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Final Draft

Master Plan

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park

PREPARED BY THE CITY OF CLAREMONT
ASSISTED BY MIG

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park
Master Plan

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

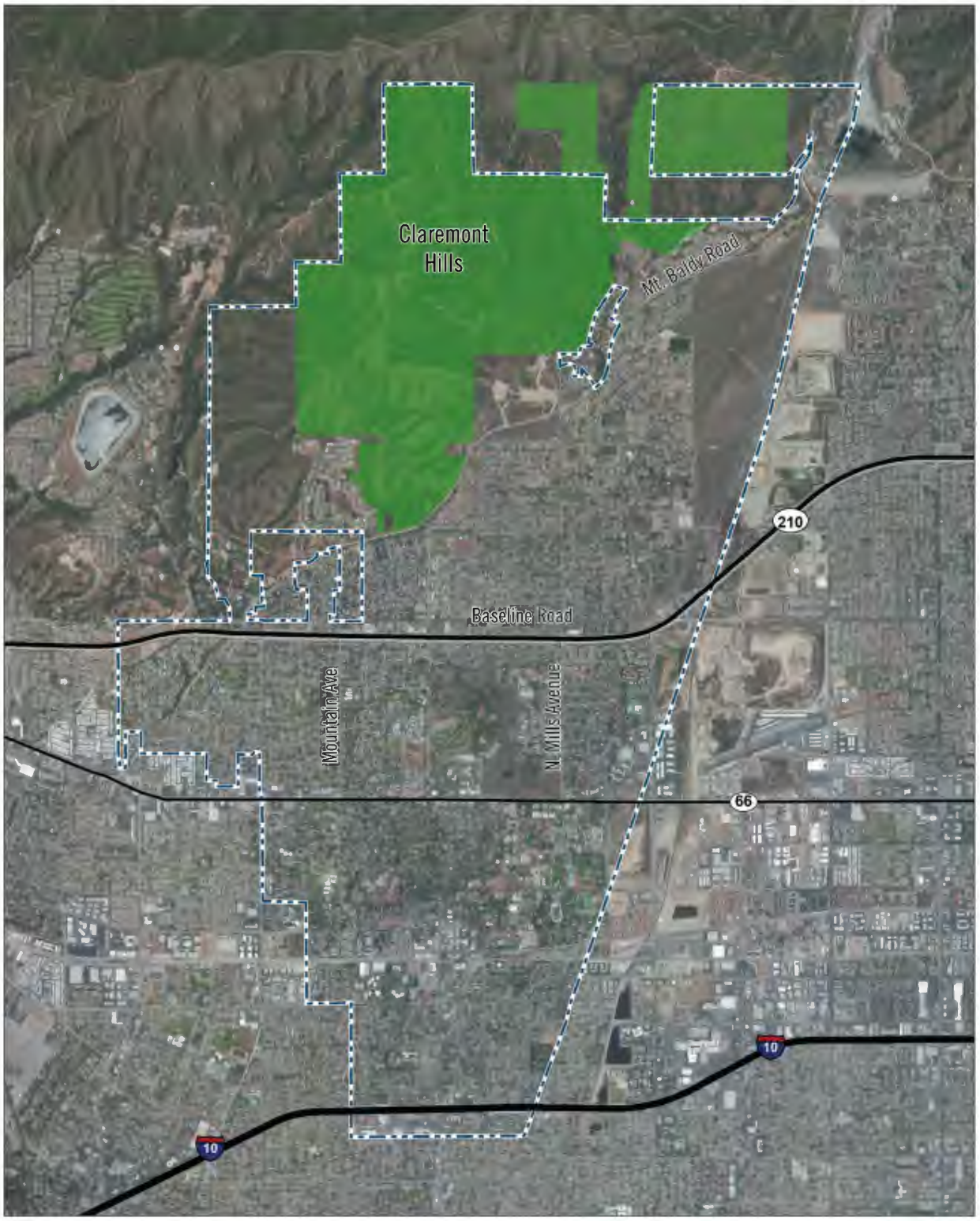
1:1 BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park (CHWP) Master Plan is to guide the management of the 2,000-acre park owned by the City of Claremont, a community of approximately 35,000 in east Los Angeles County. The CHWP is located in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains adjacent to the southern edge of the Angeles National Forest. The CHWP receives half a million visits annually from across the region (Exhibit 1). The proximity to the 10 and 210 Freeways and regional arterial streets provide convenient access for visitors. The park has multiple access points, with its busiest entrance located at the northern terminus of N. Mills Ave. The original trail network is comprised of Los Angeles (LA) County fire roads, which can be navigated with relative ease by users of different experience levels. The trail system cuts through hilly terrain with spectacular views across the valley to the south and majestic Mt. Baldy to the north (Exhibit 2).

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, the City of Claremont and Pomona College negotiated the purchase of 1,345 acres of hillside land the Garner Padua Hills Trust had given to the College. After two years of payments and further negotiations, the City gained title to 1,220 acres of open space. This purchase became the core of the Wilderness Park that was established in 1996.The College kept 125 acres of land that had been designated as a housing cluster area.

Shortly after the park was established, the City adopted a Management Plan to serve as the primary steering document to guide park management. However, the popularity of the park grew rapidly and the park quickly became a regional destination. The increased visitors created safety concerns and impacted the neighborhoods surrounding the park leading to increased community dialogue. During peak hours, hundreds of visitors parked along the shoulders of Mt. Baldy Road and N. Mills Avenue, as well as other surface streets. Pedestrians, cyclists, horses, and drivers competed for roadway space. Residents in adjacent neighborhoods became increasingly disturbed by the intensive parking along residential roads, visitors using the park after hours, noise, litter, lack of privacy, and heightened security concerns.

Based on mounting concerns associated with traffic safety and neighborhood impacts, the City Council directed staff to undertake a more comprehensive Master Planning process, which began in 2013. The Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan was developed after more than a year of planning efforts orchestrated by the City, with the assistance of MIG, Inc. and other resource management and planning consultants, the Claremont Wildlands Conservancy, neighborhood representatives, and many active community members. The Master Plan and Implementation Plan illustrate the shift from passive management of the park to active management of the park. Active management of the park in the future will be key to managing the balance between users, neighbors, and the environment over the life of the park.



Legend

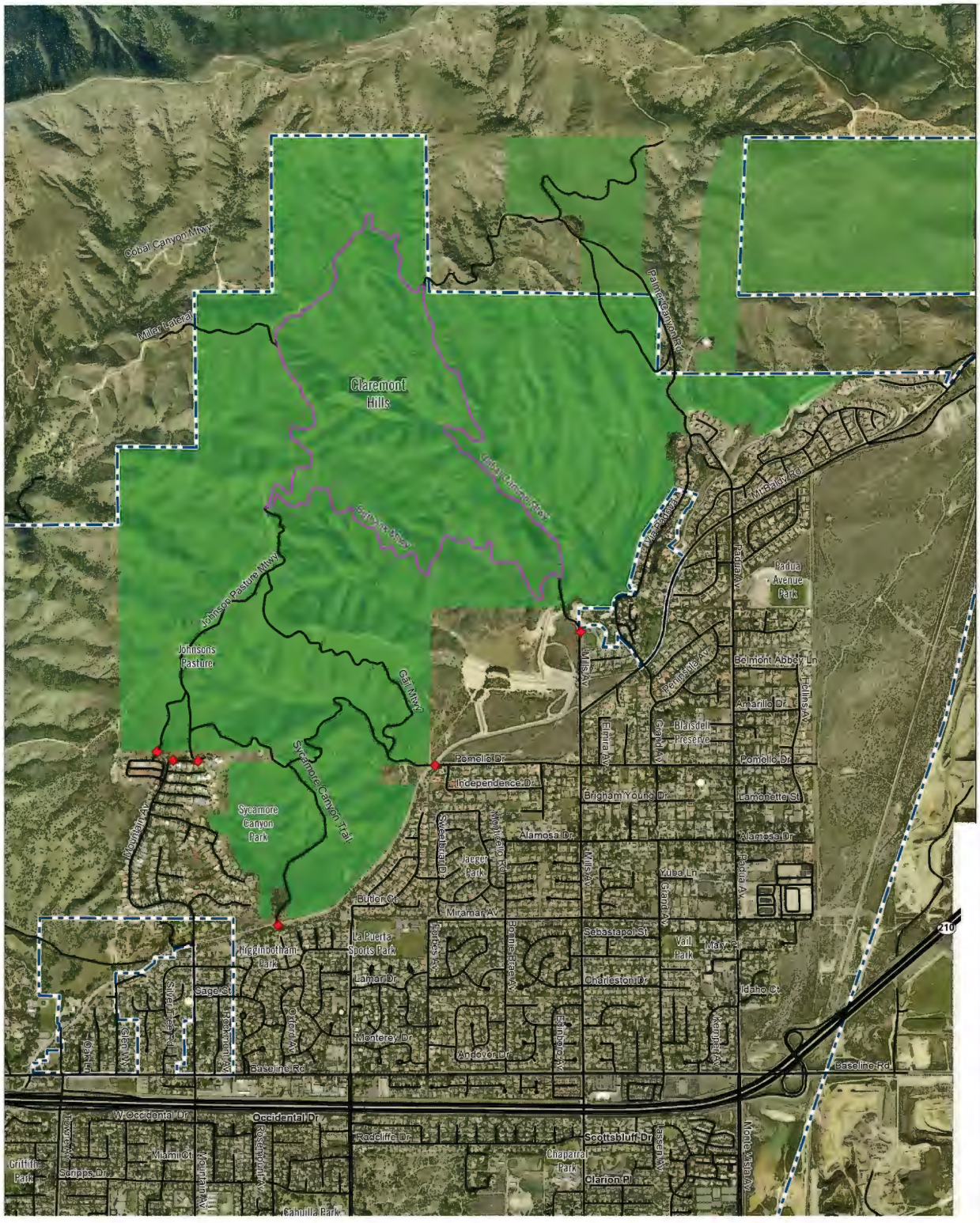
- North America Interstate Highways
- CA Major Roads
- Claremont City Limit
- Claremont Hills Wilderness

Exhibit 1: Vicinity Map

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

0 0.5 1 Miles

MIG



Legend

- Neighborhood Interface Access
- North America Interstate Highways
- CA Major Roads
- Street Centerline
- Claremont City Limit
- Claremont Hills Wilderness
- 5-mile Loop Trail

Exhibit 2: Project Area

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

1:2 VISION OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Claremont Hills Wilderness Park was created to preserve open space in Claremont's hillsides and protect this environmental resource while secondarily allowing for human access for passive recreation, education, and enjoyment. The park has become a distinctive feature of the city and is enjoyed as an ecological preserve, educational resource, and recreation destination.

The Master Plan offers guidance for protecting and preserving the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park for future generations, and seeks to mitigate the negative impacts the park's popularity has had on nearby residential neighborhoods. In time, the expectation is that the CHWP will grow to include additional open space in the Claremont hillsides and will connect with open spaces in neighboring communities to create a regional wilderness corridor for environmental preservation and passive recreation. The Master Plan's three primary goals follow from this vision.

1:3 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The primary goals of this Master Plan are to:

- Preserve the park as an environmental resource;
- Manage the park as a passive recreational[1] opportunity; and
- Minimize the impact park attendance has on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The hillsides are a natural resource to be conserved, protected, preserved, and appreciated for the benefit of habitat, wildlife, and humans. The Master Plan emphasizes the critical need to preserve and conserve the environment for present and future generations. Through education, the plan encourages park visitors to behave in a manner consistent with the spirit of "leave no trace."[2] Also paramount is managing park visitation in a manner to not unduly impact the surrounding neighborhoods. These goals are not mutually exclusive, and balance among them can be achieved when visitors and neighbors alike embrace a culture of mutual respect and consideration for each other and for the environment.

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[1] *Passive recreation is considered to be low impact activities such as walking, running, hiking, cycling, equestrian, etc. Active recreation would include activities such as off road motorized vehicle usage, sports fields, playgrounds, etc.*

[2] *Leave No Trace refers to a set of outdoor ethics promoting conservation in the outdoors, including: plan ahead and prepare, travel and camp on durable surfaces, dispose of waste properly, leave what you find, respect wildlife, and be considerate of other visitors.*

In addition, the Master Planning *process* aimed to fully engage community members, users, and the community at large in developing a blueprint to manage the park for years to come. The City set out to create a balance among the goals and to give consideration to the diverse opinions of the many community groups. Over the course of the input process, individual groups have asked that the City prioritize one goal over the other. Establishing a hierarchy of goals should be established by the City Council after additional study.

The Master Plan builds upon the original management plan, adopted in 1996, and provides a flexible blueprint to manage the park into the future. The new plan will adhere to original management plan goals while setting forth guidelines and standards for maintenance and operations. The Master Plan is intended to be a guiding document for the active management of the park for at least twenty years, sufficiently flexible to remain relevant and evolve with changing conditions, yet firm in its commitment to the original goals.

The City retained MIG, Inc. as the lead consultant to develop the Master Plan in concert with significant staff and community participation. MIG was tasked with evaluating numerous documents associated with the various hillside acquisitions, land use, and other relevant documents. MIG completed a baseline environmental assessment and an inventory of the informal and formal trail network to evaluate trail and habitat conditions, human impacts, and opportunities for enhanced resource management. An assessment of parking options, visitor management policies, and operational best practices were also included in MIG's overall scope of work. Finally, public participation was intended to not only solicit community input but to also foster an understanding of diverse perspectives.

1:3:1 Guiding Principles for the Master Plan

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles were developed to help steer the Master Planning process and guide future decision-making for the next twenty or more years. The Master Plan is designed as a policy and management document, rather than a proscriptive set of operating procedures. These guiding principles were developed based upon existing City policies and documents, as well as public input.

> **Preservation:** Environmental and cultural resources within the current park must be preserved and protected. As additional open-space lands in Claremont's hillsides become available, efforts shall be made to acquiring the land and annex the land to the park when fiscally feasible. Special attention should be given to preserving the hillsides' function as watershed for the cities of the San Gabriel Valley. Appropriate resource management promotes the long-term viability of the natural and cultural landscape, inspiring future generations to care for and respect these resources. The natural environment and the overall conditions of the Park shall be managed to minimize impacts from human recreational activities.

Stewardship: The Master Plan will promote a park culture in which visitors treat nature, park neighbors, and one another with respect and courtesy. Everyone associated with the park—visitors, neighbors, City staff members—will be encouraged to see themselves as stewards of the park, protecting its resources. City staff will educate visitors about these expectations and enforce park rules in a fair and friendly manner.

Access: Inclusive and managed public access is provided as secondary to preserving the natural environment and limiting the impacts to surrounding properties. The CHWP allows for passive recreational opportunities that connect people to nature and promote healthy lifestyles.

Education: Active education is the cornerstone of fostering visitors' safe and responsible behaviors in the park. With effective outreach to the community, a variety of educational and interpretive programs (such as field trips and docent-led hikes) will enhance their understanding and appreciation of the park's culture and its natural resources.

Public Engagement: Public collaboration is integral to ensuring sound policy decision-making, and providing opportunities for the community to contribute their knowledge, expertise, and energy to actively support Park management.

Funding: Achieving the Goals of the Master Plan and realizing the manifestation of the Guiding Principles is only possible with funding generated from parking fees and grants to support active park management, operations and maintenance.

1:3:2 Alignment with Other Planning Documents

The Master Planning process evaluated existing documents pertaining to the CHWP, including the Claremont General Plan (2006), Claremont Wilderness Park Management Plan (1996, revised 2006), Claremont Wilderness Park Vegetation Management Plan (1996, updated 2003), Draft Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) for the North Claremont Ecological Reserve (2001), Claremont Hillsides Wilderness Park and Thompson Creek Trail Parking Permit Policy (2013), Claremont Sustainability Plan (2013), and the Sycamore Canyon Master Plan (1975). In particular, the CHWP Management Plan and the Vegetation Management Plan helped formulate the outline for this Master Plan, maintaining alignment with existing policies regarding facilities, visitor, and resource management. Policies and restrictions from these documents were incorporated into the Master Plan.

A $200,000 State Bond financed feasibility study, “Thompson Creek Spreading Grounds: Acquire, Restore, Preserve,” made under the auspices of the League of Women Voters of the Claremont Area and the Three Valleys Municipal Water District, was completed in December 2010. Purchasing Thompson Creek Spreading Grounds from its owner, the Pomona Valley Protective Association is still anticipated. There has been an assumption that the land and the

management of its water resources would go to the City of Claremont as another addition to the CHWP. However, that agreement has not been formalized at this time.

A White Paper regarding Claremont Hillsides History, Acquisitions, Deeds, Agreements, and Related Policies was published on the City website on July 28, 2014 (Appendix A.1). The acquisition history of the parcels comprising the CHWP is found in Appendix A.2, and the planning documents referenced above are found in Appendix A.3.

1.4 MASTER PLAN CHANGES

The Master Plan is intended to provide long term guidance for park management, generally assumed to be at least twenty years. However, the Master Plan should be considered a flexible document that can evolve with time based on changing circumstances. From time to time, modifications to the document may be appropriate. Changes would go through the normal City review process including Parks, Hillsides and Utilities Committee, Community and Human Services Commission, and finally the City Council if necessary. In addition to the standard process, ad hoc committees, community meetings, or workshops may be needed prior to beginning the Committee/Commission/Council review process, depending on the nature of changes being considered.

In order to have a truly living document that allows for adaptive implementation based on changes in conditions, it is important to have established systems and time frames to gather fresh empirical data. To that end, the specific time frames are recommended in Chapter 5 and section 6.4 of the Implementation Plan for additional parking, user, and environmental survey coordination with community resources such as the Claremont Colleges. Results of studies and data-gathering efforts should be shared with the Friends of the CHWP, the community as a whole, the Traffic and Transportation Commission, the Community and Human Services Commission, and the City Council.

Parking

Parking behaviors and impacts should be measured throughput the first year of the implementation of any new parking fees, restrictions or changes to parking patterns. When no changes are made to the parking, reexamination should be done every two years. Areas of study should include, but not be limited to, number of cars parking outside the Residential Permit Parking Zone, empty spaces in the lots, parking meter usage data, and disruptive aspects of parking as reported by neighbors.

Usage Estimates and User Profile

In order to ensure that proper implementation efforts are undertaken, it is vital to make sure that the community, staff, and City Council have accurate and current information on the

number of park users, how often they are using the park, why they are using the park and who the users are. To obtain this detailed information, user surveys and usage estimates should be performed every two years.

Environmental Evaluation

The Master Plan Chapter 3 presents the current environmental analysis and resource management plan to guide the long term preservation of the CHWP. As with usage, the natural environment is ever changing. The impacts of usage, weather, and watershed need to be monitored regularly. In addition to the supplemental study described in the Implementation Plan, environmental evaluation should be performed every five years in order to provide updated environmental data to guide decision making.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THIS MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan is organized into five chapters as summarized below:

Chapter 1: Introduction. The purpose, goals, planning principles and desired outcomes are provided as the framework for the Master Plan. Guidelines and standards are also introduced.

Chapter 2: Background. This chapter provides more detail regarding the community context for the Master Plan and relevant background research which served as the foundation for the Master Plan recommendations, including a history of the hillside acquisitions, estimated visitation, and visitor characteristics.

Chapter 3: Resource Management Plan. This chapter describes existing biological, cultural and physical resources. It provides guidance to manage habitat conditions, as well as offering possible habitat restoration or enhancement opportunities.

Chapter 4: Operations, Maintenance, and Management. This chapter includes guidelines and standards for managing visitors and volunteers, enhancing public outreach and information, developing a consistent sign program, and providing other trail amenities to address visitor needs. The trail network is more thoroughly described in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Future Acquisition, Future Study and Reassessment. This chapter recommends specific time frames for review and processes for changes to the document over time.

Appendices. These include all background documents, technical reports, deeds, summaries of the public outreach process, and surveys.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND MASTER PLAN PURPOSE

2.1 BACKGROUND

2.1.1 History of Acquisitions

The Claremont Hills Wilderness Park, as it is generally known today, encompasses almost 2,000 publicly accessible acres (Exhibit 1) at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, with the Claremont community to its south and the Angeles National Forest to the north. The area is comprised of rolling foothills with steep elevation gains, undulating ridgelines and numerous drainage gullies. Moving from west to east along the southern perimeter are the Claraboya neighborhood at the northern terminus of Mountain Avenue, the neighborhoods adjacent to the Thompson Creek Trail and the Thompson Creek Spreading Grounds at the toe of the foothills, and the neighborhoods of Padua Hills, Stone Canyon and Palmer Canyon to the east (Chapter 1 Exhibit 2).

The earliest inhabitants of the area were the local indigenous Serrano and Tongva, whose communities were later replaced by Spanish-era missionaries and rancheros. With the advent of railroads, population migration (eastward and westward), and the founding of Pomona College in the 1880's, the Claremont community was born in 1887. The City formally incorporated in 1907, with just under four square miles of land primarily centered around the Village, a much smaller version of its fourteen square miles today. Early residents quickly realized the ideal growing conditions for citrus trees, and commercial groves soon paralleled higher education as an important part of the community's economic and social fabric. Over time, the groves gave way to housing to support the region's growing population, and new neighborhoods started a slow migration up the grade toward the foothills.

Development in the foothills dates back to as early as the 1920's, when the County of Los Angeles approved the Padua Hills neighborhood on a ridgeline in the unincorporated area northeast of town. In 1930, the Garner family opened the Padua Theatre, and the enclave attracted visual and performing artists to live and work, as well as the aficionados who supported them.

Development pressure continued in subsequent decades leading to efforts to annex the hillsides to control development. In the 1970's, after an extensive community planning effort, the City approved a program to allow the transfer of development credits, which authorized clusters of development within designated areas while retaining most of the hillsides as open space.

The first hillside area obtained by the City for both open space preservation and passive recreational use was Sycamore Canyon, when the developer of the Claraboya neighborhood at the northern terminus of Mountain Avenue dedicated 40 acres to the City in 1975.

The City's adoption of a bold and imaginative Hillside Ordinance containing a "Transfer of Development Credits" program enabled higher densities of homes in housing cluster areas to be built than would otherwise have been allowed in exchange for leaving large open space acreage undisturbed in perpetuity.

In the late 1980s/early 1990s Claremont worked with Pomona College to purchase 1345 acres of hillside land (and the Padua Hills Theater) that the Garner Padua Hills Trust had given to the College. The City aimed to pave the way for development of a 125-acre portion of Pomona's land along Baldy Road (Stone Canyon), identified in the Hillside Ordinance as a housing cluster area, in order to secure the remaining 1,220 acres as permanent open space.

