



San Dieguito River Park
Joint Powers Authority
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FINAL MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

PROJECT NAME:

**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
PAMO VALLEY SEGMENT OF THE COAST TO CREST TRAIL**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project involves the construction of a 3-mile-long segment of the San Dieguito River Park Coast to Crest Trail. This trail segment would extend through Pamo Valley connecting the existing Lower Santa Ysabel Trail to the Upper Santa Ysabel Trail, both of which are Cleveland National Forest trails. The Pamo Valley trail segment is located within the unincorporated County on land owned by City of San Diego Public Utilities Department. The project would entail grading a new 6- to 8-foot wide dirt trail and two trail head staging areas. The trail is proposed adjacent to Pamo Road and would share the roadway in two places to utilize existing stream crossings. The staging areas would be accessed from Pamo Road and would accommodate space for cars and equestrian rigs. This trail would effectively complete 12 miles of the Coast to Crest Trail, from Boden Canyon to near Lake Sutherland. Only 3 of the 12 miles would be new construction.

RESPONSIBLE AGENCY ACTIONS:

City of San Diego
Site Development Permit

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Streambed Alteration Agreement

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
401 Certification

PROJECT LOCATION:

The project is located in Pamo Valley north of Highway 78 near Ramona and west of Lake Sutherland in unincorporated San Diego County.

PROJECT OWNER:

San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority

DETERMINATION:

The San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA) conducted an Initial Study of the project, which determined that the proposed project could have a potentially significant effect on the environment. However, it has been determined that there will not be a significant effect in this case because (1) revisions in the project have been made by the JPA, the project proponent, that would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to the point where clearly no significant effect on the environment would occur, and (2) there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the project, as revised, may have a significant effect on the environment. Based on this determination and in accordance with CEQA Section 21157.5, a Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared.

DOCUMENTATION:

The attached Initial Study documents the reasons to support the determination that the proposed project as revised will not have a significant effect on the environment. Comment letters received on the draft MND/Initial Study during the public review comment period and responses to those comments are also attached.

The potential for impacts associated with the construction of the full 71 miles of the Coast to Crest Trail was examined in the previously certified San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan Program EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 91121059), which is incorporated by reference into this document. The Program EIR, which was certified by the San Dieguito River Park JPA Board of Directors on February 18, 1994, addressed program-wide issues such as cumulative impacts and policy alternatives for the various proposals incorporated in the Concept Plan, including the Coast to Crest Trail. Program level mitigation measures were identified in the Final Program EIR to be incorporated into individual park-initiated projects as they are approved. The subject Initial Study is a project-specific evaluation of the environmental impacts and project-specific mitigation measures for the proposed Pamo Valley Segment of the Coast to Crest Trail. The project documentation is available for review and download on the JPA's website at www.sdrp.org. The Concept Plan Program EIR is available for public inspection at the San Dieguito River Park office, located at 18372 Sycamore Creek Road, Escondido, CA 92025.

MITIGATION MEASURES INCORPORATED INTO THE PROJECT:

In accordance with CEQA Section 21081.6, a Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program has been prepared for the project and the mitigation measures have been incorporated into the scope of the project. The measures outlined below shall be stated in the San Dieguito River Park JPA's resolution of approval and within any subsequent

permits required for this project. The following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project:

Biological Resources

1. Prior to the start of construction, the construction limits for the trail parking areas shall be clearly delineated with orange construction fencing and silt fencing or fiber rolls to ensure that construction activity remains within the defined construction limits.
2. Clearing and grubbing of the trail within 300 feet of breeding habitat for the least Bell's vireo or southwestern willow flycatcher in Santa Ysabel and Temescal creeks shall not be done during the breeding season (combined from March 15 through September 15) to avoid noise disturbance of any breeding birds potentially occurring in the vicinity.
3. Prior to construction of individual sections of trail, the JPA rangers shall survey the area for any badger burrows within the trail footprint and avoid burrows where they are encountered. If an occupied badger burrow is encountered during construction, a 100 foot buffer will be maintained to avoid disturbing the burrow.
4. Prior to commencing construction of the trail, the JPA shall hire a biological monitor with expertise in arroyo toads. The biologist will monitor construction of the trail during the aestivating season where it occurs in potential aestivating habitat. The biologist will conduct a pre-construction survey to identify any toads in the construction footprint and any such toads shall be avoided. Implementation of avoidance measures shall be done in consultation with USFWS.
5. Manure management shall be implemented by installing a manure bin in the staging area and signage requiring users to clean up horse manure. Rangers shall patrol and maintain the staging area on a regular basis.
6. The San Dieguito River Park JPA shall provide mitigation for impacts to coastal sage scrub and non-native grassland in one of the following ways. Any one of these measures would mitigate impacts from the loss of upland vegetation from the project to a level of insignificance:
 - Conservation of a 40-acre private parcel in Pamo Valley acquired by the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy. The parcel contains non-native grassland and coastal sage scrub. A conservation easement would be placed over the entire parcel to mitigate for the Pamo Trail Project.
 - Payment into the City of San Diego's Habitat Acquisition Fund, which would be calculated by acres (1.71 acres) based on the assumption that the City would use the funds to acquire properties within the MHPA.
 - Restore and enhance 3.24 acres of coastal sage scrub (seeding with native coastal sage scrub species typical of the associations occurring in the CSS community in

Pamo Valley) in the vicinity of the trail to encourage the fire recovery of coastal sage scrub.

