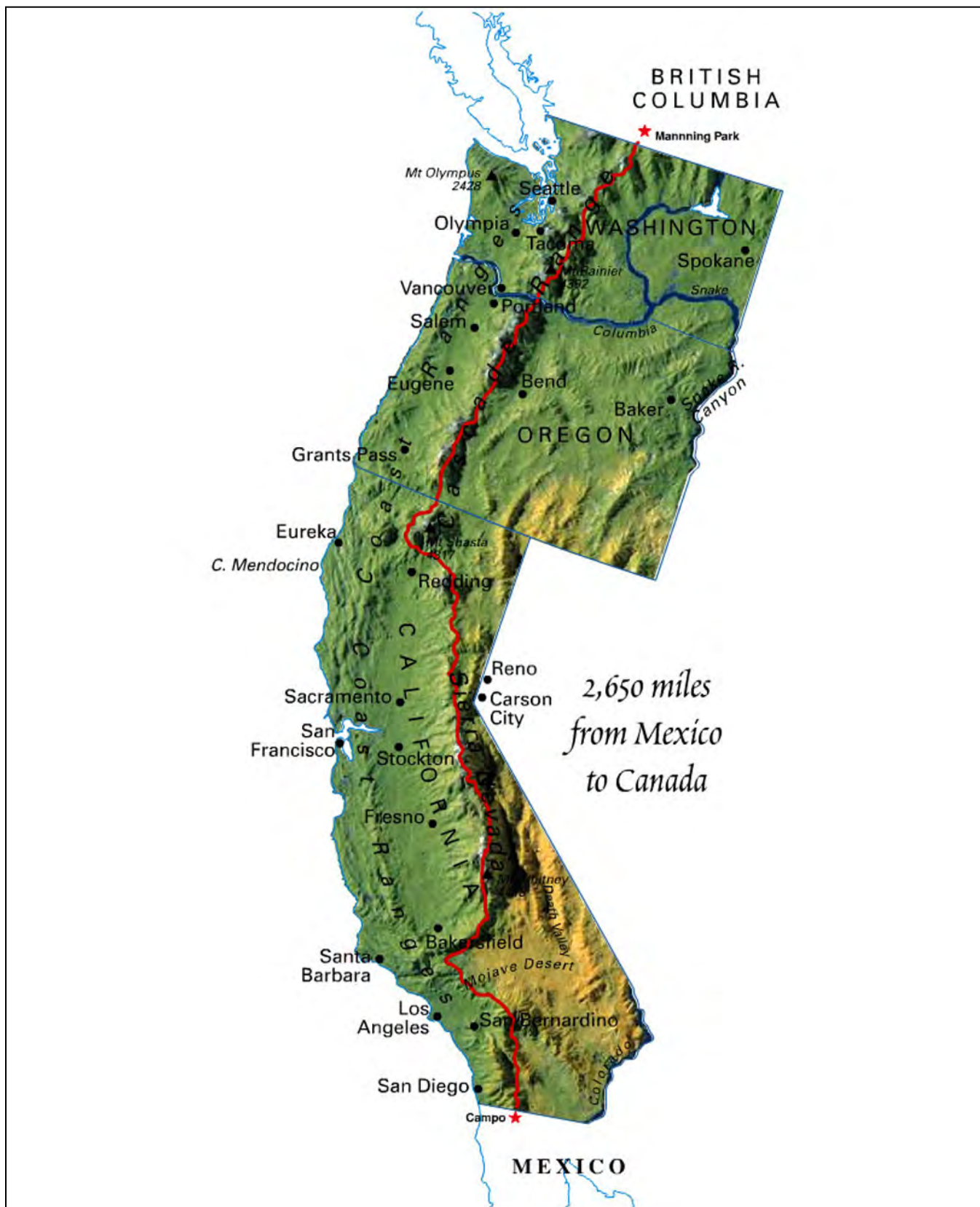
The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) is a 2,650-mile path (Figure 7-1) that allows hikers and equestrians to traverse the mountainous spine along the American West Coast between Mexico and Canada. It provides access to some of the American West's most impressive and celebrated natural landmarks, including Mount Whitney, Yosemite, Mount Shasta, Mount Hood, and the Northern Cascade Range. Every year approximately 1,000 individuals attempt to “thru-hike” the entire length of the trail, according to the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA) website, and countless others enjoy hiking shorter portions.

In the Ranch-wide Agreement, the Tejon Ranch Company committed to providing a 10,000-acre conservation easement over the viewshed from the trail, as well as a trail easement for the realignment of approximately 38 miles of the PCT (Figure 7-2). This realignment will help fulfill the original vision of the PCT, which is to have the trail follow “generally along the mountain ranges of the West Coast States” (Section 5. [16 U.S.C. 1244](a)(2), P.L. 90-543), by moving the trail from its current location in the Mojave Desert onto the crest of the Tehachapi Mountains (Figure 7-3). The involved parties and appropriate permitting agencies will ensure that no significant adverse impacts from construction and management of the PCT will affect any Conservation Values on the Ranch. These organizations will do so by using the highest conservation principles and an adaptive management approach to design and manage the PCT realignment. The parties understand that the U.S. Forest Service and PCTA will need to seek appropriate permits for the trail realignment and to the extent that the proposed realignment would impact any mitigation lands under the TU MSHCP, such use would require review and approval in writing by USFWS.

7.1.2 BACKGROUND

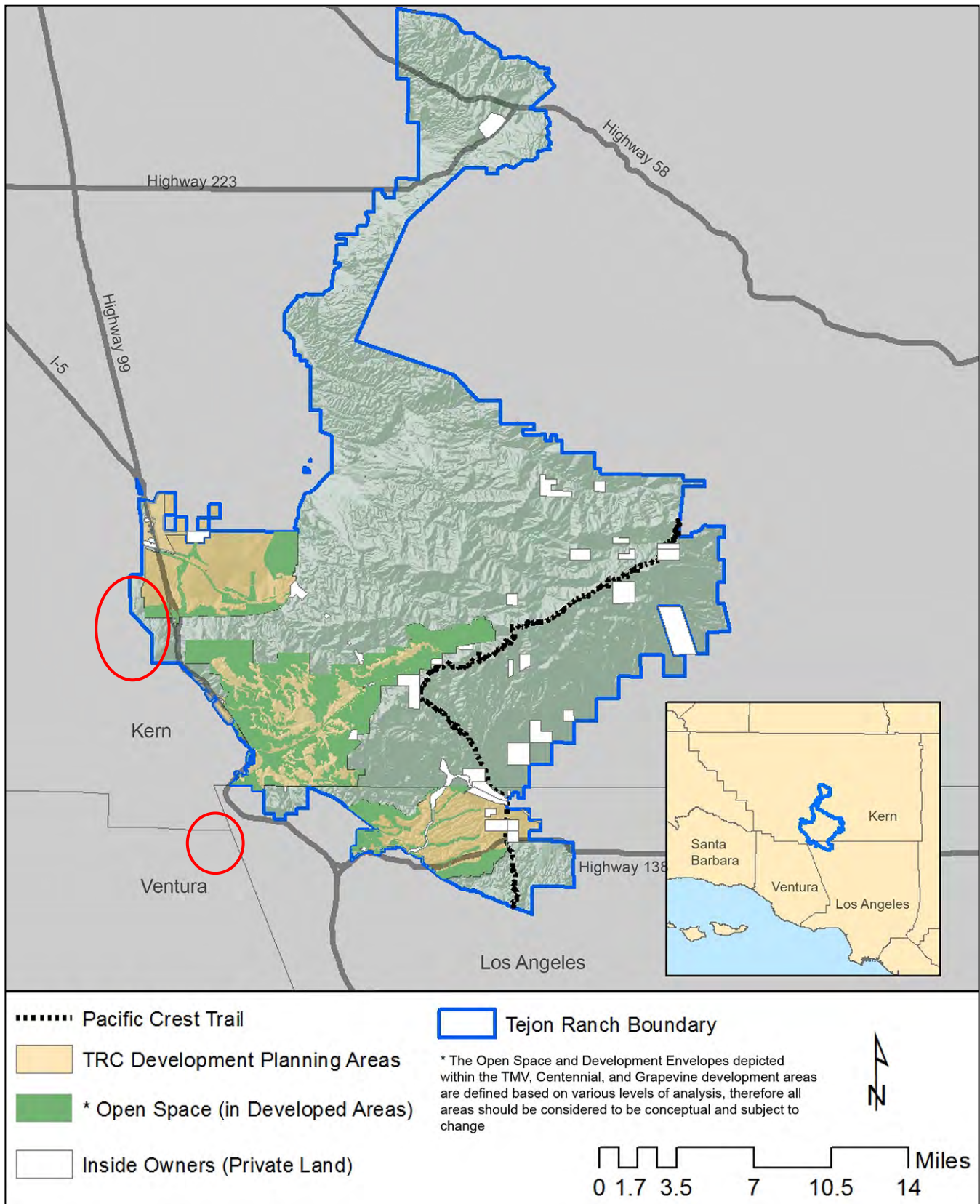
The PCT was established by the National Trails System Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-543) to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and preservation, enjoyment, and appreciation of the outdoors. According to the “Pacific Crest Trail Route Selection,” published in the Federal Register on January 30, 1973 (Vol. 38, No. 19, Part II, p. 2836), the original route of the PCT was planned to pass through Tejon Ranch:

