

LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK

General Development Plan



September 1998

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LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SEPTEMBER 1998

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LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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THE COUNTY OF ORANGE
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to the Orange County Board of Supervisors for the initiation of this important project.

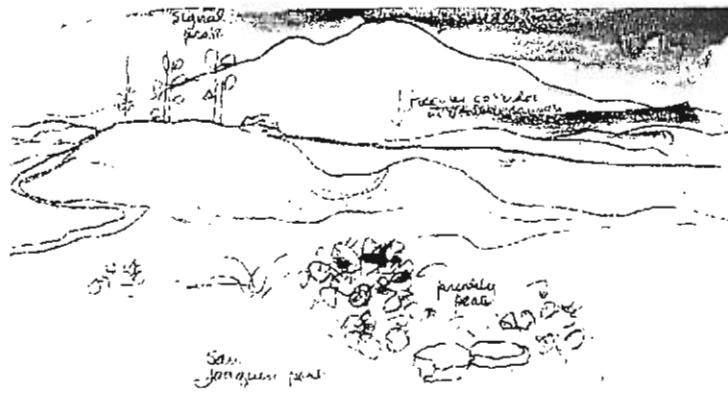
Thanks to
the City of Laguna Beach
The Coastal Greenbelt Authority
and
The Orange County Public Facilities and Resources Department
for their continuing efforts in making
Laguna Coast Wilderness Park a reality.

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Looking East from
San Joaquin plain
Laurence Halpern

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is an extremely important open space area within the County of Orange. The park provides approximately 6,300 acres of wilderness open space areas that is rich in resource diversity. The park's resources are a primary focus for the county's Coastal - Central Subregion of the Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) program.

This General Development Plan (GDP) documents the proposed development, restoration and preservation activities and facilities within the boundaries of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The GDP provides guidelines for all future design and construction within the park.

The City of Irvine withdrew their future open space lands from inclusion in this Master Plan by Council action on October 22, 1996. Their objective is to prepare a separate open space Master Plan directed by the City.

Land within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is owned by The Irvine Company and various government agencies including the State of California, the City of Laguna Beach, and the County of Orange.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The park planning team carefully studied existing conditions within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park to develop a base of information for planning decisions. Resources identified within the park are documented in the Existing Conditions Report and are briefly summarized in this document. Studies completed since the compilation of the Existing Conditions Report, including the NCCP/HCP, are also referenced. The existing conditions studies identified the special characteristics of the park's geology, topography, hydrology, paleontology, biology, and archaeology as well as visual and fire conditions, circulation, and existing facilities.

PLANNING PROCESS

Public workshops were a key element of the planning process and included representatives from relevant user groups, interest groups and government agencies. The purpose of the workshops was to make the planning recommendations that would ultimately lead to the General Development Plan for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The workshops,

based on the "Taking Part" method developed by Lawrence Halprin, increased the participants' awareness of the value of the wilderness park and empowered them to explore a variety of ways to protect and develop the park.

The "Taking Part" series of workshops lead to a consensus among the participants regarding issues of importance to Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. These areas of concern were:

- Laguna Lakes
- Park Access
- Sensitive areas/special use areas
- Park edges/image and continuity
- Education
- Management
- San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor
- Interpretive center

With the consensus items defined, the park planning team formulated design proposals for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park utilizing these issues as a foundation for design solutions. The General Development Plan describes these design proposals regarding park development.



GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The GDP comprehensively yet sensitively integrates recreation and interpretation opportunities with the protection of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park's sensitive and valuable natural resources.

The majority of the park's built structures and roads will be located at the edge of the park allowing the valuable resources of the park's wilderness areas to be protected and preserved. Recreation trails will be predominately restricted to existing trails and truck trails. Picnicking, interpretation, limited group and individual camping in Crystal Cove State Park, and

trail use are the anticipated activities by the general public. These uses will be restricted to fairly well defined areas with encroachment into heavily vegetated and sensitive resource areas prohibited. Docent-led, education programs will be encouraged.

Park interpretation will be the key ingredient in achieving integration between recreational use and resource protection. The interpretation program for the park will focus on the park as the core of a larger ecosystem that is critically dependent upon the maintenance of an ecological balance. The interpretive program will communicate park resource value and sensitivity through a comprehensive framework of docent tours and programs, park ranger talks, presentations and tours, multi-media materials, hands-on experiences, signage and park resource take-home material and information.

Staging areas, planned in several locations as access points into the park, will be the focus of facility development as well as interpretive programs. Staging areas may include parking areas, restrooms, picnic facilities, interpretive and directional signage, and trail connections for access to the wilderness areas of the park.

- Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area will include an interpretive center that will be the focus of park interpretive activities with information presented in the form of participatory exhibits, presentations, panoramic views and audio visual materials. An informal outdoor amphitheater, located nearby in a natural bowl, will act as a trail head for nature walks and docent-led tours up Little Sycamore Canyon and to the Laguna Lakes.
- James Dilley Staging Area will include a parking area for vehicles to provide access to the trails in the east section of the park.
- Laurel Canyon Staging Area includes some of the park's most significant biological and cultural resources; therefore access to sensitive areas will be limited. The focus of this staging area is to increase the park users' awareness of the value of park resources through docent-led tours and trail signage.
- Big Bend Equestrian Staging Area will include a parking area for vehicles and horse trailers to provide access to trails in the area.

- Irvine Bowl Staging Area is an existing access point near the Irvine Bowl. Existing parking in the area minimizes the need for construction of new facilities.
- Crystal Cove State Park Staging Area is owned and operated by the State. The existing headquarters and parking facilities provide an opportunity for access into the wilderness park from the south for hikers, mountain cyclists, and equestrians.

A Resource Management Plan has been developed concurrently with this GDP. It is intended to provide a framework for further research and development of management actions. Resource management goals, objectives and actions must be consistent with the NCCP/HCP program.

IMPLEMENTATION

The costs for implementing the various proposed improvements of the GDP is significant; therefore, a phasing plan was developed to spread out the costs over time. The established goals of resource protection and recreation access guided the assignment of priorities.

Administration and operation of the park, based on the "Interim Operations Plan" developed by the County, shall be under the purview of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority that was established on June 25, 1991. Park administration will be conducted from the park headquarters/interpretive building in Little Sycamore Canyon. This office will be the center of control for all park operations, except for maintenance which will be conducted from the Mason Regional Park maintenance facility.



II. INTRODUCTION

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The Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is an extremely important open space area within the County of Orange, encompassing approximately 6,300 acres adjacent to the Pacific Ocean between Laguna Beach and Corona del Mar. Combined with contiguous open space such as Crystal Cove State Park, Laguna Coast Wilderness Park provides Orange County with approximately 17,000 acres of wilderness open space rich in resource diversity. As a significant portion of the Orange County's Coastal - Central Subregion of the Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP), the park's natural resources pose a primary focus for the project.

This General Development Plan (GDP) documents the proposed development, restoration and preservation activities and facilities within the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park boundaries. The General Development Plan provides guidelines for the preparation of all future design and construction within the park.

SITE LOCATION

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is located along the central coast of Orange County and is bounded by the City of Irvine to the north, the Cities of Irvine and Newport Beach to the west, the Pacific Ocean to the south, and Leisure World to the east. Edges along the boundary of the park consist of existing and proposed development (See Figure 1).

