

2.0 MSHCP PROPOSED PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Introduction

The MSHCP, which is the proposed action, is a regional conservation planning effort that identifies and coordinates the permanent protection of habitats, biological linkages and corridors, and ecological processes for the benefit of plants and wildlife. The Plan establishes the basis for the Permittees to comply with both the State and Federal ESAs and other regulations promulgated to protect listed plants and wildlife. Adoption and implementation of the Plan would also accommodate future development in the Plan Area.

Portions of the Plan Area have been conserved or developed, pursuant to the Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard HCP (CVFTLHCP) approved in 1986. Since that time, listing of other species in the Plan Area has affected economic development activities and resulted in piecemeal conservation efforts. In the absence of a regional HCP, such piecemeal conservation could continue as would possible development uncertainty.

The proposed MSHCP provides the regionally integrated and coordinated conservation planning mechanism that involves the assembly of large expanses of contiguous habitat, effective linkages, and ecological process areas for the perpetuation of the proposed Covered Species. The following group of beneficiaries would share responsibility for implementing the proposed MSHCP, including securing and/or managing Reserve Lands, costs associated with MSHCP Reserve Assembly, and long-term management.

- Federal and State governments, and the communities they represent, benefit from the survival and continuation of species that their laws are designed to protect.
- Local governments, with jurisdiction in the proposed MSHCP Plan Area, representing the communities of the Coachella Valley, have a responsibility to contribute to assembly of the proposed MSHCP Reserve System. Existing communities benefit from the preservation of their natural heritage and the visual and recreational values of regional open space. Regional infrastructure facilities are being identified and planned that would benefit existing and future residents of these communities. The development and/or operation and maintenance of these regional facilities are proposed Covered Activities under the MSHCP.
- Private landowners and developers would benefit from the proposed MSHCP because it establishes a local permitting process, eliminating uncertainty and duplication of agency review. The Plan proposes a framework for MSHCP Reserve Assembly, monitoring, and management toward which mitigation funds and activities would be directed.

- The Southern California region as a whole would benefit from the proposed MSHCP, because it proposes a framework for future development and infrastructure to occur in a manner that considers conservation and interconnectedness with important components of Southern California's natural heritage.

2.2 Development of the Proposed MSHCP

As briefly discussed above, the CVFTLHCP was approved in 1986. It allowed development to occur in CVFTL habitat by payment of impact fees, which were used to assemble and manage habitat reserves for this species.

Continuing conversion of unique and limited habitats to urban and associated uses, and the subsequent listing of other species in the Coachella Valley, including both plants and animals, resulted in conflicts between development activities and conservation of these species in the region. As a result primarily of continuing urbanization and the loss of habitat in the Plan Area, a total of eleven plant and wildlife species are now listed as threatened or endangered under State and Federal laws. A number of other species are identified as either endemic or nearly endemic to the Coachella Valley and could warrant listing unless conservation actions are instituted.

Through a coordinated effort of CVAG and its member jurisdictions, an initial assessment and scoping study prepared in 1994 recommended the preparation of an integrated multiple species HCP to address the emerging conservation issues in a holistic manner. An MOU executed in 1996 guided the preparation of the Plan. An MOU amendment executed in 1997 stipulated that the Plan would be an NCCP.

Scientific Advisory Committee

In 1994 a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) was established, made up of biologists from BLM, the NPS, USFS, the University of California Natural Reserve System, the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM), and CVWD. One non-biologist member also served as a liaison with the PAG (See Section 1.4 of the Plan). Representatives of the Wildlife Agencies also participated.

With the assistance of other experts in the field of conservation biology, the SAC considered a wide range of species and developed an ecosystem-based conservation program for those species and natural communities to be covered by the Plan. An extensive effort was conducted to collect and assemble the best available baseline data and information on the wide range of habitats and natural communities that occur in the Coachella Valley. Surveys of the habitats were conducted and remote sensing was also used to characterize the biological resources in the Plan Area. These

efforts were aided by an integrated mapping effort using a Geographic Information System (GIS). The SAC also drew upon the knowledge and experience of a variety of plant and wildlife biologists with specific expertise.

Best Available Science. A comprehensive database of the best available scientific research and information was used over the course of the Plan's development. Extensive surveys were completed although collection of data for certain species was precluded by prolonged drought conditions, limited funding, and the unwillingness of some property owners to allow researchers on their lands. These surveys are described in detail in Appendix I of the Plan.

A coarse filter approach was employed to assess species needs, which emphasized Core Habitat areas for the proposed Covered Species, the Essential Ecological Processes that sustain them, and Biological Corridors and Linkages to maintain connectivity between larger patches of habitat. When data were available, a fine filter approach was utilized to identify important areas for specific Covered Species. Monitoring and Management Programs were developed to assess the conservation of Covered Species and natural communities, and Plan performance. A review by Independent Science Advisors was also conducted (See Plan Appendix I).

MSHCP Development Goals and Process

As stated above, the Plan was developed in consultation with the SAC, using best available science. The SAC developed a methodology for use in assessing the relative biological value of lands within the Plan Area and the subsequent development of the Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative. The PBS (PBS) conservation strategy was primarily based on the Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California (USFWS 2000).

The Plan recognizes that there is inevitably an uncertainty factor in scientific information about biological systems. The Monitoring Program is designed to increase the level of knowledge about Covered Species, natural communities, Essential Ecological Processes, and connectivity and would be utilized in implementing the Management Program.

Conservation Goals established early in the MSHCP development process include:

- Represent native ecosystem types or natural communities across their natural range of variation in a system of conserved areas.
- Maintain or restore viable populations of the species included in the Plan so that Take Permits can be obtained for currently Listed Species and Non-listed Species can be covered in case they are listed in the future.

- Sustain ecological and evolutionary processes necessary to maintain the viability of the natural communities and habitats for the species included in the Plan.
- Manage the system adaptively to be responsive to short-term and long-term environmental change.

The MSHCP development process, which is described in Section 3.0 of this EIR/EIS and Appendix I of the Plan, consisted of the following steps:

1. Determine the species and natural communities to be included in the Plan.
2. Gather information on the species and natural communities.
3. Prepare accounts of individual species and natural communities.
4. Gather other pertinent information.
5. Prepare a Natural Communities Map.
6. Analyze biological resource information to map species distribution.
7. Develop Site Identification Maps.
8. Delineate Core Habitat areas, Essential Ecological Process areas, and Biological Corridors and Linkages.
9. Develop conservation alternatives.
10. Develop and use criteria for evaluating the conservation alternatives.
11. Conduct Independent Science Advisor Review Process.
12. Develop a Preferred Alternative for Conservation of the proposed Covered Species and their habitats. And,
13. Delineate Conservation Goals and Objectives.

2.3 Covered Species and Natural Communities

The MOU initially identified 52 plant and animal species to be considered for coverage under the MSHCP. These are species for which sufficient information existed or was gathered during the planning process to enable the development of conservation measures. Appendix I of the Plan provides a detailed discussion of how species were selected for Plan coverage. *Table 2-1* lists the Covered Species under the Plan.

TABLE 2-1
Species Proposed to Be Covered under the Plan

Species Plants	Status
Coachella Valley milkvetch, <i>Astragalus lentiginosus</i> var. <i>coachellae</i>	(FE)
Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus, <i>Linanthus maculatus</i> (or <i>Gilia maculata</i>) ¹	
Mecca aster, <i>Xylorhiza cognata</i> ¹	
Orocopia sage, <i>Salvia greatae</i> ¹	
Triple-ribbed milkvetch, <i>Astragalus tricarinatus</i>	(FE)
Invertebrates - Insects	
Coachella Valley giant sand-treader cricket, <i>Macrobaenetes valgum</i>	(FSC) ¹
Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, <i>Stenopelmatus cahuilensis</i>	(FSC) ¹
Fish	
Desert pupfish, <i>Cyprinodon macularius</i>	(FE/SE)
Amphibians	
Arroyo toad, <i>Bufo californicus</i>	(FE/CSC)
Reptiles	
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, <i>Uma inornata</i>	(FT/SE)
Desert tortoise, <i>Gopherus agassizii</i>	(FT/ST)
Flat-tailed horned lizard, <i>Phrynosoma mcallii</i>	(CSC)
Birds	
Burrowing owl, <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	(CSC)
California black rail, <i>Laterallus jamaicensis</i>	(ST/SFP)
Crissal thrasher, <i>Toxostoma crissale</i>	(CSC)
Gray vireo, <i>Vireo vicinior</i>	(CSC)
Le Conte's thrasher, <i>Toxostoma lecontei</i>	(CSC)
Least Bell's vireo, <i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	(FE/SE)
Southwestern willow flycatcher, <i>Empidonax traillii eximius</i>	(SE/FE)
Summer tanager, <i>Piranga rubra</i> ¹	
Yellow warbler, <i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i>	(CSC)
Yellow-breasted chat, <i>Icteria virens</i>	(CSC)
Yuma clapper rail, <i>Rallus longirostris yumanensis</i>	(FE/ST/SFP)
Mammals	
PBS, <i>Ovis canadensis nelsoni</i>	(FE/ST/SFP)
Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, <i>Spermophilus tereticaudus chlorus</i>	(FSC/CSC)
Palm Springs pocket mouse, <i>Perognathus longimembris bangsi</i>	(CSC)
Southern yellow bat, <i>Lasiurus ega</i> or <i>xanthinus</i> ¹	

Status Codes: The status codes used in the above table are identified in the following key, as listed in the California Natural Diversity Data Base Special Animals List and Special Plants List from July 2000 (CNDDDB 2000).

- FE = Federal Endangered
- FT = Federal Threatened
- FC = Federal Candidate
- FSC = Federal Species of Concern
- SE = State Endangered
- ST = State Threatened
- SFP = State Fully Protected
- CSC = Species of Special Concern (a state list of species that are at risk due to habitat modification or destruction, over-collecting, disease, or other threats)
- CNPS = Rare in California
- List 2

¹ These species have no official status but were included because of the likelihood of their being listed during the Permit term.

Over the course of Plan development, a total of 46 natural communities were identified. The Plan focuses on 27 natural communities, 23 of which were identified in the MOU (See Plan Appendix I Section 3.9). *Table 2-2* lists the natural communities covered by the Plan.

**TABLE 2-2
Natural Communities Covered by the Plan**

Active desert dunes	Stabilized/partially stabilized desert dunes
Active desert sand fields	Ephemeral desert sand fields
Stabilized and partially stabilized desert sand fields	Stabilized shielded desert sand fields
Mesquite hummocks	Sonoran creosote bush scrub
Sonoran mixed woody and succulent scrub	Mojave mixed woody scrub
Desert saltbush scrub	Desert sink scrub
Chamise chaparral	Redshank chaparral
Semi-desert chaparral	Cismontane alkali marsh
Coastal and valley freshwater marsh	Southern arroyo willow riparian forest
Sonoran cottonwood-willow riparian forest	Mesquite bosque
Desert dry wash woodland	Desert fan palm oasis woodland
Southern sycamore-alder riparian woodland	Arrowweed scrub
Mojavean pinyon-juniper woodland	Peninsular juniper woodland scrub
Interior live oak chaparral	

2.4 Species Considered but Not Covered by the MSHCP

As noted above, 52 species were initially considered for coverage under the MSHCP. Over the course of data collection, surveys, literature reviews and consultations with conservation biologists and species specialists, a variety of species were removed from the list. A number of species originally proposed for coverage have been dropped from the list due to the lack of information on known locations or insufficient data to support conservation planning for those species. *Table 2-3* lists those species initially considered but eliminated from consideration as a Covered Species. Appendix I, Section 3.8 of the Plan provides additional information and rationale for these species considered but not proposed for coverage.

**TABLE 2-3
Species Considered but Not Covered by the Plan**

Plants

California ditaxis, *Ditaxis californica*

Cliff spurge, *Euphorbia misera*

Flat-seeded spurge, *Chamaesyce platysperma*

TABLE 2-3 (cont.)

Glandular ditaxis, *Ditaxis clariana*
Robison's monardella, *Monardella robisonii*

Invertebrates - Insects

Casey's June beetle, *Dinacoma caseyi*
Coachella Valley grasshopper, *Spaniacris deserticola*
Pratt's dark aurora blue butterfly, *Euphilotes enoptes cryptorufes*

Invertebrates - Other

Morongo desert snail, *Eremarionta morongoana*
Thousand Palms desert snail, *Eremarionta millepalmarum*

Amphibians

California red-legged frog, *Rana aurora draytonii*
Lowland leopard frog, *Rana yavapiensis*
Mountain yellow-legged frog, *Rana muscosa*
Desert slender salamander, *Batrachoseps aridus*

Reptiles

California legless lizard, *Anniella pulchra pulchra*
San Diego horned lizard, *Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*

Mammals

California leaf-nosed bat, *Macrotus californicus*
California (Western) mastiff bat, *Eumops perotis californicus*
Fringed myotis, *Myotis thysanodes*
Long-eared myotis, *Myotis evotis*
Long-legged myotis, *Myotis volans*
Pallid bat, *Antrozous pallidus*
Pocketed free-tailed bat, *Nyctinomops femorosaccus*
Townsend's (Western) big-eared bat, *Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens*
Western small-footed myotis, *Myotis ciliolabrum*
Yuma myotis, *Myotis yumanensis*

2.5 Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative (MSHCP)

The Plan is the USFWS' Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative because it meets both the purpose and need of the USFWS. Since 1994, the Plan has been subjected to a rigorous process

of data collection and analysis, as well as extensive review and critique by a variety of public agencies, academic, and private sector biologists with extensive experience in conservation biology and expertise in specific species and natural communities. Plan components include the proposed MSHCP Reserve System, Management and Monitoring Programs, funding plan, and the organizational structure for its implementation.

2.5.1 MSHCP Reserve System

The MSHCP Reserve System is proposed to be assembled from twenty-one (21) Conservation Areas providing Core Habitat and Other Conserved Habitat for the proposed Covered Species. The MSHCP Reserve System was also designed to conserve Essential Ecological Processes, including washes and blowsand corridors that sustain the Plan Area sand dune and sand field habitats. Other important ecological processes that will be encompassed in the MSHCP Reserve System include surface and subsurface hydrologic processes and systems, fire regimes, and biotic processes such as reproduction, pollination, dispersal, and migration. Biological Corridors and Linkages are also incorporated into the MSHCP Reserve System design. Linkages allow for movement in wide-ranging animals, plant propagation, interchange of genetic material among populations, movement in response to environmental change or natural disasters, and recolonization following extirpation (Beier and Loe 1992). Biological Corridors (i.e., wildlife movement areas that are constrained by existing development, freeways, or other impediments), are of particular importance in providing connectivity between otherwise isolated preserves. Areas designated as Biological Corridors may also be important in the function of ecosystem processes, such as sand transport.

Reserve System Assembly

The assembly of the MSHCP Reserve System would require coordinated efforts on the part of all Plan Permittees and Participants. As described in Plan Sections 4.1 and 4.2, the MSHCP Reserve System is proposed to be comprised of: **(1)** Existing Conservation Lands; **(2)** Complementary Conservation Lands; and **(3)** Additional Conservation Lands. Upon completion of the acquisition program, Reserve System Assembly would result in an MSHCP Reserve System of approximately 745,900 acres (See *Table 2-4* below).

TABLE 2-4
MSHCP Reserve System Lands (in acres)

1996	2006	Lands
458,800	484,600	Existing Federal lands in MSHCP Reserve System ¹
32,700	44,600	Existing state lands in MSHCP Reserve System
900	19,100	Existing non-profit organization lands in MSHCP Reserve System ²
4,000	8,800	Existing Local Permittee Conservation lands in MSHCP Reserve System
496,400	557,100	SUBTOTAL
69,290	29,990	Acres of Complementary Conservation
39,850	21,390	Acres to be acquired by State and Federal agencies
7,500	7,500	Additional Local Permittee acres for which there would be cooperation to conserve
93,100	88,900	Acres to be acquired or otherwise conserved by Local Permittees
10,800	10,800	Other non-Permittee public and quasi-public lands
7,800	7,800	Fluvial sand transport area where the Conservation Objective is met through non-acquisition. Development consistent with Conservation Objectives is allowed. ³
228,340	166,380	SUBTOTAL - COMPLEMENTARY CONSERVATION AND ADDITIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS
22,660	22,420	Potential Development within Conservation Areas
747,400	745,900	TOTAL - CONSERVATION AREAS

¹ The acreage includes lands purchased by non-profit organizations and donated to Federal agencies.

² The acreage includes lands owned by non-profit organizations but acquired with State grant funds or local funds.

³ These acres are in the Cabazon, Long Canyon, and West Deception Canyon Conservation Areas.

2.5.2 Conservation Areas

The MSHCP Reserve System would be assembled from the twenty-one (21) Conservation Areas, which have been designed based upon environmental and geophysical factors as well as jurisdictional boundaries. Assembly of the MSHCP Reserve System, and implementation of the Monitoring and Management Programs (see Section 8 of the Plan), would achieve the Plan's Conservation Goals and Objectives. These include the following:

1. Represent native ecosystem types or natural communities across their natural range of variation in a system of conserved areas.
2. Maintain or restore self-sustaining populations or metapopulations of the species included in the Plan to ensure permanent Conservation so that Take Permits can be obtained for currently Listed animal Species and Non-listed Species can be covered in case they are listed in the future.
3. Sustain ecological and evolutionary processes necessary to maintain the viability of the natural communities and Habitats for the Covered Species.

4. Maximize connectivity among species populations and avoid Habitat fragmentation within Conservation Areas to conserve biological diversity, connected populations of Covered Species, and ecological balance.
5. Minimize adverse impacts from off highway vehicle use, illegal dumping, edge effects, exotic species, and other disturbances in accordance with the Management and Monitoring Programs.
6. Manage the MSHCP Reserve System adaptively to be responsive to short-term and long-term environmental change and new science.

2.5.3 Review of Development Proposals in Conservation Areas

The MSHCP sets forth a context within which development proposals in Conservation Areas are considered. More than 90% of private lands in the Conservation Areas are designated "Open Space."

The Local Permittees would process applications for development as well as public projects in the Conservations Areas according to the process outlined in Section 6.6.1.1 of the Plan. Limited Development in the Conservation Areas would be allowed provided it is consistent with applicable Conservation and Species Goals and Objectives.

“Rough Step” Review Process

The Plan identifies a 30-year time frame for Reserve System Assembly. The Plan also includes a process to ensure that Reserve System Assembly and achievement of Conservation and Species Goals and Objectives (by Conservation Area) is not precluded by Development. This Rough Step review process requires an annual review and analysis of conserved and developed lands with each Conservation Area. The analysis is to be conducted to assure that Conservation is in “Rough Step” with meeting the Goals and Objectives for each Species and Conservation Area. If the annual review indicates that Conservation is "out of step" with Development activity, specific actions shall be taken to assure that Conservation catches up with and meets the Conservation Goals and Species Objectives for that Conservation Area (see Section 6.5 of the Plan for a detailed description of this Rough Step mechanism).

2.5.4 MSHCP Costs and Funding

Section 5 of the MSHCP provides a detailed description of costs associated with implementation of the Plan. These include direct costs of land acquisition and associated administrative and staffing costs. Biological monitoring, land management, and Adaptive Management activities would also result in Plan costs. The funding of endowments adequate to assure the long-term

monitoring and management of Reserve Lands has been incorporated into the costs of the proposed Plan.

Circumstances that would affect Reserve System Assembly include the cyclical nature of real estate development, inflation, economic cycles, supply and demand for housing, and environmental and infrastructure constraints that would affect development potential. Using a 30-year acquisition schedule land acquisition and related transaction costs for Permittees are estimated to be \$316,484,000 in 2006 dollars. These costs include the acquisition of approximately 88,900 acres.