From State Highway 58 and Tehachapi Pass, the Pacific Crest Trail turns southwesterly through the El Tejon Ranch, follows Cameron Creek and Oak Creek and climbs into the Tehachapi Mountains, passing to the south of Double Mountain, switch backs into Cottonwood Creek, crosses Cottonwood Creek road, and climbs to Liebre Twins. It continues southwesterly on the ridge between Little Oak Creek and El Paso Creek. Staying on the ridge, the Trail passes Marble Springs Canyon. It continues along the ridge of the Tehachapi Mountains between Beartrap Canyon and Sycamore Canyon to the head of Cottonwood (Los Alamos) Canyon. The Trail turns southeasterly down Cottonwood Canyon to the Kern County-Los Angeles County line. It then turns southerly to Quail Lake and the San Andreas Rift Zone and enters the Angeles National Forest to the east of Bald Mountain.



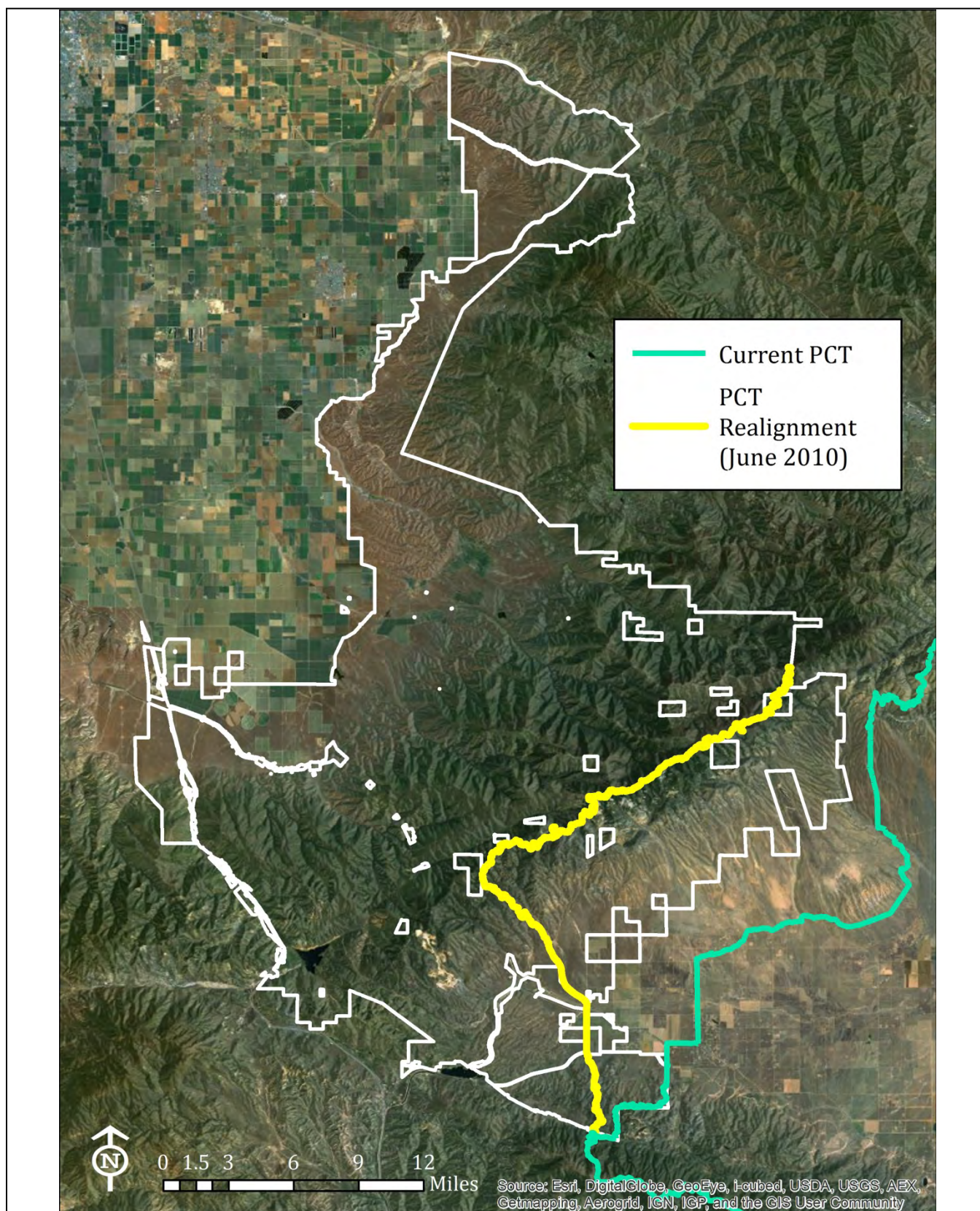
Source: InspireOut 2010

Figure 7-1 Pacific Crest Trail



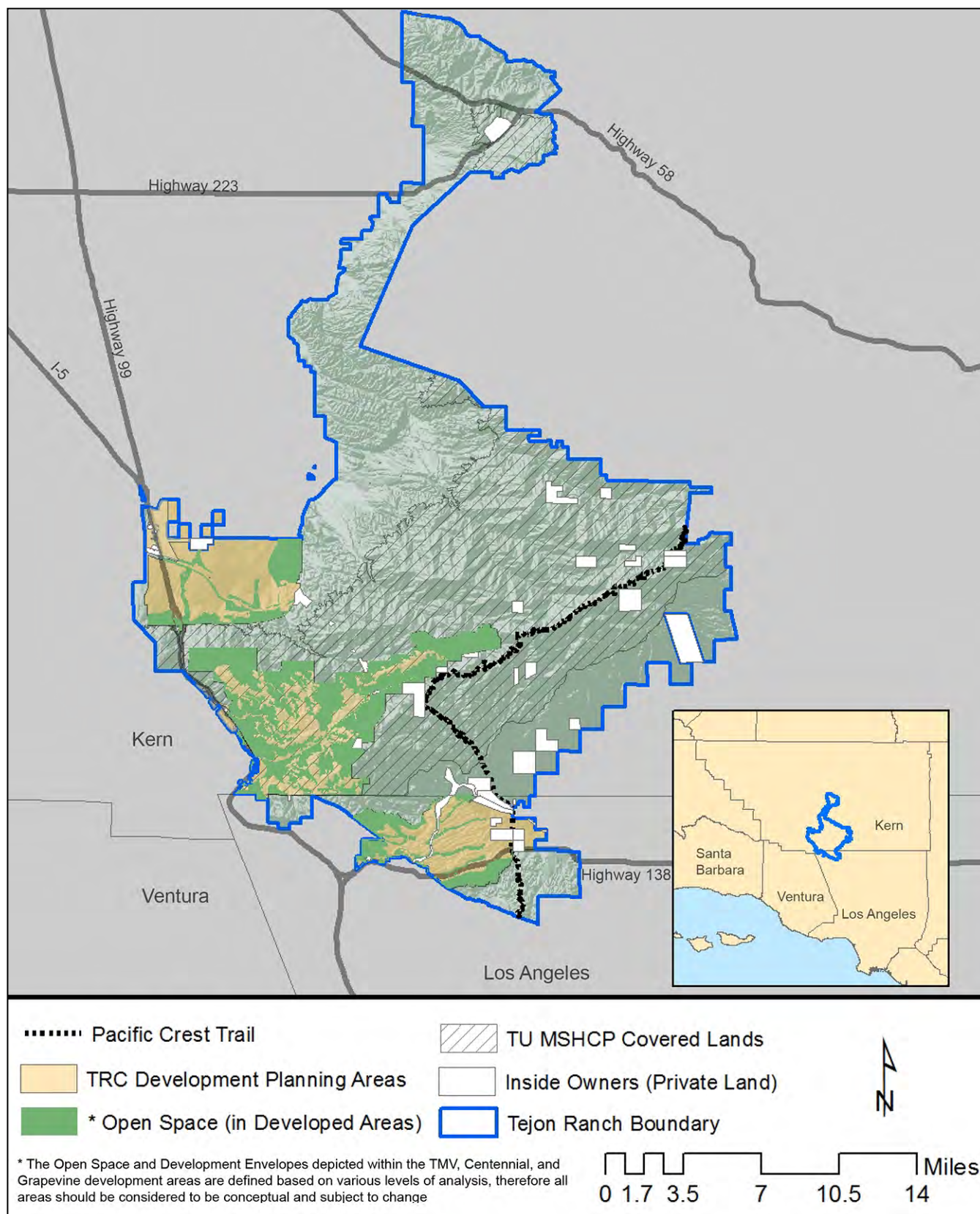
Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2013

Figure 7-2 Pacific Crest Trail Reroute Through Tejon Ranch



Source: Bren MS ESM Group Project 2013

Figure 7-3 Pacific Crest Trail Current Route



Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2013

Figure 7-4 Pacific Crest Trail Reroute Through Covered Lands

However, at the time of the trail proposal, the U.S. Forest Service was unable to obtain an easement to construct the PCT through Tejon Ranch, so the trail was re-routed in 1982. Since that time, the trail has been routed through the Mojave Desert along the California Aqueduct, and it now borders the southeastern tip of Tejon Ranch before it enters the Angeles National Forest (Figure 7-3). The proposed realignment generally follows the original 1973 PCT route selection through Tejon Ranch, except that the trail turns to the southeast down Big Sycamore Canyon instead of Cottonwood Canyon and follows 300th Street toward the Kern–Los Angeles County line to join with the existing route (Figure 7-4).