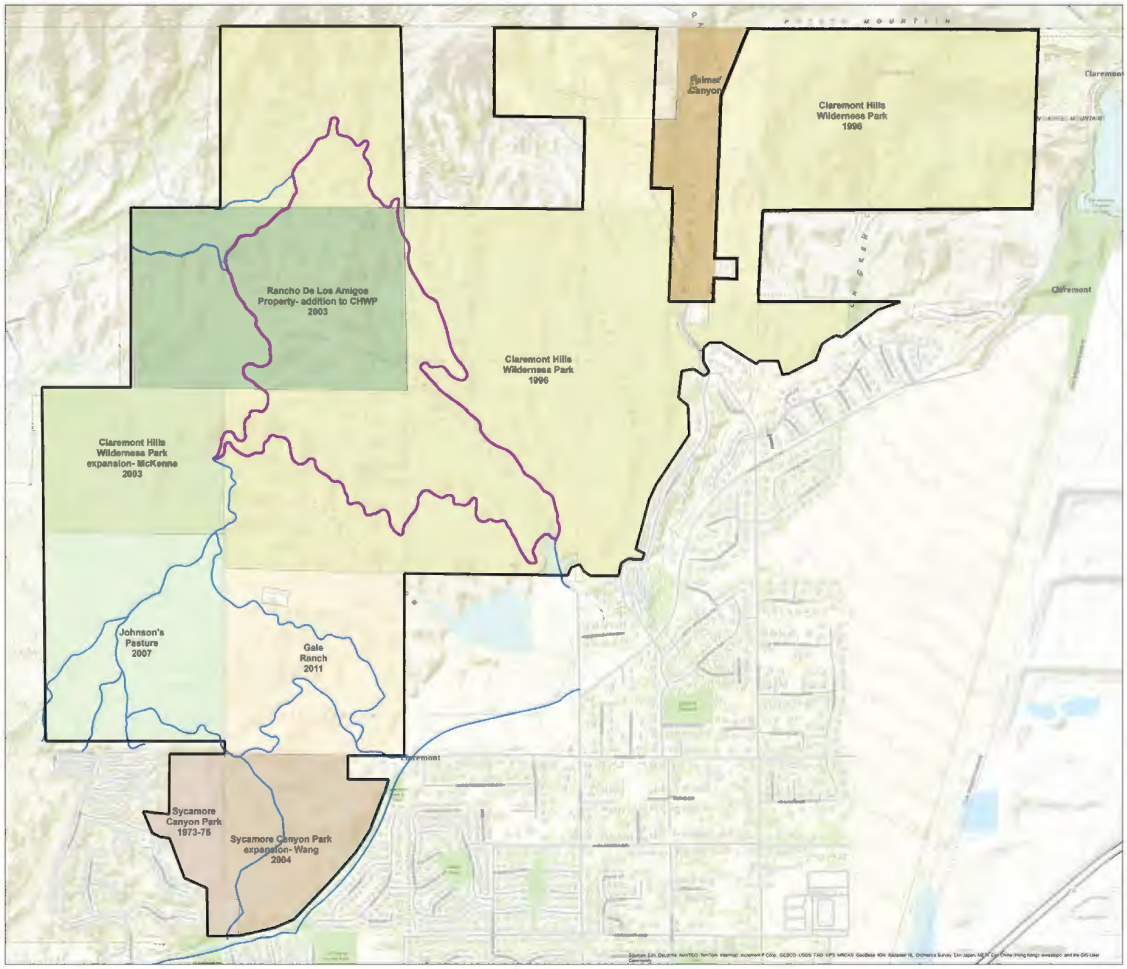
In the face of a deep recession and following two years of option payments to the College of about $1.2 million for the approximately $16 million purchase which would have included the developable 125-acre cluster area, plus another $800,000 in planning documents, the City and the College came to an agreement that left the College with the valuable housing cluster area and enabled the City to accept 1,220 acres that was to become the core of the Wilderness Park.

Development pressure continued, spurring the Claremont Wildlands Conservancy (CWC) to form in 2000 with the goal of preserving more of Claremont's hillsides from development, and more particularly Johnson's Pasture, which was being considered for a 125 home development. Since that time, the CWC, City leaders, and other motivated residents have jointly worked to acquire additional hillside land. The City eventually acquired Johnson's Pasture in 2008 after an extensive effort involving City staff, the CWC, regional environmental groups, and ultimately the support of Claremont voters who approved Measure S. The measure authorized up to $12.5 million in general obligation bonds to help fund the acquisition of 180 acres in Johnson's Pasture. Funds were specifically earmarked for acquisition purposes, and are not available to support operations and maintenance.

The City and interested environmental groups have continued to pursue additional hillside acquisitions, and today the City of Claremont owns approximately 2,000 acres of open space, which is collectively managed as the CHWP. The current boundaries of the park are included in Exhibit 3, A *Map of the CHWP Acquisitions.* Because the City continues to evaluate acquisition opportunities, this Master Plan recommends that all future hillside acquisitions be automatically folded into the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park for management purposes.

2.1.2 Acquisitions Funding

The City utilized a variety of funding sources and developer agreements to obtain hillside parcels, as outlined in Table 2-1 below. Of the nearly $20 million used to fund open space acquisitions to date, approximately 40% or $8,064,850 came from the State and regional funding sources. While the hillsides may be viewed as a local resource, significant non-local funding sources contributed to these acquisitions to support regional wildlife corridors and public access to open space.



Wilderness Area Land Acquisitions

Legend

- CHWP TRAIL
- 5-MILE LOOP TRAIL
- Sycamore Canyon Park
- Claremont Hills Wilderness Park
- CHWP Expansion- McKenna
- Rancho De Los Amigos Property- addition to CHWP
- Sycamore Canyon Park expansion- Wang
- Johnson's Pasture
- Gale Ranch
- Palmer Canyon Association - Vacation 2009
- Parcels
- Claremont Hills Wilderness

Exhibit 3: Wilderness Area Land Acquisitions

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

N W E S

0 300 600 1,200 1,800 2,400 Feet

MIG

Table 2-1: CHWP Funding Sources

Date	Acquisition Name	Acres	Funding Source	Regional Funds	Local Funds
1973-75	Sycamore Canyon	40	Developer Exchange for density bonus		
1996	CHWP	1,225	Development Agmnt, Prop A grant	$ 317,850	$ 932,150
2003	Los Amigos	240	Grants, San Gabriel & Lower LA RMC	$1,000,000	
2003	McKenna	129	Grant, Wildlife Conservancy Board	$ 774,000	
2004	Wang	104	Grant, Wildlife Conservancy Board	$ 623,000	
2007	Johnson's Pasture	180	Grants & Bonds	$ 500,000	$11,000,000
2011	Cuevas / Gale Ranch	152	Multiple grant sources	$4,850,000	
			GRAND TOTAL	**$8,064,850**	**$11,932,150**

2.1.3 Guiding Deeds and Agreements

As part of the various hillside acquisitions, a variety of documents were approved and adopted confirming how the properties should be utilized and managed. Many of these guiding documents indicate the goals of preserving the natural environment while providing access to the hills for passive recreational use. Two key documents are summarized below.

- 1996 Wilderness Park Deed: "Perpetual hillside open space shall permit only watershed, pasture, low intensity recreation, trails, and scientific study (no such use requiring more than minor structures or minor terrain modifications), uses of a nature similar to the foregoing and accessory uses as are necessary to support the foregoing uses, and with prohibitions against hunting, shooting guns, and use by motorcycles and motorbikes."[1]

- Johnson's Pasture Deed: "This Grant Deed is executed, and the Property conveyed, on the condition that the property permanently be used solely for open space, conservation, and associated recreational purposes, provided that this restriction shall not be deemed to prevent the construction of structures and improvements consistent with such uses."[2]

Therefore, a primary strategy of this Master Plan is to continue the vision and intent of these acquisitions by recommending additional measures to manage these resources appropriately, balancing public access with environmental and neighborhood preservation.

[1] 1996 Wilderness Park Deed (Appendix A.3.8)
[2] Johnson's Pasture Deed (Appendix A.3.9)

One particular note relates to the Claremont Hills Conservation Corporation (CHCC), which was established in 1995 essentially to ensure that the original land dedication was utilized as intended - perpetual open space and passive recreational access. The Board consists of nine members, three appointed by Pomona College, three by the Claremont City Council, and three by the six CHCC board members. Terms are staggered and the Board meets annually each April. This Board will continue to monitor use of the original CHWP acquisition, while the City will manage all of its hillside holdings as one entity with the same name.

A White Paper summarizing the history of hillside acquisitions, deeds, agreements, and related policies is included in Appendix A.1 as reference.

2.2 MASTER PLAN IMPETUS

South/Thompson Creek Trail Lot
Source: Google Earth

2.2.1 Increasing Popularity of the Park – Parking Impacts

The original CHWP was served by a small parking lot of approximately 20 spaces at the terminus of N. Mills Ave., which was constructed as part of the initial dedication of the park in 1996. An additional 43 spaces were also, and continue to be, available in the south / Thompson Creek Trail lot.

However, popularity of the park began increasing with the new millennium, and increasingly visitors sought parking opportunities along N. Mills Ave., Adirondack and Mt. Baldy Rd., to the disturbance of the neighbors along those impacted streets.

In 2008, the City Council temporarily approved dusk to dawn Residential Permit Parking (RPP) for two years on Via Santa Catarina in Claraboya to address parking and noise impacts from visitors entering Johnson's Pasture. In 2009, around the clock restrictions were also approved for Adirondack near the main entrance on N. Mills Ave. The City Council permanently approved both these temporary measures when restrictions expired two years later.

North Lot prior to improvements
Source: Google Earth

While impacts to these two streets were addressed with restricted parking, other streets adjacent to the main entrance at N. Mills Ave. became increasingly crowded. It was common for pedestrians, often with children, strollers or dogs, bicyclists, and other drivers passing through to compete for roadway space. Traffic safety concerns mounted, as did the frustration of residents living in the area. Staff received numerous complaints about not only a constant

Parking near south/Thompson Creek Trail Lot
Source: City of Claremont

stream of vehicles driving and parking on residential streets, but also related to noise from visitors closing car doors and setting alarms, radios, people talking, and yelling while unloading or loading vehicles, dogs barking, and litter strewn about. Others reported occasional public urination or defecation as people relieved themselves on private property or in the public right-of-way. Some residents expressed concerns about invasions of privacy and safety risks associated with the number of strangers in their neighborhoods. The basic message communicated by residents adjacent to the Mills entrance was that the previously quiet, rural streets were no longer peaceful.

In 2012, the City Council authorized the construction of the new north lot to provide 134 parking spaces. The project also included several other physical and regulatory strategies: the existing pedestrian path from the east side of N. Mills Ave. was relocated to the west side to reduce impacts to the two homes adjacent to the path; regulated parking in both lots was implemented; and no parking areas were established on Mt. Baldy Rd. (Mills Ave. to Via Padova) and Mills Ave. (Pomello to the park entrance). The new parking lot opened and the regulations became effective in April 2013, at a total project cost of approximately $750,000. This cost was offset by a $150,000 grant from the County of Los Angeles using Proposition A funds.

Parking near south/Thompson Creek Trail Lot
Source: City of Claremont

Parking near south/Thompson Creek Trail Lot
Source: City of Claremont

Following the opening of the new north lot and the implementation of on-street restricted parking, park rangers monitored both parking lots and adjacent streets during the weekends for several months. Staff monitored the same areas during the week. Staff noted that the parking lots provided sufficient capacity during most operating hours, except for Saturday and Sunday early mornings when the lots had a tendency to be full from 7:00 – 9:00 a.m. Interestingly, even in the south / TCT lot, most of the vehicles parked there did not display resident permits. Staff also noted that the south / TCT lot would be full, although the north lot had ample capacity to accommodate many more cars. Staff also noted that some cars parked on surface

streets beyond the no parking restrictions, particularly on the weekend. Pomello Dr., west of Mills Ave., in particular was heavily impacted following the changes in April 2013.

Following the initial restrictions, staff expected some level of parking migration and monitored where visitors were parking, as did those neighborhood residents. Residents very quickly submitted petitions for a number of streets, which were approved after the standard review process. However, visitors to varying degrees continued to seek parking opportunities on other residential streets. By summer 2013, the City Council had directed that staff undertake a Master Plan to address community concerns as residents continued to submit additional petitions requesting that RPP zones be extended to include their streets, and parking continued to migrate. The master planning process began in February 2014, and in June 2014, the City Council declared a moratorium on any additional neighborhood parking restrictions until the Master Plan was approved. Several submitted petitions were left in pending status with more streets considering petitions due to visitor parking.

2.2.2 Annual Visitation Estimates

As noted, the number of visitors has significantly increased through the years. Prior to the escalation, annual visitation had been estimated at approximately 30,000 visits; however, the source of the estimate is not well documented. As visitation increased and parking pressures escalated, community and staff began to question how many people were visiting the park.

In the spring of 2011, City staff counted visitors at the main entrance for a one-week period and estimated approximately 300,000 annual visits. This exponential increase in park usage has anecdotally been attributed to the proliferation of social media and electronic communication, convenient access to the CHWP, and increasing awareness about maintaining healthy lifestyles. Much of the use occurs along the 5-mile Loop Trail (Chapter 1 Exhibit 2).

In 2012, the City initiated a contract with ALTA Planning to undertake an estimate of annual visitation. However, concurrently, the City had begun construction of the north parking lot and was developing a regulated parking program for both the north and south lots. ALTA coordinated two separate count periods during five days at five entrances to the CHWP. The counts occurred in December 2012, prior to the parking changes, and in May 2013, after the regulated parking lots had opened and the first phase of on-street parking restrictions was implemented. Given the significant change in parking opportunities between counts, the data were insufficient to develop an estimate. By summer 2013, the Council had directed staff to undertake the Master Plan. The contract was cancelled and the raw data provided to MIG, which was awarded the contract to undertake the master plan.

MIG was also tasked with developing its own count program, which was implemented by a team of volunteers in conjunction with visitor intercept questionnaires. Counts were taken on 16 different days between May to July, to include two hour time blocks during various days of the week. MIG prepared a white paper summarizing this process, "*2014 Annual Estimate Count,"* Appendix A-4. Based on the data MIG obtained through its own count process, coupled

with the data collected during the ALTA process, along with vehicle counts conducted by the Park Rangers for the last several years, MIG estimates annual visitation at approximately 500,000 visits to the CHWP. Approximately 80% of those visits are through the main entrance on N. Mills Ave.

It is important to note that a more accurate count of annual users can only be determined with a far more intensive effort than has been undertaken to date, the most accurate of which would be a daily count during operating hours over the course of a complete year. The U.S. Forest Service regularly estimates annual visitor usage at its facilities through a rigorous estimation program, and it acknowledges its estimates have a possible variance of ± 20%. Therefore, the 500,000 visits currently estimated by MIG is, at best, a very general estimate. For the purposes of developing the CHWP Master Plan, however, an understanding of general magnitude of annual visitation is sufficient to develop guidelines and standards to manage conditions and impacts at the Park.

It should be noted that the estimated number of annual visits (500,000) is not the same as the actual number of individuals who come to the park, since the vast majority of park users (86%) are repeat visitors. Using data from the intercept questionnaires can be estimated that the total number of individuals who visit CHWP at least once per week is only a few thousand. This represents a reasonably small and stable core group of regular park users which the City would need to target to create a park culture of stewardship and mutual respect.

2.2.3 Visitor Characteristics – Intercept Questionnaires

The Claremont Hills Wilderness Park (CHWP) Intercept Questionnaire was designed to collect information from the perspective of park users upon completing their visit to the CHWP. From Monday, May 5, 2014 to Friday, July 18, 2014, the City of Claremont conducted intercept questionnaires with visitors to the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park. Questionnaires were administered by volunteers over approximately 16 days in 2-hour time blocks, during weekdays and weekends within those dates. Visitors were asked upon exiting the trails if they would participate in the questionnaire. To ensure a representative sample of visitors, volunteers were scheduled throughout various times of the day and were simultaneously stationed at five different hillside access points including: 1) North Mills Avenue, 2) Pomello Drive/TCT, 3) Mountain Avenue, 4) Padua Avenue, and 5) Pomona College's Evey Canyon trail head.

Based on information obtained through these questionnaires the majority of visitors arrive by car (88%), access the CHWP from the North Mills Avenue entry (80%), and are not first-time visitors (86%). The overwhelming majority of survey respondents stated they were using the Park for exercise and to stay in shape (96%), with additional reasons given as experiencing peace and quiet (27%), viewing scenery (25%), and socializing with friends (20%). A strong majority of visitors use the park for walking/hiking (75%) or jogging/running (20%), with fewer numbers biking (5%) and horseback riding (< 1%). Among those visitors providing zip code information, 18% were from Claremont and 82% from neighboring communities. A strong

majority of visitors from other communities (86%) enter at the North Mills gate to enjoy the loop.

When asked what detracts from a positive experience in the Park, respondents mentioned lack of parking (23%), trash on the trail (17%), lack of restroom facilities (15%), and trails being too crowded (14%). Recommendations are made in Chapter 4 of the Master Plan and in the Implementation Plan to address these issues. Significantly, when asked whether the number of visitors seen on the trail had a negative effect on their experience, 92% said No, 3% said Yes, and 3% were Unsure.

Visitors also were asked what makes for an enjoyable visit to the CHWP. The top three responses were loop trails (66%), long distance rides and hikes (46%) and observing the scenery (44%). Other positive experiences included socializing with friends (30%), seeking solitude (23%), and observing and learning about nature (22%). It is encouraging that over 88% of both Claremont residents and others indicated that they consider conservation either very important (73%) or important (15%), and that 54% of respondents expressed positive or strong support for the development of interpretive programs to learn about natural and cultural resources in the CHWP.

2.2.4 Carrying Capacity

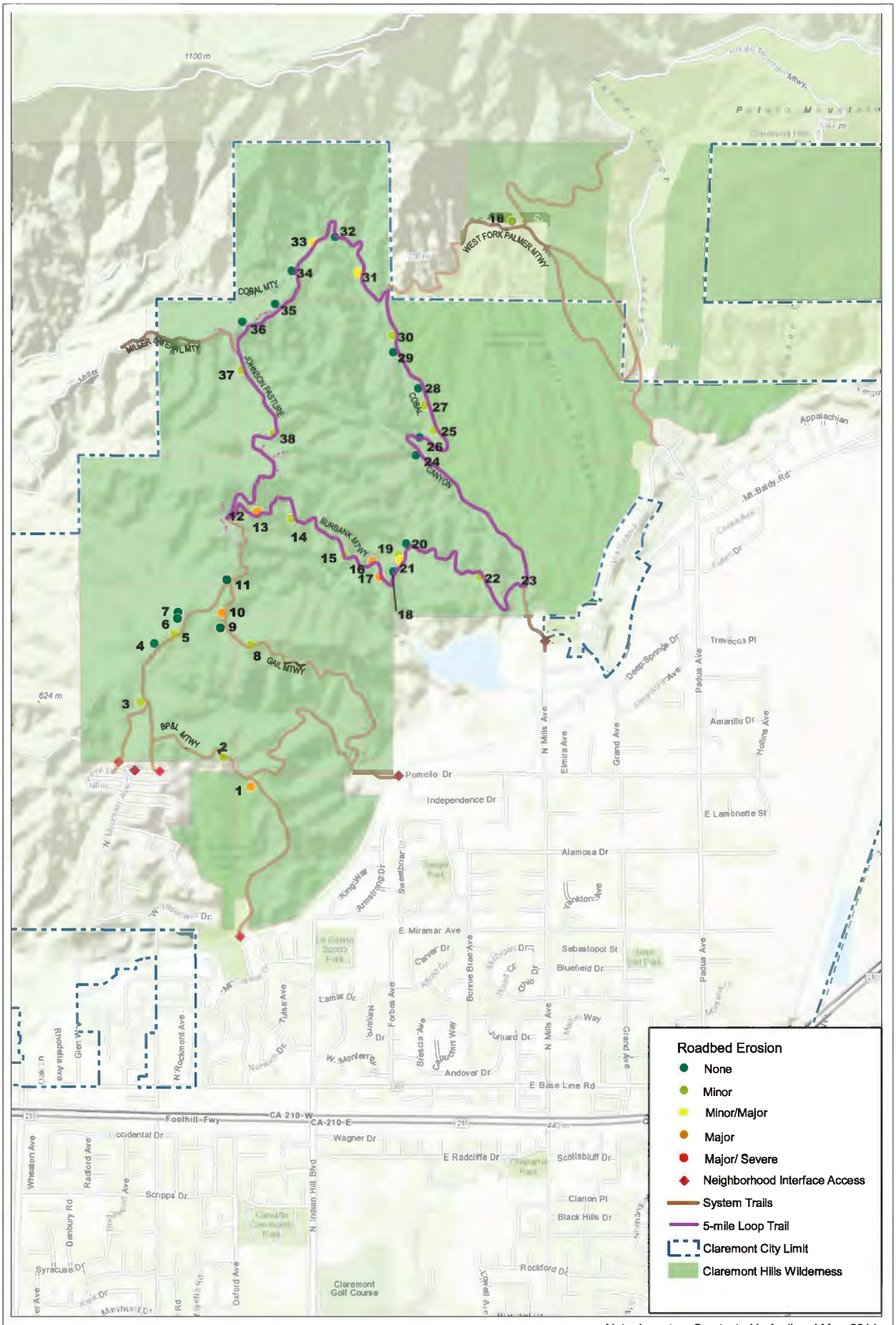
A core issue to address for the master planning process was determining at what point visitor use resulted in substantial environmental and/or social impacts, including those to the surrounding neighborhoods. To evaluate carrying capacity for this Master Plan, MIG used a framework developed by Dr. Bo Shelby, a national subject matter expert on visitor carrying capacity. Dr. Shelby (Shelby and Heberlien 1986) has stated that in order to establish visitor carrying capacities, there must be a relationship between visitor use levels and at least one of the following: social, biological, or physical factors. Social factors pertain to the extent to which visitors are comfortable with the level of encounters they have with other visitors. Biological factors pertain to the types of plants and animals and their habitats in the host facility. Physical factors pertain to roads, trails, and parking lots. In previous research to evaluate trail use levels and impacts to these three factors, it has been difficult to find relationships between the number of visitors and impacts to biological and physical resources. Impacts to biological resources as a function of trail use are often mixed and complex, and impacts to the trails themselves are sometimes more strongly related to poor design and placement rather than the number of people that use them. However, social factors can be more readily evaluated as a potential limiting factor with visitor surveys, as some visitors may negatively evaluate interactions with other visitors encountered (e.g., crowding) during a park visit.