Proposed Funding for Local Permittee Acquisitions

The funding needs associated with implementing the Plan have also been evaluated. Costs are primarily affected by the acquisition time frame, which is projected to be 30 years.

Plan funding sources for Local Permittees include the following:

- Fees on the importation of solid waste into Riverside County landfills
- Development impact mitigation fees
- Mitigation funds off-setting impacts from regional infrastructure projects
- Local transportation project mitigation funds (percentage of Measure A revenues)
- Eagle Mountain Landfill Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund

Funding for State and Federal Acquisitions¹

Funding for State and Federal acquisitions are proposed to come from a variety of sources, including but not limited to the following:

- State Bond Acts
- Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Federal Endangered Species Section 6 Funds
- Land exchanges

¹ These acquisitions are not mitigation for Covered Activities for the MSHCP.

2.5.5 Proposed MSHCP Implementation

The MSHCP provides a detailed organizational structure for implementation, including: Plan participant obligations; time frames for implementation; Plan amendments; and a process for adding Covered Species to the Plan. Each component of Plan implementation is briefly described below. A detailed discussion of Plan implementation can be found in Section 6 of the Plan.

Coachella Valley Conservation Commission

The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) would be the joint powers authority that would oversee and provide policy direction for Plan implementation. The CVCC would have neither jurisdiction over land use decisions made by Local Permittees nor the authority to prevent a Local Permittee from approving projects proposed within Conservation Areas.

The CVCC would consist of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors and an elected official from each of the Cities, CVWD, and IID. Each of these entities may also designate an alternate, who would also be an elected official. Each voting member of CVCC Executive Committee would have one vote at meetings of CVCC.

CVCC responsibilities would include but are not limited to overall coordination of the Plan, creating and appointing some subcommittees and administrators, managing the local funding plan and adopting annual budgets, contracting for special services, and other duties (see Section 6.1.1.2 of the Plan).

The CVCC would also be assisted by the following committees and administrators:

Acquisition and Funding Coordinating Committee (AFCC): The AFCC would provide input and would be advisory to the CVCC on local funding and acquisition priorities. The AFCC would also serve as a forum to discuss land acquisition priorities of the state and Federal Plan participants.

Reserve Management Oversight Committee (RMOC): The RMOC would report directly to the CVCC and would serve as an intermediary between the Reserve Managers and the CVCC. The RMOC would be comprised of one representative of the BLM, CDFG, State Parks, CVCC, County, USFWS, and up to five other private or public Reserve Land holder(s) appointed by the CVCC. NPS and USFS would be *ex officio* members. Duties of the RMOC would include but are not limited to: assisting in the prioritization of Reserve System management activities, providing expert technical advice and assistance, overseeing implementation of the Management Program, and other duties.

Monitoring Program Administrator (MPA): This individual or entity would be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Monitoring Program established by the Plan. The MPA duties shall include but are not necessarily limited to overseeing the Monitoring Program for the MSHCP Reserve System, updating and refining associated data and information, coordinating with land managers, periodic reporting, budget planning, and other duties.

Time Frame for Plan Implementation

The availability of funding and willing sellers would have a direct effect on Reserve System Assembly. The Rough Step or approximate proportionality of Development and Conservation within each Conservation Area would assure that, regardless of time frame, the Conservation Goals and Objectives of each Conservation Area shall be met. The Plan proposes to complete Reserve System Assembly within 30 years. During the 75-year term of the Permits an endowment would be established to fund the Management and Monitoring Programs in perpetuity.

2.5.6 Plan/Permit Amendments and Boundary Adjustments

It is envisioned that over the life of the Permit the Permittees may wish to amend the Plan. Such amendments would be processed pursuant to Section 6.12 of the Plan.

2.5.7 Take Authorization for Covered Activities

Certain projects, listed as Covered Activities, would receive Take Authorization under the Plan. The proposed Plan addresses two types of Covered Activities: (1) those which occur within or adjacent to the Conservation Areas; and (2) those located outside the Conservation Areas. This EIR/EIS analyzes the impacts of providing Take Authorization for the Covered Activities in the Plan. The Plan authorizes Take that would result from future actions by the Local Permittees. Impacts associated with Covered Activities construction and implementation would be subject to CEQA and/or NEPA assessment prior to approval by the applicable local Permittee.

2.5.7.1 Summary of Covered Activities outside Conservation Areas

Covered Activities outside Conservation Areas would include Development permitted or approved by Local Permittees. This includes but is not limited to new projects approved pursuant to County and city general plans, including the circulation element of said general plans, transportation improvement plans for roads in addition to those addressed in Section 7.2 of the Plan, master drainage plans, capital improvement plans, water and waste management plans, the County's adopted Trails Master Plan, and other plans adopted by the Permittees. Public facility operations and maintenance and safety activities by the Permittees for existing and future

facilities, including both on and off site activities, are also Covered Activities. Such facilities include, but are not limited to, publicly maintained roads and rights-of-way; materials pits; maintenance yards; flood control facilities; landfills, transfer stations, and other solid waste related facilities, including those for the processing of organic materials; public buildings; water development, production, storage, treatment, and transmission facilities; sewage treatment and transmission facilities; reclaimed water storage and transmission facilities; public parks; substations and electric transmission facilities; and other public utility facilities providing services essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Emergency response activities associated with wildfires, flooding, earthquakes, and other emergency situations are also covered under the Permits. (See Sections 7.1 and 7.2 of the Plan for detailed information on Covered Activities outside the Conservation Areas.)

2.5.7.2 Transportation and O&M Projects within and outside Conservation Areas

The proposed Plan also provides Take Authorization for projects and activities within the Conservation Areas. These include a variety of roadway and interchange projects to be carried out by or in cooperation with Caltrans, a variety of local transportation projects and other activities and associated O & M to be carried out by the Permittees. (See Section 7.3 of the Plan for detailed information on Covered Activities within the Conservation Areas.)

a. Interchange Projects and Associated Arterial Roadways

A variety of Caltrans/Local Permittee projects that involve highway interchanges and associated arterial roadways are proposed Covered Activities. Portions of these projects are located within and outside of Conservation Areas. Projects that are proposed Covered Activities under the Plan are set forth in the MSHCP Section 7.2.1.

b. Caltrans Projects

A variety of Caltrans projects are proposed Covered Activities. Portions of these projects occur within and outside Conservation Areas. MSHCP Section 7.2.2 lists these additional Caltrans projects and the Conservation Areas in which they occur. These Covered Activities include widening projects along I-10 and State Highways 62, 111, 86, and 74.

c. Local Transportation Projects

A variety of local transportation projects which are generally independent of those to be pursued by Caltrans, are proposed Covered Activities. These include projects that are located within and outside of the Conservation Areas. These Covered Activities are listed in MSHCP Section 7.2.3. Unless otherwise noted, the Covered Activity includes operation and maintenance of the facility.

d. City Covered Activities within Conservation Areas

Numerous projects in the cities of Cathedral City and Palm Springs are proposed Covered Activities. The Covered Activities and affected Conservation Areas are listed in Section 7.3 of the Plan.

e. Riverside County Roadway Projects

Riverside County has a wide variety of roadway projects extending from Cabazon to the Salton Sea, buildout and maintenance of which are proposed Covered Activities. Approximately 181 roadway segments are proposed Covered Activities and are described by General Plan rights-of-way, status, and affected Conservation Areas in MSHCP Section 7.3.

f. Domestic Water and Flood Control Facilities

CVWD and County Flood provide domestic water and flood control services to large portions of the Plan Area. These agencies own and operate infrastructure improvements, such as wells and water storage reservoirs, groundwater recharge basins, stormwater channels, diversion levees, and detention/retention basins within the Plan Area. The following describes existing and anticipated CVWD and County Flood proposed Covered Activities. A complete listing of CVWD and County Flood's proposed Covered Activities can be found in MSHCP Section 7.3.

CVWD Covered Activities

CVWD provides domestic water delivery, wastewater collection, agricultural drainage, irrigation water delivery, and stormwater management facilities and services to approximately 637,000 acres in Riverside, Imperial, and San Diego counties. Its water delivery system includes 63 water storage reservoirs, more than 1,600 miles of pipeline, and 92 domestic wells.² Its primary means of obtaining domestic water for the Coachella Valley is through the extraction of groundwater from subsurface aquifers underlying the valley floor. These aquifers are recharged naturally by runoff from the surrounding mountains and artificially by imported Colorado River water, which is transported to the area via the Colorado River Aqueduct. In 1999, CVWD provided domestic water services to nearly 192,000 Coachella Valley residents.³

Wastewater reclamation and recycling services are provided in most areas where CVWD provides domestic water services. CVWD's two largest wastewater reclamation plants (WRPs) are located in Palm Desert and Thermal and serve communities from Cathedral City to Mecca.

² "Coachella Valley Water Management Plan," Coachella Valley Water District, 2002.

³ Ibid.

CVWD's irrigation distribution system includes the Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal, which is, or is proposed to be, concrete-lined within CVWD's service area, and includes the Lake Cahuilla reservoir and a network of nearly 500 miles of buried pipeline.⁴ The irrigation drainage system serves nearly 38,000 acres of agricultural land in the Lower Coachella Valley and facilitates the drainage of salts and other agricultural applications, including biological and chemical residues, leached from soils. The drainage network consists of 166 miles of pipeline and 21 miles of open ditches, which drain into the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Salton Sea.⁵

CVWD provides regional flood protection for that portion of the Coachella Valley extending from Cathedral City to Salton City. Its major stormwater facilities include the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel (which becomes the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel east of Washington Street in La Quinta), Westside Dike system, Eastside Dike system, Cove community channels and basins from Rancho Mirage to La Quinta, Lower Valley stormwater channels in agricultural areas, and detention channels that drain water impounded behind the dikes.

CVWD activities include construction and O&M on its flood ALERT system facilities located in several drainages in the Plan Area, a wide variety of drainages and stormwater channels, stormwater detention basins, water delivery canals, groundwater recharge facilities, wells, booster pumping stations and water reservoirs, and other facilities. Coverage would also be for O&M activities associated with these facilities. A complete listing of CVWD's proposed Covered Activities is found in MSHCP Section 7.3.

County Flood Covered Activities

County Flood encompasses approximately 2,700 square miles of western and central Riverside County, extending east to the Cathedral City/Rancho Mirage vicinity and the Sky Valley area. County Flood's management efforts are primarily focused on rivers, major streams and their tributaries, and areas characterized by significant sheet flows. Specifically, it operates and maintains major regional flood control facilities, such as dams, flood basins, open channels, and major underground storm drains. Generally, County Flood does not maintain storm drain inlets or pipes less than 36 inches in diameter as such facilities are typically managed by local cities or Riverside County. County Flood proposed Covered Activities include its ALERT system facilities located in several local drainages, a variety of dikes and training levees, and stormwater channels. A complete listing of County Flood proposed Covered Activities is found in MSHCP Section 7.3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

IID Covered Activities

Within the Plan Area, IID provides electricity to the central and lower/southeastern portions of the Coachella Valley, as well as the Imperial Valley. IID distributes electricity from internal generation and outside resources to over 100 customers in Imperial County and parts of Riverside and San Diego Counties. Because of the extremely hot summers that characterize this desert region, per capita power consumption in the Imperial Valley ranks among the highest in the nation.

IID's service area encompasses approximately 6,471 square miles, 1,953 square miles of which are located within Riverside County and the Plan Area. System-wide, IID has a peak load of approximately 712 megawatts, which it delivers to its customers through 1,340 miles of transmission lines, 325 miles of sub-transmission lines, and 3,825 miles of overhead and underground distribution lines. The District has a total of 102,820 customers, of which 85,414 are residential, 13,982 are commercial and industrial, and 1,614 are agricultural users.

Proposed Covered Activities include a variety of transmission facilities and power facilities and O & M. A complete listing of IID's proposed Covered Activities is in MSHCP Section 7.3.

g. County Waste Covered Activities

Proposed Covered Activities also include the on-going operation and maintenance by Riverside County Waste Resources Management District of the Edom Hill Landfill well; the landfill may be closed in the next few years. County Waste would continue to operate waste management facilities at this location.

h. State Park Covered Activities

State Park facilities are located in the San Jacinto State Wilderness, at the Salton Sea, and within the Indio Hills. These lands provide opportunities for hiking and other compatible uses. See Section 6.6.2 of the MSHCP for a description of State Park's obligations to Plan implementation. State Park's proposed Covered Activities are listed in MSHCP Section 7.3.

2.5.7.3 Activities within Conservation Areas

Implementation of the Plan would provide Take for proposed Covered animal Species for the Covered Activities within the Conservation Areas. Covered Activities are set forth in Sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.1.1 of the Plan. Allowable uses are delineated in Section 7.3.2 and 7.3.2.1, compatible activities are set forth in Section 7.3.3, and conditionally compatible uses are discussed in Section 7.3.4.

a. Allowable Uses on Reserve Lands

This section describes proposed uses that may be allowable because they are considered to be compatible with the Species Conservation Goals and Conservation Objectives on non-Federal Reserve Lands (also see Section 7.3.2 of the Plan).

Emergency, safety, and police services. Local, State, and Federal law enforcement entities will be allowed access to the Reserve Lands as necessary to enforce the law. Medical, rescue, fire fighting operations, and other emergency service providers will be allowed access to Reserve Lands to carry out operations necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Local law enforcement agencies and other entities such as the National Guard or Immigration and Naturalization Service operating on Reserve Lands are subject to existing State and Federal laws. The MSHCP will not create additional permit requirements for these entities beyond those of existing state and Federal laws.

Emergency response activities by Permittees required to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Such activities by Permittees include emergency response to wildfire, flooding, earthquakes, and other emergency situations. As the MSHCP Reserve System management plan is developed, it will address advance planning, as feasible, with emergency response agencies to facilitate emergency response activities and minimize their impacts. Such planning will not impede or delay critical emergency responses that could put the public's health and safety at risk.

Pesticide Use. The use of pesticides (which includes herbicides) is an Allowable Use in and outside the Conservation Areas. This includes pesticides used to control invasive and non-native plants and animals detrimental to the Covered animal Species and natural communities protected by the Plan. Any Take of Covered animal Species resulting from toxicological effects of herbicide use is not a Covered Activity.

Existing Legal Private Use. In addition to the specified Covered Activities in Conservation Areas, the operation and maintenance of existing legal private uses, such as water tanks, transmission lines and residences, in existence as of the date of approval of the Plan, shall be recognized as allowable uses. Existing uses on parcels may be identified by presentation of appropriate evidence, such as a building permit, of the use being in existence as of the date of Plan approval. On parcels with existing wind turbines, the existing turbines may be replaced with new turbines as described in Sections 4.1, 6.6.1.1 and 7.3.1 of the Plan.

b. Compatible Activities

This section describes activities that may occur on non-Federal Reserve Lands that are Covered Activities.

(1) Emergency Repairs and Reserve Management and Monitoring

The Plan proposes Take Authorization for emergency repairs by Permittees of public infrastructure facilities and Reserve System management, monitoring, and scientific research activities (See Section 7.3.3.1 of the Plan).

(2) Public Use and Trails Management on Reserve Lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area

The Draft MSHCP includes three alternatives for the Trails Plan, including the Proposed Trails Plan, all of which are analyzed in this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS. The Proposed Trails Plan is described below. The other two alternatives, one of which is the No Action Alternative, are described in Section 2.11. Table 2-11, located in Section 2.11, provides a comparison of all Trails Plan alternatives.

Planning for public use and trails management on Reserve Lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area involves trails that cross both Federal and non-Federal lands. The MSHCP has been prepared pursuant to Section 10(a) of the ESA to provide Take Authorization for Covered Activities and compatible activities on non-Federal lands. PBS is a California Fully Protected Species and as used with respect to PBS, Take Authorization refers only to disturbance of habitat. The MSHCP does not permit Take of individual PBS. All Covered Activities of the Plan must avoid actions in violation of Section 4700 of the Fish and Game Code that addresses Fully Protected Species. (See IA Section 15.5) Take Authorization on Federal lands is provided under the ESA through Section 7. Use of trails on CDFG land is subject to Title 14 CCR. As a result, the Permittees, CDFG, BLM, and USFS have coordinated in the planning process for public use and trails management. The MSHCP, however, can only provide authorization for impacts to Covered Species for those portions of trails and any other compatible uses on non-Federal lands. BLM will pursue a Section 7 consultation for the components of the coordinated plan on BLM-managed Federal lands. On Federal lands within San Bernardino National Forest, the USFS will determine whether public use and trails management will require consultation with USFWS pursuant to Section 7 of the FESA. State of California lands within Magnesia Spring and Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserves are subject to decisions made by the State.

Impacts to Covered Species associated with the public use and trails management plan described in this section (“Proposed Trails Plan/Preferred Alternative” or “Trails Plan”) are authorized upon issuance of the Permits. For existing trails in PBS habitat, this authorization applies only to those trails specifically listed in Section 2.5.7, Elements 1 and 2.

This section describes the Proposed Trails Plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area. The Proposed Trails Plan (Alternative A) applies to Federal and non-Federal lands. Actions included in the Trails Plan that apply only to BLM lands are included in the Proposed Plan and called out as specific to BLM lands only. The two other alternatives (B and C) for the Trails Plan are described in Section 2.11 of this EIR/EIS. All of the Trails Plan Alternatives are analyzed in Section 5 of this EIR/EIS, including the potential impacts of the trails management regimes represented in each of these alternatives. For purposes of the EIR/EIS, the Proposed Trails Plan (Alternative A) is the “Preferred Alternative”.

Initial EIR/EIS Alternative Name	Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS Alternative Name
Alternative A	Deleted
Alternative B	Deleted
Revised Alternative B	Alternative A, (Proposed Trails Plan/ Preferred Alternative)
Alternative C	Alternative B
Alternative D	Alternative C

The Proposed Trails Plan, as it applies to non-Federal lands, is a proposed Covered Activity/Compatible Activity under the MSHCP (Section 7.3.3.2 of the Plan). The proposed Covered Activities/Compatible Activities include the existing trails, proposed perimeter trail system, and the Palm Desert to La Quinta Connector Trail. Construction and use of new trails (perimeter trails and the connector trail) will be a Covered Activity dependent upon results of research and the effect on PBS. Approval for construction of these new trails would be deferred under the Proposed Trails Plan pending results of a focused research program to evaluate the effects of recreational trail use on PBS.

The BLM portion of the Trails Plan, while not a Covered Activity under the MSHCP, is included in the analysis in Section 5 of the EIR/EIS. This EIR/EIS is the NEPA document for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Trails Plan proposed for adoption by BLM (Cooperating Agency on the EIS) as an activity level plan that implements the trails related portion of the 2002 CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley, as well as the CEQA/NEPA document for the MSHCP. For this reason, the Trails Plan is analyzed separately in Section 5. The Proposed Trails Plan is, however, a part of the Proposed MSHCP. The analysis of the MSHCP in Sections 4 and 6 through 9, together with the analysis of the Proposed Trails Plan in Section 5 of the EIR/EIS, constitutes the complete CEQA/NEPA analysis of the MSHCP.

The use of private lands is at the discretion of the landowner. Where needed, acquisition of land from willing sellers and/or easements from willing grantors would be pursued, dependent on available funding. Acquisition of easements and purchase of lands would be coordinated through the Acquisition and Funding Coordinating Committee. Trails would be available for use by all means of non-motorized conveyance (e.g., on foot, bicycle, horse, etc.), unless restrictions are placed on a particular use.

Because Indian Reservation lands are not part of the MSHCP, trails on Tribal lands are not subject to the management prescriptions herein identified, but are considered relative to trail connectivity and network viability. Where Federal permits are required (including *Special Recreation Permits*), they would be issued through regulatory processes and would comply with NEPA and FESA.