7.1.3 INVOLVED PARTIES

The Tejon Ranch Conservancy and Tejon Ranch Company are working with the PCTA and U.S. Forest Service to plan to provide for the realignment of the PCT. The U.S. Forest Service is the government agency overseeing the PCT, and the PCTA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides stewardship for the PCT. The PCTA and U.S. Forest Service manage the trail and are providing their expertise in trail planning, construction, and maintenance to TRC and the Conservancy to help ensure that the highest conservation principles are upheld.

In summer 2012, the Conservancy's Public Access Coordinator and two interns from the UCSB Bren School of Environmental Management Master's program hiked the proposed realignment to identify opportunities, issues, and constraints concerning trail placement. This effort was intended to inform the planning under the Ranch-wide Agreement, and the vision of the PCT. In particular, the following aspects of the proposed trail were considered: grade, aspect, viewsheds and any necessary visual mitigation, general soil characteristics, dominant vegetation communities, TU MSHCP species and their modeled habitats, water sources, locations for rest and shade, road and fence crossings, potential signage for information or deterrence, wildlife corridors, and cultural and historical sites.

7.1.4 TU MSHCP CONSIDERATIONS IN PCT REALIGNMENT



California condor
(© J. Dodson)

The TU MSHCP provides for the conservation and management of 25 species and their habitats, including the California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*), federally listed as endangered. Most of the proposed PCT realignment falls within the area identified as mitigation lands by the TU MSHCP. Therefore, the trail will need to be planned in accordance with the regulations set forth by the TU MSHCP to protect those 25 species and their habitats.

The PCT realignment will provide a recreational amenity of national importance while also maintaining the mitigation lands of the TU MSHCP and the habitats and species they are intended to protect. USFWS and PCTA will be responsible for obtaining all appropriate permits for the trail realignment. Also, because relocation of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail onto Covered Lands was not a Covered Activity under the TU MSHCP, any such additional Public Access on Covered Lands requires review and approval in writing by USFWS that such use is consistent with the preservation of the conservation values of the TU MSHCP mitigation lands.

7.2 STATE PARK STATUS

The Ranch-wide Agreement sets forth the intention to seek establishment of a California State Park on Tejon Ranch, and the parties further agreed to “use their reasonable best efforts to work with California State Parks” to take all of the necessary planning steps to establish a new State Park. The first 2 years after the signing of the Ranch-wide Agreement involved a focused effort in mapping and resource assessment to determine the right parameters for a new State Park on the Ranch. Then, as state budget issues emerged and park closures were proposed statewide, creative new approaches were brainstormed in consultation with senior leadership at the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks). However, continuing severe budget constraints within state government have led to a hiatus in the active planning for a new State Park. Any new State Park

agreement would likely constitute a new conveyance of land use rights between State Parks, TRC, and the Conservancy.

The Conservancy and other parties to the Ranch-wide Agreement remain committed to use their reasonable best efforts to seek establishment of a California State Park at Tejon Ranch. These efforts will continue to be sensitive to the ongoing resource considerations within State Parks and for the foreseeable future. These efforts will also be mindful of the requirement under the TU MSHCP that because establishment of a State Park onto Covered Lands was not a Covered Activity under the TU MSHCP, any such additional Public Access, if proposed for the Covered Lands, requires appropriate permits to be obtained, including at a minimum review and approval in writing by USFWS that such use is consistent with the preservation of the conservation values of the TU MSHCP mitigation lands.

7.3 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESERVE

Prior to the negotiations that led to the Ranch-wide Agreement, the University of California Natural Reserve System and the University of California, Los Angeles worked with TRC on a potential new Natural Reserve on Tejon Ranch. The mission of the Natural Reserve System is to contribute to the understanding and wise stewardship of the Earth and its natural systems by supporting university-level teaching, research, and public service at protected natural areas throughout California. Despite the thoughtful planning that went into the reserve plan, the Ranch-wide Agreement substantially changed the circumstances on Tejon Ranch, leading the Natural Reserve System and UCLA to move their proposed new reserve to the Santa Monica Mountains. (The new facility was dedicated in early 2013.)

The Conservancy and the parties to the Ranch-wide Agreement remain committed to the establishment of a Natural Reserve at Tejon Ranch. The Conservancy will collaborate with the Natural Reserve System on exploring the potential roles for, nature of, and location of a Natural Reserve at Tejon Ranch. The Conservancy will also continue to actively engage within the academic arena on ways of utilizing the Conserved Lands of Tejon Ranch to deepen the collective understanding of natural systems and the role of working landscapes in the conservation of biodiversity. These efforts will also be mindful of the requirement under the TU MSHCP that, because establishment of a University of California Natural Reserve onto Covered Lands was not a Covered Activity under the TU MSHCP, any such additional Public Access if proposed for the Covered Lands requires review and approval in writing by USFWS that such use is consistent with the preservation of the conservation values of the TU MSHCP mitigation lands.

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The Tejon Ranch Conservancy is committed to implementing adaptive management and associated AMPs for managing Public Access on the Ranch. Doing so will help balance the Conservancy’s dual mission to “preserve, enhance, and restore the native biodiversity and ecosystem values” and to “provide public opportunities to learn about, explore, and experience firsthand the beauty and diversity of the Ranch.” As a result of these twin goals in the Conservancy mission, it is important to design a framework that not only emphasizes mitigation of ecological impacts (e.g., vegetation trampling, wildlife behavioral changes, erosion), but also meeting access program objectives. This chapter outlines an adaptive management framework for Public Access on Tejon that brings focus to meeting the objectives of the Public Access Program and avoiding any potential impacts on Tejon Ranch’s landscape and wildlife.