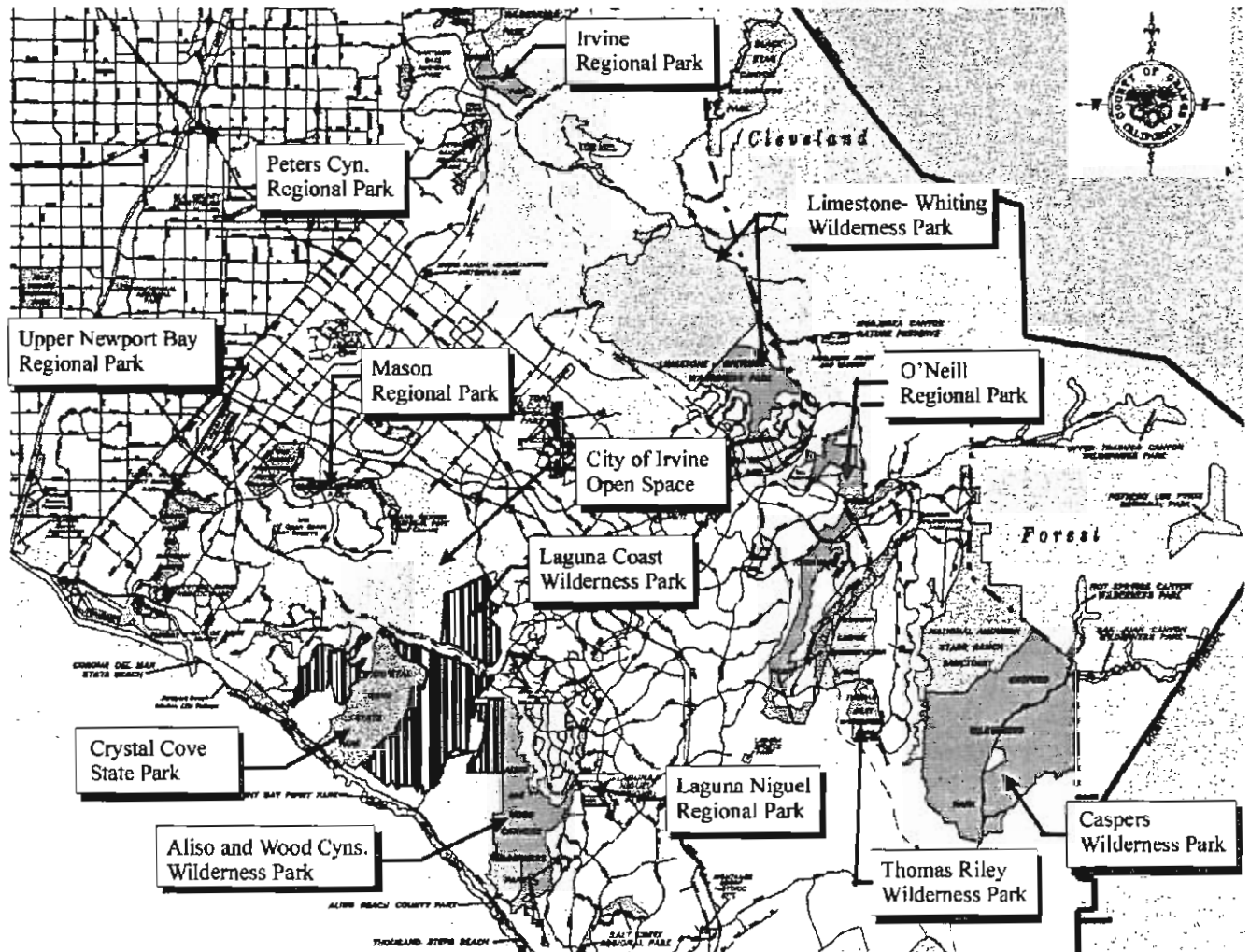


Figure 1: Regional Location Map/ Adjacent Parks and Open Space Areas

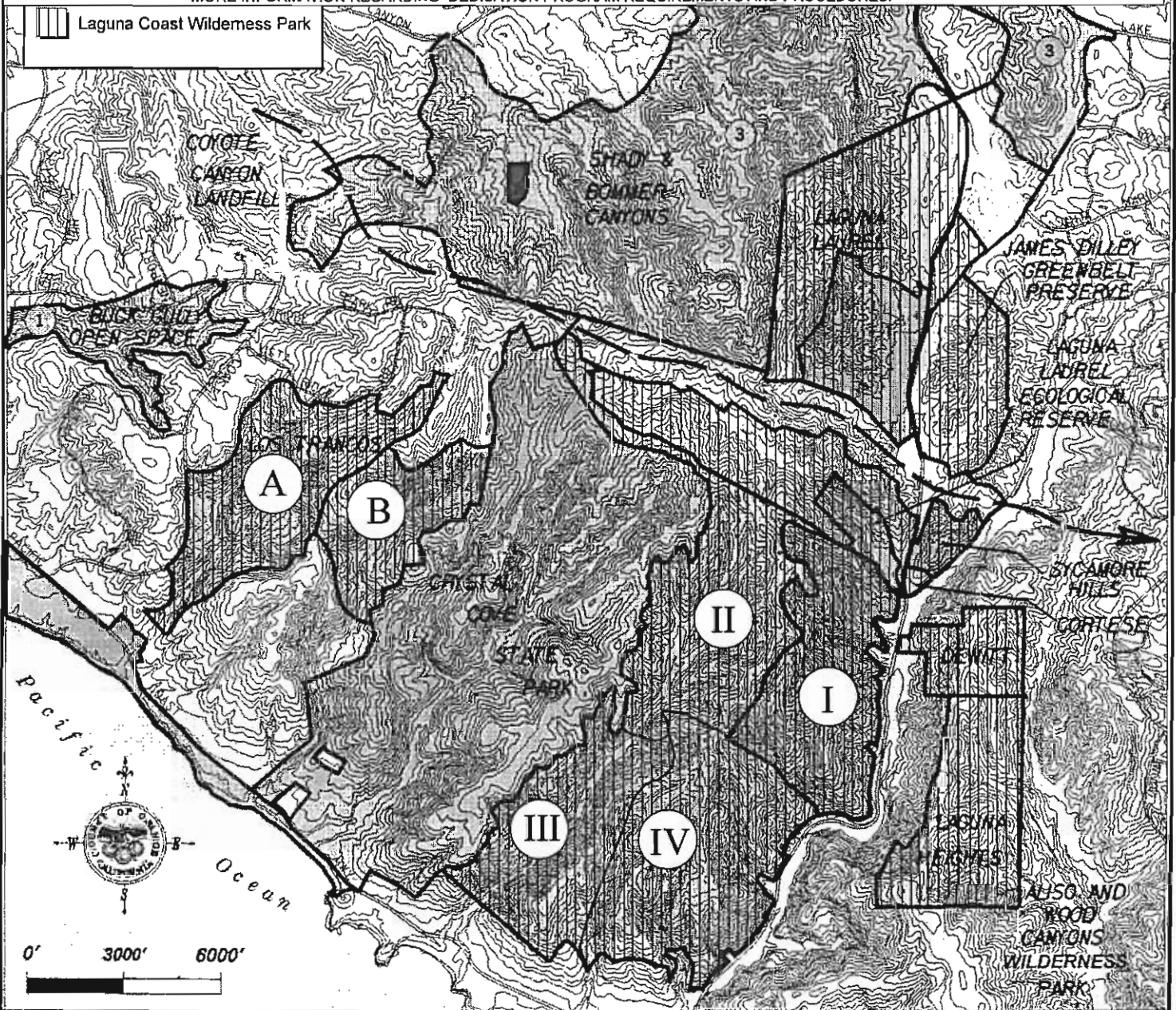
LEGEND— THE IRVINE COMPANY PHASED DEDICATION AREAS— NEWPORT COAST LOCAL COASTAL PLAN

- (I) WILDERNESS DEDICATION AREA—MANAGEMENT UNIT I (+/- 605 acres):** Obtained by the County of Orange following issuance of the first grading permit for the Newport Coast Development.
- (II) WILDERNESS DEDICATION AREA—MANAGEMENT UNIT II (+/- 731 acres):** May be accepted by the County 90 days following issuance of building permits for a cumulative total of 1,000 primary residential dwelling units.
- (III) WILDERNESS DEDICATION AREA—MANAGEMENT UNIT III (+/- 610 acres):** May be accepted by the County 90 days following issuance of building permits for a cumulative total of 2,000 primary residential dwelling units.
- (IV) WILDERNESS DEDICATION AREA—MANAGEMENT UNIT IV (+/- 720 acres):** May be accepted by the County 90 days following issuance of building permits for: (A) a cumulative total of 1,500 overnight/resort accommodations, or (B) a cumulative total of 80% of the 2.66 million square feet of development allowed in PA 13, whichever occurs first.

Note: Per the Newport Coast Irrevocable Offer of Dedication, Wilderness Dedication Areas, Management Units II, III, & IV may be accepted in their entirety on November 10, 2003, if one or more of the preceding triggers has not already occurred.

- (A) LOS TRANCOS CANYON – PLANNING AREA 12A (+/- 606 acres)—** Irrevocably offered to County and may be accepted at any time.
- (B) MUDDY CANYON – PLANNING AREA 12E (+/- 274 acres)—** Irrevocably offered to County and may be accepted at any time.

SOURCE: NEWPORT COAST LOCAL COASTAL PLAN (LCP). BOUNDARIES AND ACREAGE FIGURES ARE APPROXIMATE. SEE LCP FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING DEDICATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES.



LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK

County of Orange
Public Facilities & Resources Department
Harbors, Beaches and Parks

THE IRVINE COMPANY
PHASED DEDICATION AREAS
Figure 2B

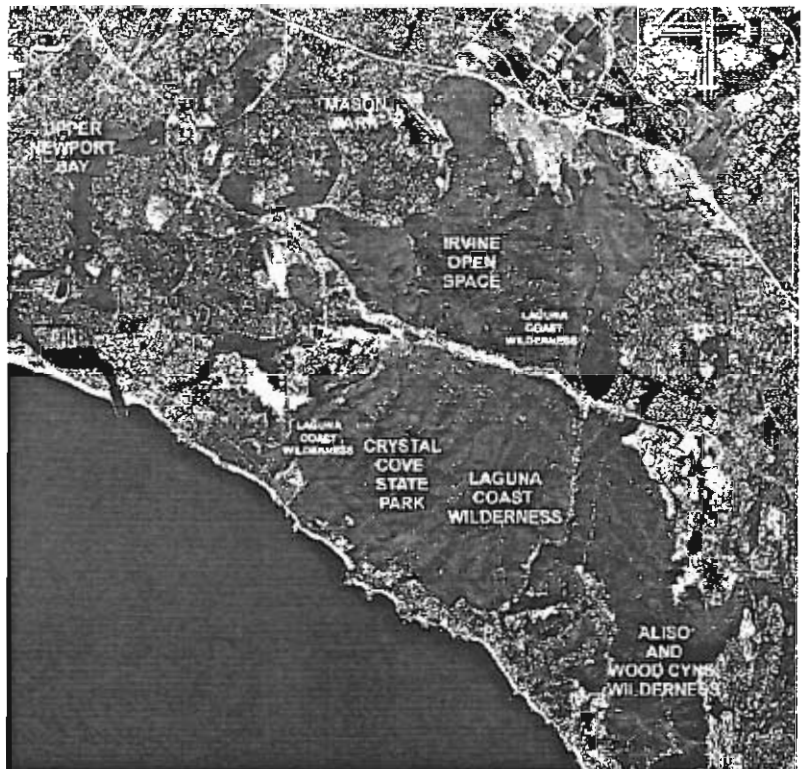
PROJECT BACKGROUND

As a part of the County of Orange General Plan, Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is perceived as valuable open space due to its rich natural resources, including habitat for many sensitive plant and wildlife species, its scenic coastal ridgelines and canyons, and for its regional recreational opportunities.

The park's approximately 6,300 acres is currently comprised of many ownerships, including the State of California (an 82 acre ecological reserve), The Irvine Company, the City of Laguna Beach, and the County of Orange (see Figure 2).

Beginning in the late 1960s, Laguna Beach bookstore owner and open space advocate, James Dilley, advanced an Orange County open space and natural resource protection movement by founding the Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. Today, the late Jim Dilley is widely recognized as the 'Father of the Laguna Greenbelt.' For more than 30 years, on-going grassroots efforts to protect and preserve coastal wilderness located in the San Joaquin Hills have successfully advanced 'Dilley's Dream.' Shared by citizens throughout Southern California, Dilley's Dream has contributed to the formation of an exemplary system of public parks and open space reserves, the center of which is the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park

In 1972, the County of Orange Board of Supervisors approved the concept of a Laguna Greenbelt in the San Joaquin Hills. In 1978, an attempt was made to create an Orange Coast national park, and although it failed, the State purchased the land for Crystal Cove State Park. At about the same time, Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park was created through a series of dedications and purchases. The privately owned land in the center of the greenbelt was approved in 1984 as the Laguna Laurel Planned Community for 3,200 homes. In response to public concern, the Laguna Canyon Conservancy, a volunteer organization, coordinated the 1989 Walk where over 8,000 people marched along Laguna Canyon Road to demonstrate their support for preserving the land for parkland. Soon after, negotiations were initiated



Aerial Photo taken in 1997

between the landowner, The Irvine Company, and representatives from the County, City of Laguna Beach, community and environmental groups. These negotiations resulted in a five year \$78 million purchase agreement for the 2,150 acre site.

In November 1990, the residents of Laguna Beach demonstrated their commitment by a historical vote for a \$20 million bond measure. The tax increase was approved by nearly 80%, the highest vote for a bond measure in California since 1956. By October 1993, four out of the five options had been purchased from \$45 million. The City of Laguna Beach, County of Orange, State of California, and Laguna Canyon Foundation provided the funding for the purchase. Laguna Coast Wilderness Park was dedicated to the public in an inspiring ceremony on April 10, 1993. Although the purchase agreement for the Laguna Laurel property ended in 1995 without the final purchase, a number of volunteer organizations continue to seek a means to include two remaining residential developable parcels within Laguna Canyon in the parkland.

As of June, 1998 there are two parcels of land within Laguna Canyon next to Laguna Coast Wilderness Park slated for residential development. Both parcels are owned by The Irvine

Company. The Laguna Laurel parcel of approximately 162 acres in an unincorporated area has an approved development plan for 1,514 homes. The Laguna Laurel Stewardship Plan, February, 1993, identified this parcel for potential creation of coastal sage scrub and wetland/riparian habitat. The balance of the Laguna Laurel development property was purchased for parkland by the City of Laguna Beach, the County of Orange and the State of California.

The second parcel within the City of Irvine jurisdiction has entitlement rights of 325 to 750 residential units. Representatives from the City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Canyon Foundation, Laguna Greenbelt, Inc., Leisure World of Laguna Hills, the County of Orange and The Irvine Company issued a joint statement of concerns about the remaining land within Laguna Canyon still proposed for development. The five major provisions of the October, 1996 joint statement are:

1. The Irvine Company will not at this time exercise its rights under the 1990 Laguna Laurel agreement to immediately process plans for development on the last parcel not yet acquired for public ownership.
2. The Irvine Company will notify and will meet with the parties to this agreement prior to advancing its plans for any proposed development in the future.
3. Any development on this parcel will preclude any direct or through connection from Santa Maria Avenue to Laguna Canyon Road.
4. Water run-off from any new development will not be directed into the watershed of Laguna Canyon and Laguna Lakes unless agreed to by the parties important as to the protection of the lakes.
5. The parties agree to continue working together to secure funds for additional open space purchases.

For various development rights in the Newport Coast Planned Community, The Irvine Company will dedicate portions of the Park to the County (see Figure 2B).

Land to the north of the park, within the Irvine Conservation Open Space, will be dedicated to the City of Irvine for various development rights in the Irvine Spectrum area. The Irvine Conservation Open Space is currently part of Irvine Company

Open Space Southern Reserve managed by the Nature Conservancy.

The City of Irvine Conservation Open Space is directly adjacent to and a natural extension of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The City is currently preparing a master plan for this area.



On June 1991, the City of Laguna Beach and the County of Orange entered into a cooperative agreement establishing a new regional park and a cooperative management authority – The Coastal Greenbelt Authority. As a result of this agreement, the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is currently being managed under the Coastal Greenbelt Authority guidelines and an Interim Operations Plan developed by the County, and The Irvine Company Open Space Reserve Stewardship Plan prepared by the Nature Conservancy.

Assigned County park staff are in place and working cooperatively with the State, City of Laguna Beach, The Nature Conservancy, Laguna Canyon Foundation, Laguna Greenbelt, Inc., and the Coastal Greenbelt Authority to manage and protect park resources, coordinate docent programs, and conduct public interpretive programs.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

Several documents resulted from the planning process for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park – the Existing Conditions Report, the General Development Plan (GDP), and the Resource Management Plan (RMP). The relationship of these plans to each other and to the Central – Coastal Subregion Natural Communities Conservation Plan/ Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP), and the Interim Operations Plan for the wilderness park is explained in this section.

The planning process for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park began with a study of existing park resource materials to develop a base of information for decision-making regarding resource protection and facility development. This research identified the special characteristics of the park's geology, topography, biology, hydrology, paleontology, and archaeology as well as visual and fire conditions, circulation, and existing facilities. The findings of this research are documented in the September 1994 Draft Existing Conditions Report and are briefly summarized in the Existing Conditions chapter of the GDP.