This Trails Plan applies to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument as well as the Conservation Area. Coordination would continue to ensure consistency with decisions made through the National Monument Management Plan (BLM/USFS 2004) and the MSHCP, as well as other related plans (e.g., the San Jacinto Ranger District Strategic Mountain Bike Plan and the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Trails Management Plan).

In order to illustrate the entire public use and trails management plan, the text and maps in this section do not distinguish between trail segments on non-Federal and Federal lands. The names of all the trails, both on Federal and non-Federal lands, are provided for informational purposes to provide context for the reader.

Goals and Objectives

The Trails Plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains is designed to meet two primary goals. These goals and the related objectives are as follows:

Goal 1

Minimize the risk of potential adverse impacts to PBS from recreational activities.

- Objective 1: Design trail management measures to support predictable use patterns by trail users.
- Objective 2: Manage trails to preserve the opportunity for bighorn sheep to access water sources during the summer months.
- Objective 3: Manage trails to preserve the opportunity for bighorn sheep to move across the landscape.

- Objective 4: Implement a biological monitoring program to track trail use and bighorn sheep activity.
- Objective 5: Provide a mechanism to evaluate effectiveness of the trails program and recommend modifications to management actions if necessary.

Goal 2

Provide recreational opportunities throughout the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains for hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers that are consistent with recovery of bighorn sheep.

- Objective 6: Provide some opportunities for recreational trail use on a year-round basis.
- Objective 7: Provide at least seasonal opportunities for recreational trail use.
- Objective 8: Enhance opportunities for recreation by developing new trails that avoid sensitive bighorn sheep habitat.
- Objective 9: Provide consistent management of the trails system across jurisdictional boundaries.

Summary Comparison of Initial Draft and Proposed Trails Plan

The Preferred Alternative Trails Plan presented in the initial Draft MSHCP (November 2004) took a precautionary approach towards trails management in PBS habitat. In response to public comments and as a result of further consideration of current conditions of local bighorn sheep and their habitat, this precautionary approach was revised in favor of Adaptive Management, which emphasizes research on the effects of recreational trail use on bighorn sheep, and monitoring of such trail use and bighorn sheep populations. Measures have been included to address resource concerns associated with specific trails, and criteria have been established for management actions to benefit PBS recovery. In particular, thresholds for ewe group numbers are established such that appropriate measures can be taken when necessary to limit potential impacts that may affect a ewe group or subgroup.

This revised Trails Plan was presented in the subsequent Final MSHCP and EIR/EIS (February 2006), and is carried forward in this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS as the Proposed Trails Plan.

Upon completion of the research program, study results and management recommendations would be integrated into a revised public use and trails management plan, using best available science, professional judgment, and wildlife management principles where study results may be less than definitive.

Proposed Trails Plan (Alternative A)

On Reserve Lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, most trails would be open year-round without limit; some trails would be subject to seasonal closure during the summer months; and some trails may be subject to manipulation of trail use levels as part of a focused research program to evaluate the effects of recreational trail use on PBS. As part of the Proposed Trails Plan, all of these would be Compatible Activities and are described below.

Trails Management Plan

The trails management program for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area would adopt a research focused Adaptive Management approach. The Trails Plan would initially focus on multi-agency scientific data gathering to evaluate the effects of recreational trail use on PBS health, habitat selection, and long-term population dynamics. The overarching goal of this research program would be to obtain empirical data from the Plan Area to guide trails management. The research program is discussed further in Element 2 of the trails management program below.

This research program would be coordinated with monitoring of human trail use, and would be integrated with educational and public awareness efforts, and other trail management prescriptions. The Proposed Trails Plan is composed of eight primary elements, which are described below. In addition, the public use and trails management plan addresses other public access issues, (e.g., dogs and cross-country travel). The eight elements, detailed in the following sections, are summarized as follows:

- (1) existing trails would remain open all year; manipulation of trail use levels on some trails may occur as part of the research program;
- (2) initiation in Plan year 1 of a research program designed to ascertain bighorn sheep response to, and any significant adverse impacts from, recreational trail use in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains; this research may include manipulation or limitation of use levels or closures on selected trails as an element of the study design to address specific hypothesis-based research questions;
- (3) gathering of data on human trail use, primarily on trails within sensitive bighorn sheep lambing habitat and other trails as appropriate; a year-round mandatory self-issue permit system for selected trails would be part of the human use monitoring program; ongoing monitoring of bighorn sheep populations would be expanded to include regular monitoring of the distribution, abundance,

recruitment, survival and cause-specific mortality of bighorn sheep throughout the Plan Area;

- (4) closure of three trails from June 15 through September 30 to minimize the potential impediments for access to water by bighorn sheep and other wildlife during the hot season;
- (5) deferral of construction of new trails, pending the results of the initial research program, monitoring of trail use, and monitoring of bighorn sheep populations;
- (6) implementation of a public awareness and education program;
- (7) annual review of the effectiveness of the public use and trails management program, including results of monitoring, research, and trail management prescriptions; this annual review would consider prudent management actions, including potential trail closures, in response to scientific data or sheep population declines below identified threshold levels; and
- (8) rerouting and decommissioning of trails to protect sensitive resource values, pending results of the research program.

Due to specific resource concerns associated with the Art Smith Trail and the Mirage Trail, management actions to benefit PBS recovery were addressed separate from the Trails Plan. These actions include rerouting the easternmost segment of the Art Smith Trail to incorporate the southern Schey Trail; restricting access to Dead Indian Canyon and the decommissioned segment of the Art Smith Trail; constructing the Hopalong Cassidy perimeter trail; closing the upper portion of the northern Schey Trail; providing an alternate access to the Mirage Trail; closing the upper Mirage Trail; and implementing an education, signage, and enforcement program to support these actions. Environmental documentation for, and approval of, these actions are separate from the Trails Plan. Some of these actions have been completed.

A Reserve Management Unit Plan (RMUP) would be prepared within 3 years after Permit issuance for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area (Reserve Management Unit 6; see Section 6.2 of the MSHCP). This RMUP would include public use and trails management. A sample Memorandum of Understanding is provided in Appendix III of the MSHCP to describe potential interim management of the Conservation Area pending approval of the RMUP. This sample MOU among the Wildlife Agencies, BLM, and the CVCC describes the roles and responsibilities of these agencies during the first 3 years of the Trails Plan, including monitoring, enforcement, and research.

(1) Trail Management Program Element 1: Trails Open All Year

The following trails within Essential bighorn sheep Habitat will be available for year-round non-motorized use subject to annual review and modification as described in Element 7 below. As part of the research program, some of the trails listed below may be subject to manipulation of trail use levels, including increases, decreases, or prohibitions of use altogether, to determine the effects of recreational trail use on PBS. Selected trails that will be the initial focus of the research program are listed in Element 2 below.

➤ ***West of Palm Canyon***

- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- North Lykken Trail
- Skyline Trail
- Museum Trail
- South Lykken Trail
- Picnic Table Trail

➤ ***South Palm Springs***

- Araby Trail
- Shannon Trail
- Berns Trail
- Garstin Trail
- Henderson Trail
- Alexander Trail
- Goat Trails
- Eagle Canyon Trail (does not include portions of trail on Indian Reservation land)
- Wild Horse Trail
- Clara Burgess Trail
- Fern Canyon Trail
- Vandeventer Trail
- Hahn Buena Vista Trail
- Dry Wash Trail

- Dunn Road (Note: A portion of this trail is currently closed to public access where it crosses private lands in Section 5, T5S R5E.)
- Dry Wash to Vandeventer Trail connector
- Thielman Trail
- Palm Canyon Trail
- Indian Potrero Trail
- Potrero Canyon Trail
- ***Cathedral City / Rancho Mirage***
 - Cathedral Canyon Trail
 - Bighorn Overlook Trail
 - Mirage (“Bump and Grind”) Trail below its intersection with the new perimeter trail (Hopalong Cassidy Trail) that connects with the Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park trail system.
- ***Palm Desert / Indian Wells***
 - Art Smith Trail from the Art Smith Trailhead to the Hopalong Cassidy Trail
 - Hopalong Cassidy Trail
 - Eisenhower Mountain Trail (access through *The Living Desert*)
- ***La Quinta***
 - Bear Creek Canyon Trail north of its intersection with the Bear Creek Oasis Trail
 - La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail (includes the Morrow Trail and a portion of the Boo Hoff Trail)
 - Guadalupe Trail
 - Boo Hoff Trail
- ***Southern Santa Rosa Mountains***
 - Cactus Spring Trail
 - Martinez Canyon Trail
- ***U.S. Forest Service lands***
 - The use of trails on Forest Service lands is subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

➤ ***Perimeter and other new trails***

- Once constructed, any perimeter trails approved by the Plan will be Compatible Activities.

Figure 7-11 of the Plan depicts PBS Habitat, existing trails open all year, new and perimeter trails to be deferred under the Plan, and trails addressed separate from the Plan. Figure 7-12 of the Plan depicts trails with special management prescriptions, including trails that are subject to the self-issue permit program and the focus of the research program, as described in Element 3, and trails subject to the hot season closure described in Element 4. Figure 7-15 of the Plan depicts changes (reroutes, new trail construction, trail closures) to the trail system from the Art Smith Trailhead in Palm Desert to the lower Mirage Trail in Rancho Mirage. As previously indicated, these specific management actions to benefit PBS recovery are addressed separate from the Trails Plan and have been initiated. Figures 5-1 through 5-5 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS also depict elements of the Proposed Trails Plan.

(2) Trails Management Program Element 2: Research Program

A focused research program to evaluate the effects of recreational trail use on PBS within Essential bighorn sheep Habitat in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains will be initiated during Plan implementation in year one, if this program has not already been initiated. This research will address the proximate response of bighorn sheep to recreation disturbance as well as broader questions about the population-level effects and impacts to long-term persistence of bighorn sheep. A separate research program focusing on the effects of recreational trail use on captive bighorn sheep is also proposed to be initiated in Plan Year One.

This research program may require manipulation of use levels on trails. Manipulation could include increases, decreases, or prohibitions of use altogether on one or more trails, while simultaneously monitoring responses of bighorn sheep. Manipulated trail use will be based on a research study design focused on addressing specific research questions related to the impacts of trail use on PBS (see Section 8.5.1 of the Plan). The research study design will determine which trails, if any, would be subject to manipulation of use levels. Data gathered from this research program will be used as the basis for future trails management decisions. Implementation of the research program will be coordinated with the Trails Management Subcommittee.

Upon completion of the research program, study results and management recommendations will be integrated into a revised public use and trails management plan by Plan Year 10 using best available science, professional judgment, and wildlife management principles where study results may be less than definitive. This process will include a review of the status of the species at that time, evaluation of the scientific literature, and other available data. The initial trails

research will be carried out during an approximately five-year period. The implementation of the trails research program will be initiated in Plan Year one with development of a problem analysis and request for proposals. Field research may not actually begin until Plan Year two. Some elements of the research may not require five years to complete. It is anticipated that interim feedback from the bighorn sheep and trails research will also be available via annual reports which will be provided to the various management committees and the CVCC for their use. The research results in their entirety will be available for review and use by the Trails Management Subcommittee, RMOC, CVCC, and other entities by no later than year nine of Plan implementation; this schedule incorporates the time necessary for complete data analysis and final report preparation. The research results will be incorporated in the trails management program. At that time, re-initiation of the Section 7 consultation with BLM will occur, if necessary, for Federal lands affected by the Trails Plan. Depending on future sheep population fluctuations, research results, and management needs, subsequent research will be provided throughout Plan implementation as part of the Monitoring Program, Management Program, and Adaptive Management, if needed.

This research program will be carried out through a contract (or contracts), solicited by a Request for Proposals (RFPs) to qualified research institutions or scientists. The roles and responsibilities of participating agencies are outlined in Section 8.5.1 of the Plan. Funding for this research is outlined in Section 8.8.2 of the Plan. Development of the RFP, review of proposals, and selection of researchers would be by qualified representatives from the Wildlife Agencies, CVCC, BLM, and outside objective reviewers. The outside reviewers will be approved by the other members of this group. All contracted research on recreational trail use must be based on research proposals that conform to the Scientific Principles.

As part of the refinement of the research program and development of the RFP, a problem analysis will be prepared. Additional description of the research program is provided in Section 8.5.1 of the Plan.

The trails or trail segments listed below will be subject to the self-issue permit system. These trails will also be the initial focus of the research program. They are depicted in Figures 5-1 to 5-4 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS. This list of trails may be adjusted as the research study design is developed:

San Jacinto Mountains

➤ **West of Palm Canyon**

- North Lykken Trail north of Desert Riders Park
- Skyline Trail

Santa Rosa Mountains

➤ ***South Palm Springs***

- Clara Burgess Trail
- Hahn Buena Vista Trail
- Lower Dunn Road from the second BLM gate in Section 5, T5S R5E, to the Road's intersection with the Dry Wash Trail. (Note: A portion of this trail is currently closed to public access where it crosses private lands in Section 5, T5S R5E.)

➤ ***Cathedral City/Rancho Mirage***

- Cathedral Canyon Trail south of the intersection of the trail's two legs that originate in Cathedral City Cove

➤ ***Palm Desert/Indian Wells***

- Art Smith Trail west of its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail

➤ ***La Quinta***

- Bear Creek Canyon Trail south of its intersection with the Bear Creek Oasis Trail
- Bear Creek Oasis Trail
- Guadalupe Trail
- Boo Hoff Trail, except for segments included in the La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail, segments north of its intersection with a secondary trail in the center of Section 24 (T6S R6E), and segments from Lake Cahuilla south to the eastern boundary of the Santa Rosa Wilderness

(3) Trail Management Program Element 3: Monitoring of Trail Use and PBS Population

The Monitoring Program for the Plan will focus on further evaluation of the use of recreational trails by hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers as it relates to habitat use by bighorn sheep. Among questions the Monitoring Program will address is, “*What are current year-round levels of human use on recreational trails in bighorn sheep habitat with an emphasis on use during the lambing season?*” The intent of this effort is to increase the currently available data and information on the levels of use on various trails within the first two years of Plan implementation if this monitoring has not already been conducted or where this additional monitoring appears warranted. This monitoring effort will use a statistically valid protocol to determine human use levels (See MSHCP Section 8.8.2).

A mandatory self-issue permit system will be implemented on the trails or trail segments listed in Element 2 to provide data for the human use monitoring program. These self-issue permits will be required of all trail users on a year-round basis. They will be designed to be as user-friendly as possible and will not be limited in number. One permit will fulfill the permit requirement for groups of trail users; however, the number of individuals in the group must be recorded in the appropriate location on the permit, and the group must remain together throughout the duration of the activity on the trail(s) subject to the permit requirement. If it is anticipated that the group will separate into subgroups along the trail, a separate permit must be obtained by each subgroup. The permits will likely be available at trailhead kiosks but may also be available online and at other convenient locations, as appropriate. The permits will provide an opportunity to educate trail users about trail use rules, conservation of bighorn sheep, and safety recommendations for desert hiking. Failure to have a permit in possession when using the applicable trails may result in issuance of a citation. Compliance with the mandatory self-issue permit system, hot season closures, and other trails management prescriptions will be assessed as part of the Monitoring Program.

To date, CDFG has been conducting ongoing population surveys of PBS on a biannual basis in cooperation with the Bighorn Institute. Population level monitoring of bighorn sheep for the Plan will increase in resolution for the first seven to nine years of Plan implementation, or until the revised public use and trails management plan is implemented, to obtain data on the distribution, abundance, recruitment, survival, and cause-specific mortality of bighorn sheep in the Plan Area. Intensive monitoring will continue until the results from the research described in Element 2 are complete and the trails management program is revised to incorporate the results and recommendations from the research. Monitoring of bighorn sheep will be a cooperative effort involving CDFG, USFWS, BLM, CVCC, and other partners, with funding provided primarily by CDFG, to the extent possible, and CVCC. This more intensive monitoring during the initial research phase is necessary for the Trails Management Subcommittee's annual review of bighorn sheep data (see Trails Plan Element 7). All data used in decisions regarding the public use and trails management plan will be available to the CVCC and appropriate committees, including the Trails Management Subcommittee.

The Monitoring Program is outlined in Section 8.4.7.1.1 of the MSHCP.

(4) Trails Management Program Element 4: Hot Season Trail Closures

Three trails or trail segments will be closed to recreational activities during the hot season to minimize potential impediments for access to water by bighorn sheep and other wildlife. The following trails will be closed from June 15 through September 30 (see Figure 7-12 of the Plan and Figure 5-3 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS):

- Art Smith Trail west of its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail
- Bear Creek Canyon Trail south of its intersection with the Bear Creek Oasis Trail
- Bear Creek Oasis Trail

Carrizo Canyon and Magnesia Canyon are within CDFG Ecological Reserves and are closed to public access from June 15 through September 30, in accordance with the California Code of Regulations. Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserve is closed per order of CDFG from January 1 through June 14.

Compliance with the hot season closures will be evaluated as part of the monitoring described in Element 3.

(5) Trails Management Program Element 5: Construction of New Trails

Construction and use of new perimeter trails described in this section will be a Covered Activity unless research results indicate that the proposed trails would adversely affect bighorn sheep. Current analysis indicates that these perimeter trails will not substantially impact PBS populations, nor result in Take. Additional research will be conducted through Element 2 (described above) to further analyze impacts to PBS from recreational trail use, thereby confirming and expanding upon previous impact assessments. Proposals to construct perimeter trails and other new trails will be deferred until the initial phase of the monitoring and research program has been completed. This deferral will ensure that trail conditions (e.g., use levels) are as consistent as possible once the research and monitoring programs are initiated. Once the research is completed, perimeter trails may be constructed unless the research results indicate that perimeter trails will substantially impact PBS. Subsequent CEQA and/or NEPA analysis of these trails will also be required.

As noted above, due to resource concerns, construction of the following new trails was addressed separate from the Trails Plan and has been initiated. Figure 7-15 of the Plan and Figure 5-3 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS illustrate these changes to the existing trail system. They are briefly described as follows:

- Art Smith Trail reroute: A reroute of the easternmost segment of the existing Art Smith Trail. This reroute from the Art Smith Trailhead parking lot off Highway 74 avoids a bighorn sheep ewe subgroup in the Dead Indian Canyon area.
- Hopalong Cassidy Trail: A new perimeter trail connecting the Art Smith Trail reroute with the Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park trail complex, and then continuing in a northerly direction to join the existing Mirage Trail.

- Desert Crossing Trail: A connector trail from the Desert Crossing shopping center to the existing Mirage Trail.

In conjunction with rerouting the Art Smith Trail, the Dead Indian Canyon Trail to the oasis is closed from January 1 through September 30.

New Perimeter Trails

New perimeter trails were proposed to provide alternative hiking opportunities and thereby reduce trail use in more sensitive bighorn sheep habitat areas. Appropriateness of constructing new perimeter trails will be determined upon completion of the research program described in Element 2. Unless research results show that recreational trail use would adversely impact bighorn sheep health, demography, population sustainability, or population connectivity, construction of these perimeter trails could be initiated as soon as feasible, depending on funding availability and acquisition of easements or other authorizations, and completion of applicable NEPA and CEQA requirements. Actions on certain lands cannot begin until easements or other authorizations from landowners are acquired. Actions regarding trails on BLM lands are not Covered Activities under the MSHCP; BLM will undertake its own approval process for trails on lands it administers. Construction of new trails on CDFG lands requires authorization from CDFG.

As described below, new perimeter trail alignments have been identified and are shown in Figures 7-12 and 7-15 of the Plan and Figures 5-1 to 5-3 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS, including alignments of trails that were addressed separate from the Trails Plan. Once constructed, these trails would be available for use by all means of non-motorized conveyance (e.g., on foot, bicycle, horse), unless restrictions on a particular use are deemed necessary.