8.1 DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR TEJON RANCH

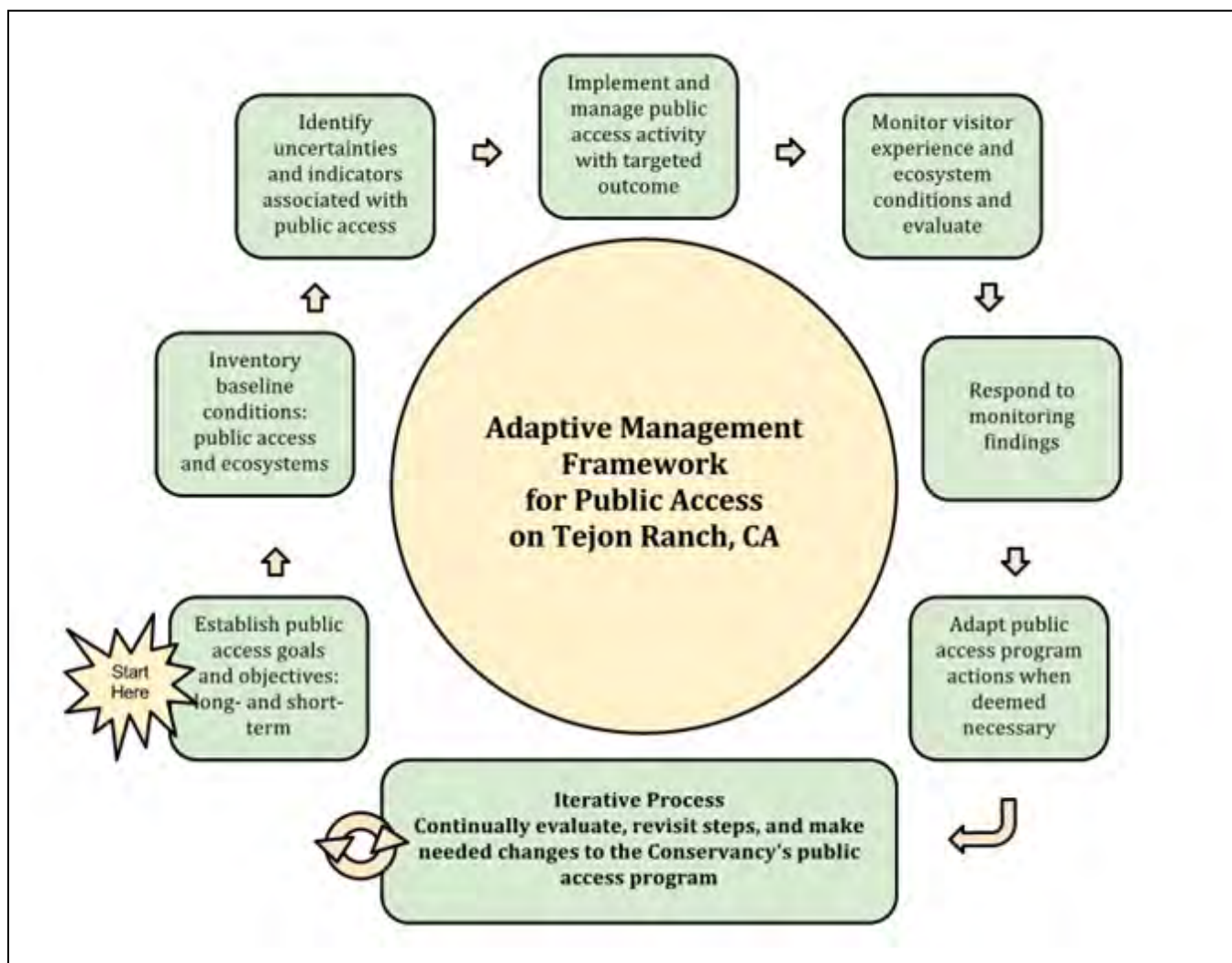
Several steps are needed to establish an adaptive management framework for Public Access on the Ranch. The foremost steps are to define clear goals for Public Access (as described in Chapter 6 of this volume) and to establish a sufficient understanding of the baseline conditions of the resource. The next crucial component of adaptive management is monitoring. Monitoring actions and impacts will inform the Conservancy whether the implemented actions are working for their intended purpose; what impacts are resulting from the programs; and what changes might be necessary. Amending and changing programs according to the results of the monitoring represents the adaptation aspect of adaptive management.

This adaptive management framework may also be useful for anticipating outcomes of Public Access management decisions. Figure 8-1 below provides a diagrammed model of the adaptive management framework for Public Access on Tejon Ranch. Subsequent sections provide further detail.

8.1.1 DOCUMENT BASELINE CONDITIONS

To implement an effective adaptive management strategy for Public Access, the Conservancy must first document the baseline conditions of current Public Access on the Ranch. Because current access is guided, the Conservancy knows the type and frequency of Public Access activities occurring on the Ranch. An estimated 1,000 visitors access the Ranch each year for activities considered Public Access. Based on the available data, Public Access on the Ranch comprises guided trips with an active spring community access program, occasional special group outings, several citizen science activities, and occasional service project activities. A recent survey of visitors suggests high satisfaction with the Public Access Program. However, visitors to date represent a very limited demographic and a lack of representation by underserved populations. The current typical visitor profile is white, middle- to upper-middle-class individuals ages 55 years and greater. It will be important for the Conservancy to develop a protocol for clearly recording its visitation spatially, temporally, and by activity.

The Conservancy has no specific information on how the current level of Public Access is affecting ecological conditions on the Ranch. As Public Access Programs develop, or as focal areas for access emerge, establishing baseline data on ecological conditions and creating a process for recording visitation will be a critical first step in the adaptive management process.



Source: Bren M5 ESM Group Project 2013

Figure 8-1. Adaptive Management Framework for Public Access

8.1.2 IDENTIFY UNCERTAINTIES AND INDICATORS

Adaptive management is specifically intended to help managers make decisions in the face of uncertainty, and the process is targeted at reducing uncertainty through time. It does so by providing managers with current information on visitor use and associated impacts as the information becomes available through monitoring efforts (NPS 2009). Key uncertainties for the Conservancy as it moves forward with Public Access on the Ranch include the following:

- How do the ecosystem impacts of Public Access differ from those of other sources of impacts (e.g., climate, weather, wildlife)? Does general ecological monitoring capture potential impacts of recreation?
- How might visitors respond to changes in the Conservancy's Public Access Program? After implementing a new Public Access activity, do they enjoy their visit to Tejon Ranch more or less?
- How are the demographics of Ranch visitors changing in response to the Public Access Program? How can the Conservancy better reach underserved populations?

- How does the Conservancy know if it is reaching its Public Access objectives?
- What conditions might act as barriers to implementation of Public Access plan?
- How can the Conservancy engage citizen science participants and docents in monitoring and mitigating recreation impacts on the Ranch?
- Is there a visitor carrying capacity for sustainable Public Access on the Ranch? How can the Conservancy identify the “right” number of visitors on the Ranch?

To address these uncertainties through adaptive management, the Conservancy must have the ability to track changes on the Ranch and with visitors that are attributable to Public Access activities. Doing so means developing a list of indicators that are measureable and reflect the state of the Ranch’s resources and the quality of visitor experiences (Manning 2007, NPS 2009, Watson and Cole 1992). Indicators could address trail conditions, soil conditions, vegetation, wildlife, infrastructure, and visitor experience. Desirable attributes of indicators include reliability, cost effectiveness, significance, relevance, sensitivity, efficiency, and responsiveness.

8.1.3 IMPLEMENT AND MANAGE PUBLIC ACCESS ACTIVITIES

The Conservancy will identify and select representative baseline conditions, uncertainties, and indicators, and will seek to test the Public Access Program (with a specific outcome or objective) in these selected areas over time. For example, the Conservancy may want to find out if visitors absorb more educational material from a self-guided interpretive trail or from a hike operated by a knowledgeable guide. The Conservancy could design two different hikes: a trail with interpretive signage throughout where visitors take a self-guided hike, and a trail on which visitors join a naturalist guide or docent and stop for discussions about the area throughout the hike. The Conservancy may then ask participants to fill out a survey that gauges how much information the participant absorbed during each hike. This could continue until it becomes apparent which form of interpretation is more effective in reaching visitors.



Hikers crossing creek (© Chuck Noble)

While the situation described above is somewhat simplistic, it illustrates the process of identifying a management question, selecting the indicator, and monitoring the results of those decisions. Although the Conservancy is exploring a new model for Public Access, there are still established management strategies that can be of use. Deciding which management strategies to use depends on a number of factors, including location and extent of the impact of concern, the cost and ease of implementation of actions and their effectiveness, and the preferences of visitors and managers (Newsome et al. 2001). It will be useful to identify key partnerships with leading recreation ecologists and agencies as a means to expedite this process.

8.1.4 MONITOR AND ADAPT PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAM

Perhaps the most essential part of adaptive management is monitoring and adapting based on the results of that monitoring. For Conservancy Public Access, this means implementing a chosen Public Access activity and then monitoring it against baseline metrics for program effectiveness and environmental impacts. The monitoring itself may be accompanied by analysis and reporting procedures and application to management (Newsome et al. 2001), according to the following guidelines.

- (a) Monitoring the visitors themselves is important and often consists of gathering information about (Newsome et al. 2001):
 - ranch use

- site use
- visitor profiling
- visitor outcomes

(b) Techniques for gathering monitoring information about visitors include (Newsome et al. 2001):

- visitor counts
- visitor surveys
- visitor interviews
- visitor observation
- interactive techniques

(c) Monitoring techniques for assessing potential Public Access impacts to natural resources include (Newsome et al. 2001):

- sampling-based rapid surveys
- problem-based rapid survey
- permanent point surveys

As a result of monitoring results, the Conservancy may need to respond by returning to previous adaptive management steps, modifying practices to account for the new information, and moving forward through the steps again. Doing so reduces uncertainty in the management setting as new information continually informs adaptive decisions. Importantly, even though there are distinct steps in adaptive management, there is no set order and revisiting steps is an integral part of the process.