The NCCP/HCP document focuses on the biological resource of the 208,000 acre central and coastal subregion of the Orange County Nature Reserve of which the wilderness park is a part. The document provides a habitat-based multiple species conservation strategy that places the focus on conserving natural communities, such as coastal sage scrub, rather than on individual species. The primary goal of the NCCP/HCP is to protect and manage habitat supporting a broad range of plant and animal populations found within the reserve.

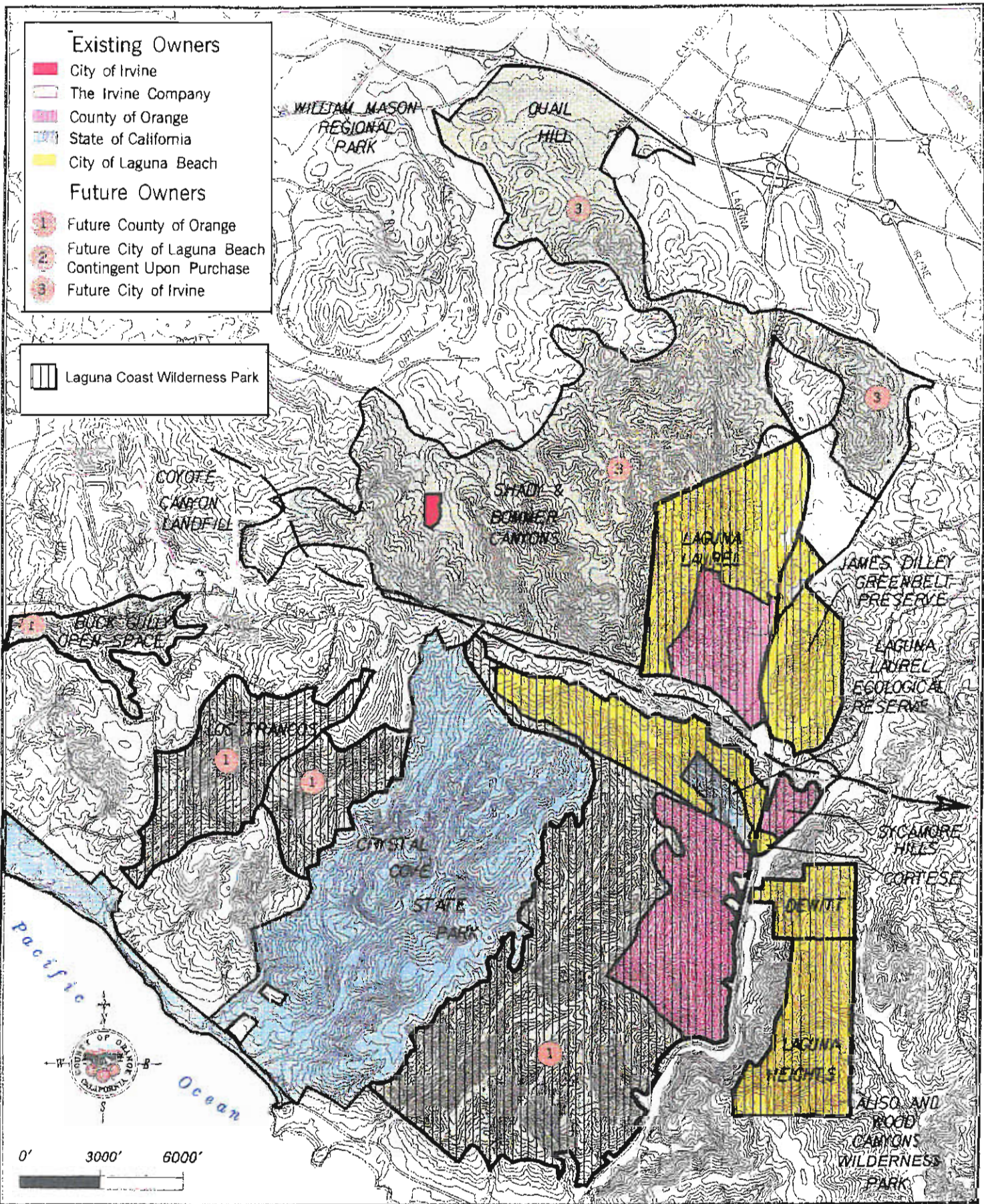
NCCP planners realize that public lands recommended for inclusion in the habitat reserve were originally acquired to provide recreation opportunities for the public, as well as to preserve open space. Therefore, NCCP/HCP policies are structured to allow for passive recreation activities in the reserve, with some locations where access will be prohibited due to sensitive habitat. Potential problems caused by public access, such as uncontrolled off-trail activities and overuse of designated areas, can be prevented by careful siting of facilities and effective management and monitoring activities.

In April 1996, chapter references to the December 1995 NCCP/HCP were added to the Existing Conditions Report to provide a link of consistent biological information between both documents. If any inconsistencies become evident between the two documents, the NCCP/HCP shall take precedence.

The primary goal for both the NCCP/HCP and the GDP is to protect the valuable natural resources of the park while allowing public access where it will not negatively impact those resources. Each document addresses this goal in different ways. The GDP is a tool for creating facilities and trails that provide opportunities for public access and interpretive activities that help to enhance and protect the natural system. The NCCP/HCP provides guidelines for preservation activities within the reserve with public access allowed if all resource protection criteria is met.

The Resource Management Plan for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park has been developed concurrently with the GDP. The RMP provides guidelines for further research and for development of management actions. The NCCP/HCP requires the preparation of a Resource Management Plan as a part of a Recreational Management Program. Prior to implementation of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park GDP and RMP, the NCCP/HCP requires the RMP be submitted for approval to the California Department of Fish and Game, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In October of 1992, the County of Orange Public Facilities and Resources Department prepared an Interim Operations Plan (IOP) to guide the management of the park for public safety, resource protection, environmental education, and passive recreation. The Nature Conservancy prepared The Irvine Company Open Space Reserve Stewardship Plan dated September 4, 1991. The plan sets forth a long range management plan for the open space reserve and a first phase action program. Parts of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park fall within the southern reserve discussed in the Open Space Reserve Stewardship Plan. The IOP and the Open Space Reserve Stewardship Plan provided the basis for the operations guidelines presented in the Implementation chapter of the GDP. The Appendix of the GDP includes a copy of the IOP.



LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK

County of Orange
 Public Facilities & Resources Department
 Harbors, Beaches and Parks

LAND OWNERSHIP
 Figure 2A



III. EXISTING CONDITIONS

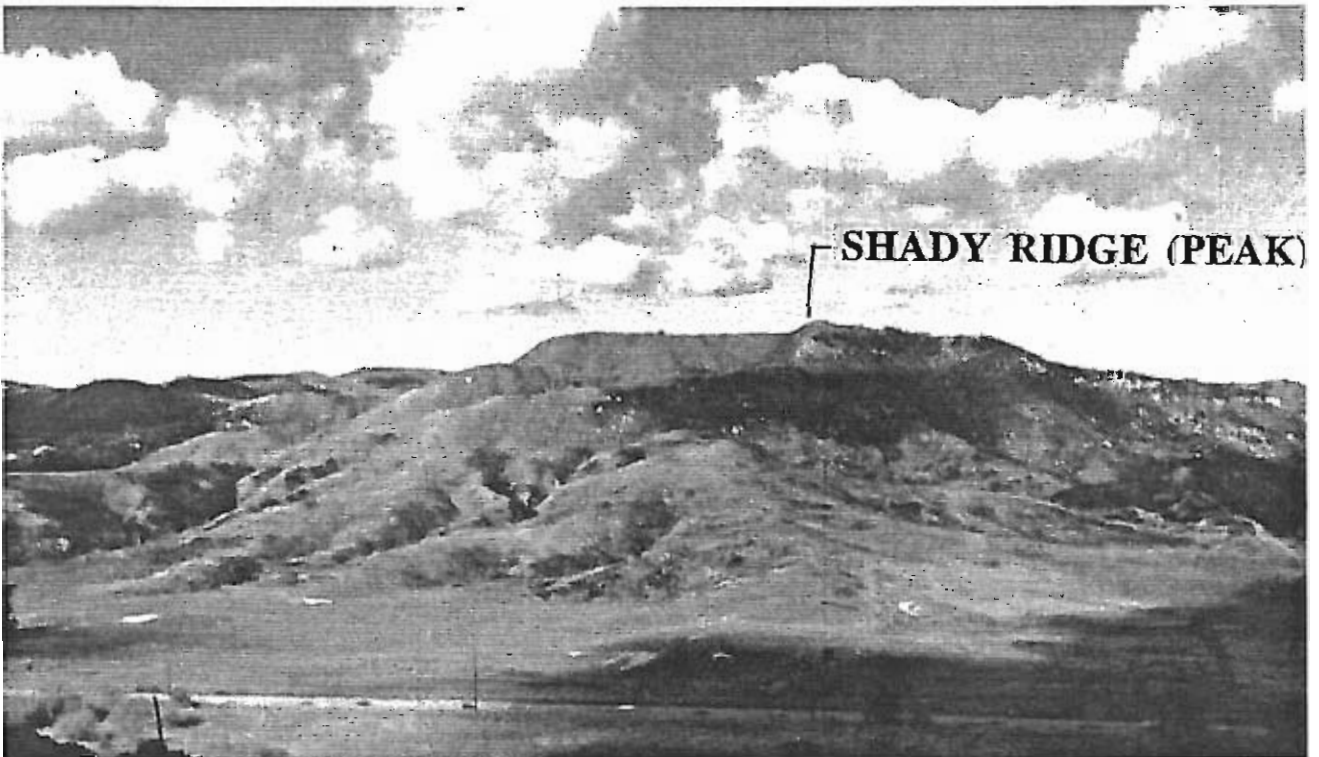
III. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is rich in resource diversity. The Physical Resources portion of this report summarizes geologic, topographic, hydrologic, paleontologic, visual conditions and fire conditions within the park. The Biological Resources section summarizes vegetation and wildlife resources. The Cultural Resources section briefly describes the archaeological cultures who relied on the natural resources of the wilderness park area for subsistence.

Development of this information began with an extensive document review consisting of approximately 75 documents concerning the geographic limits of the study. A research summary text has been prepared that organizes the literature review by subject matter and publisher. Under the direction of the County of Orange Public Facilities and Resources Department, the park planning team consolidated research material into the Existing Conditions Report.



Dudleya



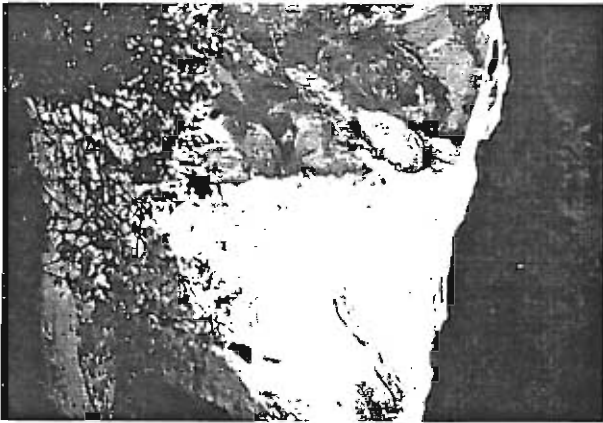
PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Geology

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is located in the San Joaquin Hills, which are part of the peninsular ranges geomorphic province of southern California. The southeasternmost extremity of the ancient sedimentary rocks within the park are both marine and non-marine formations which represent oscillations in an ancient sea level and range in age from 10 to 26 million years old.