Future proposals for new trails on Reserve Lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, other than the identified trails described herein, would be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans. Such future trail proposals would require a Minor Amendment to the Plan with Wildlife Agencies' concurrence.

General guidelines for development of perimeter trails are as follows:

- Perimeter trails would generally run parallel to and not rise more than 200 feet above the toe of slope, except where necessary to avoid residential or other developed areas or topographically inaccessible terrain.

- Perimeter trails would not be constructed within 1/4 mile of wildlife water sources.
- Perimeter trails would incorporate topographic variability where possible.
- Perimeter trails would be available for year-round use.
- Construction of perimeter trails would be allowed from July 1 through December 31 only.
- Identified perimeter trails, listed from west to east, are as follows:
 - Garstin to Thielman Link Trail: Trail along the western flank of the Murray Hill complex of trails linking the Garstin Trail with the Thielman Trail.
 - Cathedral City Cove: Trail along the eastern, southern, and western flanks of Cathedral City Cove, except for a segment of the trail in Section 33, T4S R5E. This perimeter trail would utilize segments of the lower Cathedral Canyon Trail.
 - West La Quinta Cove: Trail to summit of isolated prominence in Section 1, T6S R6E, northwest of La Quinta Cove. This trail would connect with the proposed new Palm Desert to La Quinta Connector Trail.
 - East La Quinta Cove: Trail on the western flank of the Coral Reef Mountains starting from the flood control basin access gate at the south end of La Quinta Cove. Although a specific trail alignment has been identified, development of a new reservoir by the Coachella Valley Water District would require some modification to the identified trail alignment. CVWD has agreed to cooperate in determination of this alignment.

Perimeter Trail Corridors

Specific alignments for these perimeter trails have not been ascertained. Perimeter trail corridors are identified in which new trails may be constructed after NEPA and CEQA requirements are met, and the appropriate authorizations are secured. These corridors are as follows:

- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail at Snow Creek to the northern boundary of Section 4, T4S R4E (lands owned by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians).
- Southern boundary of Section 4, T4S R4E, to the northern terminus of the North Lykken Trail.
- Terminus of one of the Goat Trails at Rimrock Shopping Center to the new perimeter trail encompassing Cathedral City Cove, including the northwest segment of the perimeter trail flanking Cathedral City Cove in Section 33, T4S R5E.

- Cathedral City Cove to Rancho Mirage (not shown in Figure 7-14 of the Plan). This perimeter trail corridor is not within bighorn sheep Habitat as a result of the fence installed by the City of Rancho Mirage.
- Northeast flank of the Coral Reef Mountains in an area known as “Silver Rock Ranch.” This trail is proposed by the City of La Quinta as part of its development of a public golf course project on the adjacent flat lands.
- Western flank of the Coral Reef Mountains starting from the flood control basin access gate at the south end of La Quinta Cove (pending coordination with CVWD). This corridor is to provide adequate area to realign the East La Quinta Cove Perimeter Trail.
- East side of the Santa Rosa Wilderness from the southern terminus of the proposed trail through Coral Mountain Regional Park to the road providing access to Martinez Canyon (the road would be used as a trail for access to the Canyon).
- Southern boundary of the proposed Travertine project in La Quinta in the vicinity of the Martinez rock slide then north along the boundary between BLM land in Section 32 and Travertine land in Section 33 (T6S R7E), then connecting to the Boo Hoff Trail.

The proposed corridors for perimeter trails are shown in Figure 7-14 of the Plan. Trails should not deviate more than 50 feet from the original corridor. Specific alignments are on file with CVAG.

Palm Desert to La Quinta Connector Trail

An alignment for a trail connecting the interpretive loop trail south of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Visitor Center (a.k.a. Randall Henderson Trail) with the northwest portion of La Quinta Cove has been identified and is known as the Palm Desert to La Quinta Connector Trail. Portions of this trail traverse known sheep use areas. Therefore, construction of the Palm Desert to La Quinta Connector Trail between the Randall Henderson Trail and *The Living Desert* will be a Covered Activity dependent upon results of research and the effect on PBS. If impacts to native and/or captive breeding populations could result as determined through the research program described in Element 2 and feasible mitigation measures cannot be implemented to reduce this impact, then all or a portion of the preferred alignment of the connector trail may not be constructed. At the end of the research program, the best available science, professional judgment, and wildlife management principles would be used where study results may be less than definitive to make the determination as to the potential for impacts. At that time, for the CEQA analysis, mitigation measures will be considered that will reduce potential adverse impacts to levels that are less than significant.

Depending on the results of the research, construction of the connector trail and alternative access trail (see below) could be initiated as soon as feasible, depending on funding availability and acquisition of easements or other authorizations and completion of applicable NEPA and CEQA requirements.

An alternate access trail beginning on Portola Avenue in Palm Desert just north of *The Living Desert* and connecting with the Palm Desert to La Quinta Connector Trail is under consideration. Because a specific alignment for this trail near *The Living Desert* has not been fully analyzed in the EIR/EIS, a preliminary trail alignment as well as the corridor in which this trail may be constructed is identified. This trail would be available for use by all means of non-motorized conveyance (e.g., on foot, bicycle, horse), unless restrictions on a particular use are deemed necessary. Limits on the use of this trail by equestrians may be necessary pending coordination with *The Living Desert*.

Figure 7-13 of the Plan and Figure 5-5 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS depict the proposed Palm Desert to La Quinta Connector Trail, alternative alignments and the alignment and corridor for the trail near *The Living Desert*.

Trailheads

Trailheads are defined as locations where individuals commence their use of a trail or network of trails and often transfer from motorized to non-motorized conveyance (e.g., arrive by car to begin travel on foot, horse, or bicycle). Intersections of trails in the backcountry are generally not considered to be trailheads. Existing trailhead facilities would be used wherever possible; improvements to these facilities may be undertaken to meet the minimum requirements identified below, upon separate approval by the applicable jurisdiction.

Minimum Facilities for Trailheads

- Parking availability commensurate with anticipated levels of use.
- Signs that explain the rules for trail use and applicable restrictions, if any.

Trail registers, kiosks, and interpretive information may be provided as determined on a case-by-case basis.

(6) Trail Management Program Element 6: Public Awareness and Education Program

A public awareness and education program will be developed and implemented by CVCC and BLM in consultation with the Trails Management Subcommittee and the Monument Advisory Committee, with the following objectives:

1. To inform the public about bighorn sheep ecology and conservation issues.
2. To encourage trail users to comply with the Trails Management Program to limit potential impacts to bighorn sheep.

Existing educational materials may be used or modified as appropriate. BLM and the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument already provide information to trail users about measures to benefit bighorn sheep conservation. The program will include information about PBS ecology and behavior in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, as well as the overall conservation program for this species. It will include information about the importance of and timeline for the monitoring and research programs to assess human trail use levels and examine bighorn sheep response to recreational trail use. Information will include the specific elements of the public use and trails management program, including trails open all year, trails that are subject to the mandatory self-issue permit, trails that are closed during the hot season, and approved dog use areas. As new perimeter trails are completed, information about the availability of these trails will be provided to the public in as many outlets as possible to encourage the use of these trails as alternatives that avoid sensitive bighorn sheep habitat. The public awareness and education program information will be provided in a variety of ways including contact with rangers and other personnel, maps, signage, kiosks at trailheads, brochures and other written information, postings to both the Coachella Valley MSHCP and Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument websites, and news releases to the local media.

(7) Trail Management Program Element 7: Review of Trails Program

The Trails Management Subcommittee will annually review effectiveness of the overall public use and trails management program. Annual review will include progress reports and recommendations from the researcher(s) working on bighorn sheep within the Plan Area; an assessment of bighorn sheep population trends; recreational trail use data; compliance with the hot season closures, mandatory self-issue permits, and other trail management prescriptions; and other new data acquired.

Until such time as the initial phase of the monitoring and research program is completed (see Trails Management Program Elements (2) and (3) above), the annual review will consider the

best information available to evaluate the public use and trails management program and any effects on the PBS. Best information available will include, but is not limited to, PBS demographic data, results from ongoing agency monitoring programs, and interim results of the monitoring and research program.

The Subcommittee will make recommendations to both the RMOC and the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Advisory Committee regarding modifications to the public use and trails management program. The RMOC will make recommendations to CVCC for the portions of trails on non-Federal lands. The Monument Advisory Committee will make recommendations to BLM and USFS regarding trails on Federal lands. See Section 6.3 of the Plan for additional information regarding the Trails Management Subcommittee.

As described on pages 67-110 of the Recovery Plan (USFWS 2000), a variety of approaches are being used to recover bighorn sheep in the Peninsular Ranges. These approaches include, but are not limited to: protecting, restoring, and acquiring habitat; removing non-native vegetation; managing fire to restore habitat; maintaining existing water sources and developing additional water where necessary; developing bighorn crossing areas over highways or other barriers where necessary to maintain or improve habitat connectivity; constructing fencing to exclude bighorn sheep from urban areas; reducing or eliminating detrimental human activities within bighorn habitat; and if the number of ewes in any recovery region drops below 15 and mountain lion predation is known to be a cause of death within that area, removal of mountain lions.

In accord with Recovery Task 1.2.2., if, in the year under review, the number of ewes within a ewe group (defined by Rubin et al. 1998 as groups of ewes having overlapping 100% minimum convex polygon home ranges) or subgroup (a group of ewes with overlapping 90% fixed-kernel home ranges, e.g., the Dead Indian Canyon/Carrizo Canyon ewe subgroup) drops below 15, the Trails Management Subcommittee and researchers shall meet and review all data regarding the decline and the causes thereof. Management actions needed to address the decline may include, but are not limited to: trail rerouting, adjustments in use levels, enforcement actions, and trail closures.

If data indicate that a ewe group or subgroup population has dropped to five or fewer ewes, immediate action to close trails shall be taken. The Wildlife Agencies, BLM, a representative of the CVCC, and researchers will meet and confer as soon as possible, but in not more than thirty days, to review the data and to identify appropriate measures to be taken regarding trail use in the area that may affect the ewe group or subgroup. Actions may include long-term trail closure, trail rerouting, or other measures deemed appropriate. Trails associated with the various identified ewe groups and subgroups are delineated in Table 7-12 of the Plan. The delineation of ewe groups and subgroups and associated trails is subject to review and modification as data warrant.

It is noted that the Dead Indian Canyon subgroup has, as of May 2005, fewer than five ewes. To avoid or minimize trail use impacts to this subgroup, management actions were approved and initiated separate from the Trails Plan. As described in Element 5, these actions included rerouting the easternmost segment of the Art Smith Trail as depicted in Figure 7-15 of the Plan, and restricting access to Dead Indian Canyon and the decommissioned segment of the Art Smith Trail. The rerouted portion of the Art Smith Trail is not subject to closure at this time, although the Dead Indian Canyon subgroup has fewer than five ewes. The research program will monitor the subgroup and trail use to assess whether use of the rerouted trail has any impacts on the subgroup. If there is evidence of a decline in the number of ewes in the subgroup, the meet-and-confer process described above will be used to determine appropriate actions.

It is expected that as the sheep population increases over time, new ewe subgroups may form. These ewe subgroups will be monitored to determine what, if any, management actions may be necessary to ensure their survival. Table 7-13 of the Plan provides adult population estimates for the ewe groups in the four recovery regions from 2000 through 2004.

For more information about management of trails and public use, see Section 8.4.6.2 of the Plan.

(8) Trails Management Program Element 8: Rerouting and Decommissioning of Trails

Trail Rerouting

As with construction of new trails, proposals to reroute trails will be deferred until the initial phase of the monitoring and research program has been completed. This deferral will ensure that trail conditions (e.g., use levels) are as consistent as possible once the research and monitoring programs are initiated. The construction and use of trail reroutes described in this section would be a Covered Activity pending the results of the research program. Rerouting and associated decommissioning of trails would occur following approval of a specific project by the appropriate project lead agency and completion of NEPA and CEQA requirements. Actions on certain lands cannot begin until easements or other authorizations from landowners are acquired. Actions regarding trails on BLM lands are not a Covered Activity under the MSHCP; BLM will undertake its own approval process for rerouting trails on lands it administers. Actions regarding the rerouting of trails on CDFG lands require authorization from CDFG.

Trails will be rerouted to protect sensitive resource values (e.g., cultural resources, wildlife habitat, soils) where meaningful and feasible. “Meaningful” trail reroutes are those that result in a reduction or elimination of adverse impacts to resource values. “Feasible” trail reroutes are those that can be accomplished without extraordinary expenditures or efforts, i.e., the benefits derived are commensurate with the expenditure of funds and/or the level of effort. Reroutes are assumed to replace, not augment, trails or trail segments.

Identification of trails to be rerouted to protect bighorn sheep will be based on habitat use patterns, home ranges, and distribution of bighorn sheep and other available research. Proposals regarding specific reroutes will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat, proposals for trail reroutes will also be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Trails will be rerouted around existing wildlife water sources, where feasible, to prevent disturbance to wildlife during the hot season. Construction of trail reroutes within Essential bighorn sheep Habitat is allowed from October 1 through December 31 only.

Trails to be rerouted are as follows:

- Segments of the Goat Trails if construction of the Palm Hills project occurs. Trail rerouting in this area would avoid bighorn sheep Habitat in the Eagle Canyon area.
- Rerouting a portion of the Guadalupe Trail to avoid desert slender salamander habitat would be proposed, if meaningful and feasible, upon locating salamander populations and determining levels of trail use.
- Rerouting the North Lykken Trail in Tachevah Canyon off the alluvial fan to a lower elevation along the edge of the debris basin would be proposed to reduce impacts to an important bighorn sheep feeding area.
- Rerouting the portion of the Art Smith Trail where it crosses Cat Canyon adjacent to a year-round water source; rerouting the trail would be proposed if a less environmentally damaging location is identified.

[**Note:** Rerouting of a portion of the Art Smith Trail in Dead Indian Canyon has been addressed separate from the Trails Plan. The alignment of the reroute is described under Element 5 and illustrated in Figure 7-15 of the Plan.]

Trail Decommission and Removal

Trails may be decommissioned and removed if their use is determined to cause adverse impacts to resource values, including visual resources where multiple trails occur in close proximity to one another (e.g., “braided” trails). Measures to mitigate adverse impacts will be considered as an alternative to trail removal. Recommendations for decommissioning and removing trails will be made by the Trails Management Subcommittee to the RMOC and the Monument Advisory Committee. Final approval for trail decommissions and removal rests with the entity having jurisdiction over the applicable lands. Decommission and removal of trails would occur following approval of the project by the appropriate project lead agency and completion of NEPA and CEQA requirements. Trail removal in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat will be allowed from October 1 through December 31 only. Approval of a trail reroute by the

appropriate project lead agency will include approval for decommission and removal of the associated trail or trail segment, unless restrictions on the use of the associated trail or trail segment is deemed more appropriate than removal. Once approved, removal shall occur within three years.

Except as noted below, recommendations regarding the decommission and removal of trails to minimize potential adverse impacts to PBS will be deferred until the initial phase of the monitoring and research program has been completed (see Trails Management Program Elements [2] and [3]).

Prior to making recommendations for decommissioning and removing trails in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, an inventory of all trails in the Conservation Area would occur. This inventory would be completed within one year of Permit issuance. Trails not listed as approved in the Trails Plan are unauthorized. The Trails Management Subcommittee will evaluate whether unauthorized trails would be decommissioned and removed or may be considered as potential new trails.

Decommission and removal of the following trails and trail segments have been approved separate from the Trails Plan, as part of the rerouting of the Art Smith and Mirage Trails and construction of the Hopalong Cassidy Trail described in Element 5:

- The lower portion of the Art Smith Trail in Dead Indian Canyon, as shown in Figure 7-15 of the Plan and Figure 5-3 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS.
- The portion of the northern Schey Trail not incorporated in the Hopalong Cassidy Trail, as shown in Figure 7-15 of the Plan and Figure 5-3 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS. Decommission and removal of this trail segment will occur upon completion of the Hopalong Cassidy perimeter trail.

The following trails to be decommissioned and removed will be considered by the Trails Management Subcommittee:

- A spur trail in Section 9, T4S R4E, that extends in a westerly direction from the North Lykken Trail.
- A spur trail in Section 14, T6S R6E, that extends in a westerly direction from the southwest corner of La Quinta Cove.
- Redundant trails in the Murray Hill Complex with particular emphasis on redundant trails in the Murray Hill/Eagle Canyon/Goat Trails area.
- Trails in the Coral Reef Mountains north of the La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail.

- The western leg of the Cathedral Canyon Trail from the toe of slope to its intersection with the new perimeter trail encompassing Cathedral City Cove upon completion of the perimeter trail.

The following trails and trail segments would be decommissioned and removed as a result of decisions of the California Department of Fish and Game, separate from the MSHCP, to facilitate management of the Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve:

- A segment of the Mirage (“Bump and Grind”) Trail above its intersection with the new perimeter trail (Hopalong Cassidy Trail) that will connect with the Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park trail system. Decommission and removal of this trail segment will occur upon completion of the perimeter trail.
- Spur trails that extend toward Magnesia Canyon and Ramon Peak from the Mirage Trail.
- Other trails in the Ecological Reserve upon completion of the trails inventory and identification of potential adverse impacts.
- The portion of the Art Smith Trail crossing Cat Canyon conflicts with a year-round water source; rerouting the trail downhill would be proposed if a less environmentally damaging location is identified.

Removal of these trails shall be completed within nine years of Permit issuance. The location of these trails is shown in Figures 5-1 to 5-3 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS.

All trails on Reserve Lands not recognized in the Trails Plan will be prioritized by the Trails Management Subcommittee for decommission and removal by the appropriate Plan Participant, subject to NEPA and CEQA requirements and any other applicable regulations.

Other Public Access Issues and Uses in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area / National Monument

Because Reserve Lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area provide Essential Habitat for PBS, the Trails Plan must address other recreational activities on Federal and non-Federal lands. Except where noted, the following proposals would apply to both Federal and non-Federal lands within Essential bighorn sheep Habitat in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area.

➤ ***Cross-Country Travel***

- Cross-country travel is prohibited from January 1 through September 30, and allowed from October 1 through December 31.

- During the period when cross-country travel is prohibited, individuals may venture no more than 50 feet from centerline of trails on either side for purposes of resting, nature study, or other similar activities; this use does not constitute cross-country travel.
- Holders of permits issued for research and extended study are exempt from the cross-country prohibition.
- Bicycles are prohibited year-round from traveling cross-country; travel by such conveyance is restricted to authorized trails.

➤ **Camping**

- Camping is prohibited from January 1 through September 30, and allowed from October 1 through December 31.
- Camping is prohibited within 1/4 mile of water sources.
- Campers must obtain a permit for camping where and when camping is allowed. The Permittees, CVCC, CDFG, and BLM will develop a system for administering these permits.
- Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserve and Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve are closed to camping (California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Section 430).

➤ **Dogs**

- Dogs are allowed in designated areas only. An educational kiosk will be installed at each designated dog walking area. It will include information about basic bighorn sheep ecology and behavior, as well as the potential threats to bighorn sheep due to the presence of dogs. The boundaries of dog walking areas will be clearly signed. The following area is approved for entry with dogs:
 - West of Cathedral City Cove in the wash from Dunn Road to the northern boundary of Section 5, T5S R5E.
- Upon construction of the Garstin to Thielman Link Trail east of the Andreas Hills residential community, a dog use area would be established that incorporates only the lower segments of the Garstin Trail, the link trail itself, and the lower segment of the Thielman Trail.
- Designated dog areas are depicted in Figure 7-16 of the Plan.

[**Note:** Additional designated dog areas are located at Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park in the City of Palm Desert and south of La Quinta Cove to the flood control levee in Section 13, T6S R6E. The latter area is outside

Essential Habitat and is not within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area.]