8.2 ZONING IN TIME AND SPACE

The approach of zoning separates activities and users by zones—distinguished by different times (e.g., seasons) or by different locations. Doing so is thought to help reduce impacts of recreation and separates incompatible uses in time and space. In many ways, Tejon Ranch already has spatial and temporal zones. Spatially, the Ranch has development zones (e.g., TMV, Centennial, Grapevine), Designated Use Areas, inholdings, Conserved Lands, and TU MSHCP Covered Lands. Temporally, TRC Reserved Rights, such as hunting and ranching and seasonal barriers to access (winter snow in the high country, extreme heat and poor air quality in the lower elevations of the property) act as zoning agents. There is potential for the Conservancy to further specify temporal and spatial zones on the Ranch in its approach to Public Access management. Possibilities include the following approaches:

- Associate Public Access goals and objectives with zones on the Ranch and establish management approaches for each zone, as opposed to focusing on every individual section of road or trail.
- Establish zones for different types of recreation to separate incompatible uses and provide a choice of experiences for recreation.
- Identify zones that provide habitat to species of concern (e.g., the Condor Study Area) and exclude visitors or types of use, either at all times or at certain times of year (e.g., nesting season for focal species).

8.2.1 SITE MANAGEMENT

Site management seeks to guide visitors through activities at the locations where Public Access occurs. Tools for this practice include infrastructure and the natural environment, which are used to influence where visitors go and what they do (Newsome et al. 2001). The Conservancy will use this approach by focusing use on the more durable parts of the landscape and designing sites and facilities to minimize visitor impacts. Site management indirectly influences visitors through use of tools such as the following considerations:

- Locate facilities away from sensitive areas. Consider soil type and erodibility, drainage, vegetation, species, visual impacts, and user desirability.
- Manage facilities so they are wanted and used by visitors. This can include site hardening, vegetation management, shade, water, waste disposal, and interpretive centers.
- Establish site restoration techniques to help mitigate recreation impacts. Examples include temporary site closure to allow regeneration, trail rerouting where deemed necessary, and active restoration (e.g., seeding, planting).
- Utilize existing road and trails to the extent feasible; for new facilities, consider road and trail design. Key influences include natural drainage patterns, soil type and erodibility, slope, known locations of sensitive species, sensitive habitat areas, location, and accessibility.

8.2.2 VISITOR MANAGEMENT

In contrast to site management, visitor management uses direct and indirect management of the visitors themselves. Since all of the activities in this plan have some form of docent leadership, visitor management is a central theme of how the Conservancy proposes to manage resource impacts from Public Access. The visitor management approach focuses on influencing the “amount, type, timing, and distribution of use as well as visitor behavior” (Newsome et al. 2001). Visitor management actions include the following approaches:

- regulating visitor numbers as a direct approach to protecting a site (doing so *before* reaching or surpassing a site’s carrying capacity is ideal);
- controlling group size;
- managing length of stay as a direct way to limit visitor impacts; and
- providing information and education on potential adverse impacts of visitor actions.

8.3 POSSIBLE MONITORING QUESTIONS AND APPROACHES

How do the ecosystem impacts of Public Access differ from those of other sources of impacts (e.g., climate, weather, wildlife)? Does general ecological monitoring capture potential impacts of recreation?

- Focus monitoring at locations experiencing the heaviest use by visitors. This could mean using permanent point surveys where specific Public Access management actions are implemented and evaluating conditions periodically.

How might visitors respond to changes in the Conservancy’s Public Access Program? After implementing a new Public Access activity, do they enjoy their visit to Tejon Ranch more or less?

- Ask visitors to complete a survey after their visit to Tejon Ranch that asks about their experience and, if they have been to the Ranch more than once, asks them to compare their latest visit to past ones. Such a survey could be general for all Public Access on the Ranch or could be specific to each type of activity. Use data to continually revisit Public Access goals and objectives and develop adjustments if deemed necessary.

How are the demographics of Ranch visitors changing in response to the Public Access Program? How can the Conservancy reach underserved populations?

- Include demographic information questions in the visitor surveys described above. Make sure questions reflect what it means to be “underserved.”

How does the Conservancy know if it is reaching its Public Access objectives?

- Undergo periodic review of the Conservancy’s Public Access Programs. This could take the form of an audit of the program that monitors and evaluates its performance environmentally and socially (i.e., ecological and visitor impacts).

How can the Conservancy engage citizen science participants and docents in monitoring and mitigating recreation impacts on the Ranch? What should they measure?

- The Conservancy can recruit volunteers to help document baseline conditions, establish indicators, and monitor as the activity is implemented.

Is there a visitor carrying capacity for sustainable Public Access on the Ranch? How can the Conservancy identify the “right” number of visitors on the Ranch?

- The Conservancy will employ the precautionary principle by initiating Public Access actions slowly and then scaling up incrementally when it is known that a carrying capacity has not yet been reached.

8.3.1 ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AMPs

- (a) The Conservancy will establish baseline information on Tejon Ranch resources as they apply to Public Access programming.
- (b) The most “resilient” habitats of the Ranch, which are less sensitive to environmental change through human recreation and access activity, will be identified. To the extent practicable, the Conservancy will concentrate Public Access activities in these areas.
- (c) The Conservancy will work to identify indicators and thresholds for environmental change through recreation.
- (d) Management activities will establish spatial and temporal zones where Public Access activities will take place.
- (e) Regular surveys of visitors will be conducted to ensure that they are being provided with the appropriate level of programming.
- (f) The Conservancy will annually evaluate the Public Access Program for its reach and outcomes.
- (g) The Conservancy will identify and partner with leading experts in recreation ecology to determine appropriate adaptive management steps (e.g., indicators, monitoring protocols, management actions).



9 AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ACTION PLAN

The Conservancy recognizes that, as its Public Access Program grows, amenities must be developed to assist with visitor management. Such infrastructure will serve the dual purpose of enhancing the visitor experience through wayfinding and amenities while protecting natural resources by concentrating impacts and utilizing industry-standard protocols. Planning for such developments may not advance beyond these initial stages in the next 5 years, but the Conservancy staff feels strongly that future Public Access developments should adhere to the highest standards for resource protection, visitor satisfaction, and ease of operation. As a result, this chapter takes a broad look at the potential for medium-term (5- to 10-year) Public Access infrastructure developments and yields few objectives for the upcoming 5-year planning period.

9.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

9.1.1 TU MSHCP CONSTRAINTS

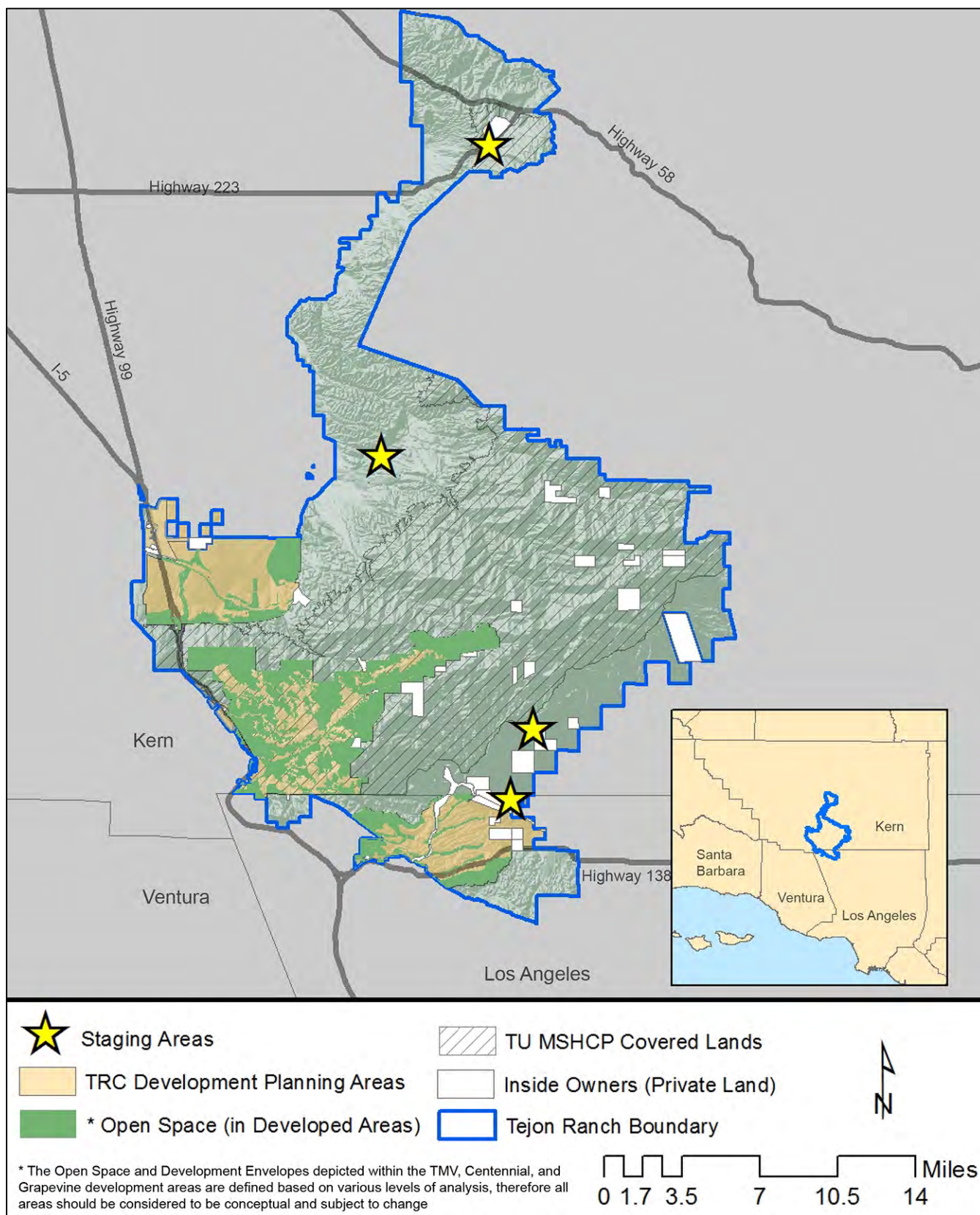
The TU MSHCP requires that, after the permit is issued, the Conservancy's Public Access Plan and all revisions are subject to review and approval by USFWS. Thus, under the terms of the permit, this requirement is to be set forth in the conservation measures required by the TU MSHCP, and from permit approval and perpetually thereafter, that portion (covering 113,352 acres of this plan area) of the Conservancy's Public Access Plan will be reviewed and approved by USFWS. Consequently, it is unlikely that the Conservancy will seek to establish permanent recreation amenities in the Covered Lands area during the current 5-year RWMP period. The Conservancy must also seek separate approvals and permits for ground disturbance and other associated impacts of permanent facilities. While the TUMSHCP identified a 200-acre allowance over the life of the permit for additional Ranch facilities as required by TRC, that allowance is not available to the Conservancy.