Formations present include the Silverado Formation (Paleocene Age), Topanga Formation, Vaqueros Formation and Sespe Formation (Miocene Age). During the Miocene Age igneous rocks were injected into cracks and veins in the overlying sedimen-

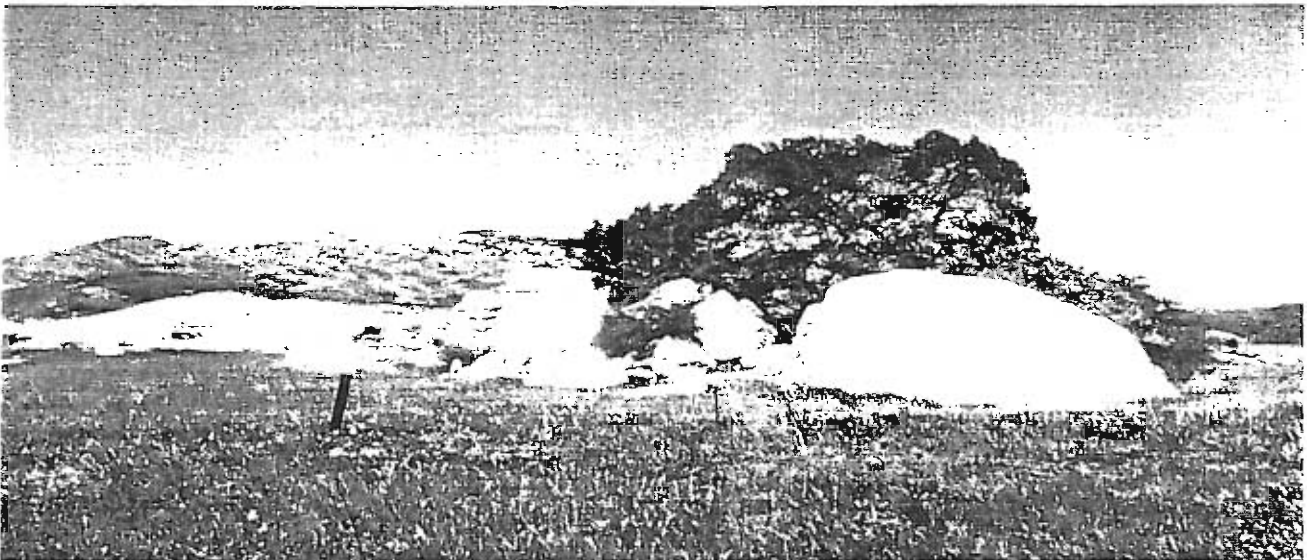
tary rocks. During the Holocene, Pliocene and Pleistocene times (ten million years ago) uplifting occurred forming the San Joaquin Hills. The Laguna Coast Wilderness Park topography is characterized by coastal hills and canyons. In response to the tectonic processes that created the coastal hills, coastal canyons developed. These canyons may have developed due to faults, stratigraphic erosion, gravitational erosion or a combination of these forces. Major canyons within the study boundaries include Laurel Canyon, Los Trancos Canyon, Muddy Canyon, Moro Canyon, Emerald Canyon, Bommer Canyon, Shady Canyon, Camarillo Canyon, Little Bommer Canyon, Boat Canyon, Little Sycamore Canyon, and Laguna Canyon.



View out from Cathedral Rock



Rock Formations in the Park



Cathedral Rock

Topography

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park can be characterized as possessing a high ridgeline of over 1,100 feet in the central portion of the Park with narrow, deep and wide sweeping canyons in every direction reaching down to sea level. These majestic canyons provide the watershed for the park.



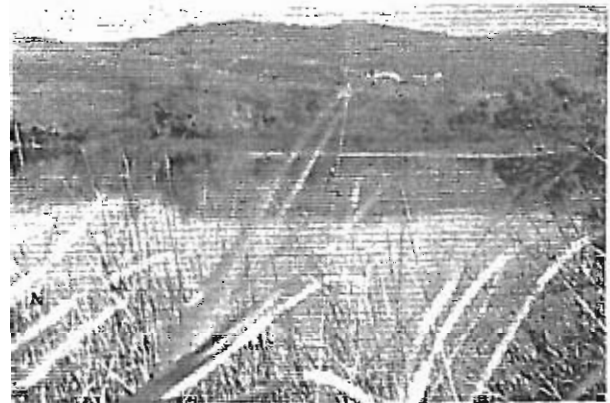
Park Topography

Hydrology

The majority of the streams in the park originate in the San Joaquin Hills and flow south to the Pacific Ocean. The primary watercourse in the area is Laguna Creek which runs parallel to Laguna Canyon Road originating at the Laguna Lakes and reaching the Pacific Ocean at Main Beach in Laguna Beach. The three Laguna Lakes have unique value as the only naturally occurring lakes in Orange County. Lakes 1 and 2 are west of Laguna Canyon road. Lake 3, the largest lake, is east of the road and is connected to Lake 2 by a culvert under Laguna Canyon Road. Lake 1 is often seasonal, only containing water in the winter and spring.

The lakes act as natural retarding basins, but when the retarding capacity of the lakes has been exceeded the overflow can contribute to flooding downstream.

Flooding along the creek and its tributaries is common during the winter months. Portions of Laguna Canyon Road are located within an area designated as a 100-year flood zone. The Environmental Impact Report for Laguna Canyon Road thoroughly describes the hydrology patterns in Laguna Canyon and proposed construction of three roadside retarding basins to insure that no increase in downstream runoff will occur.



Laguna Lake #3

The location of the retarding basins, proposed as part of the Laguna Canyon Road project (see Figure 3), is not expected to negatively impact trail and staging area activities in the park. The basins, projected to be about two to three acres in size, must be sensitively designed to be integrated into the character of the existing landform. The final location of the basins must be carefully studied to avoid impacts to significant biological resources of the park.

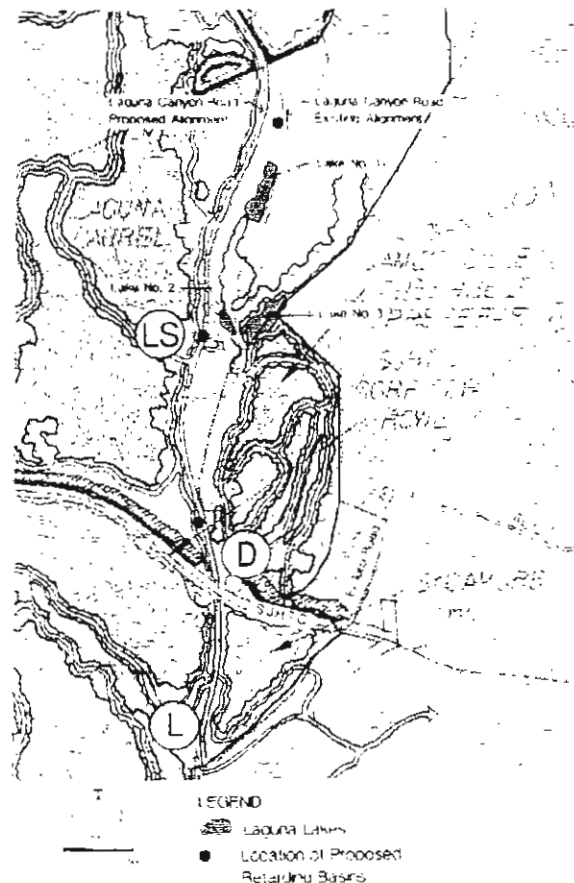


Figure 3: Laguna Lakes and Retarding Basins

Paleontology

Nine paleontological formations are exposed within the study area. Of these, eight are known to contain fossils. Descriptions of these formations are included in the Existing Conditions Report which provides an overview of their environment of deposition and potential for fossil resources.



Laurel Canyon from the Top of Cathedral Rock

VISUAL CONDITIONS

Considerations related to park visual conditions include views within the park and views into the park from areas outside the park boundary. Park topography plays a large role in creating as well as blocking views.

Views within the park range from intimate, secluded spaces to grand vistas. At lower elevations, canyon walls and trees create enclosed spaces where views can focus on the details of the space, such as rock outcroppings, plants and animals. Canyon walls block views of development that could reduce the quality of the wilderness experience. At higher elevations, the ridgeline trails provide spectacular sweeping views of the park, the Pacific Ocean and Orange County.

The park's softly rounded hills are visible from many areas outside the park's boundaries. The distinctive character of the hills provides a strong visual image for the park that contrasts strongly with surrounding development.



View of the Park and the Pacific Ocean Beyond

FIRE CONDITIONS

On October 27, 1993, the Laguna Firestorm destroyed over 330 homes in Laguna Beach and burned 10,000 acres of open space, including 90% of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. This fire increased awareness of the volatile aspect of the park's native chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grassland plant communities.

Shortly after the fire, many of the burned trees and shrubs in the wilderness park had resprouted, and animal and insect activity was evident. Chapter 2 of the 1996 Central and Coastal Subregion NCCP/HCP indicates that coastal sage scrub (CSS) is a fire tolerant and fire adapted community. Shrub species of the CSS community recover after a burn by root crown sprouting and by seed regeneration. Unlike chaparral, coastal sage scrub shrubs are able to continually resprout and reseed in the absence of fire. The natural fire return interval for coastal sage scrub is at least the same or possibly longer than that for chaparral (30-40 years). Fires occurring at greater frequency or at high intensity may inhibit the recovery of CSS communities, creating the potential for the burned areas to turn to a grassland community. Coastal sage scrub has a shorter growing season (and therefore lower fuel loads) than chaparral, which may contribute to longer fire-free intervals.

Fire control regulations and urban development patterns have dramatically altered the natural fire regime in much of the NCCP/HCP subregional planning area. The Nature Conservancy and others have noted that the ecological role of fire has been suppressed in urban areas, resulting in the build up of thick layers of thatch and dense patches of vegetation. These layers and patches impede a healthy functioning ecosystem and increase the likelihood of an intense wildfire.

Chapter 5 of the 1996 Central and Coastal Subregion NCCP/HCP indicates that fire management is an extremely important part of the overall adaptive management program for the reserve system that includes the wilderness park. Small planned fires, "prescribed burns," and other fuel load reduction techniques help prevent huge catastrophic fires and are useful tools in maintaining the diversity and viability of the reserve system.

The experiences gained from the wildfires indicate that certain types of fuel modification measures

around urban development areas are effective in protecting residential and other types of development from wildfires. Fuel modification zones are at least 150 feet wide and are planted with compatible native vegetation. These zones are not a permitted use within the habitat reserve system, except for two small areas adjacent to Emerald Bay and the Top of the World in the City of Laguna Beach. In all other cases, fuel modification zones shall be located immediately adjacent to the reserve system, separating the reserve system from the nearest urban uses.

In the Top of the World neighborhood, Laguna Beach Fire Chief Bill Edmundson has initiated a fuel reduction program that he says is efficient and cost effective. To help create a fuel modification zone, 763 goats are consuming 60 acres of shrubs every month. A Federal Emergency Management Agency grant funds the majority of the project (Root 1996).



Laguna Firestorm

The park RMP contains a fire management plan which addresses short-term and long-term fire management policies. In general, fire policy is to use suppression and control methods that cause the least damage to natural resources while providing the most effective fire-fighting methods necessary to protect human life and property. Fire fighting equipment must have access to the park at all times. To maintain access, bulldozers or other mechanical land altering equipment can be used for widening and improving existing fire roads. To minimize disruption to the natural system, hand crews will be used wherever practical or feasible to create any necessary new firebreaks. Ridge lines, roads and firebreaks will be used for containment lines (R.J. Meade 1995). All present and future developed public use areas will be enclosed by fire roads and/or fuel reduction zones (Bramlet 1996).

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The park contains large areas of coastal sage scrub, chaparral and annual grassland communities. Lesser amounts of riparian, sycamore alluvial woodland, oak riparian forest, oak woodland, alkali meadow, freshwater and brackish marsh and open water habitats are also found within the park. In recent history, some areas of native vegetation have been eliminated to accommodate ranching and farming activities. At some point in the future these areas will become part of the park.

The park contains a number of plant and animal species of special interest to the County. Of principal concern are those target and other sensitive species under Orange County's Coastal-Central Subregion of the Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP). The NCCP/HCP program is the result of the NCCP Act enacted by the California Legislature in 1991. The program is a habitat-based multiple-species conservation strategy which places the focus on conserving natural communities, such as coastal sage scrub (CSS), rather than on individual species. The NCCP/HCP program also allows social and economic uses within the subregion that are compatible with the protection of identified species and habitats.