- For designated dog areas incorporating trails (i.e., the Andreas Hills area in Palm Springs and the Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park loop), the applicable jurisdiction will establish a dog permit program whereupon individuals accompanied by dogs on trails are required to obtain a permit that specifies the conditions of use. Conditions of use shall include, but not be limited to, controlling animals to ensure they do not freely roam. Permits will be self-issued and available at each designated dog walking area.
- Dogs must be leashed (maximum length of 10 feet), except on City of Palm Desert lands at Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park where dogs may be under voice control in accordance with a local ordinance.
- Dogs are not allowed in Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserve and Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve (California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Section 430).
- Picking up and properly disposing of a dog's fecal matter is required at all locations; fecal collection bags will be provided at each site.
- Permittees will encourage the establishment of oversight committees comprised of local residents to implement an outreach effort alerting trail users of the dog restrictions and to monitor compliance.
- Use restrictions will be enforced by the appropriate jurisdiction. Compliance with and enforcement of these restrictions will be addressed by the Trails Management Subcommittee. If non-compliance is a recurring problem that is not effectively controlled by the appropriate jurisdiction(s) for more than 2 years, dog use areas may be decommissioned.
- Persons requiring accompaniment by a companion animal (e.g., seeing-eye dog), and those using dogs to facilitate search and rescue or law enforcement operations are exempt from the prohibition.
- The prohibition does not apply to dogs inside a motor vehicle.
- Working dogs may be permitted with no leash required, pursuant to an authorization for their use.

➤ ***Bicycle Restrictions***

- Certain trails, or segments thereof, are closed year-round to bicycles, consistent with existing laws, regulations, and local ordinances. These trails are depicted in Figure 7-16 of the MSHCP and identified below.

Existing closures (these closures are not modified by the Trails Plan)

- (a) Trails, or segments thereof, in designated wilderness:
 - Bear Creek Canyon Trail segment
 - Bear Creek Oasis Trail segment
 - Boo Hoff Trail segment
 - Guadalupe Trail (entire trail)
 - Cactus Spring Trail (entire trail)
 - Martinez Canyon Trail segment
 - All U.S. Forest Service trails within (and leading to) designated wilderness
- (b) Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- (c) Bicycles are not allowed in Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserve and Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve (California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Section 430).

Additional closures consistent with current closures

- (a) Closures consistent with the existing bicycle prohibition on Tribal lands to preclude bicycle access to Tribal facilities at the Trading Post in Palm Canyon:
 - Fern Canyon Trail west of its intersection with the Wild Horse Trail
 - Vandeventer Trail west of the intersection with the connector trail to the Dry Wash Trail
- (b) Closures consistent with the existing bicycle prohibition on City of Palm Springs lands due to potential terrain-related user conflicts; these closures would apply to trails in their entirety, not City lands only:
 - Araby Trail
 - Shannon Trail
 - Garstin Trail
 - Berns Trail
 - Henderson Trail
 - South Lykken Trail
 - Picnic Table Trail (located east of the South Lykken Trail)

➤ **Pack Stock**

- Pack stock is limited to horses, mules, and burros.

- ***Murray Hill Facilities (applies to BLM land only)***
 - Picnic tables and equestrian hitching posts at the summit of Murray Hill would be retained.

- ***Noncommercial, Noncompetitive Organized Group Activities***
 - Noncommercial, noncompetitive organized group activities are subject to the mandatory self-issue permit system described under Element 3.
 - Except as required in accordance with Element 3, a permit is not required for noncommercial, noncompetitive organized group activities on BLM-managed lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument when the primary purpose of the activity is hiking, running, bicycling, or horseback riding. If the primary purpose of the activity on BLM-managed lands is other than hiking, running, bicycling, or horseback riding, a representative of the group must contact the BLM to determine whether a permit is required. Upon completion of the research program, including the issuance of management recommendations, permit requirements for noncommercial, noncompetitive organized group activities may be modified as appropriate to support recovery of PBS.
 - Organized group events on state lands are subject to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 550.

- ***Non-Motorized Commercial Recreation Activities***
 - Non-motorized commercial recreation activities may be allowed, except on selected trails when manipulations of use under the research program or hot season closures are in effect (see Elements 2 and 4). Such commercial activities on Federal lands are subject to permit requirements in accordance with Federal regulations. CVCC in conjunction with CDFG shall develop a permit system for commercial activities on non-Federal lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area. In developing this permit system, consistency with requirements for commercial recreation use permits on Federal lands will occur to the extent practicable.

- ***Competitive Recreation Events***
 - Competitive recreation events on or off trails, including the use of developed trailheads in association with a competitive event, are prohibited.
 - Competitive events using paved roads or developed sites, except for developed trailheads, may be allowed. Such competitive events on Federal lands are subject to permit requirements in accordance with Federal regulations. CVCC in conjunction with CDFG shall develop a permit system for such activities on non-

Federal lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area. In developing this permit system, consistency with requirements for competitive recreation use permits on Federal lands will occur to the extent feasible.

➤ ***Motorized-Vehicle Use of Trails***

- Motorized vehicles are prohibited on all trails, except as specifically approved for trail maintenance and construction projects.
- Use of motorized vehicles for trail maintenance and construction projects in designated wilderness is generally prohibited; exceptions to the prohibition must be in conformance with existing laws and regulations.
- Motorized-vehicle use of trails may only be authorized where and when limitations on public uses are not in effect (see Elements (2) and (4)).

Existing Trails Outside the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area

Trails on Reserve Lands outside the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area have been established primarily in association with existing parks, preserves, and wilderness areas. These trails are considered as Compatible Activities under the Plan and are as follows:

- A system of trails on the Thousand Palms Preserve
- The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail traversing Reserve Lands in the Snow Creek/Windy Point and Stubbe and Cottonwood Canyons Conservation Areas
- Trails on non-Federal lands within Dos Palmas Preserve/ACEC

The other trails alternatives analyzed in this EIR/EIS are described in Section 2.11.

Conditionally Compatible Uses

The uses described in this section are considered conditionally compatible with the Covered Species Conservation Goals and the Conservation Objectives for the Conservation Areas subject to specific guidelines and criteria (See Section 7.3.4.2 of the Plan). All the uses described in this section pertain to Reserve Lands outside the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, compatible activities in which are described in Section 7.3.3.2 of the Plan.

Although the main goal of the MSHCP Reserve System is to protect biological resources, another primary objective is to provide recreational and educational opportunities, while providing adequate protection for the biological resources. Public access is an important part of the MSHCP because it gives the public an opportunity to experience and appreciate the natural

environment that is being protected while working to help conserve the proposed Covered Species. By increasing awareness and appreciation for the natural resources within the MSHCP Reserve System, local residents and visitors could learn the importance of and practice environmental stewardship.

Covered Public Access Activities

The conditionally compatible public access uses within Conservation Areas consist of trails, facilities, and passive recreational activities. The primary public access component on Reserve Lands would be trails.

In addition to the trails, trailheads, and interpretive facilities on Reserve Lands, passive recreational activities would also be Allowable Uses on Reserve Lands. These include passive recreation activities that do not adversely impact Reserve Lands and cause minimal disturbance to biological resources. Passive recreation includes hiking, bird watching, photography, and under specified locations identified in the following guidelines, mountain biking, horseback riding, picnicking, scientific research, and hunting. Other activities associated with public access and recreation that would be Compatible Activities include signs and barriers.

Guidelines for Public Access and Recreation on Reserve Lands

Excessive or uncontrolled access on Reserve Lands could result in habitat degradation and disruption of breeding and other critical wildlife functions at certain times of the year. In order to provide sufficient protection for natural and biological resources on Reserve Lands, the following policies and guidelines have been developed to regulate the Covered public access Activities described above. These are guidelines which may be adapted to specific conditions within the Conservation Areas. Where applicable, these guidelines have been incorporated into the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Trails Plan (see Section 2.5.7.3). These guidelines are separated into two categories: (1) Siting and Design and (2) Operations and Maintenance.

Guidelines for the Siting and Design of Trails and Facilities

The construction of trails and facilities would impact biological resources on Reserve Lands. Therefore, the following guidelines address ways that would avoid and minimize impacts from the placement and design of these trails and facilities on natural resources within the proposed MSHCP Reserve System.

1. Trails and facilities would be sited and designed to be consistent with Conservation Goals and Objectives.

2. Trails and facilities would be located in the least sensitive portions of Reserve Lands to avoid or minimize impacts to habitat occupied by Covered Species.
3. Trails and facilities would be designed to discourage and prevent intrusion into adjacent environmentally sensitive areas.

Trails

1. Whenever possible, trail alignments on Reserve Lands would use existing dirt roads.
2. Trails would be kept along the edges of large sensitive areas of habitat such as riparian areas.
3. The type, width, and intensity of trail uses would be consistent with protection of the resources being traversed.
4. Water breaks would be installed on steep trails to prevent accelerated runoff and erosion.
5. Dog-friendly trails would be located in or along the edges of areas that possess relatively low habitat value.

Interpretive Facilities

1. Interpretive facilities such as kiosks and interpretive panels could be constructed in appropriate locations to display and interpret the natural resources. Exhibits would emphasize the need to conserve natural resources in the MSHCP Reserve System.

Trailheads

1. Trail access points to Reserve Lands (e.g., parking lots and staging areas) that are consistent with Species Conservation Goals and Objectives and Conservation Area Conservation Objectives would be identified.
2. Entry controls and signage at trailhead sites would be used to encourage proper resource usage.
3. In most cases, trailheads would be sited at the edge of the resource area.

Guidelines for Public Use and Maintenance

1. Passive recreation would include:
 - bird watching
 - hiking, equestrian, and mountain bike uses on designated trails
 - photography
 - picnicking in designated areas

- scientific research
 - hunting
2. Off- highway vehicle use is prohibited on Reserve Lands:
 3. Adverse effects of passive recreation such as trampling vegetation and erosion would be minimized.
 4. Motorized vehicular access by the public on Reserve Lands would be prohibited except as necessary by emergency personnel or for operations and maintenance activities.
 5. As appropriate, daily and seasonal limits on trail use would be established. When necessary, trails would be closed on a temporary basis to minimize disruption of nesting and other wildlife functions for Covered Species, or if public access has resulted in, or is expected to result in, significant negative impacts to proposed Covered Species. Passive recreational uses would be limited or restricted in critical wildlife areas during breeding season, as determined appropriate.
 6. Public access could be restricted within and adjacent to wetlands, riparian areas, restoration areas, and sensitive wildlife Habitat (e.g., during the breeding season) at the discretion of the RMOC
 7. In the event that public access policies and other policies conflict, the conflict would be resolved in the manner most protective of the biological resources on Reserve Lands.
 8. Fencing or other barriers would be used to restrict access to sensitive areas when required to protect the biological resources.
 9. Education and outreach would be used to increase public awareness and appreciation for Habitat and wildlife values. Public access information packets and guides would be developed for users of Reserve Lands.
 10. Reserve Lands would be patrolled on a regular basis in order to ensure that visitors stay on trails and observe all other rules and guidelines established to protect the natural resources on site.
 11. Feeding of all wildlife would be prohibited.
 12. Trails, facilities, signs and barriers would be maintained as needed to discourage and prevent intrusion into adjacent environmentally sensitive areas.

Hiking

1. Hikers must stay on designated trails and must not stray into adjacent areas to prevent trampling of vegetation and erosion.

Equestrian Use

1. Equestrian use would be limited to designated trails.
2. Following heavy rains, the use of equestrian trails would be prohibited for appropriate periods to avoid trail damage and impacts to adjacent Habitat.

Mountain Biking

1. Mountain bike trails would be limited to areas with low susceptibility to erosion and excluded from wetlands and other sensitive areas.
2. If use becomes heavy and problematic, an access control system would be developed and permits may be required.
3. Mountain bike trails would be constructed wider than foot trails to prevent trail edge disturbance and on grades no greater than 25%.

Litter and Trash Control Measures

1. Litter control measures would be implemented on Reserve Lands.
2. Closed garbage cans and recycling bins would be provided at trailheads and access points.
3. Litter and trash would be collected and removed on a regular basis. Garbage cans and recycling bins would be maintained appropriately.
4. Penalties would be imposed for littering and dumping on Reserve Lands.
5. Permanent storage of materials (e.g., hazardous and toxic materials) on Reserve Lands would be prohibited.
6. Wildlife Corridor undercrossings would be kept free of all debris, trash, and other obstructions.

Pets

1. Pets would be leashed at all times.

Signage

1. An adequate number of signs would be provided at appropriate locations to clearly identify public access to Reserve Lands.

One other alternative addressing public access and recreation on Reserve Lands outside the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, the No Action Alternative, is described in Section 2.9.

2.6 Public Lands Alternative

This alternative includes all local, State, and Federal agency land, and Private Conservation Land, in the Plan Area with conservation management levels 1, 2, and 3 (See *Exhibit 2-2*, below). To meet at least some of the Conservation Goals of the Plan, Level 3 areas would require additional management to be implemented by the appropriate agency. No new land would be acquired for Plan purposes. The local jurisdictions would contribute to the management of the existing conservation areas as mitigation for the habitat loss allowed under the Plan. The Covered Activities would remain the same as for the Preferred Alternative.

Under this alternative, substantial areas would be protected in the mountainous portions of the Plan Area: the San Gorgonio Wilderness and Whitewater Canyon ACEC in the San Bernardino Mountains; Mission Creek west of Highway 62, Morongo Canyon ACEC, and Joshua Tree National Park, in the Little San Bernardino Mountains; portions of the Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard Preserve in the Indio Hills; the Mecca Hills Wilderness in the Mecca Hills; the Orocopia Mountains Wilderness in the Orocopia Mountains; the Santa Rosa Mountains Wilderness, Deep Canyon Desert Research Center, Hidden Palms Ecological Reserve, Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserve, Magnesia Springs Ecological Reserve and portions of the new Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument in the Santa Rosa Mountains; and portions of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, the San Jacinto Wilderness, Mount San Jacinto State Park, and Oasis de los Osos in the San Jacinto Mountains. Some of these areas are well protected, but habitat fragmentation is a problem in other areas where considerable private lands still exist. On the valley floor, the only significant reserve areas would be the three existing Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard preserves and Dos Palmas ACEC.

Because this alternative entails no land acquisition, only Core Habitat, Essential Ecological Processes, and Biological Corridors and Linkages that happen to be on existing public conservation lands or private conservation lands would be protected. As a result, sand transport, watershed, and other ecological processes would not be protected, Biological Corridors and Linkages would not be conserved, and Core Habitat areas would likely be fragmented in many instances.

Table 2-5 compares species habitat conserved between the public lands alternative and the proposed action/preferred alternative. *Table 2-6* summarizes the public lands alternative.

**Recirculated Final Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
 and
 Natural Community Conservation Plan**

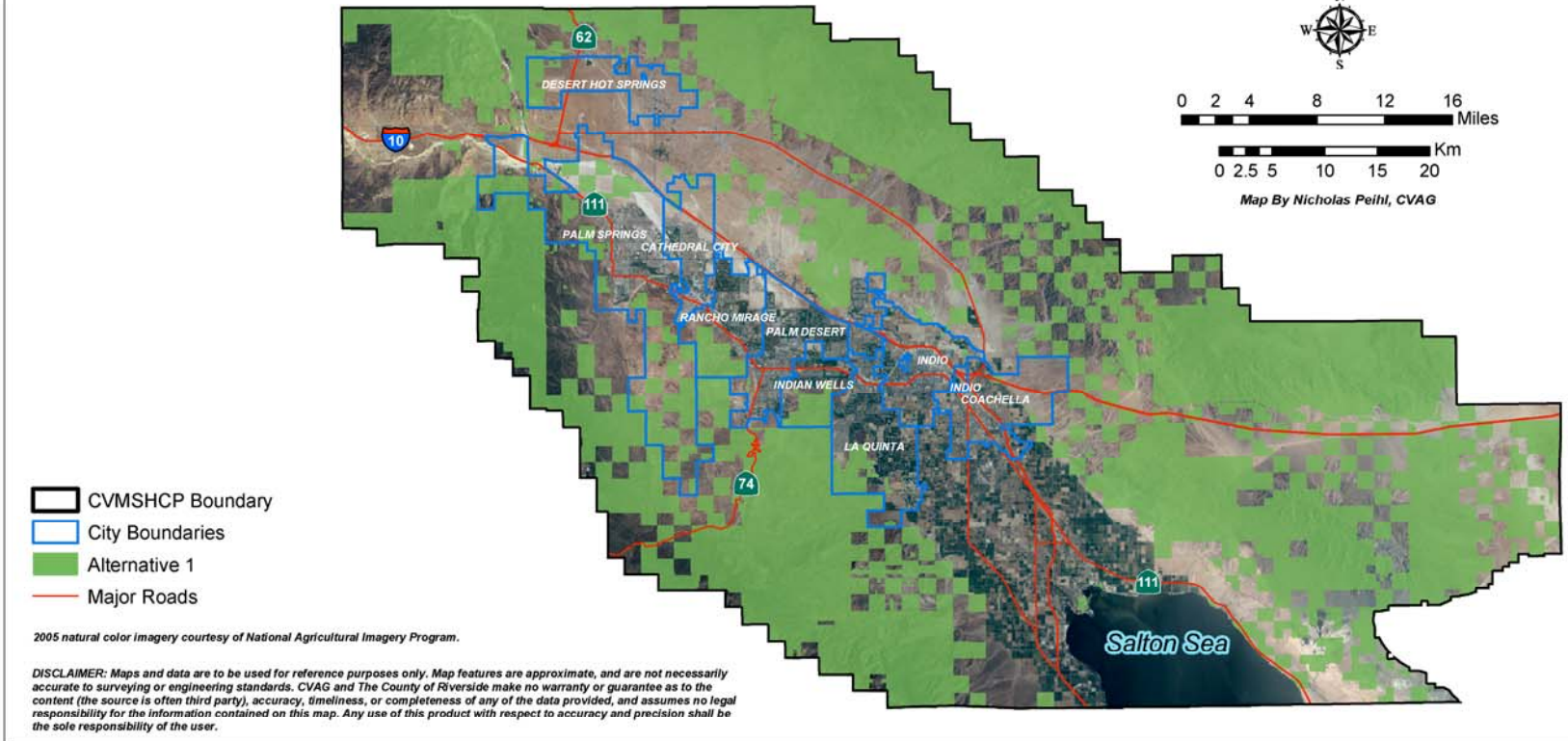


Exhibit 2-2: Alternative 1

Exhibit 2-2

TABLE 2-5
**Public Lands Alternative Compared to Proposed Action/
Preferred Alternative Species Habitat Conserved (in Acres)**

Species Listing Status	Preferred Alt. Acreage	Public Lands Alt. Acreage
Plants		
Coachella Valley milkvetch (FE)	19,363	10,395
Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (FC)	2,317	448
Mecca aster	54,667	19,612
Orocopia sage	68,950	50,744
Triple-ribbed milkvetch (FE)	2,838	1,836
Invertebrates - Insects		
Coachella Valley giant sand-treader cricket (FSC)	12,997	5,739
Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket (FSC)	11,970	5,395
Fish		
Desert pupfish (FE/SE)	25.05	0.05
Amphibians		
Arroyo toad (FE/CSC)	2,007	1,259
Reptiles		
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (FT/SE)	12,998	5,739
Desert tortoise (FT/ST)	490,283	318,978
Flat-tailed horned lizard - predicted (CSC)	13,914	6,989
Birds		
Burrowing owl (FSC/CSC)	N/A	N/A
California black rail ST/SFP)	616	428
Crissal thrasher (CSC)	1,676	422
Gray vireo (CSC)	101,544	92,821
Le Conte's thrasher (FSC/CSC)	131,616	73,144
Least Bell's vireo (FE/SE)	2,911	27,808
Southwestern willow flycatcher (SE/FE)	2,563	27,545
Summer tanager (CSC)	2,563	26,817
Yellow warbler (CSC)	2,563	27,622
Yellow-breasted chat (CSC)	2,829	26,833
Yuma clapper rail (FE/ST/SFP)	697	506
Mammals		
Peninsular bighorn sheep (FE/ST/SFP)	165,856	83,625
Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (FSCFC/CSC)	33,447	19,706
Palm Springs pocket mouse (FSC/CSC)	56,349	29,726
Southern yellow bat	1,250	663

Status Codes: The status codes used in the above table are identified in the following key, as listed in the California Natural Diversity Data Base Special Animals List and Special Plants List from July 2000 (CNDDDB 2000).