Although the Conservancy does not anticipate the development of its own recreation amenities in the TU MSHCP covered lands, a sizeable portion of the proposed PCT alignment (to be managed by the U.S. Forest Service and PCTA) will be constructed in this area. As already mentioned, the Conservancy and its partners will ensure the highest standards for trail design and construction, the development of camping amenities, and assurances that trail use will not have significant impacts on biophysical resources. The Conservancy anticipates using the process of planning and constructing the PCT realignment to inform any future trail development on the property.

9.1.2 PRE-EXISTING STAGING AREAS

Through its first 5 years of Public Access, the Conservancy has begun to recognize certain patterns of use. In particular, it has become evident that the Conservancy utilizes certain access points into Tejon Ranch at disproportionately higher rates than other points. Ranch entrances at Sebastian Gate, 300th Street, 290th Street, and the White Wolf Corrals have been identified as the highest current or near-future use portals to Conservancy activity (Figure 9-1). Consequently, these areas receive the highest impacts from vehicular traffic, foot traffic, and human waste.

Additionally, because these staging areas are typically where the Conservancy greets its guests, there is great opportunity to create interpretive kiosks that explain the history of Tejon Ranch, its natural abundance, the RWA, and important rules and regulations. Providing such interpretive information may also serve to keep visitors engaged while trip leaders check everyone in and meet internally to plan the day's activities. Furthermore, having amenities at strategic entrances to the Ranch will enable the Conservancy to provide consistent outward messaging and physically show its commitment to Public Access and addressing the needs of visitors.



Source: Tejon Ranch Conservancy 2013

Figure 9-1 Staging Areas

9.2 ACTION PLAN

9.2.1 AMENITIES TO DEVELOP IN THE SHORT TERM (3–5 YEARS)

Although prioritization and scheduling the development of recreation infrastructure will be addressed at length in the forthcoming Implementation Plan this discussion broadly defines the types of amenities and special considerations that may be contemplated. While the amenities discussed in this section need not be installed at all major entrances, it is certain that the most heavily used gateways to the property will need some improvements as time passes.

Bathroom Facilities

As Public Access increases on Tejon Ranch, human waste will undoubtedly present a significant issue for both user satisfaction and the integrity of biophysical resources. Already, many visitors have made mention that the presence of bathroom facilities would make them more comfortable during their visit. While the Conservancy has already discussed the possibility of renting removable bathroom facilities (“Port-a-Potties”) for use during the busy spring access season, it may be necessary to develop more permanent facilities.

- **Bathroom Facility 5-Year Operational Objectives:**

- ~ **Year 1**—Rent temporary restroom facilities for the most heavily used staging areas in the 2014 spring Public Access season.
- ~ **Year 1**—In the Conservancy Public Access Implementation Plan, identify sites where bathroom facilities will be most useful to the Public Access Program.
- ~ **Years 1 and 2**—Determine the feasibility of restroom options and select the most logical solution.
- ~ **Year 2**—Install restroom facilities identified in the Conservancy Public Access Implementation Plan.

Interpretive Elements

During Public Access events, Conservancy staff strives to convey information regarding its conservation science program, the Ranch-wide Agreement, Tejon Ranch history, and Tejon Ranch conservation significance through orientation talks, lunch discussions, and informal trail discussion. Invariably, this information does not reach every visitor for a variety of reasons: possibly because some do not listen, Conservancy staff members do not share a compelling enough story, or some guests are better reached by means of other teaching modalities. In an attempt to effectively share its message with more of its guests, the Conservancy wishes to develop interpretive features containing important information about the property, the Ranch-wide Agreement, and the Conservancy. These amenities would be placed at important staging areas and may be useful for providing a self-guided activity to guests at the beginning or end of Public Access events. In addition to being useful at staging areas, interpretive signs may also be placed at common stops along popular tour routes, such as the Indian Schoolhouse.

Such interpretive amenities have great potential to be developed in collaboration with other organizations. The Conservancy is already beginning to explore the possibility of working with local Boy Scout troops to develop interpretive signs as an Eagle Scout project. Additionally, opportunities may be available to reach out to the Southern California art community to assist with the design and creation of such amenities. In so doing, the Conservancy may have the opportunity to encourage science literacy among artists and art students as well as collaborate on innovative infrastructure.

▪ Interpretive Element 5-Year Operational Objectives:

- ~ Year 1– Work with TRC to identify high-priority sites for interpretive kiosks and appropriate content in Public Access Implementation Plan.
- ~ Year 1–Begin discussions with local Boy Scout troops regarding service work to design and install interpretive signs.
- ~ Year 1–Reach out to local art community/college art programs regarding collaboration on designs for interpretive kiosks/signs/earth art on Tejon Ranch.
- ~ Year 2–Begin planning for at least one interpretive project on the property.

9.2.2 AMENITIES TO DEVELOP IN THE MEDIUM TO LONG TERM (BEYOND 5 YEARS)

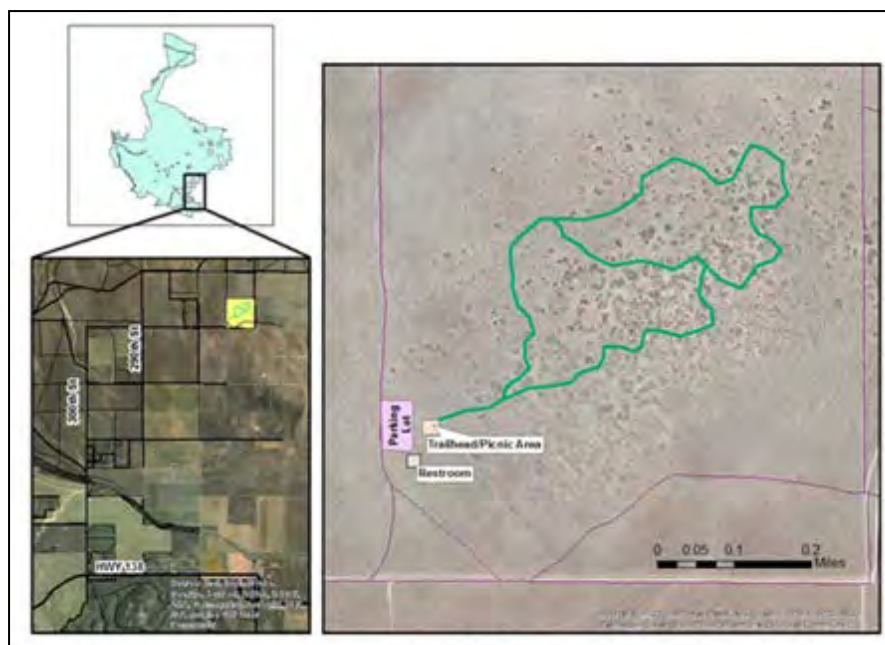
Picnic Areas

Research suggests that providing amenities such as picnic areas can attract groups from a variety of cultures to parks and outdoor areas (Chavez 2002, Gobster 2002). Insofar as one of the Conservancy's target underserved populations is the Hispanic community, it may be useful to consider developing a picnic area proximal to a predominantly Hispanic community (UCSB Bren 2013). Arvin is the nearest community to Tejon Ranch with a sizable Hispanic population.