Physical trail conditions were rated using a system developed by Mr. Timothy Best, a certified engineering geologist, for the Marin County Road and Trail Management Plan. While the fire roads, which are maintained by LA County Fire, were generally considered to be in good condition during trail inspections conducted in the spring of 2014, erosion was noted at 25 of the 38 trail locations throughout the Park (Exhibit 4). Further analysis showed that most fire road locations with erosion were either not designed to facilitate proper drainage, or drainage

structures were not functioning properly (Appendix A.5: Trail Inventory Results). Therefore, because of trail design and maintenance issues, the physical condition of fire roads and trails is not a quantifiable factor to limit visitor levels in the CHWP.

Nevin's barberry plant
Source: BonTerra Psomas

Biological and cultural resource conditions were evaluated by BonTerra Psomas. Overall, they found biological and cultural resources in the CHWP to be in good condition. Visitor impacts were considered minimal and were noted as: 1) trash and litter, 2) sanitation (human waste), and 3) erosion along unauthorized trails. None of these three categories are having major impacts on the overall condition of biological or cultural resources. In regard to sensitive plants, a Nevin's barberry plant was found immediately adjacent to the 5-mile loop trail in Cobal Canyon. In regard to large mammals that are found in the CHWP, there are no substantial migration barriers to the national forest lands located north of the Park. Environmental impacts attributable to the number of park visitors are not significant and can be mitigated with on-site trail amenities, trail management, public education, and enforcement.



Note: Inventory Conducted in April and May, 2014.

Exhibit 4: Existing Trail Conditions

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Additional details for these conclusions are found in Chapter 3, Resource Management Plan. Therefore, based on the Baseline Environmental Assessment (Appendix B), biological and cultural resources are not a quantifiable factor to limit visitor use levels in the CHWP.

Social conditions were evaluated by conducting a park intercept survey at CHWP access points. Survey respondents were asked to estimate how many people they saw during their visit (40% indicated 0-25 people, and 32% indicated 26-50). However, the majority of survey respondents (93%) indicated that the number of people they saw did *not* negatively impact their experience. Therefore, interactions with other visitors is not deemed an appropriate factor to limit visitor levels based on visitor feedback.

Parking that occurs outside of the designated parking areas has created a nuisance for neighbors adjacent to the main entrance. Car counts conducted by City ranger staff found an average of 182 cars parked on streets within one mile of the North Mills Avenue entrance during early weekend mornings (7:30-9:30 a.m.) and an average of 113 cars during late weekend mornings (11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.). Therefore, the number of parking spaces within the parking lots is an identified physical limiting factor that could be used to determine CHWP carrying capacity. This conclusion is similar to one reached in the 2013 version of the Merced River Comprehensive River Plan. The National Park Service found that although some visitors experienced crowding along trails and at attraction points under some conditions, the most limiting factor to visitor use in the Yosemite Valley was a lack of day use parking. For the CHWP, after evaluating physical factors (roads, parking, and trails), biological factors (plants, wildlife, and habitats), and social factors (visitor experiences), MIG concluded that parking is a limiting factor to visitor use at CHWP. There are currently a total of 177 parking spaces in both lots. Recommendations are made in the Implementation Plan to address parking impacts.

2.2.5 Technical Advisory Committee

Technical Advisory Committees are commonly used to help guide development for Park Master Plans. For the CHWP Master Plan a thirteen member Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to represent diverse community stakeholders was formed to facilitate public vetting and to develop collaborative solutions for park management. The TAC was comprised of representatives from each of the five adjacent neighborhoods (including a County unincorporated area), representatives from both the Claremont Wildlands Conservancy and the Claremont Hills Conservation Conservancy, representatives of the Community and Human Services Commission and the Planning Commission, and two members at large. The overall purpose of the TAC was to provide the City feedback into the public engagement process and input on specific issue areas to be addressed by the Master Plan. Other tasks the TAC carried out included educating and informing the broader community about research undertaken during the master planning process, promoting constructive dialogue about issues being addressed by the Plan, and reconciling competing interests and objectives. TAC members coordinated two meetings in community member homes with interested members of the public to address two topic areas: 1) neighborhood relations and parking issues and 2) trail sharing within the Park. Meeting participants were divided into two groups to address each of

these topic areas. Meeting dialogue was summarized for the City to help inform development of Master Plan recommendations (Appendix C). Specifically, the meeting summaries highlighted ways to address sanitation and trash along the trails, trail sharing, the need for coordination between the City and LA County for maintenance issues, and the need for more ranger staff. The TAC also coordinated two hikes for TAC members, staff, and neighbors to hike the main loop together to discuss observations onsite. The TAC also played a substantial role in reviewing staff reports that included results of technical studies and potential management options to address issues. In addition, the CWC helped develop the Park intercept questionnaire and volunteered to coordinate the visitor intercept surveys and count. Several TAC members assisted with that process throughout the summer. The volunteer engagement in survey efforts significantly increased the amount of data about Park visitors that MIG was able to process and analyze in developing Master Plan recommendations.

2.3 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a brief background about the CHWP, and its formation, funding sources, and deed restrictions. It discusses the impetus for the Master Plan, followed by an overview of key results from the technical studies that guide the recommendations found throughout the Master Plan. From 1973 to 2011, $20 million (a combination of local and regional funds) was spent to acquire the various parcels that currently comprise the CHWP. Deed restrictions and easements associated with these acquisitions require the City to preserve open space while allowing passive forms of recreation. Visitor use of the park has increased from about 30,000 to more than 500,000 annual visits in 2014. A carrying capacity analysis was conducted by MIG to determine the number of visitors that the CHWP could accommodate, and focused on biological, physical, and social factors. The analysis concluded that biological and social factors are not impacted by visitor use, but that a lack of parking facilities during peak use periods was impacting neighborhoods adjacent to the CHWP. Residents in those neighborhoods have experienced a loss of privacy and solitude, as well as vandalism, and have expressed concerns about their safety in addition to the safety of park visitors.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to represent residents was formed to facilitate public vetting and to develop collaborative solutions for park management. The purpose of the TAC was to provide the City feedback on the public engagement process and input on specific issue areas to be addressed by the Master Plan. Other tasks the TAC has been involved with included educating and informing the broader community about research undertaken during the master planning process, promoting constructive dialogue about issues being addressed by the Plan, and reconciling competing interests and objectives.

CHAPTER 3: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter documents current natural and cultural resource conditions at the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park (CHWP) to support the development of a Master Plan (Master Plan) and ongoing efforts to manage the natural resources within the City-owned hillsides. Specifically, the purpose of this chapter is to (1) describe current site conditions; (2) analyze the potential for various special status plant and wildlife species to occur at CHWP; (3) describe archaeological resources on or near the project site; (4) identify and discuss prominent land management issues; and (5) provide recommendations for long-term management of the biological, archaeological, and watershed resources of the CHWP.

3.1.1 Project Location and Site Description

The study area for the environmental work is located in Los Angeles County, directly adjacent to the southwestern boundary of San Bernardino County, in the northern portion of the City of Claremont (City) (Exhibits 1 and 2). Thompson Creek - with its tributaries from Cobal, Williams, and Palmer Canyons – is the easternmost tributary of the San Gabriel River. It is comprised of approximately 2,000 acres that make up the CHWP. The study area is located on the southern slopes of the San Gabriel Mountains, between residential neighborhoods in the City of Claremont and wilderness areas of the Angeles National Forest. The study area is located on the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS') Mt. Baldy 7.5-minute quadrangle map. Topography of the area includes foothills and creek bottoms with elevations ranging from approximately 1,500 to 3,100 feet above mean sea level (msl). The environmental study area does not include isolated parcels to the northeast of main portion of the CHWP.

Private residences occur along the southern and southeastern edges of the study area along Mt. Baldy Road, the Thompson Creek Trail, and in a small neighborhood west of Sycamore Canyon Park. Native habitat areas in the Angeles National Forest are located north of the study area. The Thompson Creek Reservoir, which is owned and maintained by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW), is located south of the study area adjacent to the Mills parking lot. Immediately south of the Reservoir and north of Pomello Drive are the Thompson Creek Spreading Grounds, owned by the Pomona Valley Protective Association. Additional County of Los Angeles and County of San Bernardino flood-control facilities are located east of the study area. Surrounding land uses include open space, recreation, and residential.

Access to the CHWP is provided principally at the southeastern corner of the park near the northern terminus of N. Mills Avenue where the City operates the park's main parking lot. An additional parking lot is located nearby at the corner of N. Mills Ave. and Mt. Baldy Rd., which also provides parking for Thompson Creek Trail users. Additional park access is available at (1)

the southwestern corner of the park off Via Santa Catarina and Highpoint Drive and (2) the Sycamore Canyon portion of the CHWP via the Thompson Creek Trail. No parking lot facilities are present at these entry points, although a small parking lot is located on N. Indian Hill Boulevard across from La Puerta Park with access to the Thompson Creek Trail.

One of the most prominent attractions of the study area is the presence of a trail system that serves both as fuel breaks for fire management and for recreational hiking. The Claremont Hills Wilderness Park is comprised of more than 9 miles of trails including the main loop, Johnsons Pasture, Gale Mountain, and Sycamore Canyon. The main loop trail begins at the primary entrance to the park on N. Mills Ave., inclusive of Burbank and Cobal Canyons, before proceeding mostly through upland areas and along ridgelines before returning to the main parking lot off Mills Avenue, for a total distance of approximately 4.5 miles. From this loop trail, additional trails extend northeast into the Angeles National Forest, to the west to Marshall Canyon County Park, to the north Palmer and Evey Canyon and Potato Mountain, and to the south toward the Via Santa Catarina/Highpoint Drive park entry points, extending southward to the Sycamore Canyon portion of the park. Because of these connections, the CHWP trails are part of a regional trail system, in addition to the very popular main loop.

3.2 SURVEY METHODS

Reconnaissance level surveys by BonTerra Psomas staff members consisted of field visits and records searches to document the presence or potential presence of biological and cultural resources. Reconnaissance level surveys are a widely accepted best practice for conducting natural and cultural resource inventories. More intensive survey efforts are only warranted when specific ground disturbing activities in specific locations have been identified as part of further research efforts for specific projects. This section describes the methods used to perform the surveys and analyses undertaken for the master planning effort. MIG acknowledges that the City commissioned biological and cultural resource surveys in 1996; these surveys have been consulted in the preparation of the information below.

3.2.1 Biological Surveys

Records Search

The California Native Plant Society's (CNPS') Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS 2014) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW's) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFW 2014) were reviewed prior to the survey to identify special status plants, wildlife, and habitats known to occur in the vicinity of the study area. The CNPS Inventory references the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR), which categorizes species as either List 1A ("Plants Presumed Extinct in California"); List 1B ("Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere"); List 2A ("Plants Presumed Extinct in California but More Common Elsewhere"); List 2B ("Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California But More Common Elsewhere"); List 3 ("Plants that Require More Information"); or List 4 ("Plants of Limited Distribution"). These databases are standard tools for determining the potential for special status species to occur on a project site. Database searches included the USGS Mt. Baldy, Glendora, Crystal Lake, Mount San Antonio, Telegraph

Peak, Cucamonga Peak, Guasti, Ontario, and San Dimas 7.5-minute quadrangles. Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) Critical Habitat documents were used to identify any portions of the study area occurring within proposed or designated Critical Habitat.[1] The literature review also included a review of the Angeles National Forest Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, and Forest Service Sensitive Plants and Animals (USFS 2011).

Field Visits

BonTerra Psomas Senior Biologist/Botanist Jennifer Pareti and Biologist Sarah Thomas conducted a general biological reconnaissance survey and vegetation mapping in the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park study area on March 18, 20, and 24, 2014. Ms. Pareti performed follow-up site visits on April 9, and 12, 2014, to refine the vegetation mapping. Representative photographs of the park were taken during these field visits and are provided in Attachment A.

Plants were identified using Baldwin et al. (2012) and the Jepson Flora Project (2012). Taxonomy follows Baldwin et al. (2012) and current scientific data (e.g., scientific journals) for scientific and common names. Vegetation communities were generally classified using *A Manual of California Vegetation* (Sawyer et al. 2009). Additionally, communities described in Holland (1986) and the CDFW's Natural Communities List (CDFG 2010) were considered while classifying vegetation. Vegetation was mapped in the field on an aerial photograph at a scale of 1 inch equals 200 feet (1"=200'). Assumptions were made utilizing current aerials and Google Earth for portions of the study area that were not accessible. All species observed were recorded in field notes. A list of plant species observed is included as Attachment B.

Active searches for reptiles and amphibians included lifting, overturning, and carefully replacing rocks and debris. Birds were identified by visual and auditory recognition. Surveys for mammals were conducted during the day and included searching for and identifying diagnostic signs, including scat, footprints, scratch-outs, dust bowls, burrows, and trails. Taxonomy and nomenclature for wildlife generally follows Fisher and Case (1997) for amphibians and reptiles, American Ornithologists Union (1998) for birds, and Baker et al. (2003) for mammals. All species observed were recorded in field notes. A list of wildlife species observed is included as Attachment B of the BonTerra Psomas report (Appendix B.1).

Additionally, unauthorized trails, non-native invasive plant species, and other biological resources of interest were mapped in the field on an aerial photograph at a 1"=200' scale.

3.2.2 Cultural Resources Survey

Records Search

BonTerra Psomas Senior Archaeologist David M. Smith conducted a cultural resources records search and literature review at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton on May 13, 2014, to determine if the property had been subject to a cultural resources survey and if any cultural resources had been recorded on or within a one-mile radius. The SCCIC is the designated branch of the California Historical

[1] Critical Habitat, as defined in the Federal Endangered Species Act, refers to specific geographic areas that contain features essential for the conservation of a Threatened or Endangered species and that may require special management and protection.

Resources Information System (CHRIS) for the project area and houses records concerning archaeological and historic resources in Los Angeles, Ventura, and Orange Counties. Data sources consulted at the SCCIC included archaeological records, Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility, historic maps, and the Historic Property Data File (HPDF) maintained by the California Office of Historic Preservation. The HPDF contains listings for the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) and/or National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Historical Landmarks, and California Points of Historical Interest.

Paleontological Resources Records Search
A review of the vertebrate paleontology records housed at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) was completed by Dr. Sam McLeod on May 23, 2014 (McLeod 2014).

Native American Heritage Commission Notification
On May 8, 2014, BonTerra Psomas notified the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) of the proposed project and requested a review of their Sacred Lands File to determine if Native American cultural resources and/or sacred places were located on or near the park. The NAHC responded in writing on May 16, 2014, and provided a list of Native American groups and individuals who may have additional knowledge regarding Native American cultural resources not formally listed on any database. Tribes and individuals were notified in writing of the proposed project on May 19, 2014, and were invited to provide comments or questions regarding the project.

Field Visit
On May 29, 2014, Mr. Smith visited the park to locate the cultural resources previously observed on the property.

3.3 BIOLOGICAL SURVEY RESULTS

3.3.1 Vegetation Types

Vegetation types and land covers that were observed in the study area were broken into six vegetative communities: coastal sage scrub communities, chaparral communities, riparian areas, woodlands, non-native communities, and other areas. A map of vegetation types that exist within the park boundaries is provided in Exhibit 5. Within these six habitat communities, vegetation types include California buckwheat scrub, California sagebrush scrub, sagebrush – annual grassland ecotone, laurel sumac scrub, laurel sumac scrub/annual grassland, chamise – black sage chaparral, chamise chaparral, scrub oak chaparral, California sagebrush – laurel sumac scrub, coast live oak woodland, California sycamore – coast live oak riparian woodland, California sycamore – coast live oak woodland – restoration, California sycamore woodland, willow thickets, mule fat thickets, coast live oak woodland, annual grassland, eucalyptus stands, ornamental, developed, and disturbed (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1: Vegetation Types and Other Areas Mapped Within the Study Area

Vegetation Types or Other Areas	Amount (Acres)
Sage Scrub Communities	
California buckwheat scrub	5.9
California sagebrush scrub	262.1
sagebrush – annual grassland ecotone	48.0
Sage Scrub Communities Subtotal	*316.0*
Chaparral Communities	
laurel sumac scrub	57.0
laurel sumac scrub/annual grassland	57.0
chamise – black sage chaparral	240.3
chamise chaparral	249.3
scrub oak chaparral	171.3
Chaparral Communities Subtotal	*774.9*
Sage Scrub – Chaparral Ecotone	
California sagebrush – laurel sumac scrub	232.4
Sage Scrub – Chaparral Ecotone Subtotal	*232.4*
Riparian Communities	
coast live oak riparian woodland	113.4
California sycamore – coast live oak riparian	24.0
California sycamore – coast live oak woodland –	0.3
California sycamore woodland	26.8
willow thickets	0.8
mule fat thickets	0.4
Riparian Communities Subtotal	*165.7*
Upland Woodland Communities	
coast live oak woodland	25.2
Upland Woodland Subtotal	*25.2*
Non-Native Communities	
annual grassland	145.7
eucalyptus stands	10.8
ornamental	2.7
Non-Native Communities Subtotal	*159.2*

Table 3-1: Vegetation Types and Other Areas Mapped Within the Study Area

Vegetation Types or Other Areas	Amount (Acres)
Other Areas	
developed	4.6
disturbed	25.9
Other Subtotal	*30.5*
Total	***1,703.9***

Sage Scrub Communities

California buckwheat scrub occurs in small patches or strips scattered throughout the western and southern portions of the study area. This vegetation type is dominated by California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) with scattered California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), coastal deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), and sessileflower goldenaster (*Heterotheca sessiliflora*). The understory consists of herbaceous species dominated by non-native grasses (*Bromus* spp.).

California sagebrush scrub occurs throughout the eastern portion of the study area. This vegetation type is dominated by California sagebrush, with California buckwheat, white sage (*Saliva apiana*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*). The understory includes herbaceous species such as blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), and red brome (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*).

Sagebrush – annual grassland ecotone occurs on south-facing slopes in the southern portion of the study area. This vegetation type represents areas of transition due to previous disturbances such as grazing. These areas contain significant quantities of non-native grasses such as ripgut brome, red brome, and slender wild oat (*Avena barbata*) with native annual species including succulent lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), and blue dicks occurring throughout. Emergent coastal sage scrub species are present throughout and include pinebush (*Ericameria pinifolia*), California sagebrush, and California buckwheat.

Chaparral Communities

Laurel sumac scrub occurs in the southern portion of the study area. This vegetation type is dominated by laurel sumac, with other shrubs such as California sagebrush and white sage scattered sparsely throughout. Understory species are the same as those found in the other scrub vegetation types described above.

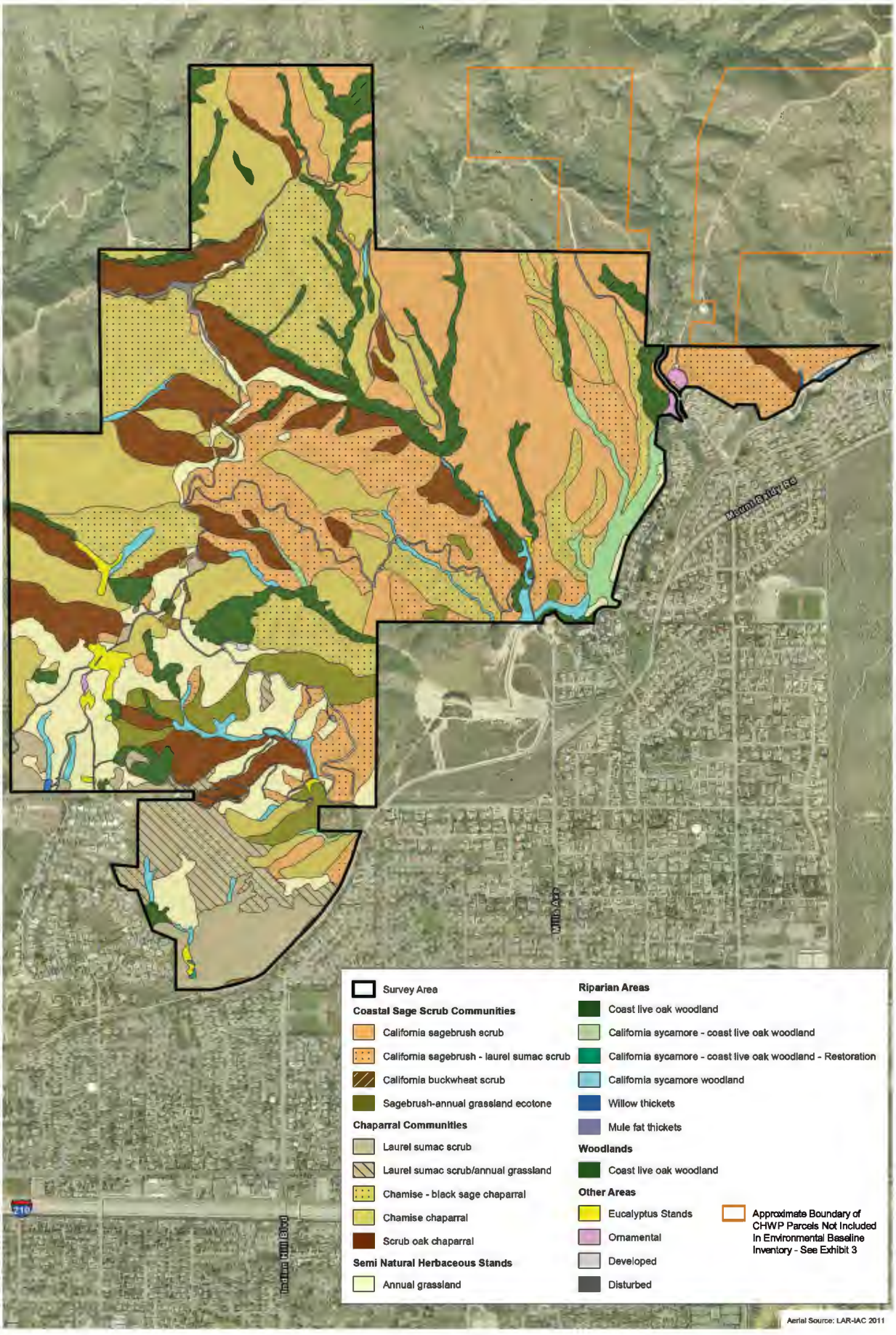


Exhibit 5: Existing Vegetation

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

1,300 650 0 1,300 Feet

Bonterra PSOMAS MIG

Laurel sumac scrub/annual grassland occurs throughout the southern portion of the study area. These areas are similar to the laurel sumac scrub described above, with areas of annual grassland incorporated throughout. This vegetation type contains the same dominant species as laurel sumac scrub, but with the inclusion of a high density of non-native annual grassland species such as ripgut brome, red brome, and slender wild oat.