- FE = Federal Endangered
- FT = Federal Threatened
- FPE = Proposed for Federal Endangered listing
- FC = Candidate for Federal listing
- FSC = Federal Species of Concern (a "term-of-art" that describes the entire realm of taxa whose conservation status may be of concern to the Service, but the term has no official status)
- SE = State Endangered
- ST = State Threatened

SFP = State Fully Protected
 CSC = Species of Special Concern (a state list of species that are at risk due to habitat modification or destruction, over-collecting, disease, or other threats)
 CNPS = Rare in California
 List 2

¹ These species have no official status at this time; however, they are included in the Plan because of the likelihood of listing during the Permit term.

TABLE 2-6
Public Lands Alternative – Summary of MSHCP Reserve System Lands

Land Categories	Acres as of 1996
Existing Federal lands in MSHCP Reserve System ¹	536,700
Existing State lands in MSHCP Reserve System	43,200
Existing non-profit organization lands in MSHCP Reserve System	900
Existing Local Permittee conservation lands in the Reserve System	4,700
Undeveloped Tribal lands outside the Reservation	0
SUBTOTAL	<i>585,500</i>
Acres of Complementary Conservation	83,690
Acres to be acquired by State and Federal agencies	0
Additional Local Permittee acres for which there would be cooperation to conserve	0
Acres to be acquired or otherwise conserved by Local Permittees	0
Other non-Permittee public and quasi-public lands	0
Fluvial sand transport area where the Conservation Objective is met through non-acquisition. Development consistent with Conservation Objectives is allowed.	0
SUBTOTAL – PUBLIC LANDS: COMPLEMENTARY CONSERVATION AND ADDITIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS	<i>83,690</i>
Maximum acres that could be developed within the Conservation Areas under the Plan in addition to the fluvial sand transport areas identified above.	0
TOTAL ACRES IN CONSERVATION AREAS	<i>669,190</i>

¹ The acreage includes lands purchased by non-profit organizations and donated to Federal agencies.

2.7 Core Habitat with Ecological Processes Alternative

This alternative was developed through the process described in Section 3 of the Plan. This alternative would establish Conservation Areas intended to protect Core Habitat for the Covered Species and natural communities included in the Plan, Essential Ecological Processes necessary to sustain these habitats, and some Biological Corridors (*Exhibit 2-3*). The Conservation Areas include most of the Public Lands Alternative lands as well as the acquisition of additional private lands for Core Habitat, Essential Ecological Processes, and Biological Corridors. This alternative would protect private lands in the mountains surrounding the Coachella Valley necessary to avoid habitat fragmentation, protect Essential Ecological Processes, and maintain some Biological Corridors and Linkages. Covered Activities are the same under this alternative as the Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative.

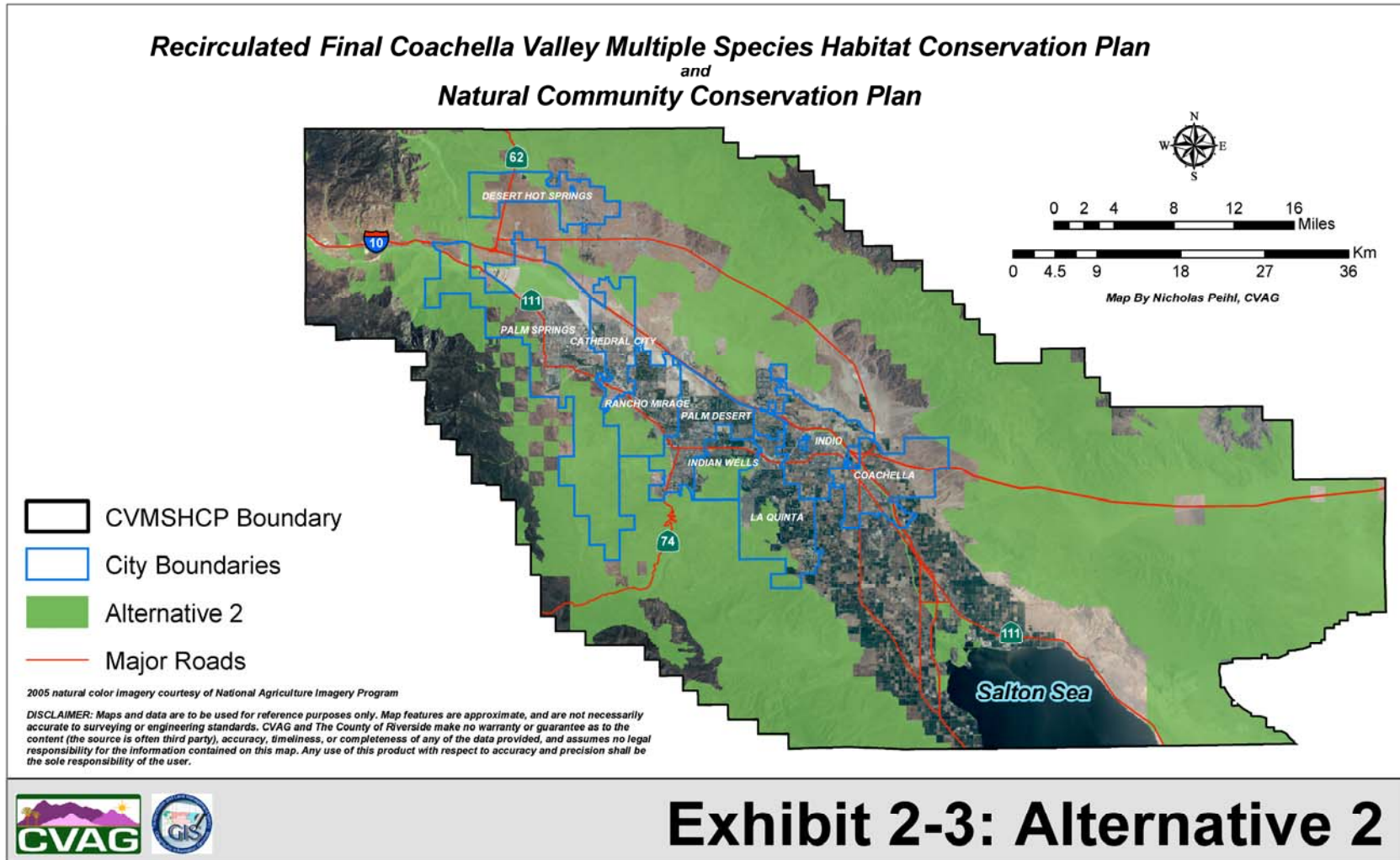


Exhibit 2-3

New management prescriptions are proposed for the existing public and private conservation lands where needed. Private lands would be protected through the implementation program, by means of acquisition, general plan policies, ordinances, and other planning tools. Conservation biology principles were used in preserve design with the intent to assure long-term viability and adequate conservation for the species and natural communities. These principles are:

1. Species well distributed across their native range are less susceptible to extinction than species confined to small portions of their range.
2. Large blocks of habitat, containing large populations, are better than small blocks with small populations.
3. Blocks of habitat close together are better than blocks far apart.
4. Habitat in contiguous blocks is better than fragmented habitat.
5. Interconnected blocks of habitat are better than isolated blocks.
6. Blocks of habitat that are roadless or less accessible to humans are better than with roads and accessible habitat blocks.

On the valley floor, this alternative builds on the existing Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard preserves and Dos Palmas ACEC by adding adjacent habitat for the Covered Species and natural communities included in the Plan, protecting the Essential Ecological Processes that maintain the habitat areas, and protecting Biological Corridors and Linkages among the major mountains ranges. In addition, this alternative creates new preserve areas in the Snow Creek area, east of Highway 62 along Mission Creek and Morongo Wash, and at the Whitewater River delta at the northwest end of the Salton Sea.

In this alternative Mission Creek and Morongo Wash drainages, as planned for ultimate improvements with armored levees and sandy bottoms, would provide necessary sand transport from portions of the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains, south to the wind corridor located south of 20th Avenue and west and east of Palm Drive. In this instance, the intent would be to assure an adequate sand source at the proper location to supply the Willow Hole Conservation Area.

Throughout the Plan Area, approximately 75% of the active sand habitat areas are protected under Alternative 2. Under Alternative 2 all the natural community types that are more limited in distribution would be conserved up to 98%, except for mesquite hummocks.

The acreage of the conserved areas is shown in *Table 2-7*. This alternative is compared to the Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative in *Table 2-8*.

TABLE 2-7
Summary of Core Habitat/Ecological Process
Alternative MSHCP Reserve System Lands (in acres)

	Acres as of 1996
Existing Federal lands in MSHCP Reserve System ¹	442,400
Existing State lands in MSHCP Reserve System	32,400
Existing non-profit organization lands in MSHCP Reserve System ²	900
Existing Local Permittee conservation lands in the Reserve System	4,750
Undeveloped Tribal lands outside the Reservation	0
SUBTOTAL	480,450
Acres of Complementary Conservation	83,690
Acres to be acquired by State and Federal agencies	27,900
Additional Local Permittee acres for which there would be cooperation to conserve	5,650
Acres to be acquired or otherwise conserved by Local Permittees	65,000
Other non-Permittee public and quasi-public lands	9,600
Fluvial sand transport area where the Conservation Objective is met through non-acquisition. Development consistent with Conservation Objectives is allowed. ³	3,950
SUBTOTAL – ALTERNATIVE 2: COMPLEMENTARY CONSERVATION LANDS AND ADDITIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS	195,790
Maximum acres that could be developed within the Conservation Areas under the Plan in addition to the fluvial sand transport areas identified above.	21,040
TOTAL ACRES IN CONSERVATION AREAS	697,280

¹ The acreage includes lands purchased by non-profit organizations and donated to Federal agencies.

² The acreage includes lands owned by non-profit organizations but acquired with State grant funds or local funds.

³ These acres are in the Cabazon, Long Canyon, and West Deception Canyon Conservation Areas.

TABLE 2-8
Core Habitat/Ecological Processes Alternative Compared to Proposed
Action/Preferred Alternative Species Habitat Conserved (in acres)

Species (Listing Status)	Preferred Alt Acreage	Core Habitat Alt. Acreage ¹
Plants		
Coachella Valley milkvetch (FE)	19,363	19,967
Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (FC)	2,317	3,145
Mecca aster ¹	54,667	51,518
Orocopia sage ¹	68,950	69,346
Triple-ribbed milkvetch (FE)	2,838	3,036
Invertebrates - Insects		
Coachella Valley giant sand-treader cricket (FSC)	12,997	8,610
Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket (FSC)	11,970	9,849
Fish		
Desert pupfish (FE/SE)	25.05	—
Amphibians		
Arroyo toad (FE/CSC)	2,007	2,140
Reptiles		
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (FT/SE)	12,998	11,847

TABLE 2-8 (cont.)

Preferred Alternative Species Listing Status	Acreage	Core Habitat Alt. Acreage ¹
Desert tortoise (FT/ST)	490,283	492,484
Flat-tailed horned lizard (CSC)	13,914	13,574
Birds		
Burrowing owl (FSC/CSC)	N/A	
California black rail ST/SFP	616	676
Crissal thrasher (CSC)	1,676	2,002
Gray vireo (CSC)	101,544	90,818
Le Conte's thrasher (FSC/CSC)	131,616	134,506
Least Bell's vireo ² (FE/SE)	2,911	3,081
Southwestern willow flycatcher ² (SE/FE)	2,563	2,746
Summer tanager ^{1,2}	2,563	2,746
Yellow warbler ² (CSC)	2,563	2,746
Yellow-breasted chat ² (CSC)	2,829	3,013
Yuma clapper rail (FE/ST/SFP)	697	1,420
Mammals		
PBS (FE/ST/SFP)	165,856	170,973
Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (FC/CSC)	33,447	33,832
Palm Springs pocket mouse (FSC/CSC)	56,349	56,099
Southern yellow bat ⁷	1,250	1,263

Status Codes: The status codes used in the above table are identified in the following key, as listed in the California Natural Diversity Data Base Special Animals List and Special Plants List from July 2000 (CNDDDB 2000). FE = Federal Endangered

- FT = Federal Threatened
- FPE = Proposed for Federal Endangered listing
- FC = Candidate for Federal listing
- FSC = Federal Species of Concern (a "term-of-art" that describes the entire realm of taxa whose conservation status may be of concern to the Service, but the term has no official status)
- SE = State Endangered
- ST = State Threatened
- SFP = State Fully Protected
- CSC = Species of Special Concern (a state list of species that are at risk due to habitat modification or destruction, over-collecting, disease, or other threats)
- CNPS = Rare in California
- List 2 ⁷ These species have no official status at this time; they are included in the Plan because of the likelihood of listing during the Permit term.

2.8 Enhanced Conservation Alternative

This alternative expands upon the Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative. This alternative is shown on *Exhibit 2-4*, below. The Enhanced Conservation Alternative includes the same Covered Activities as the Preferred Alternative. The acreage of the conserved areas is shown in *Table 2-9*. This alternative would result in less Take than the Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative, as shown on *Table 2-10*. Additional Conservation Lands would be added, as follows:

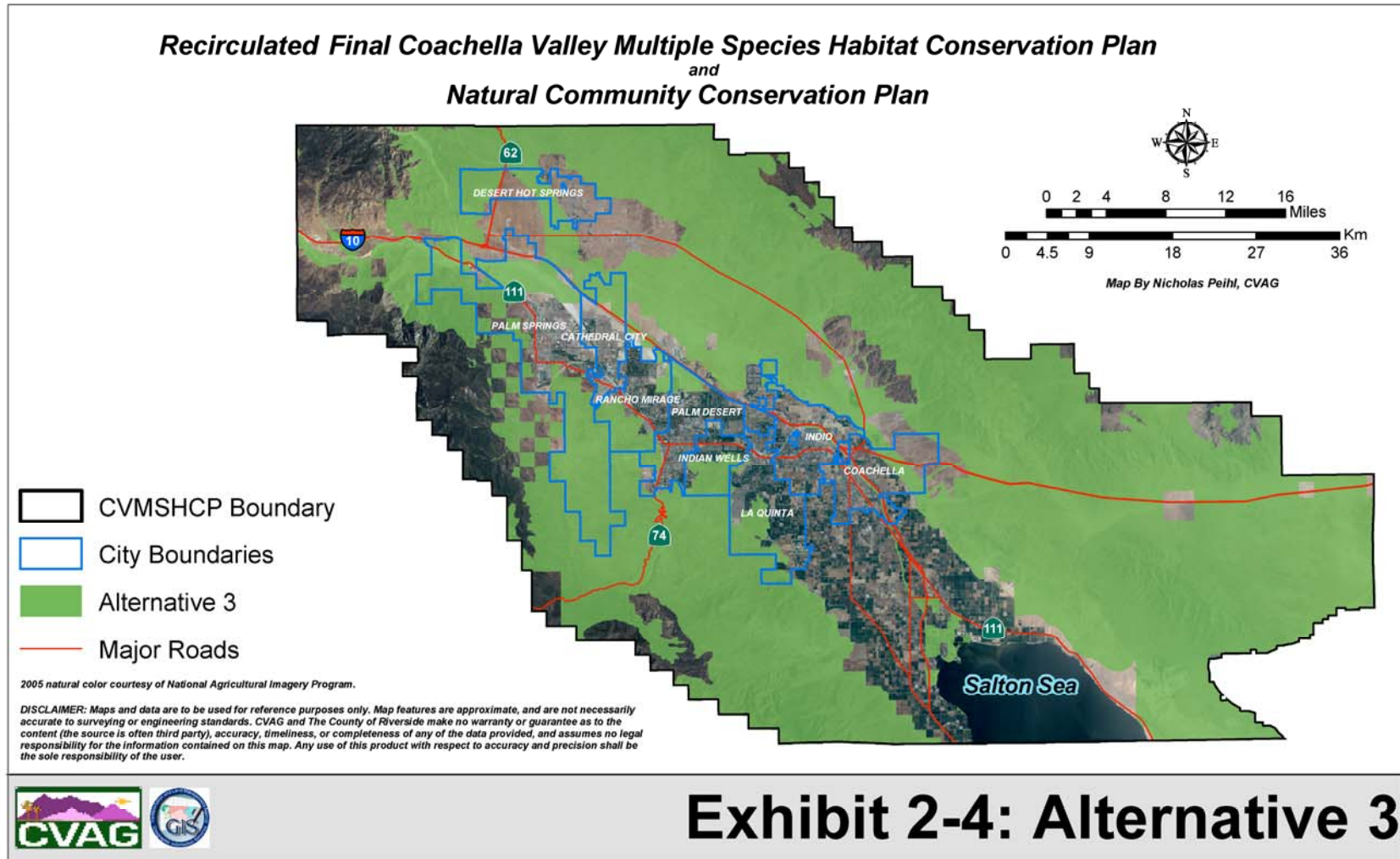


Exhibit 2-4

TABLE 2-9
Enhanced Conservation Alternative:
Summary of MSHCP Reserve System Lands (in acres)

Land Categories	Acres as of 1996
Existing Federal lands in MSHCP Reserve System ¹	452,700
Existing State lands in MSHCP Reserve System	32,400
Existing non-profit organization lands in MSHCP Reserve System ²	900
Existing Local Permittee conservation lands in the Reserve System	4,700
Undeveloped Tribal lands outside the Reservation	0
SUBTOTAL	<i>490,700</i>
Acres of Complementary Conservation	83,690
Acres to be acquired by State and Federal agencies	40,740
Additional Local Permittee acres for which there would be cooperation to conserve	7,800
Acres to be acquired or otherwise conserved by Local Permittees	95,060
Other non-Permittee public and quasi-public lands	10,400
Fluvial sand transport area where the Conservation Objective is met through non-acquisition. Development consistent with Conservation Objectives is allowed. ³	6,550
SUBTOTAL - ALTERNATIVE 3: COMPLEMENTARY CONSERVATION AND ADDITIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS	<i>244,240</i>
Maximum acres that could be developed within the Conservation Areas under the Plan in addition to the fluvial sand transport areas identified above.	26,040
TOTAL ACRES IN CONSERVATION AREAS	<i>760,980</i>

¹ The acreage includes lands purchased by non-profit organizations and donated to Federal agencies.

² The acreage includes lands owned by non-profit organizations but acquired with State grant funds or local funds.

³ These acres are in the Cabazon, Long Canyon, and West Deception Canyon Conservation Areas.

TABLE 2-10
Enhanced Conservation Alternative Compared to Proposed Action/Preferred
Alternative Species Habitat Conserved (in Acres)

Species (Listing Status)	Preferred Alt. Acreage	Enhanced Cons. Alt. Acreage
Plants		
Coachella Valley milkvetch (FE)	19,363	28,945
Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (FC)	2,317	3,470
Mecca aster	54,667	62,006
Orocopia sage	68,950	77,899
Triple-ribbed milkvetch (FE)	2,838	3,063
Invertebrates - Insects		
Coachella Valley giant sand-treader cricket (FSC)	12,997	18,895
Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket (FSC)	11,970	17,685
Fish		
Desert pupfish (FE/SE)	25.05	25

TABLE 2-10 (cont.)