An opportunity may be available to combine efforts with the Veteran's Memorial Cemetery, where picnic facilities form a transition to a loop trail on the Conserved Lands. If this option is to be pursued, it will be necessary to work closely with Tejon Ranch cattle lessees. Clear daily and seasonal rules for use should be established as part of the planning process.

Self-guided Loop Trails

Other semi-public amenities may help the Conservancy meet its responsibility for increasing Public Access to Tejon Ranch while simultaneously minimizing biophysical impacts and avoiding conflicts with TRC's Reserved Rights. A loop trail, for instance, on the edge of Tejon Ranch, east of 290th Street may be a good way to meet these goals (Figure 9-2). A fence already excludes this parcel from cattle grazing for at least part of the year, and its location in the flats and Joshua trees rarely conflicts with hunting, and it is located outside of the TU MSHCP Covered Lands. The development of more exclusion fencing and a gate may make this an area where



docents can be stationed for a day. This way, visitors can arrive and experience the area at their own pace, but the Conservancy will maintain a continuous presence and the hours of operation are clear. The Conservancy will explore similar opportunities as they arise.

Visitor Center

The creation of a modest Visitor Center (and possibly a Conservancy office) is clearly outlined in the Ranch-wide Agreement. While the Conservancy anticipates this to be a long-term project, it makes sense to try to align its creation with PCT development. It is believed that having a permanent Conservancy presence in the PCT area will assist with managing the PCT as well as the interface between the Conserved Lands and the proposed Centennial development. The Visitor Center would be located outside the Conserved Lands.

In addition to planning for the location of the Visitor Center, it will be important to devise a thoughtful design program. Crucial design elements include landscaping with native plants and possibly the creation of demonstration gardens, walking paths, bathrooms, interpretive elements, water harvesting (active/passive), and certification under a program such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SSI).

Initial planning for a Visitor Center suggested that appropriate placement for the complex would be in the mouth of Big Sycamore Canyon. While this site is extremely attractive, there are multiple concerns that suggest this may not be an ideal placement. A large colony of burrowing owls has found its home on the west side of the mouth of the canyon. The “Africa Tree,” a distinctively shaped valley oak (Figure 9-3) is the subject of frequent filming operations at the east end of this site. In an effort to protect these sensitive resources, the Conservancy is considering siting the Visitor Center farther to the south. This orientation will work to mitigate potential impacts on sensitive species and TRC’s economic resources. Alternatively, placing the Visitor Center closer to the 300th Street gate will create a stronger interface between the Conservancy and the proposed Development Area of Centennial.

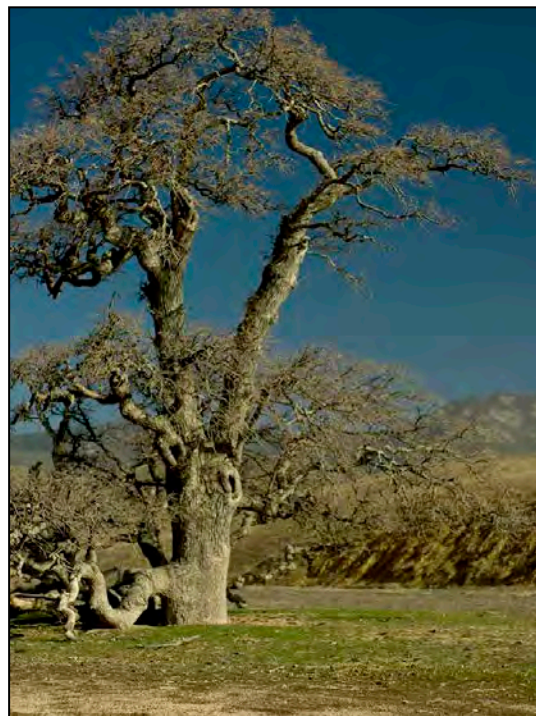


Figure 9-3 The Africa Tree

9.3 TYPOLOGY STUDIES

As the Conservancy pursues the development of recreation amenities and infrastructure, it will be important to ensure that the final products reflect certain organizational values and aesthetics. Additionally, having consistency in the aesthetic of recreation amenities will help visitors with wayfinding and messaging (Rutledge 1971). While it is not the purpose of this document to rigidly define design standards, the following section should serve as a guide to help inform future standards as well as begin to resolve the Conservancy’s design aesthetic.



InSapphoWeTrust 2012



Photo by Neal Herbert, National Park Service



© RMM Design Group 2012



Mike Willis 2010

Figure 9-4 Examples of Contemporary Recreation Amenity Design

9.3.1 CONTEMPORARY RECREATION AMENITY DESIGN

In the past few decades, recreation design has shown an increased sensitivity to the surrounding environment as well as to natural resource use. Certification processes such as LEED and SSI have created codified standards for environmental sensitivity. Pursuit of such accreditation for appropriate projects will ensure the development of amenities that are in line with the Conservancy's mission and provide a standard of excellence that the public will recognize. Figure 9-4 provides examples of projects that have received LEED/SSI certification or that reflect important design features.



Nyttend 2011



Fredlyfish 2009



Ruhrfisch 2011



Ruhrfisch 2008

Figure 9-5 Examples of Park Rustic Design

9.3.2 PARK RUSTIC/“PARKITECTURE”

Many of the most iconic outdoor recreation facilities were constructed using Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) labor during the Great Depression of the 1930s. These structures, signs, and other amenities were extremely well crafted and utilized local materials. This combination yielded amenities that are durable, functional, and attractive (Figure 9-5). While the development of Park Rustic recreation facilities sets a high aesthetic standard for the Conservancy to strive for, it also presents a standard for sourcing labor and using local materials. It may be that many of the Conservancy’s recreation amenities can be designed and constructed in partnership with local branches of the Conservation Corps, such as the Kern Service and Conservation Corps (KSACC) and Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC).



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Alan Fryer 2008



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Figure 9-6 Precedent Examples

9.3.3 PRECEDENT STUDIES

There is no shortage of creative, dynamic, place-based solutions to the question of developing outdoor recreation infrastructure. In its search to develop an aesthetic that reflects the particular natural and cultural history of Tejon Ranch, the Conservancy must draw from existing precedents. Figure 9-6 attempts to capture a diversity of styles, details, materials, massing, and forms that may be appropriate to incorporate in the design of recreation facilities on Tejon Ranch.



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Appendix A

Summary of the Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tejon Ranch Company (TRC) and Audubon California, the Endangered Habitats League, Natural Resources Defense Council, Planning and Conservation League and Sierra Club (the Resource Groups) reached agreement on June 17, 2008 to preserve permanently up to 240,000 acres of the 270,000-acre Tejon Ranch – approximately 90% of the entire Ranch. Without regard to the timing of any development on the remainder of the Ranch, the conserved lands were to be managed to preserve natural resource values by the newly formed, independent Tejon Ranch Conservancy. The key provisions of the Agreement are as follows:

- The Resource Groups are assured, as of the date of execution of the Agreement, and at no cost to taxpayers, of the permanent preservation of approximately 178,000 acres of the Ranch through the phased recordation of conservation easements.
- The Resource Groups were granted options, which have been exercised, to acquire the development rights over five parcels comprising an additional 62,000 acres of the Ranch. Once these options were exercised, the total amount of conserved lands became approximately 240,000 acres.
- The Agreement did not authorize development. For any development project TRC wishes to pursue on the approximately 30,000 acres not subject to conservation under the Agreement, TRC is required to seek applicable approvals, including the completion of all environmental review and permitting processes to develop the Centennial, Tejon Mountain Village and Grapevine projects in compliance with all laws, regulations and standards. The entitlement process consists of extensive public review and public hearing processes, including Environmental Impact Reports and numerous agency approvals for each project. Frequent opportunities for public involvement, review, comment and testimony on the three planned projects will be available.
- The Agreement requires that TRC propose a suite of environmental protection and sustainability requirements as part of each project to address traffic, air quality, climate change and other important issues.
- The protection and stewardship of the conserved lands was assured, from the date of execution of the Agreement, by the creation and funding of the independent Tejon Ranch Conservancy, a nonprofit public benefit corporation that has been qualified as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- To ensure that the public will be able to use and enjoy the conserved lands, the Agreement guarantees significant public access to Tejon Ranch, to be defined in a public access plan (Volume 3 of the RWMP)

developed and implemented by the Conservancy. Public access also includes realignment of approximately 37 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail within an approximately 10,000 acre viewshed through the heart of the Ranch and docent-led tours to Bear Trap Canyon.

- The Agreement was reached after two years of careful scientific analysis and intense negotiations between TRC, its partners and the Resource Groups. All parties believe that the Agreement provides for a far better conservation outcome than the typical project-specific permitting and protracted litigation methods most often used in development and conservation disputes.