Chamise – black sage chaparral occurs in large areas in the western portion of the study area and smaller portions of the eastern study area. This vegetation type is co-dominated by chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) and black sage. Additional species commonly occurring in this vegetation type include California sagebrush, hoaryleaf ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*), bush monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), laurel sumac, and toyon, with an understory of non-native grasses.

Chamise chaparral occurs in the northern, central, and western portions of the study area. This vegetation type is dominated by chamise with hoaryleaf ceanothus, laurel sumac, black sage, California sagebrush, and toyon. Areas of chamise near the intersection of Johnson's Pasture and Burbank Roads are degraded with shortpod mustard (*Hirshfeldia incana*) and non-native grasses.

Scrub oak chaparral occurs on north-facing slopes across the study area. This vegetation type is dominated by San Gabriel scrub oak (*Quercus durata* ssp. *gabrielensis*), with hoaryleaf ceanothus, little leaved red berry (*Rhamnus crocea*), skunk bush (*Rhus aromarica*), hillside gooseberry (*Ribes californicum*), heart-leaved bush-penstemon (*Keckiella cordifolia*), southern honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata* var*. denudata*), chamise, white sage, and scattered bush monkeyflower.

Sage Scrub – Chaparral Ecotone

California sagebrush – laurel sumac scrub occurs throughout the central and eastern portions of the study area. Within this vegetation type, California sagebrush is co-dominated by laurel sumac. Other shrub species mentioned above are also found in lesser amounts within this vegetation type. The understory consists of herbaceous species dominated by non-native grasses.

Riparian Communities

Coast live oak riparian woodland occurs along drainages throughout the study area. Coast live oak riparian woodland is dominated by coast live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*), with canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*), western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), San Gabriel scrub oak, toyon, and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*). The understory is open and dominated by western poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), with mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*), giant wild rye (*Elymus condensatus*), wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpus*), common miner's-lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata* ssp. *perfoliata*), and non-native grasses including ripgut brome and hare barley (*Hordeum murinum* var. *leporinum*).

California sycamore – coast live oak riparian woodland occurs in the southeastern drainage of the study area as well as additional smaller drainages throughout the study area. This vegetation type has a dense tree canopy that is dominated by western sycamore and coast live

oak. Additional species include blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), and scattered California sagebrush and chamise.

California sycamore – coast live oak woodland – restoration occurs along Sycamore Canyon in the southern portion of the study area. Areas here have been cleared along the riparian drainage, and western sycamore and coast live oak have been planted. These planted trees are young; therefore the canopy is open and coastal sage scrub species including California sagebrush, laurel sumac, and deer weed (*Acmispon glaber* var*. glaber*) are present with ripgut brome, shortpod mustard, and hare's ear cabbage (*Sisymbrium orientale*).

California sycamore woodland occurs in the drainages throughout the study area. This vegetation type is dominated by western sycamore and mule fat, with blue elderberry, California gooseberry (*Ribes californicum*), coast live oak, black willow (*Salix gooddingii*), narrow-leaved willow (*Salix exigua*), oak mistletoe (*Phoradendron serotinum* ssp*. tomentosum*), and chaparral nightshade (*Solanum xanti*). The understory consists of herbaceous species including non-native grasses.

Willow thickets occur in the basins adjacent to the eastern and southwestern boundaries of the study area. These areas are dominated by young arroyo willow, with mule fat and cattails (*Typha* sp.).

Mule fat thickets occur along the California sycamore woodland riparian drainage in Johnson's Pasture and consist of dense mule fat.

Upland Woodland Communities

Coast live oak woodland occurs on north-trending slopes in Johnson's Pasture and is dominated by coast live oak. Additional species occurring in this vegetation type include San Gabriel scrub oak, chamise, and laurel sumac, with an understory of non-native grasses.

Non-Native Communities and Other Areas

Annual grassland occurs throughout Johnson's Pasture in the southwestern portion of the study area. This vegetation type is dominated by non-native grasses, including slender wild oat, ripgut brome, and red brome with non-native weedy species including shortpod mustard, common horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), and sourclover (*Melilotus indica*), and annual native species such as California milkweed (*Asclepias californica*) and blue dicks. Scattered chaparral species and sage scrub species listed above also occur throughout the grasslands. Additional disturbed or cleared areas occur in the study area and are comprised of non-native grasses, mustards, and other disturbance-following species including red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), strigose lotus (*Acmispon strigosus*), and miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*).

Eucalyptus stands occur primarily in the southwestern portions of the study area in Johnson's Pasture and Sycamore Canyon. The eucalyptus stands in Johnson's Pasture are generally upland stands of eucalyptus trees (*Eucalyptus* spp.) with an understory of semi-natural herbaceous species as listed above. The eucalyptus stands in Sycamore Canyon occur along the downstream portion of a riparian corridor. This area is dominated by eucalyptus trees with scattered black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and coast live oak. Mule fat, ash trees (*Fraxinus*

sp.), fan palms (*Washingtonia* sp.), tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), mugwort, and western poison oak are present in the understory. Additional stands of eucalyptus occur along Cobal Canyon with Peruvian pepper trees (*Schinus molle*) and pines (*Pinus* sp.).

Ornamental areas occur in the eastern portion of the study area and consist of planted rows of olive trees (*Olea europaea*). A stand of pine trees occurs in Johnson's Pasture and is included as ornamental vegetation.

Developed areas in the study area consist of paved roads and concrete utility pads.

Disturbed areas consist of dirt roads that have little to no vegetation. These dirt roads include the Cobal Canyon, Burbank, and Johnson's Pasture trails. Transitional areas immediately adjacent to the fire road trails include disturbance-following species such as red-stemmed filaree, strigose lotus, miniature lupine, Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), slender wild oat, and ripgut brome.

3.3.2 Exotic Vegetation

Exotic vegetation is commonly found in many parts of the study area, though instances of non-native invasive plant species are relatively low. Non-native vegetation observed in the study area consists mainly of eucalyptus trees, castor bean (*Ricinus communis*), tree tobacco, Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*), pine trees, and Peruvian pepper trees. Along the main trails, a consistent cover of non-native grasses and mustards extends a few feet from the edge of the trails, which is a result of constant disturbance from fire clearance and human and/or dog traffic. Non-native grasses and shortpod mustard also occur at isolated locations along trails where spoils from trail maintenance have disturbed adjacent side slopes.

3.3.3 Special Status Vegetation Types

In addition to providing an inventory of special status plant and wildlife species, the CNDDB also provides an inventory of vegetation types that are considered special status by State and federal resource agencies, academic institutions, and various conservation groups (such as the CNPS). Determination of the level of imperilment is based on the NatureServe Heritage Program Status Ranks that rank both species and vegetation types on a global (**G**) and statewide (**S**) basis according to their rarity; trend in population size or area; and recognized threats (e.g., proposed developments, habitat degradation, and non-native species invasion). The ranks are scaled from 1 to 5. NatureServe considers **G1 or S1** communities to be critically imperiled and at a very high risk of extinction or elimination due to extreme rarity, very steep declines, or other factors; **G2 or S2** communities to be imperiled and at high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations or occurrences, steep declines, or other factors; **G3 or S3** communities to be vulnerable and at moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences, recent and widespread declines, or other factors; **G4 or S4** communities to be apparently secure and uncommon, but not rare with some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors; and **G5 or S5** communities to be secure (Faber-Langendoen et al. 2009).

All vegetation alliances[2] that have State ranks of S1 to S3 are considered to be highly imperiled. Currently, association ranks are not provided, but associations ranked as S3 or rarer are noted. These vegetation types in the study area would be considered special status: scrub oak chaparral, California sycamore – coast live oak riparian woodland, California sycamore woodland, and willow thickets.

3.3.4 Special Status Plant and Wildlife Species

Plants or wildlife may be considered to have "special status" due to declining populations, vulnerability to habitat change, or restricted distributions. Certain special status species have been listed as Threatened or Endangered under the California and/or Federal Endangered Species Acts. A summary of special status plant and wildlife species known to occur in the project region and their potential to occur in the study area is provided in Attachment C.

3.3.5 Special Status Plants

Several special status plant species are known to occur or have historically occurred in the vicinity of the study area. Five of these species are federally and/or State-listed Threatened or Endangered: Braunton's milk-vetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*), Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*), thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*), and slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*). Brand's star phacelia (*Phacelia stellaris*) is a Candidate species for federal listing. Potentially suitable habitat exists in the study area for each of these species. Nevin's barberry was observed during the reconnaissance survey. Any impacts to this species, if present, would be considered significant under Section 15380 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

In addition to species formally listed by the resource agencies, multiple species reported in the vicinity of the study area are designated by the CRPR as List 1B and 2 plant species that may be considered constraints on project-related activities according to CEQA. Potentially suitable habitat exists in the study area for the following List 1B and List 2 plant species: round-leaved filaree (*California macrophylla*), slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*), late-flowered mariposa lily (*Calochortus fimbriatus* [*Calochortus weedii* var. *vestus*]), intermediate mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii* var. *intermedius*), Parry's spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *parryi*), San Gabriel River dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *crebrifolia*), many-stemmed dudleya (*Dudleya multicaulis*), San Gabriel bedstraw (*Galium grande*), mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* var. *puberula*), California satintail (*Imperata brevifolia*), knotted rush (*Juncus nodosus*), white rabbit-tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*), chaparral ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*), San Bernardino aster (*Symphyotrichum defoliatum*), Greata's aster (*Symphyotrichum greatae*), and Sonoran maiden fern (*Thelypteris puberula* var. *sonorensis*). Impacts on these species would be considered potentially significant depending on the size of the population, if present, relative to populations in the region.

[2] A vegetation alliance is "a classification unit of vegetation, containing one or more associations and defined by one or more diagnostic species, often of high cover, in the uppermost layer or the layer with the highest canopy cover" (Sawyer et al. 2009).

Several of the species listed above are also listed as sensitive species by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). While the project site is not within the Angeles National Forest boundary, these species are included in Table C-1 in Attachment C to identify possible opportunities to augment management or conservation programs with the USFS.

Special Status Wildlife

Several special status wildlife species are known to occur in the vicinity of the study area (CDFW 2014). One of these species, the coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) is federally listed as threatened, and potentially suitable habitat occurs in the study area. Historical occurrences of coastal California gnatcatcher have been documented approximately five miles west of the study area, but are presumed extirpated from this area due to development. United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Final Critical Habitat for the gnatcatcher occurs approximately 4.5 miles to the southwest of the study area in Bonelli Park. No contiguous habitat occurs between Bonelli Park and the study area, which reduces potential for dispersal to the study area, but does not entirely eliminate potential. The study area is contiguous with open space to the east along the foothills, where potentially suitable habitat for the gnatcatcher occurs. Potentially suitable habitat occurs in the scrub vegetation types in the southern portion of the study area.

In addition to species formally listed by the resource agencies, additional special status species may occur within the study area. Potentially suitable habitat for the following species exists in the survey area: silvery legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra pulchra*), coast (San Diego) horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillii*), coast range newt (*Taricha torosa torosa*), San Bernardino ringneck snake (*Diadophis punctatus modestus*), San Bernardino Mountain kingsnake (*Lampropeltis zonata parvirubra*), coastal rosy boa (*Lichanura* [*Charina*] *trivirgata roseofusca*), coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgultea*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), long-eared owl (*Asio otus*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*), pocketed free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops femorosaccus*), big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*), northwestern San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax fallax*), southern grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus ramona*), Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*), San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), and American badger (*Taxidea taxus*).

3.3.6 Watershed Resources

Soil Types

Soil data for the study area is taken from three sources: (1) the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Report and General Soil Map for Los Angeles County (USDA 1969); (2) the USDA's Report and General Soil Map for the Angeles National Forest (USDA 1980); and (3) the LACDPW's Hydrology Manual for Los Angeles County (LACDPW 2006). Exhibit 6 shows soils that are described in the LACDPW Hydrology Manual as this source provides the most detailed

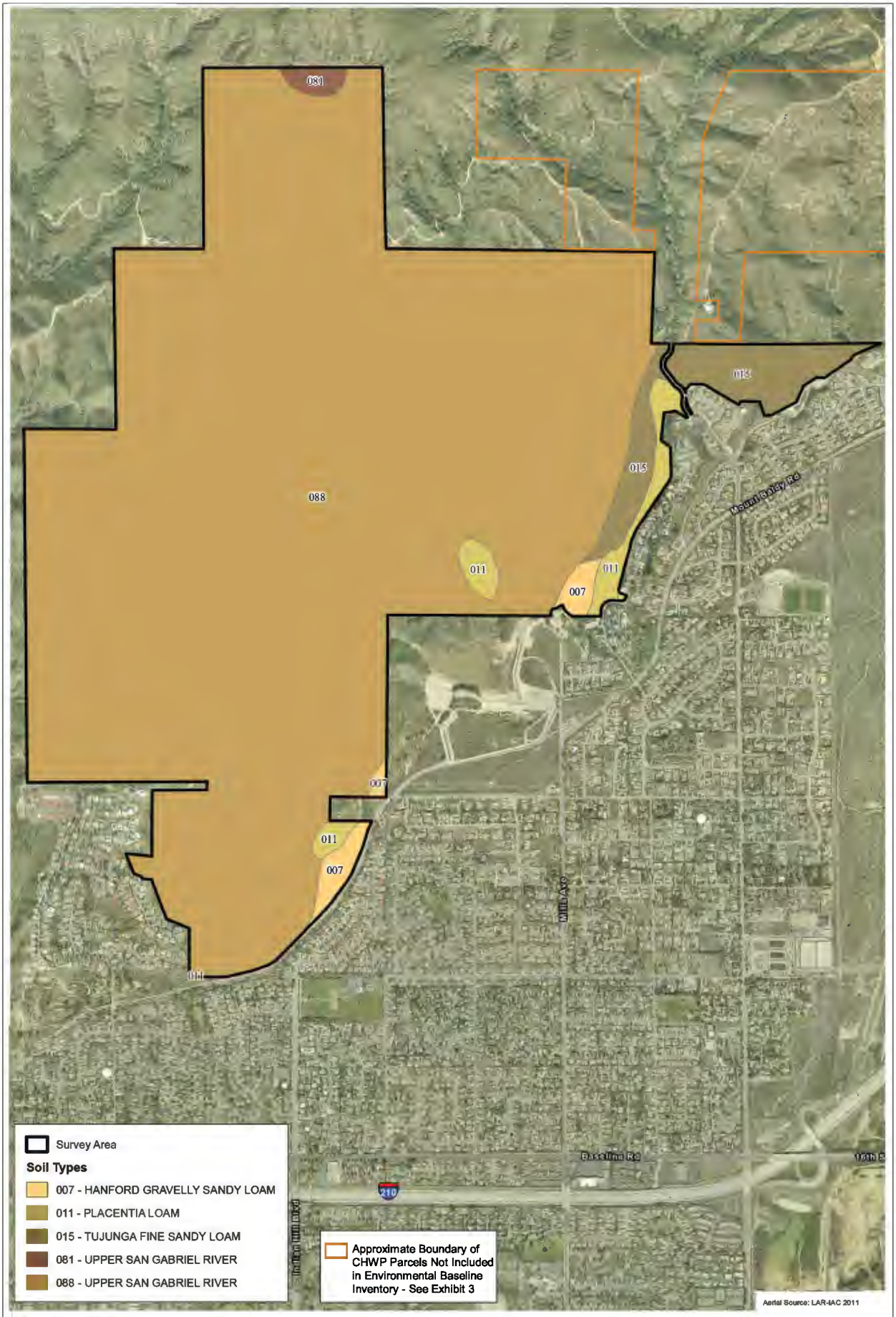


Exhibit 6: Soils

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

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PSOMAS

information for soils within the study area. Results from each of these sources are discussed below. The study area is covered by the Los Angeles County General Soil Map, but soil is only described to the association level. This report identifies most of the study area as containing the Vista-Amargosa association, with one area containing the Ramona-Placentia association.

Vista-Amargosa soils are found in steep mountainous areas. Vista soils make up 45 percent of the association, with Amargosa soils making up 40 percent. The remaining 15 percent consist of 5 percent Godde soils, 5 percent Saugus soils, and 5 percent rock land. The surface layer is coarse sandy loam, about 14 to 20 inches deep. Subsoils are brown sandy loam, approximately 14-20 inches thick, resting on hard granitic rock. These soils are well drained and have moderately rapid soil permeability. Sheet and rill erosion are moderate on Amargosa soils, which has led to the removal of 25 to 40 percent of the surface soils, with rock outcrops covering 2 to 10 percent of the surface. Vista-Amargosa soils have low shrink-swell potential and low corrosivity. Soil erosion hazard is high to very high.

Ramona-Placentia soils are also found on strongly sloping land up to 3,900 feet above msl. Ramona soils make up about 80 percent of this association and Placentia soils contribute about 15 percent. Hanford soils make up the remaining 5 percent. These soils in the Los Angeles Basin are generally more than 60 inches deep, and are well drained with slow subsoil permeability. They are characterized by loam to sandy loam surface layers that are about 18 inches thick with brown to reddish-brown coloration. Subsoils are brown to reddish-brown with a clay to clay loam texture. These soils tend to have low permeability and are very erodible especially on steep slopes. The dense subsoil restricts the movement of air and water and the development of roots. Inherent fertility is low.

Areas immediately to the north of the study area are within the Angeles National Forest and are included in that general soil map and report. Though this area is off site, this soil report is referenced as soils are classified to the series level, providing somewhat more detailed information for the northern portion of the study area. Soils along the northern edge of the study area (presumably extending down into the study area) consist of (1) Trigo Series, granitic substratum – Exchequer families – rock outcrop complex, 60 to 100 percent slopes and (2) Chilao-Trigo Series, granitic substratum – Lodo families complex, 55 to 85 percent slopes.

Trigo soils are typically found in mountainous areas at least 1,800 feet above msl. The top layer of soil consists of loam to a depth of up to three inches. Subsoils are gravelly sandy loam to a depth of up to 17 inches deep on top of weathered bedrock. These soils are somewhat excessively drained.

The Chilao-Trigo series consists of approximately 35 percent Chilao family soils, 30 Trigo soils, 20 percent Lodo soils, and 15 percent minor components. These soils are found in mountainous areas at least 1,800 feet above msl. The top layer of soil is up to five inches deep, consisting of gravelly loam. Subsoils are very gravelly loam, up to 18 inches deep, on top of weathered bedrock. These soils are somewhat excessively drained.

The LACDPW prepared a hydrology manual to assist in their efforts to predict runoff rates based on rainfall amounts to assist in their planning efforts for flood control and water

retention activities. This manual includes information on soils in their study area, including the CHWP. Though no reference information is provided in the report to indicate how these soil types were mapped, they included the following soils in the study area: (1) Hanford gravelly sand loam; (2) Placentia loam; (3) Tujunga fine sandy loam; and (4) Upper San Gabriel River.

Soils in the Hanford series consist of very deep, well drained soils that formed in moderately coarse textured alluvium dominantly from granite. The top layer of soil is up to 12 inches deep, pale brown sandy loam. Subsoils are up to 60 inches deep consisting of loam or sandy loam soils. These soils are well-drained, with moderately rapid soil permeability and a relatively low potential for erosion. They are slightly acidic to mildly alkaline.

Placentia soils consist of well drained or moderately well-drained soils found at elevations from 50 to 2,500 feet above msl. Placentia soils are over 18 inches deep and are characterized by a brown to reddish-brown surface layer with a dense dark reddish-brown clay loam subsoil. These soils tend to have low permeability and are very erodible, especially on steep slopes. The dense subsoil restricts the movement of air and water and the development of roots and is therefore considered limiting for effective soil depth. Inherent soil fertility is low.

No information could be discovered regarding soils described as "Upper San Gabriel River", which cover most of the study area.

Jurisdictional Waters

Much of the study area contains "waters of the U.S." and "waters of the State" that are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the State Water Quality Control Board, and the CDFW (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "resource agencies"). The basis for identifying these waters as jurisdictional by the USACE is the direct connection that the various channels have with the Pacific Ocean, a Traditional Navigable Waterway (TNW) as defined by Federal regulations. Principally, these waters consist of Palmer Canyon Creek, Williams Canyon Creek, and Cobal Canyon Creek in the East Side Loop Zone; Burbank Canyon Creek in the West Side Loop Zone; Gale Canyon Creek in the Johnson's Pasture area; and Sycamore Canyon Creek in the Sycamore Canyon area (Exhibit 7). Various additional unnamed streams that are tributary to the aforementioned creeks also occur in the study area.

All of the various streambeds are ephemeral (i.e., seasonal) waters that are found at the bottom of steep canyons. Riparian vegetation associated with these streambeds is generally either California sycamore woodland or California sycamore – coast live oak riparian woodland as described above in Section 3.1. Because streambed areas tend to be in steep canyons, access to these features is limited. The CHWP trail system is generally relegated to upland areas that go around the upper streambed areas. As a result, streambeds and associated riparian vegetation tends to be in an undisturbed condition, with mature vegetation and very little non-native vegetation.