Through the development of the NCCP process, the program focused on three "target species" that are indicators of a healthy, well-connected coastal sage scrub ecosystem. These target species are the California gnatcatcher, coastal cactus wren and the orange-throated whiptail lizard. Princi-

pal plant species of concern include the Laguna Beach dudleya (*Dudleya stolonifera*), multi-stemmed dudleya (*Dudleya multicaulis*), Intermediate mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii* var. *intermedius*), Coulter's saltbush (*Atriplex coulteri*), southern tarplant (*Hemizonia parryi* ssp. *australis*) and Nuttall's scrub oak (*Quercus dumosa*). (R.J. Meade 1995)

Other highly significant animal species known to occur or potentially occur in the park include the spadefoot toad, San Diego horned lizard, southwestern pond turtle, western burrowing owl, least bell's vireo, southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, tricolored blackbird, and the Pacific pocket mouse. There are many other plant and animal species of special interest known to occur or potentially occur in the park, but these are not as sensitive as the above mentioned species.



Cholla



Coyote

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Human occupation in southern California may extend beyond 10,000 years. The earliest identified archaeological cultures are known as either Early Man Horizon or San Dieguito Tradition. In coastal Orange County, the earliest identified cultural tradition is a late San Dieguito on the eastern bluffs above Newport Bay. Artifacts for this period include large projectile points and scrapers. A hunting-based economy was the probable subsistence pattern. (LSA 1987)

After 5500 B.C., the archaeological cultures termed either Millingstone Horizon or Encinitas Tradition are evident. The millingstones of this time period included manos, which were handstones used to grind vegetable material, and metates, which were flat or concave stones in which the vegetable material was ground. (EMA 1988) The mano and metate allowed the hunters and gatherers to render previously non-digestible plant foods into edible food. This new technology - grinding hard seeds and other plant foods - gradually replaced projectile points as the primary subsistence tools. (Community Planning Services 1986)

By 3000 B.C., populations within the coastal areas began to rely more on marine resources, including deep sea fishing. The use of the mortar and pestle indicates the arrival of a developing acorn processing technology, signaling a major change in subsistence patterns. (LSA 1987)



One of the Park's Caves

The Late Prehistoric Horizon or Uto-Aztecan Tradition begins around A.D. 500. The arrival of Uto-Aztecan people in the area is indicated by the presence of arrowheads, soapstone bowls and cremation. By A.D. 1000, smoking pipes and Tizon Brownware pottery also occur. (LSA 1987)

The Uto-Aztecan Tradition ended abruptly in the late 1800s when Spanish colonists began establishing their missions along the California coast. The names of native Americans living in the area of the wilderness park, the Juanenos and Gabrielinos, were taken from the names of the closest missions - San Juan Capistrano and San Gabriel Archangel. The wilderness park was Gabrielino territory with Aliso Creek as the territorial division with the Juanenos. (State of California 1982)

The Gabrielino Indians spoke a Uto-Aztecan language and were intensive hunter-gatherers who used both inland and coastal resources. The village was the focus of Gabrielino political and social life. A Gabrielino village was permanently situated adjacent to a major stream or estuary. The Gabrielino also established seasonal camps to collect resources such as acorns, berries, fruits, and shellfish and to hunt waterfowl. (LSA 1987) The Gabrielino made a variety of steatite (soapstone) artifacts, mortars, metates, manos, wooden utensils, baskets and trays, pottery, wooden bowls, bone tools, shell tools, chipped stone tools, and a large variety of weapons for both hunting and interpersonal conflict. (State of California 1982)



Looking North
from Liguas Canyon
Lawrence Halpern

IV. THE PLANNING PROCESS

IV. THE PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process began with the generation of numerous studies including vegetation, sensitive plant and animal species, hydrology, circulation, ownership, existing facilities, and archaeology that summarized existing conditions within the park. The subsequent analysis of this information gave the planning team a thorough understanding of the park's conditions. With this information in hand, the park planning team conducted numerous site visits to verify existing conditions, gain a thorough understanding of the site and identify appropriate study areas for the next step in the planning process - the "Taking Part" workshop. The workshop is a process based on the basic principle that people in a community have both the right and the responsibility to establish what their community should be - its character and quality of life - and to explore alternative ways their environment can develop.

Workshops held throughout the planning process were designed to develop the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park General Development Plan. The

County required that the park planning process include representatives of interested user groups, neighboring communities as well as relevant governmental agencies.

The thrust of the workshops was to receive creative input from all concerned about the use of the site, the facilities to be included, the linkage to surrounding areas, the users, and the quality and character of the park.

The format of the workshop followed a method called "Taking Part" developed by Lawrence Halprin which is based on the theory that everyone is inherently creative. In "Taking Part" many devices are used to release that creativity. The workshop encourages group activities that help increase awareness of a place while also providing the group with shared experiences that lead to a common language and increased communication. Different ways of expressing feelings other than talking are explored, such as drawing, writing, and other expressive modes. In all these modes, each person's feelings and attitudes have equal value.



Workshop Participants Traveling to the Park

There are no experts who have "the right answer."

The "Taking Part" process builds from beginning to end. In that way participants get the most out of it, and the entire group benefits.

Participation was the key aspect in "Taking Part." The success of the entire workshop process - its fun and usefulness and enjoyment - depended on the participants doing and sharing creatively.

A creative consensus emerged from this effort. This report summarizes the process and describes the creative results.

The "Taking Part" process began with an Information Fair where all data gathered during the analysis phase of work was displayed for workshop participant review and opportunities for questions and answers.



Workshop



Awareness Tour

The next step involved a series of site awareness tours bringing all workshop participants to the park site to form a common foundation for design workshop activities. Following the awareness tours, a weekend-long design workshop was conducted to generate consensus on design issues. With this information, the park planning team was able to formulate design proposals for the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park utilizing consensus items as a foundation for design solutions.

The workshop effort and the resulting consensus items focused on the entire Laguna Coast Wilderness Park site including the City of Irvine parcels which are no longer part of the park.

SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP CONSENSUS ITEMS

The following outlines summarizes consensus items resulting from the workshop process:

A. Laguna Lakes

- Restore through re-unification, the three Laguna Lakes. Plan and coordinate the enhancement of the Laguna Lakes area with the preferred re-alignment of Laguna Canyon Road.

B. Access

1. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ACCESS POINTS

- There will be three major access points located at Little Sycamore Canyon, Sand Canyon Road and Bommer Canyon. (Note: Sand Canyon Road and Bommer Canyon staging areas are not part of this park plan at the request of Irvine City Council.)
- Provide a variety of access points at the perimeter of the park of varying character and size dependent upon the uses, users and facilities planned for that area.
- Provide major access points with smaller ones in more sensitive areas.
- Provide opportunities for limited low impact and seasonal group camping by special permit or arrangement. Supervised youth and educational/ nature study program groups will be the focus of the facilities. No camping would be planned in environmentally sensitive areas.

2. ROADWAYS, STAGING AREAS AND TRAILS

- Diversity of trail types: hiking, equestrian, and mountain cycling. Specific trail uses will be specified in the park plan.
- Provide trails that accommodate the intended user groups with a variety of challenge levels including those for the physically challenged.

LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK



"TAKING PART" AWARENESS TOURS *Six, Seven and Eight*

Awareness Tour Booklet Cover

- Keep the character of the trails as rustic as possible while accommodating uses.
- Provide trail markers and signage indicating appropriate use and user groups.
- Keep parking to a minimum and design parking in a character consistent with the type of uses planned for an area.
- Accommodate the use of public transportation, shuttles and off-site parking areas in the planning of access points.
- Limit the use of existing fire and service roads within the park to service vehicles. Abandon or reclaim unused roads for other park uses.
- Plan and enhance existing trails and paths in a manner that reduces their impact on the natural terrain, wildlife and plant habitat, while providing a greater sense of continuity that unifies the park.

C. Sensitive Areas / Special Use Areas

- Provide controlled access to areas containing sensitive wildlife and vegetation.
- Provide special areas for camping, docent-led tours, hiking, equestrian use, mountain cycling, natural history, archaeological field work, and other special uses.

D. Park Edges / Image and Continuity

- Plan the edges of the park in a manner that will support a positive image of a wilderness park from within the park looking outward and from the greater context inward. Use native plantings of trees and lower chaparral to screen out bad views and perimeter developments.

E. Education

- Provide educational opportunities and programs for all ages and user groups with special emphasis on young children. Educational efforts will be near trail heads and access points and emphasize the park's uniqueness, sensitivity and appropriate behavior for visiting the wilderness park.

F. Management

- Provide a management program that will enable the Coastal Greenbelt Authority to manage the park in a manner that protects and interprets the natural resources in the park.
- Maintain the Coastal Greenbelt Authority as the organization to which citizens and special interest groups can voice their concerns with the opportunity for special task forces to be established to look at special issues.

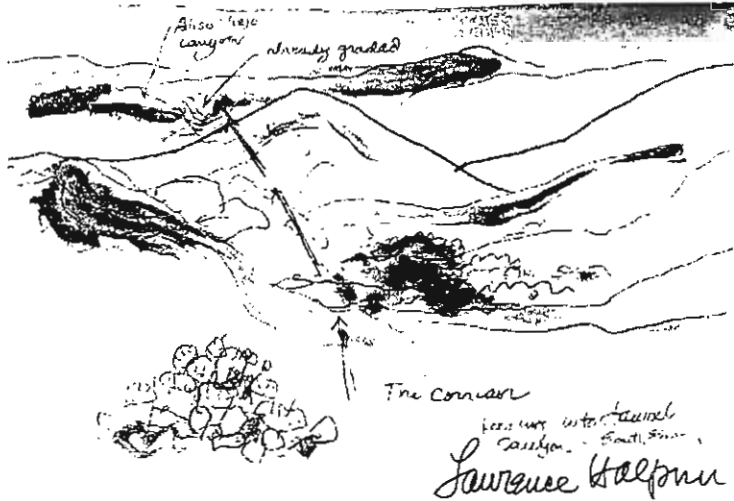
G. San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor

- There is unanimous agreement that the SJHTC should not pass through the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

- It was also agreed that if the corridor becomes an inevitable reality (Note: SJHTC has since opened to public use), then everything possible should be done to affect and mitigate the aesthetic and environmental impacts that it will have on the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. People felt that the SJHTC should be redesigned to accomplish these goals.

H. Interpretive Center

- All groups agreed the park interpretive center should include a ranger office, docent office, information/interpretive center, restrooms, and limited parking.
- There was also general consensus that an outdoor amphitheater, a viewing platform, an assembly area and signage area are appropriate for this facility.
- There was general agreement among all groups that the facility should be small and simple with an indoor/outdoor character. Natural materials such as plantings, decomposed granite and stone should be used as appropriate. The overriding concern is that the facility "fit" within its environmental context and that as little site disturbance as possible take place.



V. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

V. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The research, studies, awareness tours and workshops, as described previously, led the park planning team to the development of a park plan for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. This plan was developed as a tool to lead further design studies and ultimate development of the park for resource management and recreational opportunity.

PARK DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

As described earlier, the roughly 6,300 acres designated as the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is the heart of the Central Coastal Subregion Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP). This alone dictates that the primary disposition of the park be limited in facility development and that activities be passive in nature.

The precious resources found within the park must also be properly managed to protect their value and insure their longevity. This gives rise to the other aspect of the park concept – an emphasis on interpretation and education. Not only are the park's natural resources extremely valuable, but its location within a densely populated part of Orange County renders Laguna Coast Wilderness Park a much needed wilderness retreat for Orange County's suburban community. With this as an existing condition, it is the charge of the park planning team and this General Development Plan to comprehensively yet sensitively integrate recreation and interpretive opportunities with the protection of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park's sensitive and valuable natural resources.

In general, park access facilities are planned at the south and east edges of the park. Recreational trails are predominately restricted to existing trails and truck roads to minimize damage to park resources. Park uses such as picnicking will be clustered around the park's staging areas. Docent-led educational programs are, and will continue to be, an important method for interpretation of the park's ecosystem.

The northern park boundary defined by the City of Irvine's 'future' city limits is now consistent with the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor and is readily identifiable in the field. An extensive loop trail network crosses through future City of Irvine open space. Cooperative management of the trails and the integral network resource system will be a significant benefit to the preservation, protection, and enhancement of this pristine wilderness area.



PARK USES

Proposed uses within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park will remain consistent with the County definition of a wilderness park, which is contained in the Recreation Element of the County's Master Plan as follows:

"Wilderness Regional Parks: A regional park in which land retains its primeval character with minimal improvements and which is managed and protected to preserve natural processes. The park (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value. In essence, park uses envisioned will result in minimal impact to existing park resources and are compatible with a wilderness experience."