A more detailed description of the key provisions of the Agreement follows:

CONSERVED LANDS

- **Management Plan.** Under the Agreement, all conserved lands will be managed pursuant to a Ranch-Wide Management Plan that will be developed by TRC (the Interim RWMP, adopted in September of 2009) and the Conservancy (the Initial RWMP, due for adoption June 21, 2013).
- **Dedicated Conservation Areas.** TRC will permanently protect approximately 178,000 acres through a combination of dedicated conservation easements and designated project open spaces.
 - ~ A conservation easement of up to 10,000 acres will be dedicated to allow for realignment of 37 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail through the Ranch.
 - ~ An additional 33,000 acres of open space areas within the permitted project areas will be designated as part of the project development process.
 - ~ Conservation easements over the remaining 135,000 acres will be dedicated in six phases as TRC receives development approvals, with all dedications to occur within 30 years from final approval of the first project.
 - ~ Prior to these dedications, no unauthorized development is permitted in the conservation areas. Grazing, game management and other existing ranch activities continue in accordance with the Ranch-Wide Management Plan.
- **Acquired Conservation Areas.** TRC provided separate options for the Resource Groups to purchase development rights, through acquisition of conservation easements, for five separate Acquisition Areas, totaling an additional 62,000 acres. The Conservancy exercised these options with the support of the California Wildlife Conservation Board and recorded conservation easements March 2011.
- **Public Access.** The parties are committed to providing opportunities for significant public access and community education programs on the conserved lands. To date, the Conservancy, in close collaboration with the Tejon Ranch Company, has introduced about 4,000 visitors to Tejon Ranch through its access Programs.
 - ~ **State Park.** The Resource Groups and TRC will work with the Conservancy and the California State Parks Department towards creation of a State Park within the conserved lands.
 - ~ **Pacific Crest Trail.** TRC will work with the Conservancy, the US Forest Service and the Pacific Crest Trail Association to provide an easement on conserved lands to realign a 37-mile segment of the Pacific Crest Trail through the Ranch.

- ~ **University of California Natural Reserve.** The Conservancy will work with the University of California Natural Reserve System to determine whether certain conserved lands may be viable for a future UC Natural Reserve.

TEJON RANCH CONSERVANCY

- The Conservancy was created as an independent nonprofit public benefit corporation and was qualified as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- The Conservancy is governed by a twelve member board consisting of four members appointed by the Resource Groups, four members appointed by TRC and four independent members appointed by the Conservancy Board.
 - ~ Four independent directors: Emmy Cattani, Cattani Farming; Al Wright, Retired Wildlife Conservation Board; Frank Davis, UCSB, Bren School; Soapy Mulholland, Sequoia Riverlands Trust;
 - ~ Four appointed by the Resource Groups: Joel Reynolds, NRDC; Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League; Dan Taylor, Audubon CA; Jim Dodson, Sierra Club; and,
 - ~ Four by TRC: Brian Grant, TRC; Roberta Marshall, DMB Pacific Ventures; Gary Hunt, California Strategies; Randall Lewis, Lewis Operating Corp.
- The Conservancy has an experienced staff with expertise in land trust administration, conservation biology, environmental education, outdoor recreation and open space land management.
- The Conservancy is in the 2014 round for Accreditation under the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices.
- **Ranch-Wide Stewardship.** The Conservancy has brought together the expertise of leading experts in conservation, natural resource management and business interests to develop the framework for stewardship of the conserved lands.
 - ~ The Conservancy's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the native biodiversity and ecosystem values of the Tejon Ranch and Tehachapi Range for the benefit of California's future generations. The Conservancy will work collaboratively with TRC to promote long-term, science-based stewardship of this historic 270,000-acre property to provide for public enjoyment through educational programs and public access.
 - ~ The Conservancy will adopt, update, monitor and enforce implementation of the Ranch-Wide Management Plan, which will be applicable to all conserved lands.
 - ~ As necessary the Conservancy will manage and monitor natural resource mitigation activities on conserved lands and will hold conservation easements, subject to regulatory agency approval.
 - ~ The Conservancy will receive and allocate conservation fees and other sources of funding.
 - ~ The Conservancy, in close collaboration with the Tejon Ranch Company, manages public access to conserved lands and provides interpretive and environmental education programs for the local communities, focusing in particular on underserved populations.

- **Conservancy Funding.** Funding for the Conservancy is assured through a combination of advances from TRC and payment of conservation fees collected at the time of initial sales and resales of residential units within current development areas.
 - ~ A conservation fee covenant will be recorded encumbering the development projects of Centennial, Tejon Mountain Village and Grapevine. The covenant shall provide for a fee, payable in perpetuity, equal to one quarter percent (.25%) of the retail sales price of each covered transaction, which generally includes initial sales and resales of custom lots and single family attached and detached homes and excludes units designated as affordable.
 - ~ Prior to the receipt of conservation fees by the Conservancy, TRC will advance amounts necessary to adequately fund the Conservancy, as described below.
 - ~ For the 2008 calendar year, TRC advances will total \$820,000 and for 2009 and 2010, TRC annual advances will be \$1,070,000. The advances for these first three years include a total of \$1,100,000 for costs of Conservancy formation and for costs associated with securing funding and due diligence for acquisition of the conservation easements for the five Acquisition Areas.
 - ~ For calendar years 2011 through 2014, which was extended to 2021 since conservation easements for the Acquisition Areas were purchased, TRC annual advances will be \$800,000.
 - ~ Three years after Final Approval of a development that requires mitigation in the conserved lands or two years before the Conservancy first takes responsibility to manage and monitor natural resource mitigation activities on the conserved lands, the TRC annual advance will be increased to \$1,500,000.
 - ~ In the year the Conservancy first takes responsibility to monitor and maintain natural resource mitigation, the TRC annual advance will be adjusted to \$1,500,000 plus the actual mitigation costs for each year.
 - ~ In future years, conservation fees in excess of amounts required to meet the Conservancy's core obligations will be used to repay TRC advances without interest.

MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVED LANDS

- **Public Access.** Public enjoyment of the conserved lands is a high priority to Tejon Ranch Company, the Resource Groups and the Conservancy. Tejon Ranch Company works closely with the Conservancy to establish and implement a public access plan to conserved lands that encourages and facilitates public access, including public access opportunities for underserved populations. The public access plan also provides for docent-led tours to Bear Trap Canyon.
- **Ranch-Wide Management Plan (RWMP).** The RWMP identifies and assesses natural resource and conservation attributes of the conserved lands in order to develop sustainable stewardship management strategies that provide for protection and enhancement of natural resource values and appropriately managed existing ranch uses.
 - ~ **Development and Implementation.** TRC worked with the Conservancy to draft and implement an interim RWMP that was adopted by the Conservancy Board in September of 2009. The initial RWMP is targeted for adoption by the Conservancy board on June 21, 2013.
 - ~ **Identification of Conservation Values and Existing Ranch Uses.** The RWMP identifies natural resources and conservation values of the conserved lands as well as opportunities to

protect, enhance and restore identified resources and values. In addition, the RWMP establishes best management practices for existing ranch uses on the conserved lands.

- ~ **Current Stewardship.** During an initial 5-year period, the RWMP focused on preservation of existing conservation values by maintaining baseline conditions.
- **Restoration and Enhancement.** After the 5-year initial period, the RWMP will include Conservation Activities, funded by the Conservancy, for restoring and enhancing the natural values of the conserved lands.
- **Core Activities.** TRC will be permitted to continue certain core activities on conserved lands (e.g. comply with obligations pursuant to existing leases and easements, perform natural resource mitigation, comply with applicable laws) without regard to Conservancy developed BMPs.
- **Existing Ranch Uses.** TRC will be permitted to continue certain existing uses on conserved lands, subject to the stewardship and adaptive management standards in the RWMP.
 - ~ Grazing, game management and filming activities are generally permitted ranch-wide and will be subject to BMPs in the RWMP.
 - ~ Farming, sand and gravel mining and oil and gas extraction activities are permitted within existing areas and defined expansion areas and will be subject to BMPs under the applicable management standard.

PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

- **Permitted Developments.** TRC is proceeding through the process to entitle and develop the three new projects of Centennial, Tejon Mountain Village and Grapevine within designated development envelopes and subject to local, state and federal approvals.
- **Project Design Measures.** Centennial, Tejon Mountain Village and Grapevine will be required to incorporate specific design measures in its entitlement applications to minimize impacts on the environment (e.g. energy reduction requirements in excess of Title 24 standards, construction waste recycling, onsite shuttle bus systems connecting to regional routes, environmental education outreach programs).
- **Non-Opposition.** The Resource Groups will refrain from opposing the entitlements, approvals and agency applications for the proposed development projects and for other permitted uses.

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