While the streambeds in the study area are in generally good condition, disturbance is evidenced in various locations. Residential areas are located immediately east of Palmer Canyon and immediately west of Sycamore Canyon. Therefore, the upper banks of these areas

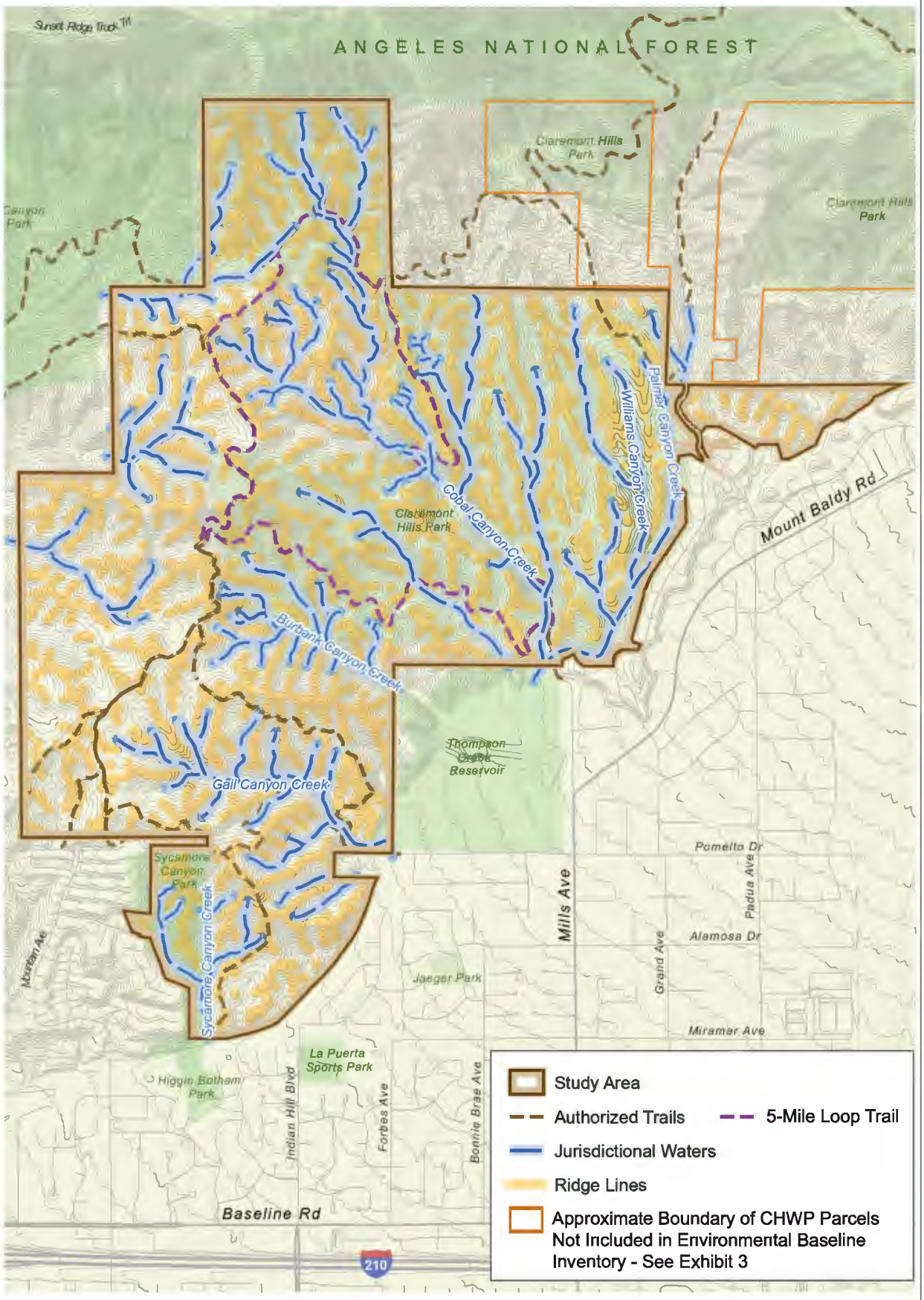

Exhibit 7: Jurisdictional Waters

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

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are subject to vegetation management for the purpose of fuel reduction to comply with the Los Angeles County Fire Code. This vegetation management results in a reduction of overall vegetative cover and encourages non-native plant establishment due to associated soil disturbance. Significant cover of non-native vegetation has not been observed, but is an ongoing potential source of riparian habitat degradation.

Areas adjacent to Gale Canyon Creek in the Johnson's Pasture area have experienced disturbance resulting from previous land use, likely livestock grazing. Native vegetation occurs along the streambed, though it is more sparse than other portions of the study area. Non-native annual grass species such as slender wild oat, ripgut brome, and red brome are a common component of the areas adjacent to Gale Canyon Creek.

The Cobal Canyon Creek riparian area is one of the most heavily visited portions in the study area. As a result, it also contains the most litter and off-trail human incursions. The presence of a maintained fire road/hiking trail adjacent to the lower portion of Cobal Canyon Creek provides non-native species a pathway to spread into the creek itself; however, only isolated occurrences of non-native species were observed during the field visits for this report. However, conditions change and if additional environmental resource management efforts are approved, the area could be monitored as part of an invasive species control program. Palmer Canyon Creek, Williams Canyon Creek, and Cobal Canyon Creek all enter the Thompson Creek Reservoir, a flood-control basin operated by the Pomona Valley Protective Association, a private corporation that owns and maintains (e.g., reads the gauges for water on) the Spreading Grounds; the reservoir is located immediately west of the CHWP N. Mills Avenue parking lot. These creeks all cross the Cobal Canyon trail near the entrance to the park before entering Thompson Creek Reservoir. Because of this interaction between foot traffic and potential water movement, these locations are critical for preventing litter and sediment from entering the stream system. Thompson Creek Reservoir drains into Thompson Creek flood-control channel; a short distance downstream of Thompson Creek Reservoir, Burbank Canyon Creek, Gale Canyon Creek, and Sycamore Canyon Creek all outlet into Thompson Creek. Water from Thompson Creek subsequently outlets into San Jose Creek which, in turn, outlets into the San Gabriel River, eventually reaching the Pacific Ocean. Because a direct connection exists between the streambeds in the study area and a TNW (in this case, the Pacific Ocean), all the streambeds described above would be considered "waters of the U.S.", and any CHWP projects that would potentially affect these streambeds would require resource agency permits.

3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY RESULTS

This section summarizes the findings of the Cultural Resources Study that was performed in support of the project Master Plan. The full report is provided in Appendix B.2.

Cultural Resources Records Search and Data Review

The results of the literature review showed that one cultural resources survey had been conducted within the park boundary. That survey encompassed 360 acres of parklands within Sections 21 and 27 of Township 1 North and Range 8 West on the Mt. Baldy 7.5-minute quadrangle. No cultural resources were observed or recorded during that survey.

The remainder of the park has not been intensively surveyed.

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Management Plan (1992) identified the existence of a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) temporary camp (unknown location) and a possible shepherd's camp in Palmer Canyon in the far eastern portion of the park. No conclusive documentation for the existence of the CCC camp was uncovered during any of the records searches or literature reviews. However, Human Services Manager Bill Pallotto obtained a history book for Claremont, which notes that the CCC and Works Progress Administration had constructed many of the roads in the foothills north of Claremont in the early 1930s. No mention is made of a particular CCC site located within the park boundaries. The shepherd's camp was informally documented on October 3, 1993, by archaeologist Anne Stoll. In May of 2014, Ms. Stoll provided BonTerra Psomas copies of her field notes, which included: a photo, several sketch maps, and a typed description of the site. Ms. Stoll speculated that the site might represent a structure built by an Indian shepherd. However, according to the Chief of the Shoshone Gabrielino Nation, Ya'Anna Vera Rocha, the area was used for grazing by Basque Sheepherders, a commonly observed activity occurring well into the late 20th Century throughout the San Gabriel Mountains.

3.4.1 Native American Sacred Lands File Review

The NAHC search of the Sacred Lands File did not identify the presence of Native American cultural places on or near the project site. The NAHC also provided a list of Native American individuals/organizations that may have knowledge of cultural resources in proximity to the project area that are not documented in the Sacred Lands database. Each contact on the list was notified in writing of the proposed undertaking and was invited to comment on the project. The only response that was received from the contact list was from Mr. Daniel McCarthy of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. Mr. McCarthy indicated that while a Native American presence in the area was possible, he was unaware of any cultural resources at CHWP.

3.4.2 Paleontological Records Search

BonTerra Psomas requested a paleontological records search from the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History to determine if any fossiliferous rock units are present within the park. The results indicate that the geology in the park is composed primarily of plutonic igneous and metamorphic rocks that would not contain fossils. However, there may be older deposits of Quaternary alluvium within the park. Similar deposits near the City of Chino have yielded fossilized camel and horse remains.

3.4.3 Archaeological Field Survey

On May 29, 2014, BonTerra Psomas Senior Archaeologist David M. Smith visited the park to determine if the CCC site, the shepherd's camp, and a building foundation in Sycamore Canyon still existed and to talk to the Park Rangers about any observations they may have made of cultural resources elsewhere in the park. Ranger Barry Mullins escorted Mr. Smith to the general area in Palmer Canyon where the shepherd's camp was thought to exist. After an extensive search, the site was not observed and the search was abandoned. Ranger Mullins then showed Mr. Smith a potentially historic well site and the building foundation in Sycamore

Canyon, which is identified by a plaque as the site of a Boy Scout cabin built in 1933 on land donated by the Johnson family. The Park Rangers were not aware of the CCC site. Because of limited information regarding the CCC site, Mr. Smith did not attempt to locate the site.

3.5 MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

During field visits to the CHWP and through the public participation process for development of the Master Plan, several management issues were raised that are discussed in this section. These management issues are considered with the Master Plan's goals in mind of (1) park preservation; (2) managing the park as a passive recreational resource; and (3) minimizing impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods, along with the Master Plan's guiding principles of Preservation, Stewardship, Access, Trail Maintenance, Education, and Participatory Management.

In addition to the Master Plan's goals, regional conservation and land management plans were consulted to identify opportunities for the CHWP to enhance and augment regional efforts. Principally, these regional plans consisted of the Angeles National Forest Land Management Plan (USDA 2005) and Southern California Mountains and Foothills Assessment, Habitat and Species Conservation Issues (Stephenson and Calcarone 1999).

3.5.1 Invasive Species Management

Invasive plant species degrade native habitat and displace native plants and wildlife, increase wildfire potential; increase slope erosion potential; and degrade recreational opportunities. Therefore, invasive plant species control and management are important components to preserving the integrity of CHWP's native habitat. The California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) rates non-native plant species in California, and their invasiveness and impact on native plant communities are rated as high, moderate, or limited. These ratings are defined below (Cal-IPC 2014):

- **High:** These species have severe ecological impacts on physical processes, plant and animal communities, and vegetation structure. Their reproductive biology and other attributes are conducive to moderate to high rates of dispersal and establishment. Most are widely distributed ecologically.
- **Moderate:** These species have substantial and apparent—but generally not severe—ecological impacts on physical processes, plant and animal communities, and vegetation structure. Their reproductive biology and other attributes are conducive to moderate to high rates of dispersal, though establishment is generally dependent upon ecological disturbance. Ecological amplitude and distribution may range from limited to widespread.
- **Limited:** These species are invasive but their ecological impacts are minor on a statewide level or there was not enough information to justify a higher score. Their reproductive biology and other attributes result in low to moderate rates of invasiveness. Ecological amplitude and distribution are generally limited, but these species may be locally persistent and problematic.

Non-native species that have been observed in the study area that are listed by Cal-IPC are summarized below in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2: Summary of Invasive Species Observed in Study Area

Botanical Name	Common Name	Cal-IPC Rating
Ageratina adenophora	crofton weed	Moderate
Avena barbata	slender wild oat	Moderate
Brassica nigra	black mustard	Moderate
Bromus diandrus	ripgut brome	Moderate
Bromus madritensis ssp. *rubens*	red brome	High
Carduus pycnocephalus	Italian thistle	Moderate
Erodium cicutarium	red-stemmed filaree	Limited
Ficus carica	edible fig	Moderate
Gazania linearis	gazania	Moderate
Hirschfeldia incana	shortpod mustard	Moderate
Hordeum murinum	hare barley	Moderate
Marrubium vulgare	horehound	Limited
Olea europaea	olive	Limited
Pennisetum setaceum	crimson fountain grass	Moderate
Ricinus communis	castor bean	Limited
Robinia pseudoacacia	black locust	Limited
Salsola tragus	Russian thistle	Limited
Schinus molle	Peruvian pepper tree	Limited
Silybum marianum	milk thistle	Limited
Spartium junceum	Spanish broom	High
Stipa miliaceum	smilo grass	Limited
Tamarix ramosissima	salt cedar	High
Cal-IPC: California Invasive Plant Council Source (Ratings): Cal-IPC 2014.		

Based on the Cal-IPC rating system, three species are highly invasive: red brome, Spanish broom, and salt cedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*). Therefore, invasive plant management efforts should focus on controlling the presence of these species within CHWP. It should be noted that the species rating system is based on State-wide impacts; a species that is rated as moderate or limited can still be highly impactful on native vegetation communities on a regional basis. Additional species listed in Table 3-2 that should be a priority for control at CHWP include black

mustard (*Brassica nigra*), ripgut brome, edible fig (*Ficus carica*), crimson fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*), castor bean, Russian thistle, and milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*). In addition to potentially displacing native plant species and degrading native habitat for wildlife, black mustard, ripgut brome, and crimson fountain grass provide dry, fine fuel in the summertime which increases wildfire potential in the park. Edible fig and castor bean can proliferate rapidly in the understory of riparian woodland areas and potentially degrade the quality of the various riparian corridors in the park. Eucalyptus trees can become established in riparian areas and either displace or become co-dominant with native riparian trees. Castor bean produces fruit that is toxic to humans and animals. Russian thistle and milk thistle can become established along trails and their thorns can scratch visitors.

In addition to the Cal-IPC list, Stephenson and Calcarone (1999) list several non-native species that are of particular concern to mountain and foothill areas in the region. Several of these regionally concerning species occur at CHWP including salt cedar, Spanish broom, and various Mediterranean grasses (e.g., slender wild oat, ripgut brome, red brome, hare barley). Additional species of regional concern that have not been observed at CHWP include giant reed (*Arundo donax*), star thistle (*Centaurea* spp.), and pampas grasses (*Cortaderia* spp.). If any of these species are observed at CHWP, their removal should be an immediate priority to prevent their establishment and spread, if an invasive species control program is developed and approved.

Though several potentially harmful invasive plant species occur on the site, currently they are generally found sporadically in small populations (sometimes only single individuals were observed). As a result, their potential to harm native vegetation communities can be lowered with a relatively modest effort of herbicide treatment. Larger shrubs and trees should be cut down and the cut stump should be immediately treated with herbicide to prevent re-growth, rather than removing the stump which disturbs the soil, creates erosion potential and involves the use of mechanical equipment with even greater impacts. A minimal quantity of herbicide is very effective at killing problematic species, and spot application (non-aerial) is consistent with best practices for tree stumps. Any herbicide use should be performed by a Qualified Pesticide Applicator with the proper license, though no resource agency approval is needed for pesticide use if it is applied outside of riparian zones. Though the presence of most non-native herbaceous, tree, and shrub species is limited, non-native grasses dominate large portions of the Johnson's Pasture area and are commonly found on the spoils of maintained trails. Controlling non-native grass dominance of large areas of Johnson's Pasture would require sustained habitat restoration activities that would re-establish native shrubs and trees that were likely displaced by earlier land disturbance (likely livestock grazing) in the area.

3.5.2 Habitat Restoration

As discussed in Section 3.1, nearly 90 percent of the study area contains native vegetation types. Based on a brief visual inspection, these vegetation types appear to be in excellent condition, with high native plant coverage dominated by mature plants with low non-native species presence. However, opportunities for habitat restoration and enhancement do exist in the CHWP study area and should be part of the long-term management of CHWP. For example, the benefits of converting annual grassland areas to native shrub and tree-dominated

vegetation types would enhance wildlife habitat and likely reduce the potential for wildfires. Evaluating specific projects was not included in the scope of the Master Plan; however, the plan was intended to provide a framework to support the potential for future projects as they are identified, prioritized and funded with Council authorization. Representative examples are noted below.

As summarized above in Table 3-1, approximately 159.2 acres of non-native vegetation exist in the CHWP study area. This primarily consists of annual grassland areas, with smaller areas of eucalyptus stands and ornamental vegetation. These areas are mostly located in the southern portion of the study area within the Johnson's Pasture and Sycamore Canyon management zones. Annual grass species provide fine fuel that is easily ignited when it dries out in the mid to late summer. Therefore, conversion of non-native grassland areas to native sage scrub, chaparral, or woodland reduces the opportunity for wildfires to occur in the park. Native shrubs and trees are also capable of burning, but are less likely to ignite than dried grasses.

Existing sycamore woodland can be enhanced along the lower portions of Gale Canyon Creek by planting additional sycamore trees, removing eucalyptus trees, and establishing more native understory. Sycamore woodland can also be expanded into the mid and upper portions of Gale Canyon, though the uppermost portions are likely better suited to shrub-dominated communities such as scrub oak chaparral and sagebrush scrub. Hillsides adjacent to upper portions of Gale Canyon Creek can also be converted to scrub oak chaparral (on north-facing slopes) and California sagebrush scrub (on south-facing slopes).

Habitat restoration activities have occurred in the Sycamore Canyon area in the recent past, mostly focused on removing eucalyptus stands within a degraded California sycamore woodland. Additional restoration opportunities exist in this area, through removing additional eucalyptus trees; establishing California sycamore and coast live oak trees; establishing native understory species; and converting adjacent annual grassland hillsides to laurel sumac scrub.

Any proposed habitat restoration projects should be required to use plant material that originates from the CHWP and natural areas that are immediately adjacent to CHWP to the extent feasible. Commercially produced seed and container plant stock whose source cannot be documented should not be used. Furthermore, it should be noted that the CDFW should be consulted prior to any work performed in streambed areas. This is especially necessary if any tree removal or other activities are performed that would reduce bank stability or result in sedimentation to the stream.

Eucalyptus stands exist in small pockets at several locations in the study area. Though these are non-native trees, they also represent potential nesting and perching habitat for raptors. Therefore, plans to remove these trees should fully consider the impact on local raptor activity and ensure that no direct impacts on active raptor nests occur as a result of their removal.

The principal obstacle for restoring significant areas of degraded habitat at CHWP is the cost associated with controlling non-native species, installing native plants and seed, and maintaining a site until native plants are fully established. Aside from the costs, the main logistical challenge of habitat restoration in the Johnson's Pasture and Sycamore Canyon areas

is installing a temporary irrigation system that will support newly installed plants until they have become established and can survive on natural precipitation. A detailed Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Plan is a potential project that could be developed as a next step to prioritize areas for restoration; determine appropriate restoration goals; identify methods for supplying water to new plants; and calculate a necessary budget and funding sources to perform this work.

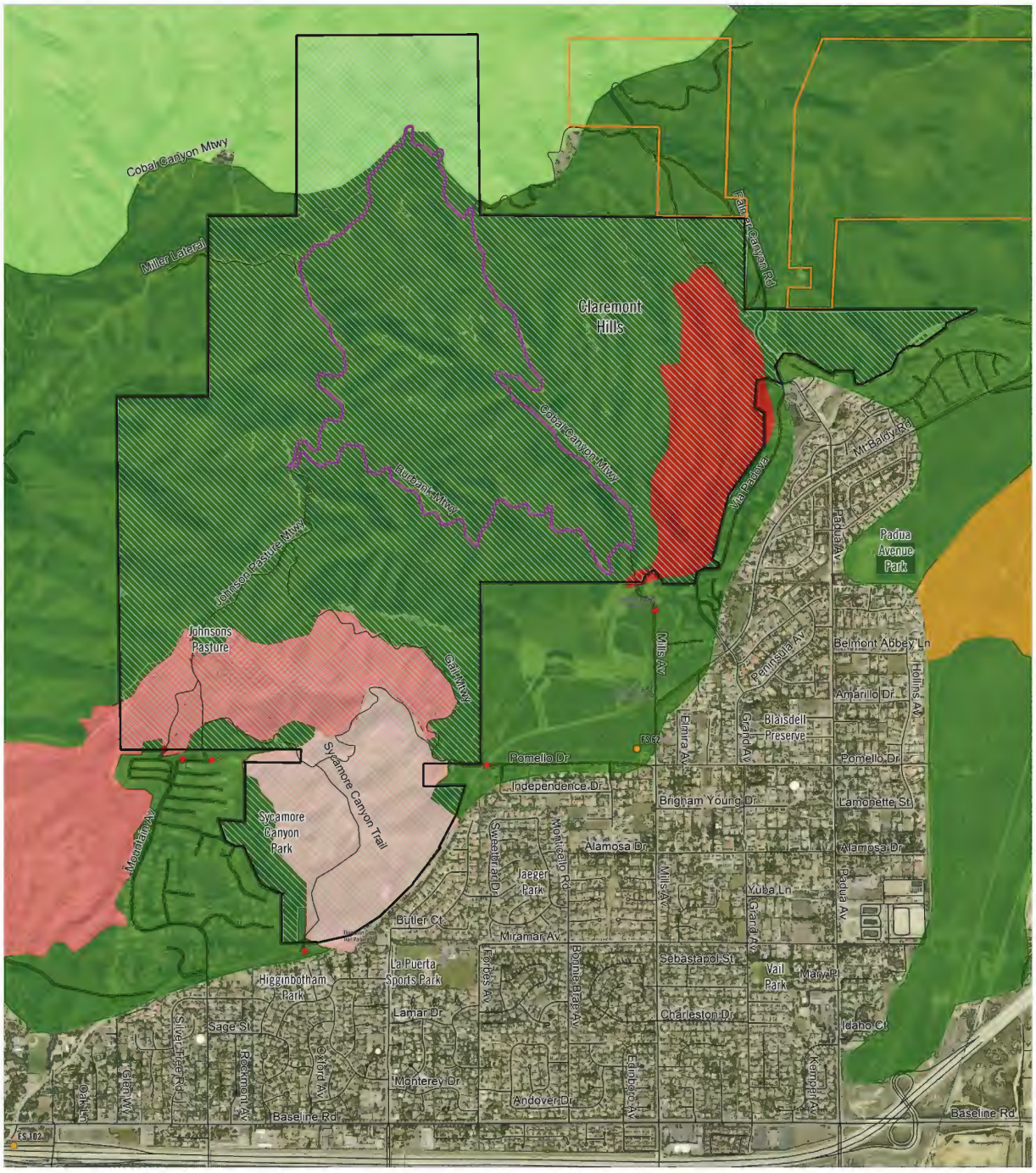
3.5.3 Wildfire Hazard Reduction

Fuel modification is the process of reducing the presence of flammable vegetation near inhabited areas to reduce the potential for wildfires to spread from natural areas to residential areas and vice-versa. The CHWP area has been subject to the following significant fire events in recent history: the 1962 Webb Fire, the 1975 Village Fire, the 1979 Millie Fire, the 1990 Webb II Fire, the 2002 Williams Fire, and the 2003 Padua Fire. Because the CHWP area is subject to ongoing threat of destructive wildfires, fire management is of utmost importance to overall park management (Exhibit 8).