Interpretation, picnicking, trail use and general sensory experiences of a wilderness area are the anticipated uses by the general public. These uses will be restricted to fairly well defined areas with off-trail encroachment into heavily vegetated and sensitive resource areas prohibited.



Exploring the Park through the Trail System



Sketching in the Wilderness Park

Park Interpretation

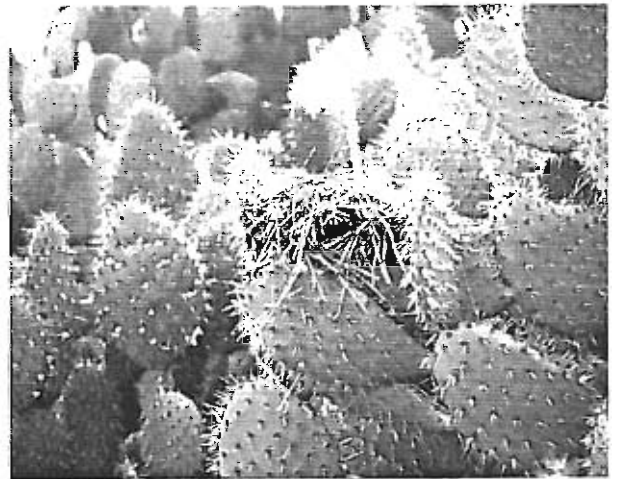
Park interpretation will be the key ingredient in achieving integration between park recreational use and park resource protection and proliferation. Park interpretation, community education, docent programs and continuing park research and discovery were consistent themes throughout all park planning discussions. The interpretive program proposed for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park will communicate park resource value and sensitivity through a comprehensive framework of docent tours and programs, park ranger talks, presentations and tours, multi-media materials, hands-on experiences, signage and park resource take-home materials and information. Components of the program focus on:

- Educational opportunities and programs for all ages and user groups with special emphasis on children.
- Education that emphasizes the park's uniqueness and sensitivity.
- Education that conveys appropriate park use and behavior when visiting the park.
- Conveyance of resource management concepts and resource features that yields a full understanding and meaning for the park visitor, including explanation of the park's role in the NCCP/HCP.
- Programs that feature hands-on participation within the park.
- Programs that feature take-home concepts and methods for resource conservation, protection and management.
- Information regarding on-going research and field work with special emphasis on opportunities for volunteer and park adoption programs.

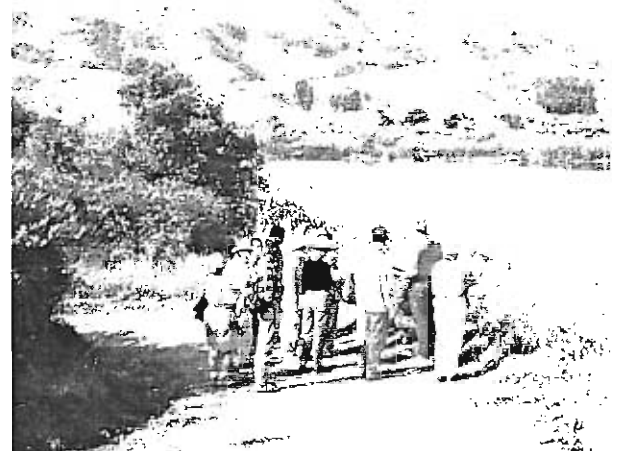
The interpretive program for the park will focus upon the concept that the park is part of, in fact the core of, a larger ecosystem that is critically dependent upon the maintenance of an ecological balance. The park's physical, biological, and cultural resources are all part of a fragile network of forces that depend upon each other for their own perpetuation.



Docent-Led Tour



Cactus Wren Nest in Prickly-Pear Cactus

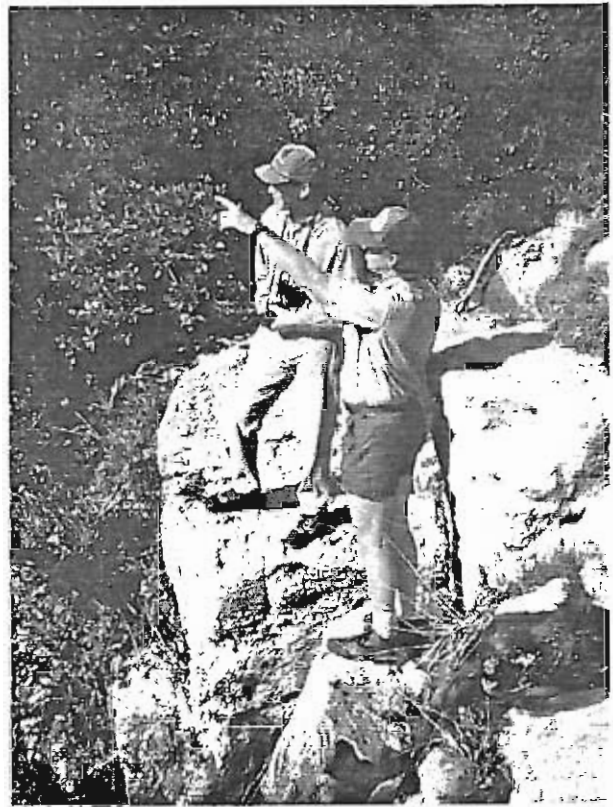


Lake Trail

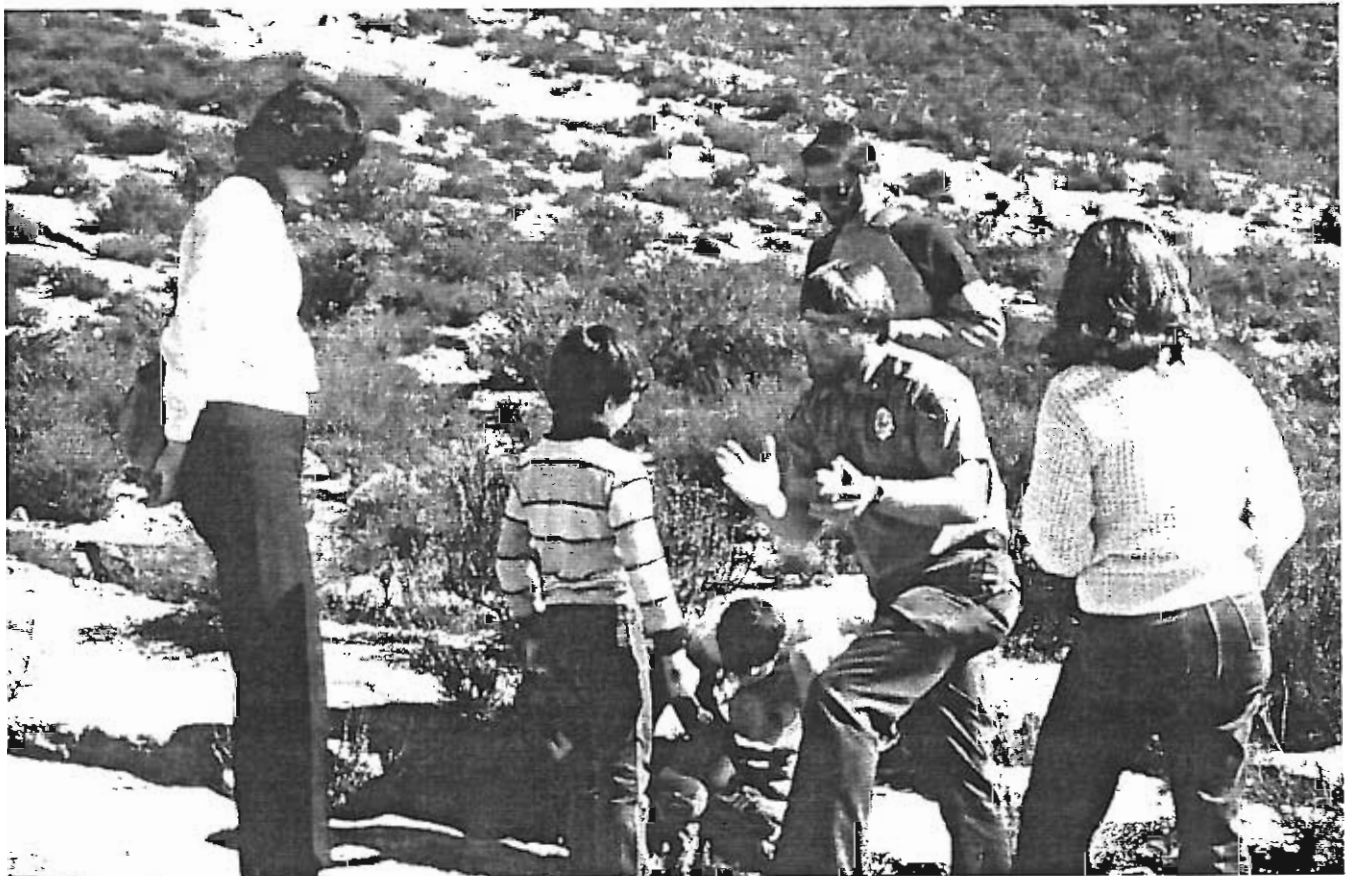
The breakdown of this balanced system caused by human intrusion can be devastating to the park's ecology and, since it is a part of a larger ecosystem, damage to the park can cause damage to the whole. Interpretive programs that foster an understanding of human roles in preserving this natural balance will greatly contribute to the park's success as a healthy, natural system.

The interpretive program will be orchestrated and delivered in a number of ways. At the small interpretive center in Little Sycamore Canyon, interpretive information presented in the form of participatory exhibits, presentations, panoramic views and multimedia materials will convey the park's physical, biological and cultural resources. Physical resource discussions will include the park's geology, hydrology, paleontology and climate as key contributions to its current ecology.

The park's geologic structure (a result of historic uplifting of the San Joaquin Hills) is the foundation of the park as we know it today. Interpretation of the park's geology reveals the diverse tapestry of unique coastal hills and canyons.



Trail Hike with the Park Ranger



Interpretive Activities with the Park Ranger

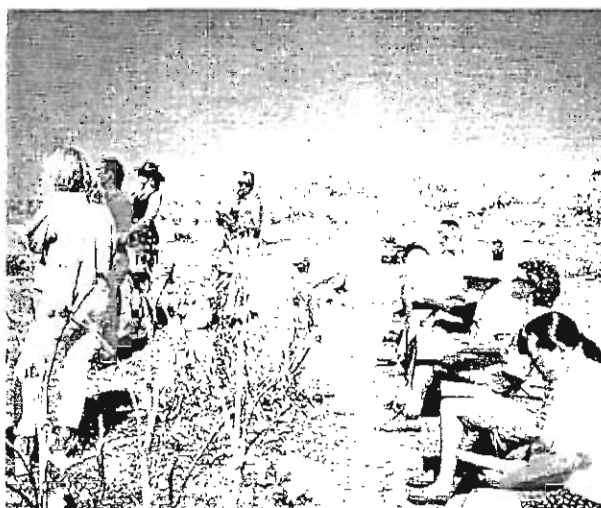
Watershed from these canyons is the most important park contribution to the hydrology of the region. Interpretive center subjects regarding watershed will include sustenance of plant and animal life, Laguna Lakes, and sand replenishment for beaches in Laguna Beach and Crystal Cove State Park. In addition, paleontological and climatic contributions to the sustenance of park life will be discussed.

Biological resource themes and subjects will center on the major plant communities within the park including coastal sage scrub, riparian woodland, grassland, oak woodland, chaparral and wetland communities. Interpretive concepts to be communicated include wildlife dispersion corridors, foraging, wildlife cover, species interdependence, endangered plants and animals, species of special interest and a comprehensive overview of the Central-Coastal Subregion Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan Program.

Cultural resource messages will include discussions regarding the park's archaeological past, its recent and current political condition and its future with regards to environmental awareness, resource preservation and the capability of the park to provide a much needed open space retreat from ever increasing suburbanization.



Sketching in the Wilderness Park



Sand Canyon

A variety of facilities will be provided to aid in the physical and experiential interpretation of park resources. In addition to the interpretive center, interpretive overlooks and nodes, a naturalized outdoor amphitheater and a "nature hike" oriented trail is proposed at Little Sycamore Canyon.