Upland Type	Impact (acres)	Mitigation Ratio	Mitigation (acres)	Mitigation Ratio	Mitigation (acres)
		outside MHPA		inside MHPA	
Diegan coastal sage scrub	0.36	1.5:1	0.54	1:1	0.36
Non-native grassland	2.70	1:1	2.70	0.5:1	1.35
Total	3.06		3.24		1.71

7. The JPA’s Trails Management Plan and Standards shall be updated to include the Pamo Valley segment of the Coast to Crest Trail before the trail is opened to the public.

Cultural Resources

1. The JPA shall retain a qualified archaeological monitor and a Native American monitor prior to commencement of project construction. The monitors will be responsible for overseeing all specified subsurface disturbance associated with project construction in accordance with City of San Diego mitigation requirements for archaeological resources. The monitors shall ensure that the proposed trail alignment or site disturbance avoids cultural resources as designed.
2. To mitigate the potential impacts of the project on sites CA-SDI-7933 and CA-SDI-8279, prior to construction of the trail the project site shall be capped where it is in proximity to these sites per the JPA’s Concept Plan Design and Development Standards (1994) and the City of San Diego protocol. The purpose of "capping" is to cover archaeological sites with a layer of soil before construction to preserve those cultural resources, as follows:

Filter fabric shall be placed on the portion of the site to be impacted, followed by the placement of two inches of sterile soils, one inch of ½ to ¾ inch gravel, and a minimum of an additional four inches of sterile soil.

All capping shall be designed and performed in consultation with and monitored by the archaeological monitor and a Native American monitor.

3. Any construction activities within 50 feet of sites SDI-7933 and SDI-8279 shall be monitored by a qualified archaeological monitor and a Native American monitor. The monitors will identify any cultural materials uncovered by the project activity and shall have the authority to suspend work in order to document and evaluate the finds and recommend avoidance or capping measures, if necessary. The JPA shall implement measures required by the monitors. The monitors shall have the flexibility to reduce or cease archaeological monitoring based on soil observations indicating a lower sensitivity for cultural materials.

4. To mitigate potential impacts resulting from trail construction near two other known archaeological sites, archaeological monitoring by a qualified archaeological monitor and a Native American monitor shall be conducted during construction of those segments of trail within 50 feet of the cultural site boundaries for sites SDI-9790 and SDI-19464, as identified in the project report: *An Archaeological Survey for the Pamo Trail Project* (August 2008, updated July 2014). The monitors will identify any cultural materials uncovered by the project activity and shall have the authority to suspend work in order to document and evaluate the finds and recommend avoidance or capping measures, if necessary. The JPA shall implement measures required by the monitors. The monitors shall have the flexibility to reduce or cease archaeological monitoring based on soil observations indicating a lower sensitivity for cultural materials.
5. To further reduce the potential for impacts to a cultural site, the JPA shall continue to involve Native American representative(s) during final project design and during construction of the proposed trail, and particularly during design and placement of signage and fencing designed to discourage trespassing on nearby sites and orient trail users away from visible resources. The JPA shall also consult with Native American tribal representatives regarding any proposed signage or public information (e.g., maps or website) that pertains to cultural resources in the Pamo Valley.

PUBLIC REVIEW DISTRIBUTION:

The following individuals, organizations, and agencies received a copy or notice of the draft MND and were invited to comment on its accuracy and adequacy:

United States Government

- Department of the Interior
 - Fish and Wildlife Service
- Department of the Army
 - Corps of Engineers
- Department of Agriculture
 - Natural Resources Conservation Services
- Department of Forestry
 - Cleveland National Forest, Palomar District Office

State of California

- State Clearinghouse
- Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 5
- Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 9
- Office of Historic Preservation
- Resources Agency (Water Resources)
- Native American Heritage Commission

County of San Diego

- Department of Public Works
- Department of Parks and Recreation

Supervisor Dianne Jacob

City of San Diego

Development Services Department
Real Estate Assets Department
Historical Sites Board
Public Utilities Dept.

Other Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals

SDG&E
Sierra Club
Palomar Audubon Society
California Native Plants Society
San Diego State University/South Coastal Information Center
Endangered Habitats League
San Diego Mountain Biking Assoc.
San Diego County Archaeological Society, Inc.
Ramona Trails Association
San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians
Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians
Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel
San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians
Ramona Planning Group
Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley
San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
San Diego County Farm Bureau
San Dieguito River Park Citizens Advisory Committee
San Dieguito River Park JPA Board of Directors
San Diego Union-Tribune



Shawna Anderson, AICP, Principal Planner
San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority

3/16/16
Date of Draft Report

5/20/16
Date of Final Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Comment Letters Received and Responses
Initial Study
MMRP