Though the CHWP is a large area, fuel modification zones only exist in two locations adjacent to the study area. These include the Palmer Canyon area adjacent to the Padua Hills neighborhood and the residential area that is located immediately west of Sycamore Canyon Creek. The Palmer Canyon fuel modification area extends approximately 4,700 linear feet from the park entrance up to residences beyond the Padua Hills Theater. Fuel modification along Sycamore Canyon Creek would affect approximately 3,000 linear feet of slopes adjacent to the creek.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) developed a Vegetation Management Plan (Claremont 1999) that was revised in 2003 to identify strategies that would reduce wildfire risk to life and property. The City of Claremont adopted the original plan in 1999; the plan was subsequently revised in 2003. The Vegetation Management Plan identifies a variety of biological and mechanical methods to reduce the amount of potentially flammable brush near structures adjacent to the CHWP. These methods include (1) clearing brush (approximately 50 percent of live brush and 100 percent of dead vegetation) to a distance of 200 to 300 feet from structures adjacent to CHWP; (2) converting an historic firebreak to a fuelbreak (i.e., allow limited plant growth in a previous vegetation clearance area); (3) utilizing existing roadways in CHWP as a fuelbreak system; (4) using goats to graze on vegetation in vegetation maintenance areas to reduce potential fuel; and (5) using controlled burning on a limited basis.

Though the LACFD Vegetation Management Plan discusses the potential of livestock grazing and controlled burning as management methods, these are not compatible with the overall park management goals. Consultation with CDFW staff indicated they do not support grazing as a wildfire hazard reduction tool. Controlled burning is very difficult to accomplish in southern California due to restrictions on burning imposed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District. The number of allowable burn days in southern California are typically low and do not always coincide with other requirements regarding wind velocity and relative humidity. Moreover, the potential for escaped controlled burn always exists in burning conditions that



Legend

- Fire Stations
- Neighborhood Interface Access
- Street / Trail
- 5-Mile Loop Trail
- Claremont Hills Wilderness Study Area
- Claremont City Limit
- Approximate Boundary of CHWP Parcels Not Included in Environmental Baseline Inventory - See Exhibit 3

Fire History

- 2003 - Padua Fire
- 2002 - Williams Fire
- 1997 - Amarillo TankFire
- 1993 - Mills Fire
- 1990 - Webb Fire II
- 1989 - Sycamore Fire

Exhibit 8: Fire History

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

were initially acceptable (low wind velocity, high relative humidity) but change unexpectedly. Therefore, these methods are not considered in this plan.

Ultimately, the challenge of wildfire management at CHWP is to minimize the potential for wildfire to damage property and threaten human life while minimizing degradation of the habitat areas that occur in the fuel management areas. Vegetation thinning and removal that is performed to comply with the Los Angeles County Fire Code should (1) target the removal of non-native plants and more flammable native plants; (2) protect native vegetation that naturally resists fire; (3) trim lower tree branches to minimize the opportunity for fire to spread from the ground into the tree canopy; (4) avoid removal of trees and large shrubs so that their root systems are protected for erosion control; and (5) convert areas that contain large amounts of flammable vegetation to communities with more fire-resistant plant material.

The Los Angeles County Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines (LACFD 2011) identify undesirable (i.e., highly flammable) native plant species that should be targeted in fuel modification activities. These species include some that occur in the study area: chamise, California buckwheat, white sage, and black sage. These species, along with mule fat that may incidentally occur on slopes, should be preferentially removed. Laurel sumac is another species that, when ignited, can burn intensely. However, this species also has an extensive root system that helps to stabilize slopes. If this species does burn, it readily re-sprouts, and the root system can provide important slope stability in a post-fire environment. Laurel sumac scrub is common along the western Sycamore Canyon area, so if laurel sumac shrubs are retained in this area, other vegetation should be cleared to a distance of twice the diameter of the retained shrub.

Though the Vegetation Management Plan indicates that distances of up to 300 feet from nearby structures should be thinned, such a fuel modification zone would extend into Palmer Canyon Creek and Sycamore Canyon Creek. Riparian species (especially coast live oak and western sycamore trees) are generally more fire resistant than upland shrub vegetation, and therefore these areas should not be subject to brush clearance. Additionally, any vegetation removal within or adjacent to streambed areas would require a permit from the CDFW to comply with the *California Fish and Game Code*. Brush clearance activities also have the potential to impact active bird nests. Therefore, brush clearance should be undertaken outside of the peak nesting season for birds (approximately March 1 through September 15) or a qualified biologist should be retained to determine the locations of nesting activity to avoid or minimize impacts to birds that are protected by State and federal law.

As a long-term fire management strategy, highly flammable chaparral communities that occur near homes can be converted to less flammable vegetation types. Coast live oaks are known to be fire resistant and are native to many portions of the CHWP. Establishing coast live oak spaced approximately 60 feet on center combined with an understory of native grasses would provide native habitat that provides excellent slope stabilization while requiring minimal ongoing brush clearance.

In addition to maintaining fuel modification zones in compliance with the Vegetation Management Plan and the Los Angeles County Fire Code, nearby residents should be educated on steps they can take to minimize fire risk. Brush clearance activities are designed to avoid

direct flame contact and lessen convective heat that would ignite a structure. However, airborne embers also have the ability to ignite flammable vegetation on a homeowner's property or to blow into a house or garage that would ignite the structure. Educational materials should be regularly provided to area residents to instruct them on properly maintaining their houses to protect against fire damage.

Another important aspect to wildfire management at CHWP is reducing the risk of fire within the park. Annual grasses and mustard species are common to the study area and they produce fine, dry fuels that are easily ignited during much of the year. Reducing the potential for fire to start in the park would require (1) trail maintenance that does not result in dirt spoils being pushed up along the trail edges, which encourages annual grass establishment; (2) treating annual grasses that are growing along trail edges on an as-needed basis; and (3) prohibiting actions by park users (e.g., smoking) that have the potential to ignite vegetation.

Given the above information, updating the current Vegetation Management Plan and preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan would be worthwhile efforts to undertake as next steps. Those documents could be incorporated into the Master Plan when complete.

3.5.4 Trail Maintenance

As described in Section 2.2.2, trails at CHWP consist of a 5-mile loop trail that begins and ends at the main park entrance near the Mills Avenue parking lot, along with spur trails that lead to the Marshall Canyon County Park, and the Johnson's Pasture and Sycamore Canyon areas. These trails serve not only as hiking trails for park visitors but also as firebreaks and fire roads that are utilized and maintained by the LACFD.

Trails have the potential to affect several aspects of the environment at CHWP such as (1) wildlife movement; (2) habitat fragmentation; (3) soil erosion; (4) weed dispersal; and (5) noise/dust production. Though these issues have the potential to affect the natural environment, no significant impacts were observed during field visits to the study area. Park trails are heavily traveled only on an intermittent basis, which minimally discourages wildlife movement through the area. Trails are generally narrow (less than 20 feet wide) and there are relatively few of them at CHWP compared to the size of the area, leaving large blocks of high quality habitat. Rivulets and minor gullies were observed on some trails shortly after a moderate rain event, but no evidence of recent landslides or significant erosion on trails was observed at the time field assessments were conducted, although mild to severe erosion was noted in some areas. Trails can serve as vectors for the spread of non-native plant species when humans unknowingly transport seeds on shoes and clothing (Wells et al. 2012), but this impact is minor as patches of non-native plants were observed to be small and isolated. Trail maintenance activities can be noisy and generate dust that can affect wildlife, but these effects are infrequent and temporary.

Two negative impacts on the natural environment resulting from trail maintenance activities include (1) soil disturbance on the edge of trails that encourage weed establishment and (2) soil build up at the base of native trees. When trails are maintained by LACFD, construction equipment creates spoils of excess soil along the edge of the trails. These spoils are commonly

dominated by non-native plants (especially grass species) that can, in turn, invade adjacent habitat areas. In a few locations, excessive amounts of spoils were observed to have spilled down adjacent slopes. At these locations, pre-existing native plants are damaged and non-native plants (especially grass and mustard species) become dominant species. These locations tend to be small (usually a few hundred square feet), but many years are required for native plants to re-establish dominance. Finally, at several locations within Cobal Canyon, excessive amounts of spoils were deposited at the base of oak trees. Excessive soil build up can smother tree roots and create a favorable environment for oak tree pathogens that can attack the trunk and root system of oak trees.

3.5.5 Unauthorized Trails

Illegal foot and bike traffic have created multiple unauthorized trails throughout the study area that emanate from the authorized trail system. Though many of these unauthorized trails are narrow, they represent a potentially serious threat to the CHWP's natural environment. In all, a total of approximately 3.1 linear miles of unauthorized trails were mapped during the field surveys (Exhibit 9). MIG photographed each unauthorized trail location. Those photographs are numbered to correspond with the numbers on Exhibit 9, and may be found in Appendix A.5.

Most unauthorized trails are a few feet wide and well established. The length of the unauthorized trails varies greatly; some are small and appear to be used as mountain bike jumps, while other trails meander a great distance from the main trail. Park users were infrequently observed using these unauthorized trails during the site visits, the majority of which were mountain bike riders. However, along the main loop some visitors do utilize the single track trails that parallel the fire road. Numerous small foot trails leading to large shrubs just off of the main trail are being used by Park users to access areas of privacy in order to urinate and/or defecate.

Though most unauthorized trails appear to be used infrequently, they exhibit a range of minor to severe erosion in limited areas, and the potential exists for those areas to widen. The potential for single track trails to proliferate if not managed is a common problem, requiring continual vigilance to prevent such trails from establishing. The negative effects of these trails can escalate if they eventually connect to other unauthorized trails. Unauthorized trails not only result in direct impacts to vegetation that is trampled but, at the interface between disturbed areas and native habitat, the disturbed areas have a spillover effect on the undisturbed habitat, commonly known as an "edge effect". Edge effects vary widely, depending on the level of disturbance, type of habitat, and species involved. However, edge habitat has been associated with lower overall species diversity (Atauri and De Lucio 2001), increased presence of invasive plant species (McDonald and Urban 2006), and lowered bird nesting success (Manolis et al. 2002). When landscapes become highly fragmented, there may be no interior habitat that is protected from edge effects (Bennett and Saunders 2010). Therefore, if unauthorized trails are allowed to proliferate, the edge effect from these trails can multiply rapidly and dramatically alter biological processes.

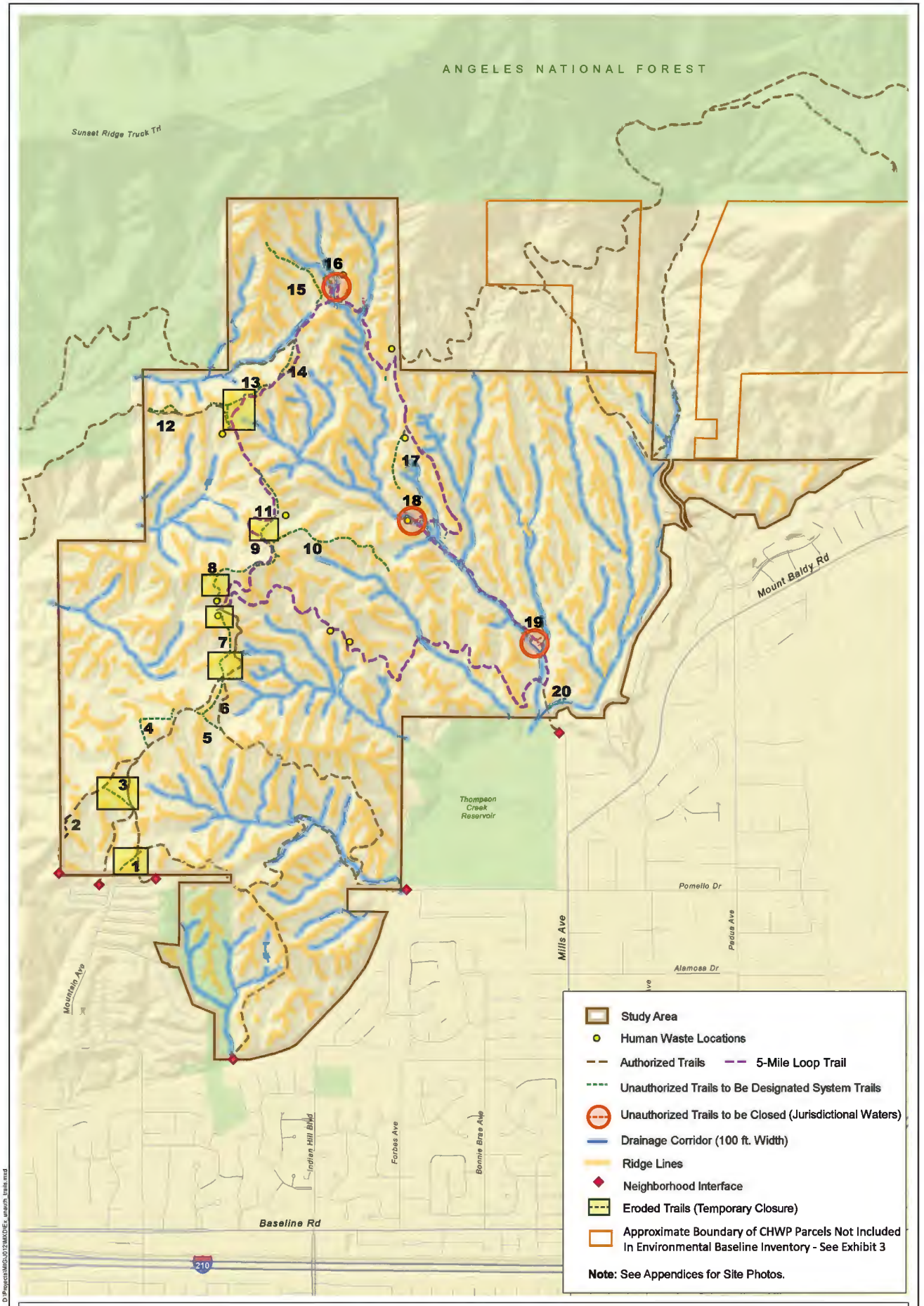


Exhibit 9: Recommended Actions for Unauthorized Trails

Claremont Hills Wilderness Park Master Plan

1,350 675 0 1,350 Feet

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Preventing the creation of unauthorized trails is extremely important to protecting the CHWP's soils, which are quite fragile and easily damaged. Soils generally consist of a thin layer of sandy or loamy soil on top of partially decomposed granite. Therefore, once the top layer of soil is damaged, the ability for native vegetation to become re-established is severely compromised. Revegetation of these trails may require suitable soil for plant growth to be imported to the site.

Although signage exists in the CHWP indicating users should stay on "designated trails," this signage is limited, and it may be unclear to visitors which areas are designated and which are not. Clear signage that discourages off-trail activity along with educational signage explaining the fragile nature of soils and vegetation at the park are recommended.

3.5.6 Water Quality and Groundwater Recharge

As shown in Exhibit 6, the study area contains a number of streambed features that drain into Thompson Creek Reservoir and Thompson Creek. These streambed features are generally in an undisturbed condition and are located in steep canyons that are inaccessible to park visitors. Therefore, current park activities appear to have little effect overall on the quality of water leaving the site.

On the other hand, there are potential threats to water quality in the study area. First, soils in the study area are highly erodible, meaning that degradation of vegetation on canyon side slopes can lead to sedimentation of the streambeds.

Secondly, the park's trails cross streambeds principally at four locations along the main loop trail: (1) Palmer Canyon Creek near the park entrance; (2) Cobal Canyon Creek approximately 0.1 mile north of the park entrance; (3) Cobal Canyon Creek approximately 0.75 mile northwest of the park entrance; and (4) Burbank Canyon Creek approximately 0.7 mile northwest of the park entrance. Because foot traffic passes through these locations, the potential exists for litter and pet waste to be washed into the various stream systems which would negatively affect water quality.

Lastly, evidence of park users urinating or defecating on the ground was observed in a few locations off the main trails. Though human waste presents a potential source of water pollution, the locations where toilet paper was observed occur in upland areas away from streambeds. Though bathroom facilities are found at the park entrance, human waste locations were found far away from the bathrooms (Exhibit 9). Additional bathroom facilities along the main loop would be expected to help reduce the incidents of park visitors urinating or defecating on the ground.

Though there is potential for park activities to impact water quality, no specific threats to water were observed during field visits.

3.5.7 Litter and Graffiti

Litter and graffiti were observed throughout the site to a relatively low degree. The trash observed on site during the site visit generally consisted of hydration bottles, toilet paper, and fruit peels. The majority of the graffiti observed in the study area occurred in areas along

unauthorized trails that led to areas out of view of the main trail. Graffiti was also observed on large rocks in Cobal Canyon.

The majority of the Park users visit for the purpose of exercising and many of those observed during site visits were carrying hydration bottles. Many drink bottles were observed left by the side of the main trail within a mile of the park entrance. Toilet paper was observed multiple times behind large shrubs where park users have urinated or defecated. Fruit peels from oranges were observed multiple times throughout the park, usually near benches. Five 30-gallon metal trash cans are placed strategically throughout the park, though they are open top without lids, making trash in the cans accessible to wildlife. The park would likely benefit from more numerous, closed-top, waste receptacles.

3.5.8 Biological Resource Protection

During field visits to the study area, one special status plant species, Nevin's barberry, was incidentally observed. Mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* sp.) were observed near the Cobal Canyon trail that had yet to bloom, preventing positive identification of the species. Several mariposa lily species, some of them special status, have potential to occur in the vicinity of the park. Focused botanical surveys would allow the mariposa lilies to be accurately identified, and the full extent of these species could be documented. Then the presence/absence of additional special status species with potential to occur in the study area could be determined. Since mariposa lilies are sensitive to soil disturbance, foot traffic is a potential threat to this species. No evidence of significant hiking traffic was observed during field surveys; however, if this changes, signs or protective fencing to discourage visitors may be needed.

3.5.9 Wildlife Movement

The study area is bordered to the north, northeast, and northwest by largely undisturbed native habitat, while areas to the south, southwest, and southeast are dominated by dense residential development. Wildlife species obviously pass through the study area, including large mammals such as deer, bears, and mountain lions. Due to the dense residential development along the southern portions of the study area, wildlife species would be expected to only pass in an east-west direction. Because ample native habitat is located along the northern boundaries of the site, the CHWP would not be considered a critical wildlife corridor by regulatory standards. Therefore, no specific management strategies are proposed to maintain or enhance wildlife movement at this time.

3.5.10 Cultural Resource Protection

In Section 3.4, three specific cultural resource features are discussed: (1) a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) temporary camp; (2) a possible shepherd's camp in Palmer Canyon; and (3) a potentially historic well site and the foundation of a Boy Scout cabin in Sycamore Canyon associated with a Boy Scout Camp. The only sites with any visible remains are the Boy Scout cabin and the well site. The well site and the Boy Scout cabin should be recorded on California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Series Site Record forms. This site is a potentially significant site of local history and should be protected.

The remaining acres of the park have not been surveyed intensively. In compliance with CEQA, they should be surveyed by a qualified Archaeologist to determine the presence or absence of any historic or prehistoric sites prior to any project resulting in significant soil disturbance. Any additional sites discovered should be recorded and reported in a technical report specific to that endeavor.

3.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarizes the recommendations with regard to invasive species management, habitat restoration, wildfire hazard management, and unauthorized trails that are discussed in Section 3.5.

3.6.1 Invasive Species Management

1. Invasive species control should focus on eradicating the following species: edible fig, castor bean, Russian thistle, milk thistle, Spanish broom, and salt cedar.
2. Cobal Canyon had the highest number of different invasive species (i.e., highest diversity of species, not total cover of invasives), likely because this is probably the most heavily visited portion of the park. Spanish broom, castor bean, salt cedar, and edible fig (along with ubiquitous annual grasses) were all observed in the Cobal Canyon area. Given this high diversity of invasives and high foot traffic (providing a vector for ongoing weed transport), the Cobal Canyon area should receive regular invasive species control.
3. Grass species occurring on trailside spoils should be removed on an as-needed basis to limit their spread into less disturbed areas and to reduce fire risk.

3.6.2 Habitat Restoration

1. The City should commission a study to analyze costs and benefits of habitat restoration and to prioritize areas for restoration activities as a next step
2. Plant material used for habitat restoration projects should originate from the CHWP area to the extent feasible.
3. Prior to removing eucalyptus trees for habitat enhancement, the importance of these trees for raptor nesting and perching should be determined.

3.6.3 Wildfire Hazard Management

1. The City should work with the LACFD to update the CHWP Vegetation Management Plan so that it is consistent with the Master Plan, current CHWP park management goals, the *California Fish and Game Code*, and the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act*. The goal of revising the Vegetation Management Plan is to identify methods of minimizing fire risk while protecting biological resources and park access to the greatest extent possible.
2. Woody perennial plants with sizeable root systems should be preferentially retained in fuel modification zones, with areas cleared around these plants to a distance of twice the diameter of the retained plant (i.e., a plant with a 10-foot-wide canopy would not have any plants within 20 feet of it).

3. Removal of species from fuel modification zones that are identified as "highly flammable" in the Los Angeles County Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines should be prioritized. These species include chamise, California buckwheat, white sage, and black sage.
4. Additional native species to be preferentially removed include mule fat and laurel sumac.
5. No oak trees should be removed for fuel modification purposes.
6. Removal of riparian vegetation for fuel modification purposes should not occur unless permitted by the CDFW.
7. Brush clearance should be performed outside of the nesting season for birds, generally from January through September 15.
8. Establishment of native fire-resistant species (e.g., coast live oak) should occur in fuel modification zones to minimize the need for ongoing brush clearance.
9. Smoking and camp fires are prohibited within CHWP and should be strictly enforced.

3.6.4 Unauthorized Trails

1. Signage should be posted at existing unauthorized trails to discourage off-trail exploration.
2. Educational materials should be provided to park visitors that explain the environmental effects of off-trail disturbances.
3. The City could consult with a soil remediation expert to determine how disturbed soils can be improved so that native vegetation can naturally re-establish along unauthorized trails as a next step.

3.6.5 Water Quality and Groundwater Recharge

1. Locations where the main loop trail crosses streambed areas should be prioritized for cleanup activities so potential contaminants (e.g., litter) will not wash into streams during rain events.
2. The installation of additional bathroom facilities in the interior of the park to reduce the incidence of human waste should be studied.

3.6.6 Biological Resources Protection

1. As a next step, focused botanical surveys should be undertaken to document the presence and extent of special status species at CHWP that were observed during the reconnaissance survey (Nevin's barberry and Mariposa lily); this would allow for strategies to be created for the protection of any special status species.

3.6.7 Wildlife Movement

1. The City should work with qualified organizations to monitor and document wildlife movements. Specific monitoring requirements should be developed in consultation with CDFW.

3.6.8 Cultural Resources Protection

1. The Boy Scout cabin and well site in the Sycamore Canyon area should be formally recorded on DPR 523 forms.
2. Additional field surveys by a qualified Archaeologist should occur prior to any ground-disturbing projects to determine the presence or absence of any historic or pre-historic sites.