Species (Listing Status)	Preferred Alt. Acreage	Enhanced Cons. Alt Acreage
Amphibians		
Arroyo southwestern toad (FE/CSC)	2,007	2,181
Reptiles		
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (FT/SE)	12,998	18,895
Desert tortoise (FT/ST)	490,283	521,258
Flat-tailed horned lizard (CSC)	13,914	20,925
Birds		
Burrowing owl (FSC/CSC)	N/A	N/A
California black rail (ST/SFP)	616	676
Crissal thrasher (CSC)	1,676	2,220
Gray vireo (CSC)	101,544	105,543
Le Conte's thrasher (FSC/CSC)	131,616	175,416
Least Bell's vireo (FE/SE)	2,911	3,252
Southwestern willow flycatcher (SE/FE)	2,563	2,774
Summer tanager	2,563	2,774
Yellow warbler (CSC)	2,563	2,774
Yellow-breasted chat (CSC)	2,829	3,041
Yuma clapper rail (FE/ST/SFP)	697	676
Mammals		
PBS (FE/ST/SFP)	165,856	171,439
Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (FSCFC/CSC)	33,447	61,847
Palm Springs pocket mouse (FSC/CSC)	56,349	94,545
Southern yellow bat	1,250	1,353

Status Codes: The status codes used in the above table are identified in the following key, as listed in the California Natural Diversity Data Base Special Animals List and Special Plants List from July 2000 (CNDDDB 2000).

- FE = Federal Endangered
- FT = Federal Threatened
- FPE = Proposed for Federal Endangered listing
- FC = Candidate for Federal listing
- FSC = Federal Species of Concern (a "term-of-art" that describes the entire realm of taxa whose conservation status may be of concern to the Service, but the term has no official status)
- SE = State Endangered
- ST = State Threatened
- SFP = State Fully Protected
- CSC = Species of Special Concern (a state list of species that are at risk due to habitat modification or destruction, over-collecting, disease, or other threats)
- CNPS = Rare in California
- List 2¹ These species have no official status at this time; however, they are included in the Plan because of the likelihood of listing during the permit term. Note, also, that the Department of Interior eliminated the category of FC2 subsequent to the adoption

Expanded Snow Creek Area: Additional Conservation Lands would be added between I-10 and State Highway 111 west of the Whitewater River. The additional lands would increase habitat for the Palm Springs pocket mouse, Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, and Coachella Valley milkvetch; potential habitat for the burrowing owl would also be added. The addition is somewhat isolated from similar habitat to the south by Highway 111 and the Union Pacific Railroad lines.

Expanded Mission Creek Area: Additional Conservation Lands comprised of the alluvial plain created by Mission Creek and west of State Highway 62 would be added. This additional Conservation Area could provide very low density habitat for desert tortoise and potential habitat for Le Conte's thrasher and burrowing owl.

Expanded Whitewater Preserve Area: This alternative involves the possible reconfiguration of the groundwater recharge basins built and managed by the Coachella Valley Water District. The reconfiguration would provide a wider path for stormwater in the Whitewater River to deposit its sediment load with the intention of increasing fluvial deposition and broader areas for wind transport in the downwind portions of this preserve. Currently, Whitewater River flows are contained along the northern portion of the recharge basins by loosely consolidated (sugar) training levees which are intended to erode away in a large storm event.

Expanded Willow Hole and Sand Source Area: Additional Conservation Lands comprised of the alluvial plain created by Mission Creek would be added along the east and west sides of the Mission Creek Wash, and extending east to the Morongo Wash. This alternative increases sand transport through these drainages to the wind corridor to the south, and to provide a potential wildlife movement corridor between the Mission Creek/Morongo Wash and the Willow Hole Conservation Areas.

Flat-Top Mountain and Dune Area North of I-10: This alternative would involve the addition of lands south to US I-10 and south of the power line corridor, which serves as the southern limit for conservation lands in this area east of Palm Drive. Lands would also be added to the Conservation Areas north of 20th Avenue in the western portion of the Desert Dunes golf course/Seven Palms Valley Ranch property. The intent of this alternative is to add habitat for several Plan Covered Species, including the Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, burrowing owl, Le Conte's thrasher, flat-tailed horned lizard, and the Coachella Valley milkvetch. The additional lands are also meant to enhance fluvial and aeolian sand transport into the Stebbins Dune area located at the base of the north slope of Flat-top Mountain.

This alternative also adds a long but somewhat narrow strip of land to the Conservation Areas east of Date Palm Drive and DaVall Road (extended), north from the I-10 corridor to Varner Road. The intent is to provide additional active sand field habitat for Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, burrowing owl, flat-tailed horned lizard, Coachella Valley giant sand-treader cricket, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, and the Coachella Valley milkvetch.

Big Dune (Palm Springs Sand Ridge) South of I-10: The Palm Springs Sand Ridge (referred to as the "Big Dune" in the MSHCP) is an artifact of the prevailing wind direction and major area

of aeolian sand deposition formed prior to the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad lines and later US I-10. Since the construction of these transportation corridors and their attendant sand-intercepting windrows, the Big Dune has been cut off from most of its upwind sand source and is now recognized as a stabilized sand dune habitat.

The portion of Big Dune/Palm Springs Sand Ridge that extends east from Date Palm Drive to Gerald Ford Drive (extended) is included in this alternative. Significant commercial, residential and institutional development has occurred within this area. Substantial portions of these lands are still vacant and could provide additional habitat for Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, burrowing owl, flat-tailed horned lizard, Coachella Valley giant sand-treader cricket, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, and the Coachella Valley milkvetch.

East Indio Hills: This alternative also adds land to the Conservation Areas located east of the north end of the Del Webb Sun City development, including the Adams Ranch Specific plan and Granite Construction Indio Quarry lands, extending south to the US Bureau of Reclamation flood control levee. These lands could provide additional habitat for Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, Palm Springs pocket mouse, burrowing owl, Le Conte's and Crissal thrashers, flat-tailed horned lizard, Coachella Valley giant sand-treader cricket, the Coachella Valley milkvetch, migratory riparian bird species, and the mesquite hummocks natural community. Subdivided and partially developed lands in the eastern portion of Sky Valley north of the Indio Hills would also be included to assure a sand source for the aforementioned lands to the south.

Coachella Canal Linkage: The Enhanced Conservation Alternative includes a mile wide corridor located along the north side of the Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal, which delivers Colorado River Water to farmlands in the Coachella Valley. This corridor could provide enhanced wildlife Linkages between the east Indio Hills and the Dos Palmas ACEC, primarily benefiting the Palm Springs pocket mouse and the Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel.

2.9 No Action/No Project Alternative

The No Action/No Project Alternative would not result in the implementation of the Plan and no Permits would be issued. Individual project proponents would continue to obtain their own Take Authorizations or avoid Take. This alternative would not result in issuance of Permits, therefore, it would not result in direct impacts to listed species. This alternative would not prevent indirect impacts to listed species from development on lands adjacent to occupied habitat. These impacts could include habitat fragmentation, disruption of natural processes that sustain occupied habitat, and impacts from pets, OHV use, illegal dumping, and increased risk of fire.

Furthermore, the No Action/No Project Alternative would not provide protection for unlisted species or natural communities that do not occur within habitat for listed species. At the same time, developers in the Plan Area would still have to mitigate pursuant to CEQA and potentially under FESA, and CESA for impacts to biological resources. Over time, additional species would likely become listed, further impacting development within the Coachella Valley.

This Alternative would result in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Trails Plan not being adopted. Management of existing trails would be subject to current local, State, and Federal management programs. It is uncertain whether these management programs would continue into the future.

2.10 Alternatives Considered and Eliminated from Further Review

Since 1996, the development of the MSHCP has considered a variety of conservation land allocation models based upon fundamental principles of conservation biology and an on-going assessment of the Plan Area. An alternative was also developed that fully protects those areas encompassed by the current composite modeled distribution and known locations of Covered Species in the Plan Area.

By seeking to protect all habitat for the proposed Covered Species in the Plan, such an alternative would result in no incidental Take being permitted. Thus, there would be no need for a habitat conservation plan. This alternative could not meet Plan objectives, was determined to be infeasible and did not meet the purpose and need of the USFWS. This alternative was, therefore, not considered further in the EIR/EIS.

The Preferred Alternative described in the initial Draft EIR/EIS for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Trails Plan (November 2004) included a provision that would substantially restrict access to certain trails in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat during the bighorn sheep lambing season: no more than 2,300 individual permits and 50 group permits would be available for the use of nine trails or trail segments. The Lead Agencies (CVAG, USFWS) worked with CDFG and BLM to address issues of sheep protection as well as concerns raised by trail users regarding restrictions on trail use and other elements of the Trails Plan. As indicated in Section 2.5.7.3, the precautionary approach of seasonally restricting access was revised in favor of Adaptive Management, which emphasizes research on the effects of recreational trail use on bighorn sheep, and monitoring of such trail use and bighorn sheep populations. The Proposed Trails Plan incorporates aspects of alternatives analyzed in the initial Draft EIR/EIS.

During preparation of the initial Draft EIR/EIS, an alternative based on 4,000 individual permits and 50 group permits was considered and eliminated from further review because the Preferred Alternative would provide a sufficient number of permits to accommodate estimated use levels

for the subject trails in accordance with data gathered by BLM from 2001 to 2003. Increasing the number of individual permits was considered to increase impacts to bighorn sheep and would not accomplish the project objective of balancing recreation use and bighorn sheep conservation. Hence, this alternative is also eliminated from further review in the Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS.

The initial Draft EIR/EIS included a Trails Plan alternative that was based on voluntary compliance with requests to seasonally avoid certain trails in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat. This alternative was considered and eliminated from further review in this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS because it, similar to the previous Preferred Alternative, was based on a precautionary approach to the management of public access in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area. The precautionary approach has been revised in favor of Adaptive Management as described in the Proposed Trails Plan.

2.11 Public Access and Use Alternatives

2.11.1 Public Access and Use Alternatives for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area

The Proposed Trails Plan is found in Section 7.3.3.2 et seq. in the MSHCP, as well as Section 2.5.7.3 of this Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS. The other two alternatives are described below. A comparison of the primary elements of the three alternatives, one of which is the Proposed Trails Plan, is provided below in Table 2-11.

TABLE 2-11
Comparison of Trails Plan Alternatives

Trails Plan Element	Proposed Trails Plan (Alt. A)	Alt. B	Alt. C No Action Alternative
Open year-round	38 trails or trail segments	20 trails or trail segments	38 trails or trail segments
Permit Program	11 trails or trail segments: year-round mandatory self-issue permit, no limit on number of available permits	n/a	n/a
Lambing season closures, January 1 to June 30 (see footnote #1)	none, except as part of Research Program (to be determined)	22 trails or trail segments	none
Hot season closures, June 15 to September 30 (see footnote #1)	3 trails or trail segments	20 trails or trail segments	none
Cross-country travel limits	prohibited January 1 to September 30	prohibited year-round	none
Camping limits (see footnote #2)	prohibited January 1 to September 30	prohibited year-round	none

TABLE 2-11 (cont.)

Trails Plan Element	Proposed Trails Plan (Alt. A)	Alt. B	Alt. C No Action Alternative
Entry with dogs (see footnote #3)	allowed in 3 locations	allowed in 2 locations	generally not restricted
Murray Hill facilities (BLM lands)	retained	removed	retained

- 1 Does not include the Carrizo Canyon Trail which is closed per California Department of Fish and Game order from January 1 through June 14, or the Carrizo Canyon and Mirage Trails in Carrizo Canyon and Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserves, respectively, which are closed per California Code of Regulations from June 15 through September 30. Also does not include closure of the Dead Indian Canyon Trail from January 1 through September 30 as approved separate from the Trails Plan.
- 2 Camping is prohibited under all alternatives within 1/4 mile of wildlife water sources.
- 3 One area west of Cathedral City Cove would be approved under the Proposed Trails Plan and Alternative B. Entry with dogs has been approved in a separate action for Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park. Under the Proposed Trails Plan, a new dog use area would be developed east of the Andreas Hills residential community upon completion of the Garstin to Thielman Link Trail. .

Alternative B

Trails Open All Year

The following trails in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat would be available for year-round non-motorized use:

West of Palm Canyon

- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- Museum Trail
- Picnic Table Trail

South Palm Springs

- Henderson Trail
- Alexander Trail
- Fern Canyon Trail
- Vandeventer Trail
- Dry Wash Trail west of the Dry Wash to Vandeventer Trail connector
- Dry Wash to Vandeventer Trail connector
- Palm Canyon Trail
- Indian Potrero Trail
- Potrero Canyon Trail

Cathedral City / Rancho Mirage

- Bighorn Overlook Trail
- Mirage (“Bump and Grind”) Trail below its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail

Palm Desert / Indian Wells

- Eisenhower Mountain Trail (access through *The Living Desert*)
- Art Smith Trail east of its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail
- Hopalong Cassidy Trail

[**Note:** Year-round use of the Art Smith Trail east of the Hopalong Cassidy Trail intersection, as well as the Hopalong Cassidy Trail itself, was approved separate from the Trails Plan.]

La Quinta

- Bear Creek Canyon Trail in Section 13, T6S R6E

Southern Santa Rosa Mountains

- Cactus Spring Trail
- Martinez Canyon Trail

U.S. Forest Service lands

- The use of trails on Forest Service lands would be subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Perimeter trails

- Once constructed, the proposed perimeter trails would be available for year-round use.
- Outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat trails would be open year-round for non-motorized use, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Trails with Seasonal Limits on Use: Seasonal Trail Program

A Seasonal Trail Program would consist of five elements: (1) prohibitions of use on selected trails during the lambing season from January 1 through June 30; (2) prohibitions of use on selected trails during the “hot season” from July 1 through September 30; (3) implementation of a public awareness and education program; (4) annual review of the effectiveness of the Seasonal Trail Program and other trail management prescriptions, including results of monitoring and research; and (5) research designed to ascertain bighorn sheep response to and any significant adverse impacts from recreational trail use in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains.

(1) Seasonal Trail Program Element 1: Trail Closures - Lamb Rearing Habitat

The *Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California* (USFWS 2000) includes a table (Table 10 – page 88) that lists 16 trails and areas that pose “potential conflicts”

with recovery during the lambing season and hot season. Subsequent to completion of the Recovery Plan, biologists from BLM, CDFG, and USFWS examined the location of each trail and area relative to known bighorn sheep uses (including lambing, rearing, and movement corridors), habitat conditions, and the location and condition of water sources. The list in the PBS Recovery Plan was modified for use in the Trails Plan based on this subsequent review.

- Certain trails would be closed to public use from January 1 through June 30. These trails were identified in *Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California* (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2000) as “having potential conflicts with lambing from January 1 through June 30, and should be addressed in an interagency trails management plan.”
- Signs would be posted where appropriate to identify the trail closures.
- Trails subject to seasonal trail closures would be as follows:

West of Palm Canyon

- North Lykken Trail
- Skyline Trail
- South Lykken Trail

South Palm Springs

- Murray Hill trail complex:
 - Araby Trail
 - Shannon Trail
 - Berns Trail
 - Garstin Trail
 - Clara Burgess Trail
 - Hahn Buena Vista Trail
 - Goat Trails
 - Eagle Canyon Trail
 - Wild Horse Trail
 - Thielman Trail
 - Dry Wash Trail east of the Dry Wash to Vandeventer Trail connector
- Upper Dunn Road

Cathedral City / Rancho Mirage

- Lower Dunn Road
- Cathedral Canyon Trail

Palm Desert / Indian Wells

- Art Smith Trail, west of its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail
- Dead Indian Canyon Trail, which is closed from January 1 through September 30 as approved separate from the Trails Plan.
- State of California lands within Magnesia Spring and Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserves are subject to decisions made by the State. Carrizo Canyon is currently closed to public access from January 1 through June 14 per order of the CDFG. In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, both Ecological Reserves are closed to public access from June 15 through September 30.

La Quinta

- Bear Creek Canyon Trail south of the Section 13/24 boundary, T6S R6E
- Bear Creek Oasis Trail
- Boo Hoff Trail
- Guadalupe Trail
- La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail (includes the Morrow Trail and a portion of the Boo Hoff Trail)

(2) Seasonal Trail Program Element 2: Trail Closures - Hot Season

- Certain trails would be closed to public use from June 1 through September 30. These trails were identified in *Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California* (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2000) as having potential conflicts with water stress from June 1 through September 30, and should be addressed in an interagency trails management plan.
- Signs would be posted where appropriate to identify the trail closures.
- Trails subject to the “hot season” trail closures would be as follows:
 - North Lykken Trail
 - Murray Hill trail complex:
 - Araby Trail
 - Shannon Trail
 - Berns Trail
 - Garstin Trail
 - Clara Burgess Trail
 - Hahn Buena Vista Trail
 - Goat Trails
 - Eagle Canyon Trail
 - Wild Horse Trail

- Thielman Trail
- Dry Wash Trail east of the Dry Wash to Vandeventer Trail connector
- Dunn Road
- Cathedral Canyon Trail
- Art Smith Trail west of its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail
- Dead Indian Canyon Trail, which is closed from January 1 through September 30 as approved separate from the Trails Plan.
- Bear Creek Canyon Trail, south of the Section 13/24 boundary, T6S R6E
- Bear Creek Oasis Trail
- Boo Hoff Trail
- Guadalupe Trail
- La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail (includes the Morrow Trail and a portion of the Boo Hoff Trail)
- State of California lands within Magnesia Spring and Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserves are subject to decisions made by the State. Carrizo Canyon is currently closed to public access from January 1 through June 14 per order of the CDFG. In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, both Ecological Reserves are closed to public access from June 15 through September 30.

(3) Seasonal Trail Program Element 3: Public Awareness and Education Program

- An awareness and education program would be developed and implemented by the CVCC and BLM to inform the public about bighorn sheep conservation issues with respect to trail use. This program would encourage trail users to comply with the Seasonal Trail Program to limit impacts to bighorn sheep.

(4) Seasonal Trail Program Element 4: Review of Seasonal Trail Program and Other Trail Management Prescriptions

- The Trails Management Subcommittee would annually review effectiveness of the overall trails management program, including the Seasonal Trail Program. Annual review would include an assessment of bighorn sheep population trends, recreational trail use data, compliance with seasonal use restrictions, and other new data acquired.
- The Subcommittee would make recommendations to both the RMOC and the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Advisory Committee regarding modifications to the trails management program. The RMOC would make recommendations to the CVCC for the portions of trails on non-Federal lands. The Monument Advisory Committee would make recommendations to the Federal land management agencies (BLM and USFS) regarding trails use on Federal lands.

(5) Seasonal Trail Program Element 5: Research

- A cooperative research program among the Wildlife Agencies, CVCC, and BLM would be initiated within Essential bighorn sheep Habitat in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains to examine bighorn sheep response to recreational trail use. This research program could require manipulation of trail use levels (increases, decreases, or prohibitions of use altogether on one or more trails) while simultaneously monitoring responses of bighorn sheep. Manipulated trail use would not be subject to trail closures herein described.
- Projects that do not involve handling of bighorn sheep could be initiated at any time without further approval.

Closures to Bicycles Consistent with Existing Laws, Regulations, Ordinances and Land Use Plans

- Certain trails, or segments thereof, would be closed year-round to bicycles. These trails are identified below.

Existing closures to bicycles (these closures would not be modified by the Plan)

- (a) Trails, or segments thereof, in designated wilderness:
 - Bear Creek Canyon Trail segment
 - Bear Creek Oasis Trail segment
 - Boo Hoff Trail segment
 - Guadalupe Trail (entire trail)
 - Cactus Spring Trail (entire trail)
 - Martinez Canyon Trail segment
 - All U.S. Forest Service trails within (and leading to) designated wilderness
- (b) Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- (c) Bicycles are not allowed in Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserve and Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve (California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Section 430).