Interpretive opportunities including trails and signage will also occur at Laurel Canyon, Crystal Cove State Park and the James Dilley Preserve. It is anticipated, however, that some of the most educational and inspiring experiences offered visitors will be quiet, reflective hikes or strolls along any one of the park's many extraordinary canyons or ridges.

Picnic

Picnic facilities are planned for three areas within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The Little Sycamore Canyon staging area will accommodate group and individual picnicking near the existing native sycamore trees adjacent to the park entry gate. Functioning as a key trailhead, this picnic area will include picnic tables, a drinking fountain, parking, an equestrian hitching post and an information kiosk.

The Laurel Canyon staging area primarily functions as a trailhead and interpretive opportunity. Picnicking will be accommodated through the provision of picnic tables, a restroom, drinking fountain, interpretive kiosk/information station, parking (in the existing walnut grove) and equestrian hitching post.

Picnic opportunities at the Crystal Cove State Park staging area will be limited to the capacity of the existing facilities. These include parking, restrooms, park headquarters, information kiosk and trail access. Currently, there are no picnic tables or barbecues at the headquarters center site. Picnic areas are currently available along the coastal areas of Crystal Cove State Park.



Character Sketch of Picnic Area in Little Sycamore Canyon

Camping

Camping has been a historical recreational use offered by Crystal Cove State Park. Both State Park and County of Orange staff have indicated that there has not historically been any great demand for camping in the County. While this may be true, workshop participants felt there was a strong need to provide some limited camping within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

Camping will continue to be offered at Moro Canyon in Crystal Cove State Park, including hike-in and equestrian camping.



Group Picnic Facilities with Information Kiosk

PARK ACCESS

During the workshop process, it was identified that potential frequent visitors to the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park would primarily come from four neighboring and distinct populated regions: the Irvine region, the Newport Beach region, the Laguna Beach region, and the Laguna Hills/Mission Viejo/Aliso Viejo region. This yields virtually a 270° circumference need for park access. In addition, due to the unique character and nature of this regional park, visitors can be expected from throughout Orange County and the surrounding region. It was therefore determined that a variety of park access locations with varying levels of service was necessary to successfully accommodate park users.

Three existing points of park access were determined to be logical in that they accommodate both a variety of recreational uses as well as servicing anticipated regions of access. These three access points are Crystal Cove State Park, Laurel Canyon and the Equestrian Staging Area near Big Bend off Laguna Canyon Road. Two other key points of park access are proposed due to their character, location and level of service - Little Sycamore Canyon and the Irvine Bowl area. These access points are discussed further in the Staging Areas section. In addition to the staging areas, access into the park is available through existing trails that are located adjacent to residential areas of north Laguna Beach.



Circulation

The Laguna Coast Wilderness park is well served by the South County Transportation System. Freeways, arterials, highways and local roads all provide vehicular access to the park perimeter. Circulation planning within the park consciously limits the automobile to the park perimeters to maintain a wilderness experience and to limit the impact on natural resources. Park circulation will accommodate several modes of travel including hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking and road biking. In addition, there was discussion during workshop exercises about the possibility of shuttle services for special events to limit automobile and bus traffic and parking impacts. These shuttles could be similar to those provided during the park opening ceremonies that transported people from existing parking areas outside the park to park staging areas. The following is a summary of the different modes of travel envisioned in and around the park.

Roads

The San Diego freeway (I-405) provides an off ramp at Laguna Canyon Road which allows direct access to the park. The entire eastern edge of the park is served by the primary arterials of Laguna Canyon Road and El Toro Road. A series of proposed arterial extensions along the eastern edge of the park including Bake Parkway, Lake Forest Drive, Ridge Route Drive, Santa Maria and Aliso Creek Road also pose potential increased access and are being evaluated with respect to need and potential resource impacts. In addition, the extension of the east-west running San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor also provides increased access to the park at Laguna Canyon Road.

Pacific Coast Highway forms a portion of the southern boundary of the park study area at Crystal Cove State Park where the southern-most staging area to the park is proposed.

Access along the western edge of the park is limited to one location. This location is a proposed view park located on the western side of Los Trancos Canyon with access from Newport Coast Drive.



Multi-use Truck Trail

Roads within the park study area boundaries are limited to the existing truck trails and the emergency and maintenance vehicle roads that are used primarily for purposes of utility access, emergency access, park maintenance, surveillance, and fire protection. Public auto use is limited to the perimeter staging areas.

Trails

Probably the most important recreational opportunity proposed within the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is trail use. Whether a visitor's activity focuses around resource interpretation, horseback riding, cycling, exercise, bird watching or simply strolling, the wilderness quality of the park and the vastness and richness of park resources are best experienced through trail use. Approximately 42 miles of multiple-use trails for hiking, mountain bicycle, and equestrian users are proposed within the park, with 92% of those occurring on pre-existing hiking trails and truck roads. As a primary mandate set by the NCCP/HCP, non-disturbance of sensitive resources will be of paramount concern.

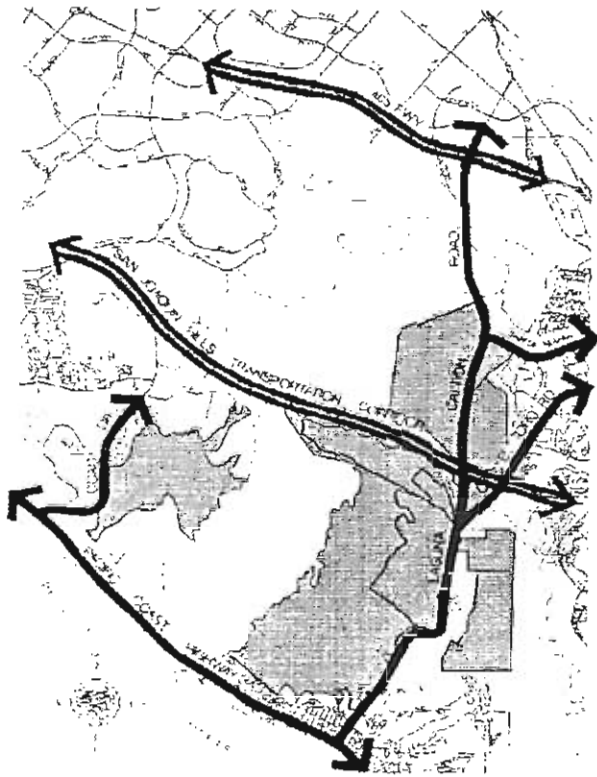


Figure 4: Major Circulation Routes

Well managed and controlled park access and trail use affords recreational opportunity within an otherwise protected and preserved natural resource. The general concept for trail planning focused upon providing a series of short and long loop systems for all users as well as providing trails to special destination points that focus on park resources, unique characteristics and dramatic views

such as the Laguna Lakes, the Laurel Canyon waterfall and the Pacific Ocean.

While providing a large variety of trail staging and access around the park, key local and regional connections were also important. These connections include: Crystal Cove State Park, Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park, Upper Newport Bay Regional Park, Los Trancos Canyon, Laguna Heights, North Laguna Beach, Newport Coast neighborhoods and a regional connection to the north at Laguna Canyon Road. Important trail locations within the park include: Little Sycamore Canyon (hiking only); James Dilley Preserve (hiking only); Laurel Canyon (hiking only); primary loops and the ridge top trail through the middle of the park (multi-use); Moro Canyon and Emerald Canyon (multi-use).

Trails at Laguna Lake No. 3 and Laurel Canyon are accessible to all hikers. Natural topography prevents many other trails from being accessible as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Figure 5A: Multi-use Trail Section

To ensure the viability of the trail system, trail easements will need to be acquired from land owners in several locations. These areas include portions of Los Trancos Canyon and Signal Hill, and an area northwest of Irvine Bowl. Construction of any new trails will be done in an environmentally sensitive manner, especially in regards to sensitive species.

In addition to trail easements, this GDP recommends acquisition of several parcels of land that are not currently part of the wilderness park (see Figure 6). These parcels adjacent to Laguna Canyon Road, including the Option 5 parcel north of Laguna Lake No. 3, would ensure the physical integrity of the park in this area. The Moro Sliver parcel north of the State park will provide important trail linkages to the existing Crystal Cove State Park trail system.

The trails within the park fall into four categories. Each category is described below, and plans showing the location of each trail type area are also included. Figure 6 shows all trail locations. Trails are color coded to correspond to each of the four categories.

1. Hiking Only Trails – Primarily use existing hiking trails. These are approximately 3' wide and are intended to protect sensitive habitats

by maintaining narrow widths and limited potentially habitat-damaging activities such as noise, trail edge disturbance, horse droppings and general disturbance caused by more active use. This trail type also seeks to provide park users with an opportunity to "isolate oneself" within a wilderness setting.

2. Hiking and Mountain Bike Trails – Utilize for the most part existing truck trails within the park for hiking and mountain cycling only. No equestrian use.
3. Class II (On-Road) Bike Trail – This trail is proposed along both sides of the realigned Laguna Canyon Road to provide regional bike trail connections to the park.
4. Multi-Use Trails – Trails that are approximately 10' wide and accommodate hikers, mountain cyclists and equestrians.

Figure 6 shows the location of over 32 miles of trails designated as multi-use, 4 miles of trails designated for hiking and mountain bike use, and 6 miles of trails designated for hiking only. A Class II bike way is proposed for the realigned Laguna Canyon Road. Class II trails already are in place on the existing Laguna Canyon Road.










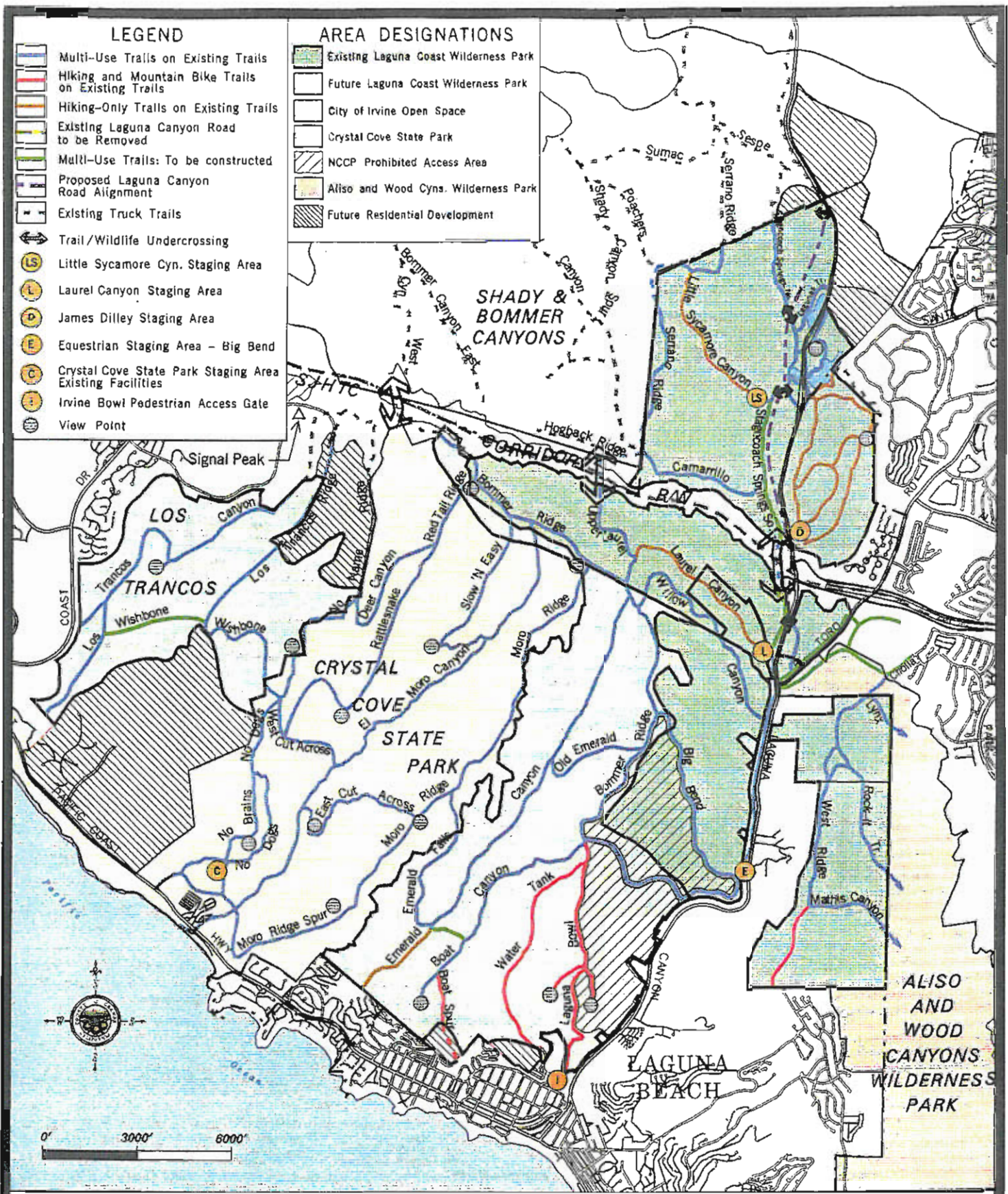
Figure 5B: Hiking Trail Section

LEGEND

-  Multi-Use Trails on Existing Trails
-  Hiking and Mountain Bike Trails on Existing Trails
-  Hiking-Only Trails on Existing Trails
-  Existing Laguna Canyon Road to be Removed
-  Multi-Use Trails: To be constructed
-  Proposed Laguna Canyon Road Alignment
-  Existing Truck Trails
-  Trail/Wildlife Undercrossing
-  Little Sycamore Cyn. Staging Area
-  Laurel Canyon Staging Area
-  James Dilley Staging Area
-  Equestrian Staging Area - Big Bend
-  Crystal Cove State Park Staging Area Existing Facilities
-  Irvine Bowl Pedestrian Access Gate
-  View Point