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CHAPTER 4: MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE

This chapter discusses the management, operations and maintenance of the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park (CHWP). The chapter is intended to provide broad guidelines about how the park should be managed and operated to meet the goals and desired outcomes developed in this Master Plan. Guidelines are supplemented by pertinent operations and maintenance standards for various park functions. This chapter provides recommendations and guidelines that shall serve as the policy basis for park operations for the next twenty years. The policies in this chapter as well as the adoption of the Master Plan as a whole are part of a paradigm shift in park management from passive to a more actively managed public space. The increases in usage and associated impacts in and around the CHWP in the last ten years have necessitated this shift to more active management.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this chapter is to strengthen the management, operations, and maintenance of the CHWP consistent with the goals and guiding principles developed during the Master Planning process. Together, these policy level statements provide the strategic "framework" for managing the park. These precepts were developed and refined based on significant public input before and during the Master Planning process, as well as input from the consultants regarding best practices associated with open space management. Staff then refined the recommendations for the local community context.

The overarching goals of the Master Plan are as follows:

- Preserve the park as an environmental resource;
- Manage the park as a passive recreational opportunity; and
- Minimize the impact park attendance has on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

These broad goals include an inherent tension common in the world of open space and outdoor recreation management, which entails both protecting natural resources while providing public access. However, these goals are not mutually exclusive and the challenge of balancing these goals can be addressed in different ways depending upon the purpose of the natural area, the characteristics of the adjacent land use, and the values of the host community.

An urban city park may substantially alter a natural environment to add playgrounds, sports fields, passive turf areas and various amenities for picnicking and relaxing. Its intended use is very different from how and why the public experiences a large open space or back country area. In a suburban / urban environment, users expect better trail conditions, amenities, and public services. Such visitors are less prepared for the rigors of long distances, steep inclines, weather extremes, and wild animals which they may encounter in the CHWP; they expect risks to be managed and mitigated for individual and general safety.

In back country areas, users expect that trails may be single-tracked, rutted, eroded, and inherently more risky to traverse. Trash cans, benches, and latrines are minimally provided, if at all, with the understanding by most users that you pack out what you pack into the park. The motto of "leave no trace" is understood and embraced, and the risks inherent with entering a back country area with wild animals far from assistance and even cell phone coverage is tacitly accepted by the typical trail user.

Like other regional open space facilities, the CHWP itself is a balance between open space and urban park given its unique location within the urban-wildland interface zone. It is bounded by a suburban region to the south and the vast natural areas of the San Gabriel Mountains to north, which results in a mix of expectations from park users.

This Master Plan proposes a blend of management philosophies, managing, and operating the facility in the context of its natural setting while recognizing not only the needs of suburban visitors but also the opportunity to educate them about the value of respecting and preserving our natural resources and habitat. Hence, six guiding principles inform specific recommendations related to park management, operations and maintenance. These principles are as follows:

Preservation: Environmental and cultural resources within the current park must be preserved and protected. As additional open-space lands in Claremont's hillsides become available, efforts shall be made to acquiring the land and annex the land to the park when fiscally feasible. Special attention should be given to preserving the hillsides' function as watershed for the cities of the San Gabriel Valley. Appropriate resource management promotes the long-term viability of the natural and cultural landscape, inspiring future generations to care for and respect these resources. The natural environment and the overall conditions of the Park shall be managed to minimize impacts from human recreational activities.

Stewardship: The Master Plan will promote a park culture in which visitors treat nature, park neighbors, and one another with respect and courtesy. Everyone associated with the park—visitors, neighbors, City staff members—will be encouraged to see themselves as stewards of the park, protecting its resources. City staff will educate visitors about these expectations and enforce park rules in a fair and friendly manner.

Access: Inclusive and managed public access is provided as secondary to preserving the natural environment and limiting the impacts to surrounding properties. The CHWP allows for passive recreational opportunities that connect people to nature and promote healthy lifestyles.

Education: Active education is the cornerstone of fostering visitors' safe and responsible behaviors in the park. With effective outreach to the community, a variety of educational and interpretive programs (such as field trips and docent-led hikes) will enhance their understanding and appreciation of the park's culture and its natural resources.

Public Engagement: Public collaboration is integral to ensuring sound policy decision-making, and providing opportunities for the community to contribute their knowledge, expertise, and energy to actively support Park management.

Funding: Achieving the Goals of the Master Plan and realizing the manifestation of the Guiding Principles is only possible with funding generated from parking fees and grants to support active park management, operations and maintenance.

These guiding principles are intertwined and relate to one or more of the three Master Plan goals. The intent of this Master Plan is to manage the CHWP as a natural area. As such, visitors enter at their own risk and should be prepared to encounter back country conditions, including rough terrain, potential extreme weather conditions and potentially dangerous wildlife, such as bears, mountain lions, and rattle snakes. However, a goal of park management is not only to advise the public of such risks, but also to educate visitors of the need to respect and protect natural resources as well as the adjacent neighborhoods. Promoting a culture of mutual respect and consideration for natural areas, other visitors and park neighbors is a key strategy to achieving a balance among the Master Plan goals and is woven throughout many of the guiding principles.

FUNCTIONAL AREAS

Park management, operations, and maintenance include several functional areas. Overall management of the park includes four primary functions: (1) disseminating relevant public information (Public Outreach); (2) developing educational and recreational opportunities (Programming); (3) engaging volunteers and developing public collaborations (Volunteer Engagement); and (4) developing and enforcing park rules (Enforcement). The first three activities fall within the purview of the Human Services Department, while enforcement has been shared between the Police Department and theRangers. To date police staff has been the primary entity issuing citations. In June of 2015 City Council extended citing authority to Park Rangers.

Source: Claremont Resident /TAC Member, Hugh Wire

Management strategies for parks and natural areas can be both direct and indirect. Direct management techniques result in limiting visitor choice by defining rules and regulations (e.g., littering is prohibited) while indirect management actions encourage a visitor to act or behave in a certain way (e.g., educational strategies encouraging visitors to use trash receptacles).

Typically, outdoor recreation areas are managed using a combination of direct and indirect strategies that lead to desirable visitor behavior consistent with goals and desired outcomes. For example, a direct management technique to enforce no littering is to cite violators. To do so requires an enforcement officer to see the violation. Effectiveness is limited to those individual citations. However, public information coupled with volunteer engagement is a powerful combination of indirect management techniques to achieve the same end goal of minimizing litter in the park. An ongoing public information program will be augmented by permanent signage related to park rules, strategically placed trash receptacles, and an engaged volunteer

group interacting with other visitors. This public information program will achieve a broader and more positive educational impact than would a limited and more negative practice of citing a few violators.

A grassroots effort has already sprung up for this very circumstance with a Technical Advisory Committee member who regularly hikes the main loop bringing an extra garbage bag marked with a label, "Clean Trails, Help Out." He has dubbed this social experiment "Befriend the Loop."

As he picks up trash, he engages in conversation with other visitors and offers the extra bag for his new friend to do the same. The "pay it forward" concept is like throwing a stone into a lake: the ripple effect extends the message and encourages subsequent action. A key strategy recommended in this Master Plan is to enhance park management to promote a number of Master Plan goals and desired outcomes by facilitating efforts such as "Befriend the Loop."

Supplementing park management are various activities that fall within the functional area of Operations and Maintenance. Operations and maintenance in the industry of outdoor recreation management includes activities related to operating and maintaining the physical infrastructure of the facility. In Claremont that responsibility falls primarily within the purview of the Community Services Department, with assistance from the rangers. For this Master Plan, these activities have been organized within four primary functional areas: (1) trail maintenance; (2) trail amenities; (3) fuel and vegetation management; (4) parking. It is critically important that operations and maintenance be aligned with park management to ensure goals and desired outcomes are understood and consistently embraced. An enhanced ranger program is an opportunity to solidify a critical linkage between both facets of overall operations.

4.1 GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Guidelines help define a course of action or provide a general management direction that aims to achieve the Master Plan goals. They should be adhered to as much as possible, understanding that some flexibility may be necessary when applied to specific circumstances. If a guideline can be reasonably implemented, it should be carried out without deviation. Guidelines have been developed for park management as well as operations and maintenance. Standards are mandatory actions or agreed upon best practices that are applied across operations and maintenance to ensure consistency and adherence to management goals.

For example, a guideline related to park operations and signage would state that all entrances to the CHWP should include signage related to hours of operation, a specific set of rules, and whether trails are opened or closed. Another example of a guideline would state that trail signage should provide sufficient information regarding rules, user etiquette, and a way of finding information without detracting from vistas and sight lines to the degree possible. An example of a standard would be that all signage shall include consistent design elements, such as mounting methods, weather resistant material, lettering, and use of color.

4.2 PARK MANAGEMENT

Management actions include leading, planning and organizing various activities to achieve goals and desired outcomes. For the CHWP, management is divided into four parts: Public Outreach, Programming, Volunteer Engagement, and Enforcement.

4.2.1 *Public Outreach*

As was noted in Chapter 2, the current level of park usage is not creating significant environmental impacts or detrimental user experience. The limiting factors in carrying capacity are the availability of parking, the secondary effects of the parking (e.g., extra driving), and users' accessibility to the park from the parking lots. In managing the park, recommendations are made to mitigate user impacts in the park, such as use of unauthorized trails and informal latrines. While considering these impacts and the carrying capacity issues, staff considered options to manage admission to the park through fees or daily maximums rather than through the parking lot and permit system proposed in the Implementation Plan. The nature of the park – with multiple entrances and open access - makes restricting pedestrian and bicycle access infeasible. Controlling the number of visitors and distribution of visitors through the programs offered in the Implementation Plan allows for management of park use without expensive and problematic additions such as walls and staffing level requirements beyond what can be supported by the park.

Regarding parking issues, it is important to note that, at the time this plan was developed, parking capacity issues occur only during peak periods on Saturday and Sunday mornings. At all other times, the existing parking lots are more than sufficient to meet the demand. Based on this information, recommendations about parking and fees focus on addressing these weekend peak-period problems.

Public Information

Informing the public about CHWP regulations, safety, amenities, and appropriate behavior is a key management activity to achieve goals and desired outcomes. Some visitors may not encounter City staff or volunteers while visiting the CHWP. Therefore, information provided through community resources, websites and signage at park entrances and along the trails may be the only method to inform visitors. Because the majority of park visitors, particularly those who enter through the main entrance on Mills, are not local residents, the City's website and park signage are particularly important as primary messaging tools.

City staff currently maintains public information on its website and provides updated information as necessary through its standard methods. However, opportunities exist to expand the type and frequency of public information.

Policy Tenet: Public information should be developed and regularly disseminated to promote the preservation and conservation of natural resources, trail etiquette, and a positive park culture that embraces mutual respect and consideration for the area, other visitors, and park neighbors.

Public Information Guidelines:

- Information regarding park rules and trail etiquette shall be clearly posted on the City's website, in park kiosks, and on signage at park entrance points.
- Information regarding rules, safety, programming, and resource conservation shall be regularly disseminated through standard City methods, including the website, quarterly newsletter, the City Manager's weekly updates, the recreation brochure, press releases, and other venues.
- Outreach information shall be regularly refreshed for interest, and designed to engage, inform and educate visitors and neighbors in order to reinforce management goals and desired outcomes.

Sign Program

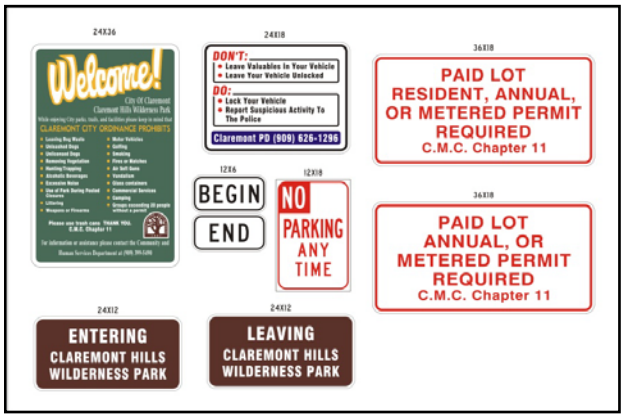
Signage is a key management tool as many visitors do not encounter City staff or volunteers during their visits, and non-residents may not receive updated information from local resources. Signs have been installed at the CHWP through the years for various purposes using different materials with no consistent standard. Many signs are worn and faded, and multiple signs at trail junctions create an appearance of "sign pollution" inconsistent with a back country area. The focus has been to provide some wayfinding guidance, inform visitors of rules and trail etiquette, and to mark property boundaries. Implementation has been sporadic and inconsistent, given limited oversight and management of the hillsides.

Multiple signs lacking consistent format and content
Source: City of Claremont

Newer signage was developed in recent years, principally related to the construction of the north parking lot and the implementation of regulated parking. An effort has also been made to install signage at all park entry locations to promote hours of operation and park rules.

Policy Tenet: Any sign program should direct, guide, and educate visitors, which will not only maximize visitor enjoyment and safety, but also aid in protecting and preserving the area. comprehensive sign program consists of several types of signs:

Regulatory: Signage that informs visitors of rules, such as operating hours and unauthorized activities as listed in the Municipal Code, enforceable with citations. These are installed at primary entrances to the facility where visitors have a reasonable opportunity to see them.



Recent signs installed in the CHWP
Source: City of Claremont

Trail Etiquette: Signage that informs visitors how to share the trail (yielding protocols) and that promote a culture of respect and courtesy for other users and the environment. These are installed at primary entrances to the facility and as reminders along the trail. They include rules for acceptable behavior not necessarily included in the Municipal Code but subject to enforcement by park rangers.

Safety: Signage that advises users of trail conditions, authorized usage, park rules, and cautionary information, including wildlife advisories.

Wayfinding: Signage that informs visitors of the authorized trail network, including names and locations, and any closed trails, which should not be traversed. Contact information to request assistance should be included on wayfinding signage.

Informational or Interpretative: These signs provide educational information to promote an understanding and appreciation for the environment, including geographical, habitat, and wildlife information.

The CHWP is first and foremost a natural area. Sign guidelines and standards have been developed to minimize visual impacts along the trail, while providing sufficient information for user safety. This information has been included in the Operations and Maintenance section presented later in this chapter.

Examples of potential sign styles and types are included in Attachment 4 as reference only. The CHWP sign program should be developed in a collaborative effort with staff from both the Community and Human Services Departments and park users actively engaged in this effort. The sign program shall be considered by the Parks, Hillsides and Utilities Committee and the Community and Human Services Commission and approved by the City Council. The adopted sign program shall be incorporated into the Master Plan as an addendum.

Kiosks and Signage

Public information is a key management tool to address a variety of goals and desired outcomes related to enforcing rules, promoting a respectful park culture, enhancing visitor experience and personal safety. Because many visitors do not encounter City staff or volunteers during their visits, and non-residents may not receive updated information from local resources, information displayed in kiosks and through a comprehensive sign program is the most direct and effective way to communicate with park visitors.

The park has three information kiosks - one at the south / Thompson Creek Trail lot and two at the north parking lot. Due to the north parking lot construction (at the time this was written), the kiosks at the end of N. Mills are no longer located in an area most visitors pass as they enter the park. Kiosks should be located in highly visible areas to maximize the effectiveness of disseminated public information.

As mentioned in the Park Management section above, signage has been installed in the CHWP through the years for various purposes, using different materials with no consistent standard. Posted information can be significantly improved for wayfinding purposes, for enhancing

personal safety, and to minimize sign clutter and visual distractions as appropriate for a natural setting. A more comprehensive sign program includes a variety of sign types which, once developed, should be incorporated into the sign maintenance program. Budgets permitting, and as signs are replaced, the following guidelines and standards should be followed.

General Kiosk and Sign Guidelines:

- Kiosks should be located at primary entrances to maximize public visibility.
- Signs should provide sufficient information regarding rules, user etiquette and wayfinding information, and installed in a manner aesthetically consistent with the natural context without detracting from vistas and sight lines to the degree possible.
- Along trails, sign placement should be discrete but visible, and set against vegetation, berms or outcroppings rather than open space sight lines, unless providing information specific to the vista.
- Signage at trail entrances should adequately inform visitors of park rules, trail etiquette and "back country" precautions.
- All major trail junctions (fire roads) should be signed for wayfinding purposes.
- Any trail segments closed due to detrimental environmental impacts or other reasons should be clearly posted as ”Closed, passage prohibited.”

General Kiosk and Sign Standards

- Kiosks should be constructed in a style appropriate for a natural context and include easy yet secure access.
- Signage should include consistent design elements, such as mounting methods, weather-resistant material, lettering, and use of color as approved and incorporated into the Master Plan.
- Worn and damaged signs shall be replaced as funding permits, consistent with an adopted sign program.
- Signage should conform to ADA guidelines for exterior signs.
- Mounting height should not exceed eye level for regulatory signs; signs should be installed at a height appropriate for the purpose of the sign.
- Regulatory and trail etiquette signage should be installed at CHWP entry points.
- Wayfinding signage should include emergency and non-emergency contact information to request assistance and report maintenance and / or safety concerns.

4.2.2 Programming

From 2002 to 2012, the Human Services park rangers provided docent led hikes for local youth, elementary through high school, which reinforced classroom curriculum. The hikes provided an opportunity for local children and teens who might not otherwise visit the CHWP to experience a natural area and learn about habitat and wildlife native to the San Gabriel Mountains. This introduction to the natural environment was intended to initiate a lifelong appreciation for conserving natural areas while encouraging physical activity, such as hiking or biking. The CHWP offers a tremendous opportunity to serve as a “natural classroom.” Unfortunately, the program was eliminated due to staffing shortages.

Given mounting public policy concerns associated with rising obesity rates and associated health issues, providing outdoor physical fitness opportunities is important for healthy lifestyles. The main loop provides an invigorating five mile opportunity to hike or bike in a natural setting that is appealing to numerous people. Promoting the park rangers as liaisons to these various groups to communicate park rules, trail etiquette, neighborhood consideration, and to coordinate group activities would aid in achieving management goals and desired outcomes.

Policy Tenet: The CHWP is a resource that can allow for education, understanding, and appreciation of conservation, the outdoors, wildlife and healthy physical activity.

General Programming Guidelines

- Programming organized and implemented by Human Services should promote the goals of environmental stewardship and conservation, outdoor physical exercise, and a culture of mutual respect and consideration for the natural environment, other visitors, and park neighbors.
- Program participants should be encouraged or incentivized to carpool to the main entrance, park in designated lots, and visit the CHWP during non-peak hours to the degree possible.

4.2.3 Volunteer Engagement

Harnessing the energy of volunteers to achieve goals and outcomes can be extremely successful if effectively managed. Volunteer activities should align with adopted goals and desired outcomes, and supplement and enhance staff efforts rather than divert resources to satisfy volunteer initiatives. Volunteers require active management to support their efforts, ensure alignment, and maximize effective outcomes. A more robust ranger program is necessary to support an active volunteer engagement program.

Community input in recent years illustrates the passion that neighbors and park users alike feel about the CHWP. Through the efforts of many Technical Advisory Committee members, committed residents, and vested neighbors, progress has been made to better align perspectives and facilitate collaboration for undertaking CHWP activities. Many community members engaged in the Master Planning process have expressed a desire to continue to foster a forum, such as the Friends of the CHWP, for mutual communication and collaboration. This group would allow interested community members and park users to come together to share concerns, coordinate projects, and communicate with City staff about park management and operations. This ongoing, collaborative process would significantly aid in maintaining a balance among the three primary goals of the Master Plan: promoting environmental preservation, providing public access, and mitigating negative neighborhood impacts.

Policy Tenet: The CHWP is a community asset and, as such, should have a community group (Friends of the CHWP) that actively works to preserve, program, support, and facilitate communication among park users, neighbors, and City staff.

The Friends of the CHWP would not provide oversight for CHWP management and operations, as that function currently resides with the Parks, Hillsides, and Utilities Committee and the Community and Human Services Commission. Rather this group would actively engage in CHWP related projects and activities and offer recommendations to the aforementioned advisory bodies. Human Services and Community Services staff would participate to provide guidance on helpful projects and to participate in the community dialogue that has become established as part of the Master Planning process. This group would self-organize with support from the City to achieve adopted goals and desired outcomes.

A trained volunteer group could assist staff with numerous projects, from picking up litter, serving as volunteer liaisons to park visitors to reinforce trail etiquette and park rules, assisting with disseminating information and undertaking special projects, such as dog checkpoints to verify licensing or staff a "Be Prepared" public information stand during hot days. In high temperatures, it is common for visitors and pets to be overcome by heat, lack of water, and physical exertion on the main loop. Many first time visitors are unprepared for the rigors of the trail during hot days and need assistance. Volunteers could also monitor neighborhoods and parking lots for unwanted conditions and activity and to assist visitors. Organized volunteers could be rewarded and engaged with a branded t-shirt, regular newsletters, and through annual recognition by the City for their efforts.

Policy Tenet: Park rangers will be responsible for coordinating volunteer activitiesincluding those of the Friends of the CHWP, Scout projects, and other efforts.

Staff resources are constrained and insufficient to develop a more active volunteer program to assist with managing, operating and maintaining the CHWP. A more robust ranger program could coordinate and support an active volunteer program that supplements staff efforts. Scouts could undertake elements of implementing the sign program while additional volunteers can focus on ongoing activities such as picking up litter. Staff and the Friends of the CHWP could develop project lists for volunteers to accomplish as they come forward.

Volunteer Management Guidelines

- The park ranger program will coordinate CHWP volunteers so that activities supplement staff efforts and contribute to the management goals and desired outcomes of the Master Plan.
- An effective volunteer management program should include constructive engagement, effective communication, and recognition for personal contributions.

4.2.4 Enforcement

Throughout the Master Planning process a general theme from public input has been the need to increase enforcement of park rules, specifically related to operating hours and littering. Another significant theme that evolved during public dialogue related to developing a park culture that promotes mutual respect and consideration for the environment, other visitors, and park neighbors. Developing a park culture not only includes enforcing specific rules but

also promoting an awareness and respect for others and the environment that is achieved through positive outreach and visitor engagement.

Managing the use of any open space or recreational facility includes promoting and enforcing a reasonable set of rules and regulations to ensure general safety, appropriate behavior, and acceptable activities in order to minimize negative impacts to other users, neighbors, and the environment. A number of park rules for the CHWP have already been codified in Municipal Code Chapter 11.10, which is included in Appendix D as reference. Rules include hours of operation for the park and parking lot, which adjust each month generally by the amount of available daylight hours; specific lists of authorized and unauthorized activities; and general prohibitions related to the park. Any violation of these codified rules and prohibitions is a citable offence under the Municipal Code.