Proposed closures to bicycles consistent with current closures

- (a) Closures consistent with the existing bicycle prohibition on Tribal lands; these closures would preclude bicycle access to Tribal facilities at the Trading Post in Palm Canyon:
 - Fern Canyon Trail west of its intersection with the Wild Horse Trail
 - Vandeventer Trail west of the intersection with the connector trail to the Dry Wash Trail

- (b) Closures due to potential terrain-related user conflicts (steep narrow trails where simultaneous equestrian and mountain bicycle use was determined as excessively dangerous) consistent with the existing bicycle prohibition on City lands; these closures would apply to trails in their entirety, not City lands only:
- Araby Trail
 - Shannon Trail
 - Garstin Trail
 - Berns Trail
 - Henderson Trail
 - South Lykken Trail
 - Picnic Table Trail (located east of the South Lykken Trail)

Construction and Rerouting of Trails

New Perimeter Trails

General guidelines for development of perimeter trails would be as follows:

- Perimeter trails would generally run parallel to and not rise more than 200 feet above the toe of slope, except where necessary to avoid residential or other developed areas of topographically inaccessible terrain.
- Perimeter trails would not be constructed within 1/4 mile of wildlife water sources.
- Perimeter trails would incorporate topographic variability where possible.
- Perimeter trails would be available for year-round use.
- Construction of perimeter trails would occur from July 1 through December 31 only.
- Specific alignments for new perimeter trails are described below. Construction of these perimeter trails would be dependent on funding availability and acquisition of easements or other authorizations.
 - Garstin to Thielman Link Trail: Trail along the western flank of the Murray Hill complex of trails linking the Garstin Trail with the Thielman Trail.
 - Cathedral City Cove: Trail along the eastern, southern, and western flanks of Cathedral City Cove, except for a segment of the trail in Section 33, T4S R5E. This perimeter trail would utilize segments of the lower Cathedral Canyon Trail.
 - West La Quinta Cove: Trail to the summit of an isolated prominence in Section 1, T6S R6E, northwest of La Quinta Cove.

- East La Quinta Cove: Trail on the western flank of the Coral Reef Mountains starting from the flood control basin access gate at the south end of La Quinta Cove; although a specific trail alignment has been identified, development of a new reservoir by the Coachella Valley Water District would require some modification to the trail alignment. CVWD has agreed to cooperate in determination of this alignment.

Perimeter Trail Corridors

- Alignments for trails in the following areas have not been specifically described. Perimeter trail corridors are identified in which new trails may be constructed after NEPA and CEQA requirements are met, and the appropriate authorizations are secured. These corridors are as follows:
 - Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail at Snow Creek to the northern boundary of Section 4, T4S R4E (lands owned by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians)
 - Southern boundary of Section 4, T4S R4E to the northern terminus of the North Lykken Trail
 - Terminus of one of the Goat Trails at Rimrock Shopping Center to the new perimeter trail encompassing Cathedral City Cove, including the northwest segment of the perimeter trail flanking Cathedral City Cove in Section 33, T4S R5E
 - Cathedral City Cove to Rancho Mirage
 - Northeast flank of the Coral Reef Mountains in an area known as “Silver Rock Ranch.” This trail is proposed by the City of La Quinta as part of their development of a public golf course project on the adjacent flat lands
 - Western flank of the Coral Reef Mountains starting from the flood control basin access gate at the south end of La Quinta Cove (pending coordination with the Coachella Valley Water District)
 - East side of the Santa Rosa Wilderness from the southern terminus of the proposed trail through Coral Mountain Regional Park to the road providing access to Martinez Canyon (the road would be used as a trail for access to the Canyon)

Other New Trail Construction

- Proposals for new trails within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, other than those identified above, as well as the remaining Federal lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, would be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Trail Rerouting

- Trails within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area and Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument would be rerouted to protect sensitive resource values (e.g., cultural resources, wildlife habitat, soils) where meaningful and feasible. “Meaningful” trail reroutes would be those that result in a reduction or elimination of adverse impacts to resource values. “Feasible” trail resources would be those that could be accomplished without extraordinary expenditures or efforts, i.e., the benefits derived would be commensurate with the expenditure of funds and/or the level of effort.
- Identification of trails to be rerouted to protect bighorn sheep would be based on habitat use patterns, home range, and distribution of bighorn sheep. Until sufficient data are available to identify meaningful and feasible trail reroutes relative to these criteria, proposals regarding specific reroutes would be considered on a case-by-case basis, except as pertains to segments of the Goat Trails (see below).
- Trails would be rerouted around existing wildlife water sources, where feasible, to prevent disturbance to wildlife during the hot season.
- Trail reroutes would be allowed October 1 through December 31 only.
- Trails to be rerouted would be as follows:
 - Segments of the Goat Trails should the Palm Hills project be constructed. These reroutes would include a new trail to provide a loop from the Clara Burgess Trail west to the Araby and Wild Horse Trails, and a connection from the Palm Hills access road west to the Berns Trail. Another trail corridor would be located along the northern boundary of the proposed Palm Hills project.
 - Rerouting a portion of the Guadalupe Trail to avoid desert slender salamander habitat would be proposed, if meaningful and feasible, upon locating salamander populations and determining levels of trail use.
- Outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, as well as the remaining Federal lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, proposals for trail reroutes would be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Trail Decommission and Removal

- Trails to be decommissioned and removed would generally be considered as (1) redundant or (2) supporting recreational use where disturbance to sensitive resource

values (e.g., cultural resources, wildlife habitat, soils) should be avoided. Redundant trails are those serving the same or similar purpose as other trails (e.g., connecting the same two points), and providing the same or similar recreation experiences. Secondary or tertiary braided trails and trail shortcuts are generally considered as redundant.

- Trails to be decommissioned and removed would be as follows:
 - Redundant trails in the Murray Hill Complex with particular emphasis on redundant trails in the Murray Hill/Eagle Canyon/Goat Trails area.
 - All trails in the Coral Reef Mountains north of the La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail, except for the new perimeter trails on the western flank and northeastern flanks of these mountains.
 - The western leg of the Cathedral Canyon Trail from the toe of slope to its intersection with the new perimeter trail encompassing Cathedral City Cove upon completion of the perimeter trail.
 - A spur trail in Section 9, T4S R4E, that extends in a westerly direction from the North Lykken Trail.
 - A spur trail in Section 14, T6S R6E that extends in a westerly direction from the southwest corner of La Quinta Cove.

[**Note:** Decommission and removal of the Art Smith Trail between Dead Indian Canyon and the Art Smith Trail reroute, as well as a portion of the northern Schey Trail not being used for the Hopalong Cassidy Trail, was approved separate from the Trails Plan. Decommission and removal of the Mirage Trail above its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail is subject to a separate decision by CDFG.]

- Trails identified above would be removed within nine years of Permit issuance.
- Trails not addressed above would be assessed for redundancy and removed if appropriate. Consideration would be given to using seemingly redundant trails to separate potentially conflicting trail use (e.g., horseback riding and mountain biking). Where such trails could be used to effectively manage conflicting uses, they would no longer be considered redundant. Assessments would consider the following criteria that establish redundancy:
 - Two or more trails connect the same two points.
 - Each trail connecting the same two points provides the same or similar recreation experiences.
 - Trails meeting the criteria above would not be effective in managing conflicting uses.
- Prior to assessing trails for redundancy, an inventory of all trails within the Conservation Area would be completed.

- Recommendations for decommissioning and removing trails would be made by the Trails Management Subcommittee to the RMOC and Monument Advisory Committee. Final approval for trail decommissions and removal rests with the entity having jurisdiction over the applicable lands.
- Trail removal in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat would be allowed from October 1 through December 31 only.

Trailheads

- Trailheads are defined as locations where individuals commence their use of a trail or network of trails, and often transfer from motorized to non-motorized conveyance (e.g., arrive by car to begin travel on foot, horse, or bicycle). Intersections of trails in the backcountry are generally not considered to be trailheads.
- Existing trailhead facilities would be used whenever possible; improvements to these facilities may be undertaken to meet the minimum requirements identified below, upon separate approval by the applicable jurisdiction.

Minimum Facilities for Trailheads

- Parking availability commensurate with anticipated levels of use.
- Signs that explain the rules for trail use and applicable restrictions, if any.
- The development of trailheads would be addressed when new trails are approved.
- Trail registers, kiosks, and interpretive information may be provided as determined on a case-by-case basis.

Other Public Access Issues and Uses in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area / National Monument

Cross-Country Travel

- Cross-country travel in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area would be prohibited year-round.
- Individuals would not be allowed to venture more than 50 feet from centerline of trails on either side for purposes of resting, nature study, or other similar activities when trails are open; this use would not constitute cross-country travel.
- Holders of permits issued for research and extended study would be exempt from the cross-country prohibition.

- Bicycles would be prohibited year-round from traveling cross-country; travel by such conveyance would be restricted to trails.
- Outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat on the remaining Federal lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, cross-country travel would be allowed year-round (except for bicycles), subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Camping

- Camping in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat would be prohibited year-round.
- Camping would be allowed year-round outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat on the remaining Federal lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.
- Camping would be prohibited within 1/4 mile of wildlife water sources.
- Campers would be required to obtain a permit for camping where and when it is allowed. CVCC, in conjunction with CDFG and BLM, would develop a permit system for such activities consistent with existing regulations, policies, and land management plans, as applicable.

Dogs

- In Essential bighorn sheep Habitat dogs would be allowed in designated areas only.
 - The following areas would be approved for entry with dogs:
 - West of Cathedral City Cove in the wash from Dunn Road to the northern boundary of Section 5, T5S R5E.
 - The Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park loop trail in the City of Palm Desert. This area is already designated and approved for dog use by the City of Palm Desert and BLM in consultation with USFWS and CDFG.
- [**NOTE:** An additional designated dog area is located between the southern end of La Quinta Cove and the flood control levee in Section 13, T6S R6E. This area is located outside Essential Habitat for bighorn sheep, and is not within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area.]
- Dogs would be required to be on leash (maximum length of 10 feet) except on City of Palm Desert lands at Homme-Adams Park/Cahuilla Hills Park where dogs may be under voice control in accordance with local ordinances.

- Picking up and properly disposing of a dog's fecal matter would be required at all locations; fecal collection bags would be provided at each site.
- Use restrictions would be enforced by the appropriate jurisdiction.
- Persons requiring accompaniment by a service animal (e.g., seeing-eye dog), and those using dogs to facilitate search and rescue or law enforcement operations would be exempt from the prohibition.
- The prohibition would not apply to dogs inside a motor vehicle.
- Working dogs may be permitted with no leash required, pursuant to an authorization for their use.
- Outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat, entry with dogs on the remaining Federal lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument is subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans, as applicable.

Pack Stock

- Pack stock would be limited to horses, mules, and burros, and be subject to the same restrictions as hikers.

Murray Hill Picnic and Horse Hitching Facilities (applies to BLM lands only)

- Picnic tables and equestrian hitching posts at the summit of Murray Hill would be removed and not relocated within Essential bighorn sheep Habitat.

Non-commercial, Non-competitive Organized Group Activities

- Non-commercial, non-competitive organized group activities would be allowed only where and when the Seasonal Trail Program is not in effect. A group would be defined as a gathering of 12 or more individuals for a structured, ordered, consolidated, or scheduled activity that is neither commercial nor competitive.
- Organized group events on state lands are subject to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 550.

Groups of more than 30 individuals using BLM-managed lands

- All non-commercial, non-competitive organized groups of more than 30 individuals using BLM-managed lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument would be required to obtain a *Special Recreation Permit*, except when exemptions apply.

- Permits would only be issued for use of trails and areas if consistent with the Seasonal Trail Program and other management prescriptions herein identified.

Non-Motorized Commercial Recreation Activities

- Non-motorized commercial recreation activities may be allowed only where and when the general public is allowed access. The CVCC, in conjunction with CDFG and BLM, would develop a permit system for such activities, consistent with existing regulations, policies, and land management plans, as applicable.

Competitive Recreation Events

- Competitive recreation events would be prohibited year-round in Essential bighorn sheep Habitat.
- Outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat on the remaining Federal lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, competitive recreation events may be allowed, subject to permission of private landowners for use of their lands; local and Federal permitting processes; and existing regulations, policies, and land management plans, as applicable.

Motorized-Vehicle Use of Trails

- Motorized vehicles would be prohibited on all trails, except as specifically approved for trail maintenance and construction projects.
- Use of motorized vehicles for trail maintenance and construction projects in designated wilderness is generally prohibited; exceptions to the prohibition must be in conformance with existing laws and regulations.
- Motorized-vehicle use of trails would only be authorized where and when the Seasonal Trail Program is not in effect.

Alternative C: No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative results in the maintenance of the status quo, which currently involves several local, State and Federal agencies with differing and occasionally conflicting interests and management programs. The impacts of the No Action Alternative, which constitutes what could be reasonably foreseen to occur without the Plan, are characterized and analyzed in Section 5 of the EIR/EIS. The No Action Alternative for the Trails Plan applies to Federal and non-Federal

lands, and is described below. Under this alternative, the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Areas would not be established.

Trails Open All Year and With Seasonal Limits on Use

Trails Open All Year

All trails inside and outside Essential bighorn sheep Habitat in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument would be available for year-round non-motorized use, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans. These trails are identified below:

West of Palm Canyon

- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- North Lykken Trail
- Museum Trail
- Skyline Trail
- South Lykken Trail
- Picnic Table Trail

South Palm Springs

- Araby Trail
- Shannon Trail
- Berns Trail
- Garstin Trail
- Henderson Trail
- Alexander Trail
- Goat Trails
- Eagle Canyon Trail
- Wild Horse Trail
- Clara Burgess Trail
- Hahn Buena Vista Trail
- Fern Canyon Trail
- Vandeventer Trail
- Dry Wash Trail
- Upper Dunn Road
- Dry Wash to Vandeventer Trail connector
- Thielman Trail
- Palm Canyon Trail
- Indian Potrero Trail
- Potrero Canyon Trail

Cathedral City / Rancho Mirage

- Lower Dunn Road
- Cathedral Canyon Trail
- Bighorn Overlook Trail
- Mirage (“Bump and Grind”) Trail outside the Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve

Palm Desert / Indian Wells

- Art Smith Trail outside the Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve
- Eisenhower Mountain Trail (access through *The Living Desert*)

La Quinta

- Bear Creek Canyon Trail
- Bear Creek Oasis Trail
- Boo Hoff Trail
- Guadalupe Trail
- La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail (includes the Morrow Trail and a portion of the Boo Hoff Trail)

Southern Santa Rosa Mountains

- Cactus Spring Trail
- Martinez Canyon Trail

U.S. Forest Service lands

- The use of trails on Forest Service lands would be subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Trails with Seasonal Limits on Use

- State of California lands within Magnesia Spring and Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserves are subject to decisions made by the State. Carrizo Canyon is currently closed to public access from January 1 through June 14 per order of the CDFG. In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, both Ecological Reserves are closed to public access from June 15 through September 30. Affected trails are as follows:
 - Art Smith Trail (segment)
 - Mirage “Bump and Grind” Trail (segment)
 - Carrizo Canyon Trail
- Dead Indian Canyon Trail to the oasis is closed from January 1 through September 30 per decision made separate from the Trails Plan

Closures to Bicycles

- Trails would be available for use by all means of non-motorized conveyance (e.g., on foot, bicycle, horse, etc.), except for certain trails or segments thereof that are currently closed to bicycles.
- Certain trails, or segments thereof, closed year-round to bicycles, are identified below:

Existing closures to bicycles (these closures would not be modified by the Plan)

- (a) Trails, or segments thereof, in designated wilderness:
 - Bear Creek Canyon Trail segment
 - Bear Creek Oasis Trail segment
 - Boo Hoff Trail segment
 - Guadalupe Trail (entire trail)
 - Cactus Spring Trail (entire trail)
 - Martinez Canyon Trail segment
 - All U.S. Forest Service trails within (and leading to) designated wilderness
- (b) Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- (c) Closures by the City of Palm Springs due to potential terrain-related user conflicts (steep narrow trails where simultaneous equestrian and mountain bicycle use was determined as excessively dangerous); these closures would not be applicable to non-City lands:
 - Araby Trail
 - Shannon Trail
 - Garstin Trail
 - Berns Trail
 - Henderson Trail
 - South Lykken Trail
- (d) Bicycles are not allowed in Carrizo Canyon Ecological Reserve and Magnesia Spring Ecological Reserve (California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Section 430).

New Trails

- Proposals for new trails in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, would be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Trail Rerouting

- Proposals for trail reroutes within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument would be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Trail Decommission and Removal

- Proposals to decommission and remove trails within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument would be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.
- Decommission and removal of the Art Smith Trail between Dead Indian Canyon and its intersection with the Art Smith Trail reroute, as well as the northern Schey Trail segment not utilized in the Hopalong Cassidy Trail, was approved separate from the Trails Plan.
- Decommission and removal of the Mirage Trail segment above its intersection with the Hopalong Cassidy Trail is subject to a separate decision by CDFG.

Trailheads

- Trailheads are defined as locations where individuals commence their use of a trail or network of trails, and often transfer from motorized to non-motorized conveyance (e.g., arrive by car to begin travel on foot, horse, or bicycle). Intersections of trails in the backcountry are generally not considered to be trailheads.
- Use of existing trailhead facilities would continue.
- Construction of new trailheads would be addressed on a case-by-case basis and subject to approval by the applicable jurisdiction.
- Trail registers, kiosks, and interpretive information may be provided as determined on a case-by-case basis.

Other Public Access Issues and Uses in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area / National Monument

Cross-Country Travel

- Cross-country travel would be allowed year-round within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area/National Monument, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Camping

- Camping would be allowed year-round within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area/National Monument, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.
- Camping would be prohibited within 1/4 mile of wildlife water sources.

Dogs

- Dogs would be allowed within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area/National Monument, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Pack Stock

- All animals would be allowed as pack stock within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area/National Monument, subject to existing regulations, policies, and land management plans.

Murray Hill Picnic and Horse Hitching Facilities (applies to BLM land only)

- Picnic tables and equestrian hitching posts at the summit of Murray Hill would be retained.

Non-commercial, Non-competitive Organized Group Activities

- Non-commercial, non-competitive organized group activities would be allowed within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, subject to permission of private landowners; local and Federal permitting processes; and existing regulations, policies, and land management plans, as applicable.
- Organized group events on state lands are subject to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 550.
- Determinations regarding whether a *Special Recreation Permit* is required for use of BLM-managed lands by noncommercial, noncompetitive organized groups would be made on a case-by-case basis.

Non-Motorized Commercial Recreation Activities

- Non-motorized commercial recreation activities may be permitted within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, subject to permission of private

landowners for use of their lands; local and Federal permitting processes; and existing regulations, policies, and land management plans, as applicable.

Competitive Recreation Events

- Competitive recreation events may be permitted within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, subject to permission of private landowners for use of their lands; local and Federal permitting processes; and existing regulations, policies, and land management plans, as applicable.

Motorized-Vehicle Use of Trails

- Motorized-vehicle use of trails for trail maintenance and construction projects within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area/National Monument would be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Use of motorized vehicles for trail maintenance and construction projects in designated wilderness is generally prohibited; exceptions to the prohibition must be in conformance with existing laws and regulations.

2.11.2 Public Access and Use Alternatives in Other Conservation Areas

The proposed guidelines for public access and recreation on Reserve Lands outside the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area are described in Section 2.5.7.3. As these are guidelines only, no other alternatives, other than the No Action Alternative, are presented.

No Action Alternative

- Proposals for new trails would be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Changes to current recreation opportunities would be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Compliance with existing laws and regulations would be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Management coordination between jurisdictions would occur on an as-needed basis.

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