User Etiquette Sign
Source: City of Claremont

Achieving compliance with rules and regulations includes a variety of methods and techniques, both direct and indirect, including: public information and signage to inform and educate visitors; verbal reminders from staff, volunteers, and other visitors; encouraging visitors to model appropriate behavior and compliance; and formal enforcement through citations. To date all of these methods have been undertaken by staff and engaged community members. The rangers have verbally enforced these rules through their interactions with park visitors, while police officers have issued citations primarily for violations of park and parking lot hours and parking lot regulations.

Policy Tenet: In order to (1) preserve the park, (2) maintain positive experiences for users, and (3) mitigate impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods, park rules must be adopted and enforced to foster acceptable norms of behavior in and around the CHWP.

Enforcement Guidelines

- Information regarding park rules shall be disseminated to the public and visitors through various means to facilitate compliance to the degree feasible; visitors are responsible for following posted rules.
- Park rules shall be enforced fairly and reasonably through various strategies at the discretion of assigned staff.
- Enforcement can serve to positively engage visitors to achieve compliance; it can encourage the development of methods, activities and programs to promote acceptable park norms and a culture of respect and appreciation for the environment, other visitors, and the neighbors.

- Effective enforcement is only possible with sufficient ranger staffing levels and enforcement presence at opening, closing and other critical and high use times of the park.

4.3 PARK OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Operations and maintenance in the industry of outdoor recreation management include activities related to operating and maintaining the physical infrastructure of the facility. In Claremont, that responsibility falls primarily within the purview of the Community Services Department with some assistance from the rangers. For this Master Plan, these activities have been organized within four primary functional areas: (1) trail maintenance; (2) trail amenities; (3) parking lots; and (4) fuel and vegetation management.

Unauthorized Trail
Source: City of Claremont

Unauthorized Trail
Source: City of Claremont

4.3.1 Trail Maintenance

The trail network within the City-owned hillsides are comprised of LA County maintained fire roads and a series of informal or unofficial single track trails established primarily by bike riders but also used by hikers. Several short single track trails also cross into "Waters of the US" and "Waters of the State", which are protected habitat areas. Because unauthorized trails were developed for the enjoyment of the users rather than consistency with proper trail standards, they have the potential to erode, encroach into wildlife corridors, damage vegetation, and generally disturb overall habitat conditions. Efforts to deter access to heavily eroded trail segments by blocking areas with benches have resulted in users going around and continuing to access those locations.

Trail erosion is caused more by impacted drainage structures, impeded drainage flows and deficient trail design than by the number or type of park users. Although CHWP rules and signage indicate visitors should remain on designated trails, no trails have been signed as unofficial, closed or passage prohibited; therefore, messaging is incomplete and enforcement not possible.

The fire roads were graded at a pitch to sheet flow either away from the slope and off the road, or toward the slope to access culverts under the trail. The roads are maintained by the LA County Fire Department consistent with its standards, which typically involves scraping the roads as necessary to provide passage for emergency equipment, the primary goal of their maintenance program. However, repeated scraping has created spoil berms over time, impeding drainage flows off the edge of road down slope or blocking drainage culverts on the interior side. Over time ruts develop and widen. With additional resources and in coordination with LA County Fire, additional maintenance could be performed to provide openings in the berms to facilitate sheet flow off the trail and to regularly remove accumulated sediment from trail culverts.

Extreme erosion on 5-mile Loop Trail
Source: City of Claremont

The fire roads and single track trails should be actively managed to avoid negative environmental impacts and maintained to standards consistent with those of a natural area. While periodic maintenance does occur and may be enhanced on CHWP trails as the budget allows, visitors should be prepared to encounter rutted trail conditions, debris from storms, and a variety of conditions inherent in back country conditions. Visitors pass at their own risk.

Evidence of switchback cutting
Source: City of Claremont

Should additionalfunding sources become available, opportunities exist for enhanced trail management and maintenance to improve environmental conditions, habitat stewardship, and visitor experience.

Policy Tenet: Established trails should be maintained by the City with coordination with LA County Fire for fire road maintenance.

Trail Maintenance Guidelines:

- Established single track trails shall be monitored for severe erosion and detrimental habitat or watershed impacts and closed as necessary until funds are secured to undertake trail relocation, renovation and / or revegetation.
- Non-conforming trails in Waters of the US and Waters of the State shall be closed in accordance with Federal and State resource regulations.
- Grading and maintenance of the trails shall be performed during the dry months when erosion can be reduced.

- Rangers and maintenance staff shall monitor trail conditions to ensure proper trail use and deter the formation of unauthorized trails, the cutting of switchbacks, and other conditions detrimental to environmental conditions and visitor safety.

Trail Maintenance Standards:

- Any new trails shall be designed and existing trails maintained in accordance with the standards set forth in the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation Trails Manual, included in Appendix E, to the degree economically feasible.

4.3.2 Trail Amenities

Limited amenities are provided for CHWP visitors consistent with a back country management philosophy, although some facilities and amenities have been installed to enhance visitor experience and safety and minimize human impacts on the environment. Trail amenities include temporary restrooms in the parking lot and two along the main loop, lidded waste containers, and natural benches built by the rangers with tree stumps from downed trees and other simple material.

Sanitary Facilities and Trash Receptacles

The sanitary facilities currently in use are temporary porta-potties. Four porta-potties are located next to the north parking lot and two are located on the main loop. The porta-potties and trash receptacles are serviced regularly, although the need for enhanced sanitary service is evident. The main loop porta-potties have proven to be inefficient for contractors to service given their remote locations on a dirt road. With limited restroom facilities on the trail, visitors have created a number of informal locations to relieve themselves. The two porta-potties on the main loop are heavily used and the limited service level has generally not been adequate for the amount of use.

Policy Tenet: Park usage should not detrimentally impact the natural environment. Therefore, sufficient sanitary facilities, trash receptacles, and other necessary minor improvements should be installed and maintained - not to encourage increased park usage, but to limit the impact of ongoing human usage on the environment and animal residents of the park.

Trash receptacles are located in several locations along the main loop and consist of 55-gallon drums painted green with lids clamped on to prevent birds and small rodents from scavenging. The lids are generally effective for smaller animals but not for bears. Trash disposed in the receptacles consists primarily of water bottles, pet waste, and food wrappers, which are not attractive to bears; therefore, incidents of bear scavenging have been infrequent. Trash cans used in the park should be designed to discourage scavenging by small animals and birds. Manufactured bear-proof lidded receptacles would help minimize bear scavenging should such behavior be observed in the future.

Sanitary Facilities Guidelines

- Sanitary facilities and trash receptacles shall be provided to minimize negative human impacts within the CHWP. Need shall be determined by the Community and Human Services Departments, subject to budgetary considerations and standard project or purchasing approvals that require Commission and / or City Council approval.

Sanitary Facilities Standards

- Service of sanitary facilities, including cleaning and stocking of restroom facilities and emptying trash receptacles, shall be scheduled as necessary to maintain clean facilities, minimize litter, and deter the use of informal off trail latrine areas.
- Sanitary facilities and trash receptacles shall be in colors consistent with a natural setting to minimize visual distractions.
- Sanitary facilities and trash receptacles shall be located against vegetation, berms or outcroppings rather than within open space sight lines.
- Trash receptacles shall be located with other amenities to limit the occurrence of man-made fixtures along the trail.

Benches and Rest Areas

In addition to the shelter at the top of the main loop, the rangers have constructed and installed a number of benches primarily along the main loop as well as a few elsewhere in the park to provide rest areas for visitors. These benches consist primarily of stumps from downed trees and boards provided by the rangers through a variety of means, including donated supplies. The seating is rustic and actively used by visitors. Although manufactured benches are available at varying costs, the tree stumps and rustic benches are in keeping with the natural setting.

General Bench and Rest Area Guidelines

- Benches should be located in areas set back from trail traffic against vegetation, berms, or outcroppings rather than within open space sight lines unless used as barriers.
- Some existing benches are located at vistas in view sheds / open space sight lines and may stay at the discretion of the park management, provided no additional benches are added in other such locations.

General Bench and Rest Area Standards

- Benches should continue to maintain a rustic feel, and be made of natural or natural looking material consistent with the current aesthetic.
- Large flat even surfaces should be avoided to deter graffiti. Open slatted and rough uneven surfaces are preferred.

4.3.3 Fuel and Vegetation Management

Fuel and vegetation management is guided by the City Council approved Vegetation Management Plan, which was updated in 2003 following the Grand Prix Fire. The plan was prepared by the LA County Fire Department for the City of Claremont and is intended to "provide long-term wildfire hazard mitigation and reduce associated threats to life, property, and the environment" within the limitations of environmental and regulatory constraints.

The CHWP is located in a historic fire corridor along the San Gabriel Mountains' urban-wildland interface, which has experienced a series of brush fires throughout the decades. In fact many of the region's plant communities, such as Manzanita, are not only tolerant of periodic fires, but dependent upon fire to germinate and thrive. Due to steep topography, heavy fuels, severe fire weather, extreme drought, and higher than normal seasonal temperatures, the very real potential exists for brush fires to occur again. Whether a fire starts within the Claremont-owned hillsides or blows in from the east, as was the case with the 2003 Grand Prix Fire, the Claremont community should prepare for wildfires as it does for earthquakes.

Within its own hillsides, the City of Claremont undertakes a number of measures to mitigate fire risk, including enforcing the prohibition against glass containers, smoking, or camp fires in the CHWP. In addition, each year the Community Services Department undertakes brush clearance activities at the perimeter of the park in proximity to nearby structures, work which is inspected by LA County inspectors to certify compliance with the current Vegetation Management Plan.

Because wildfire embers are known to travel over a mile before settling onto combustible material or vegetation, it is paramount that the neighborhoods adjoining the hillsides take appropriate actions to mitigate fire risk on private property.

Policy Tenet: To address changing conditions in the CHWP and to incorporate updated technologies and practices related to mitigating the risk of wildfires, City staff must maintain communication with LA County Fire, including for preparedness planning and critical incident response.

General Fuel and Vegetation Management Guidelines

- Update the Vegetation Management Plan every 10 years and adhere to its guidelines for vegetation and fuel management.
- Participate in the preparation of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and adhere to its guidelines for City actions related to community preparedness.
- Maintain collaboration with LA County Fire Department to ensure fire roads are maintained for equipment accessibility.
- Disseminate public information related to fire risk, prevention, and preparedness, particularly during periods of high fire risk.
- Close the CHWP during Red Flag conditions to reduce visitor risk should a fire begin.
- Avoid conducting brush clearance during Red Flag conditions to preclude the risk of sparks.

4.3.4 Parking Management

The most complex issue surrounding the Wilderness Park relates to parking. Although the capacity and usage study determined the park trails were sufficient to carry the number of annual visits to the park, the parking capacity is limited to the parking lots and surrounding streets. However, street parking brings with it impacts to the neighborhoods adjacent to the park. Residential permit parking zones and a parking permit system have been instituted to minimize the parking impacts.

In completing this Master Plan, staff conducted extensive studies on parking behaviors, parking limitations, visitor behavior, and the impacts on the residents in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The following are the key findings related to these areas:

1) There is adequate parking during nonpeak times in the existing two parking lots.
2) During peak periods on Saturday and Sunday mornings there is a shortage of available parking in the lots. Restrictions on street parking are necessary in order to direct park users to the parking lots.
3) Implementation of Residential Parking Permit (RPP) zones have resolved the majority of resident complaints.
4) Charging for parking and restricting on-street parking is the current recommendation to control attendance.
5) Parking behavior and impacts are dynamic. As regulations are changed, behavior will change in anticipated and unanticipated ways.

Additional monitoring and studying of parking will be necessary.

4.3.5 Parking Lots

Two parking lots are located on N. Mills Avenue adjacent to the CHWP. The north lot provides 134 spaces and serves as the primary parking lot for the facility. The N. Mills parking lot hours of operation were established in relation to the operating hours of the park, which are adjusted each month to generally match available daylight hours.

A 45 space parking lot at the trail entrance to the Thompson Creek Trail is located at the intersection of Mt. Baldy and N. Mills and is referred to as the TCT / south lot. Its operating hours match those of the municipal park and trail system, which is 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Both parking lots are currently regulated and require a permit. Meters are available in both lots to purchase a temporary permit valid for up to four hours. Frequent visitors may also purchase an annual permit. All annual permits expire January 1 and are prorated based on the purchase date. Annual permit stickers must be displayed on the rear window of the vehicle and may be used in either parking lot. Residents may obtain two free resident permits per household with proof of residency. Resident permits are only valid in the south lot, which is City-owned. The north lot is leased by City from the Pomona Valley Protective Association (PVPA), a regionally

serving water agency. As a condition of the lease, PVPA required the City make access to the parking lot available for all visitors whether they live in Claremont or not. Therefore, the resident permit is only valid in the south lot. Parking lot fees and regulations may be adjusted as deemed appropriate by the City Council.

The current parking lot capacity is sufficient to meet visitor demands on most days except Saturday and Sunday mornings, which becomes a factor for determining park capacity. When the City's consultant, MIG, was asked to evaluate "carrying capacity," the discussion primarily revolved around trail capacity and whether the park was too crowded. Carrying capacity is affected by social, biological and /or physical factors. Because the trail network is primarily comprised of wide fire roads, the trails can physically accommodate more people than currently hike or bike (physical factor) in the CHWP. Furthermore, according to the intercept survey results, the majority of park users do not believe the trails are too crowded (social factor). Nor does the baseline environmental assessment indicate that the number or type of visitors is having a significant detrimental impact to park habitat or the physical condition of the hillsides (biological factors). Therefore, based on data collected in 2014 the park's internal carrying capacity has not been limited thus far by social, biological or physical factors. However, limited parking availability in parking lots or street parking is a limiting factor in the number of visitors that the park can accommodate. Additionally, visitor parking negatively impacted the surrounding neighborhoods prior to the introduction of restricted parking. Therefore, parking capacity should be considered a limiting factor and can serve as the basis for managing park visitation.

Based on parking surveys, park visitors park outside the lots for three general reasons: 1) the lots are full (physical capacity), 2) the visitor does not want to pay for parking in the lots (discretionary preference), or 3) the visitor cannot afford to pay for parking (economic limitation). Adjacent collector and residential streets have been impacted by migrating parking from park visitors to varying degrees. As noted in Chapter 2, a series of Restricted Parking Permit zones have been approved to address parking impacts. As part of the Master Planning process, additional parking alternatives were evaluated, including lifting some restricted parking areas on N. Mills, providing overflow parking areas, improving shoulder areas to traffic safety standards to accommodate additional parking, funding a weekend shuttle from the Metrolink parking lot in the Village, and encouraging visitors to park at other parks and walk or bike to the main entrance. These alternatives are not recommended at this time due to negative impacts to other neighborhoods or park user groups and the cost subsidies necessary to provide the service. Alternatively, a park reservation system was evaluated to limit entrance to the CHWP based upon the number of spaces available in the parking lots factoring in the number of people walking and biking to the park. However, the capital improvement and labor costs to secure and control entrances were prohibitive.

In order to achieve a better balance between parking supply and demand, the Implementation Plan makes recommendations to reduce parking demand using increased peak time pricing and

increased parking restrictions on residential streets to reduce supply and drive users during these times into the parking lots.

With regard to physical operation and maintenance, the parking lots should be maintained in a safe and good condition, including landscaping, asphalt, signage, striping, and amenities such as bike racks, benches, sanitary facilities, drinking fountains and trash cans.

General Parking Lot Guidelines:

- Parking opportunities to support CHWP visitation shall be provided at a level deemed necessary and / or sufficient by the City Council, and managed through a variety of methods and means to minimize detrimental neighborhood impacts.
- Incentives should be provided to encourage visitation during off-peak periods.

General Parking Lot Standards:

- The facilities shall be inspected regularly, maintained in good and working order, and any deficiencies repaired or corrected in a timely fashion.
- Consistent with Community Services standards, graffiti shall be removed within 48 hours of discovery, if possible.

Chapter 5 is a new chapter which was not in the Final Draft Master Plan released in January 2016. The inclusion of the Chapter was in response to public feedback received after the publication of the January 2016 version and after review by the Commissions and public.

CHAPTER 5: FUTURE AQUISITION, FUTURE STUDY & REASSESSMENT

As was noted in Chapter 1, the Master Plan was shaped by the Goals and Guiding Principles listed below:

Primary Goals:

- Preserve the park as an environmental resource;
- Manage the park as a passive recreational opportunity; and
- Minimize the impact park attendance has on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles were developed to help steer the Master Planning process and guide future decision-making for the next twenty or more years. The Master Plan is designed as a policy and management document, rather than a proscriptive set of operating procedures. These guiding principles were developed based upon existing City policies and documents, as well as public input.

Preservation: Environmental and cultural resources within the current park must be preserved and protected. As additional open-space lands in Claremont's hillsides become available, efforts shall be made to acquiring the land and annex the land to the park when fiscally feasible. Special attention should be given to preserving the hillsides' function as watershed for the cities of the San Gabriel Valley. Appropriate resource management promotes the long-term viability of the natural and cultural landscape, inspiring future generations to care for and respect these resources. The natural environment and the overall conditions of the Park shall be managed to minimize impacts from human recreational activities.

Stewardship: The Master Plan will promote a park culture in which visitors treat nature, park neighbors, and one another with respect and courtesy. Everyone associated with the park—visitors, neighbors, City staff members—will be encouraged to see themselves as stewards of the park, protecting its resources. City staff will educate visitors about these expectations and enforce park rules in a fair and friendly manner.

Access: Inclusive and managed public access is provided as secondary to preserving the natural environment and limiting the impacts to surrounding properties. The CHWP

allows for passive recreational opportunities that connect people to nature and promote healthy lifestyles.

Education: Active education is the cornerstone of fostering visitors' safe and responsible behaviors in the park. With effective outreach to the community, a variety of educational and interpretive programs (such as field trips and docent-led hikes) will enhance their understanding and appreciation of the park's culture and its natural resources.

Public Engagement: Public collaboration is integral to ensuring sound policy decision-making, and providing opportunities for the community to contribute their knowledge, expertise, and energy to actively support Park management.

Funding: Achieving the Goals of the Master Plan and realizing the manifestation of the Guiding Principles is only possible with funding generated from parking fees and grants to support active park management, operations and maintenance.

This Master Plan provides a framework for policy direction and management of the park for the next 20 years. However, the Master Plan is not a static document but one that will change and evolve over time. Future acquisitions, environmental changes, usage pattern changes and other factors will require adaptation of the Master Plan. This chapter presents policy and guidelines to help manage this Master Plan as a dynamic document.

5.1 FUTURE ACQUISITION

The General Plan background report in 2004 notes, "Claremont City officials have stated that they will continue to explore grants, partnerships, and other opportunities for acquiring as much hillside open space as possible." Since the 2004 General Plan report, the City has purchased several parcels. Key factors in acquisition for expansion are (1) a willing seller wanting a reasonable price and (2) available funding. Due to other significant projects affecting the City budget, substantial general fund monies are not currently available to expand the CHWP. However, hillside open space acquisition remains a priority for collaboration between City staff and engaged community groups. The City will continue to actively monitor available grant funds so that when parcels become available for sale, grant funds can be used expand the CHWP.

Policy Tenet: Preserving open space by limiting development benefits the environment, the wildlife in the foothills, and the entire community. Expanding the CHWP should remain a priority, through funding acquisitions with non-General Fund revenue

While acquisition of parcels to maintain as open space remains a priority, it is vital that issues such as parking, access, environmental impacts, and impacts on neighborhoods are evaluated. While all future acquisitions should be folded into the CHWP to ensure consistency of rules, hours and usage, it may be necessary for other regulations or the planning process to accompany new acquisition in order to limit any unintended consequences of acquisition.

5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION, WATERSHED PROTECTION, AND FUTURE STUDY

The baseline environmental assessment performed by the consultants as part of the Master Plan process provided an important snapshot in time of the environmental conditions in the CHWP. While the overall findings do not point to major environmental concerns, a more study of the local habitat would provide additional comprehensive results to supplement those of the consultants.

Through the community dialogue during the Master Plan process, great interest was expressed for taking steps for additional study and planning to maintain and maximize the yield of the watershed. There was also interest shown in additional long-term wildlife and environmental studies performed and monitored over time.

Due to the expense of such studies, some could be done using volunteers and community resources. In some cases, a consultant would need to be hired to manage the process, and in others, a community ad hoc committee may need to be formed. The City must set priorities and secure funding for such studies over the long term.

Policy Tenet: Additional study of the CHWP is beneficial to better understand, and thus better manage, the CHWP in order to maximize preservation and environmental protection.

5.3 CHANGES TO THE MASTER PLAN AND REASSESSMENT TIME FRAMES

The Master Plan is intended to provide long term guidance for park management, generally assumed to be at least twenty years. However, the Master Plan should be considered a flexible document that can evolve with time based on changing circumstances. From time to time, modifications to the document may be appropriate. Changes would go through the normal City review process including Parks, Hillsides and Utilities Committee, Community and Human Services Commission, and finally the City Council if necessary. In addition to the standard process, ad hoc committees, community meetings, or workshops may be needed prior to beginning the Committee/Commission/Council review process, depending on the nature of changes being considered

In order to have a truly living document that allows for adaptive implementation based on changes in conditions, it is important to have established systems and time frames to gather fresh empirical data. To that end, the following time frames are recommended for additional parking, user, and environmental survey and study. Gathering of this information should be funded through parking meter revenue and/or in coordination with community resources such as the Claremont colleges. Results of studies and data-gathering efforts should be shared with the Friends of the CHWP, the community as a whole, the Traffic and Transportation Commission, the Community and Human Services Commission, and the City Council.

Parking

Parking behavior and impacts should be measured throughout the **first year** of implementation of any new parking fees/restrictions or other changes to how or where visitors park. Additionally, when no changes are made to parking policy or facilities, the parking situation should be reexamined **every two years**. Areas of study should include, but not be limited to, number of cars parking outside of the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) zone, empty spaces in the lots, parking meter usage data, and disruptive aspects of parking as reported by neighbors.

Usage Estimates and User Profile

In order to ensure that proper implementation efforts are undertaken, it is vital to make sure that the community, staff and City Council have accurate and up-to-date information on how many people are using the park: and how often, why and who the park users are. To this end, user surveys and usage estimates should be performed **every two years**.

Environmental Evaluation

Chapter 3 of this plan presents the current environmental analysis and the resource management plan to guide the long-term preservation of the CHWP. As with usage, the natural environment is ever-changing, and impacts of usage, climate change, watershed concerns, and others also need to be monitored regularly. In addition to the supplemental study described in the Implementation Plan, environmental evaluation should be performed **every five years** in order to provide updated environmental data to guide decision making.