AREA DESIGNATIONS

-  Existing Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
-  Future Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
-  City of Irvine Open Space
-  Crystal Cove State Park
-  NCCP Prohibited Access Area
-  Aliso and Wood Cyns. Wilderness Park
-  Future Residential Development



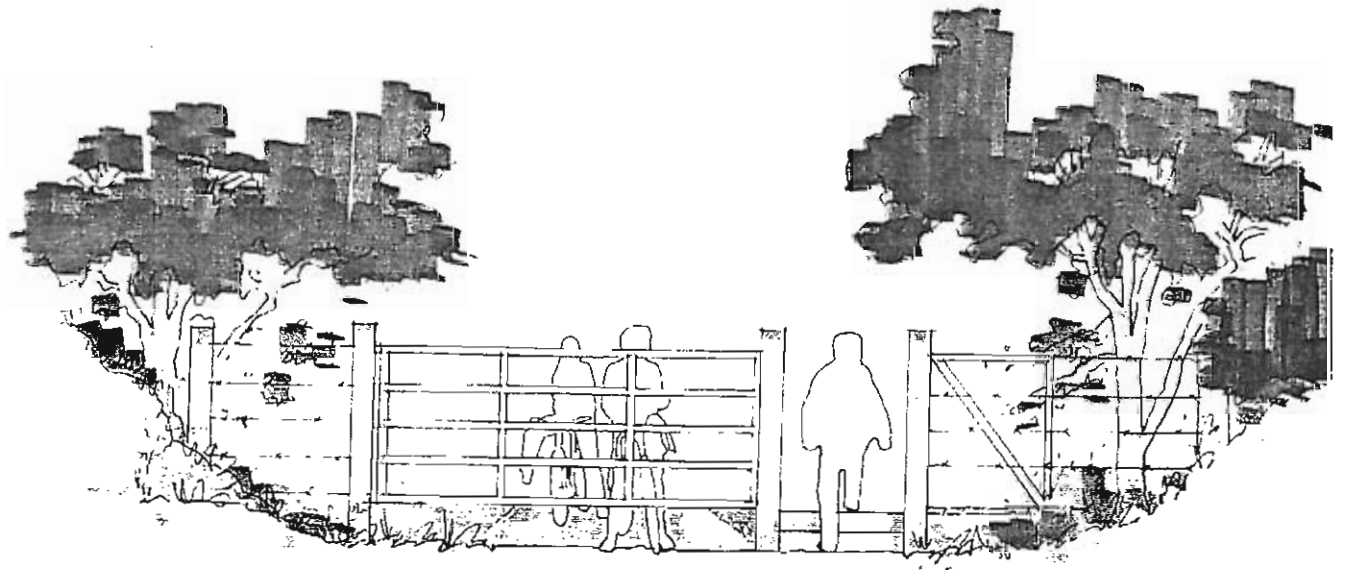
LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK
 COUNTY OF ORANGE
 PUBLIC FACILITIES and RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
 HARBORS, BEACHES AND PARKS • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

TRAILS
 Figure 6

Protection of park resources is of utmost importance. Park control will occur utilizing a number of methods which include park control gates, signage, and possible permanent and temporary fencing for protecting and resting special areas. Perimeter park control other than the park headquarters will utilize control gates that are a current method of regional park control utilized by the County. Control gates will be placed at all park access points and staging areas. Gates will have signage and will physically prohibit automobile entry while providing step-through gates for trail access and other permitted uses. No step through will be installed at trails accessible to the physically disabled.



Existing Control Gate



STEP THRU CONTROL GATE

CONTROL GATE



Figure 7: Control Gate

Park Staging Areas

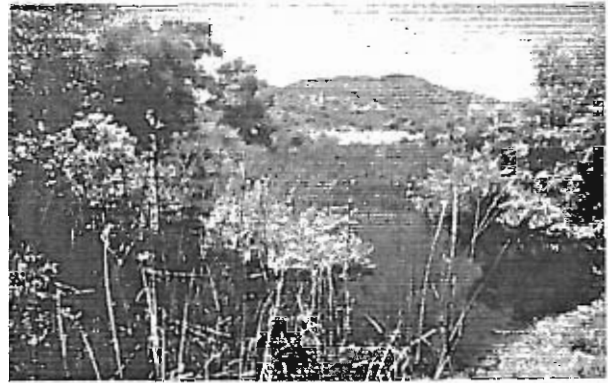
Staging areas are planned for five locations to accommodate park users arriving from adjacent communities as well as from the region. The location of these access points places the majority of the park's built structures and roads at the edge of the park, allowing the valuable resources of the park's wilderness areas to be protected and preserved.

The staging areas are the focus of facility development as well as interpretive programs. Their character will blend with the wilderness setting. Staging areas may include parking areas, restrooms, picnic facilities, interpretive and directional signage, and trail heads. The trails, roads, and parking areas will utilize natural materials as well as existing trail and road alignments whenever possible.

In addition to the proposed staging areas (described in more detail on the following pages) there are two existing access points along Laguna Canyon Road currently utilized for park access. One is the "interim" park headquarters located in Willow Canyon, the other is the gravel parking area which provides access to the James Dilley Preserve just north of the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor.

Once the Laurel Canyon Staging Area is completed, the Willow Canyon Staging area will be removed and revegetated with native plants.

The James Dilley Staging Area is proposed to remain as permanent access to the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. (See Figure 9B -- James Dilley Staging Area).



Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area will provide Trail Access to the Laguna Lakes









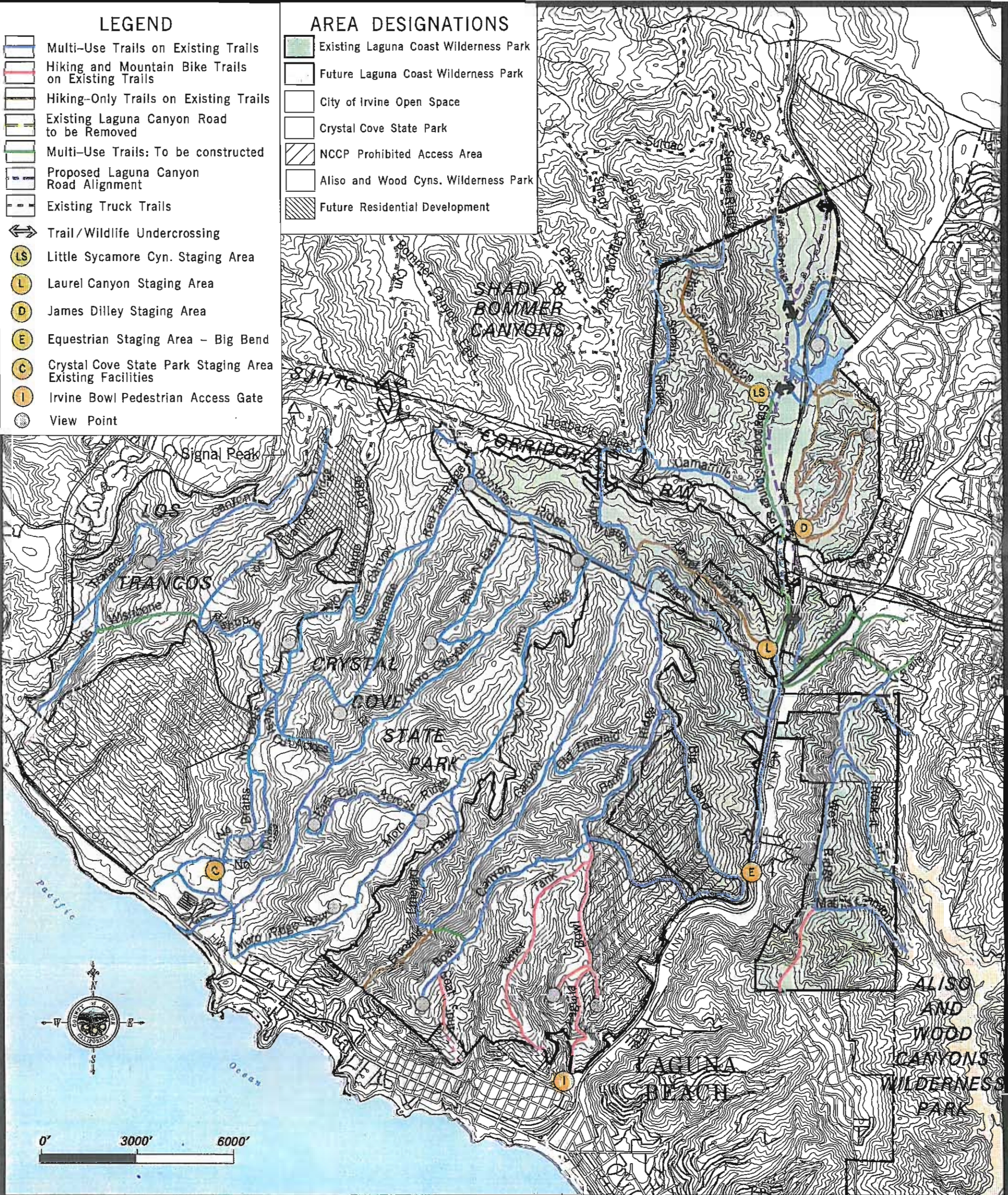
Laurel Canyon

LEGEND

-  Multi-Use Trails on Existing Trails
-  Hiking and Mountain Bike Trails on Existing Trails
-  Hiking-Only Trails on Existing Trails
-  Existing Laguna Canyon Road to be Removed
-  Multi-Use Trails: To be constructed
-  Proposed Laguna Canyon Road Alignment
-  Existing Truck Trails
-  Trail/Wildlife Undercrossing
-  Little Sycamore Cyn. Staging Area
-  Laurel Canyon Staging Area
-  James Dilley Staging Area
-  Equestrian Staging Area - Big Bend
-  Crystal Cove State Park Staging Area Existing Facilities
-  Irvine Bowl Pedestrian Access Gate
-  View Point

AREA DESIGNATIONS

-  Existing Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
-  Future Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
-  City of Irvine Open Space
-  Crystal Cove State Park
-  NCCP Prohibited Access Area
-  Aliso and Wood Cyns. Wilderness Park
-  Future Residential Development



LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK
 COUNTY OF ORANGE
 PUBLIC FACILITIES and RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
 HARBORS, BEACHES AND PARKS • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

General Development Plan
 Figure 8

James Dilley Staging Area

The James Dilley Staging Area is an existing access point located on the east side of Laguna Canyon Road, about 1/8 mile north of the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor interchange (see Figure 9A). This staging area provides access to the James Dilley Preserve portion of the park, and the Laguna Lakes.

A new access road to the staging area is proposed as part of the Laguna Canyon Road realignment and widening project (see Figure 9B). For safety purposes, vehicular access to this staging area will be limited to right-in and right-out turns. Other proposed improvements include interpretive and directional signs, as well as an interpretive kiosk.

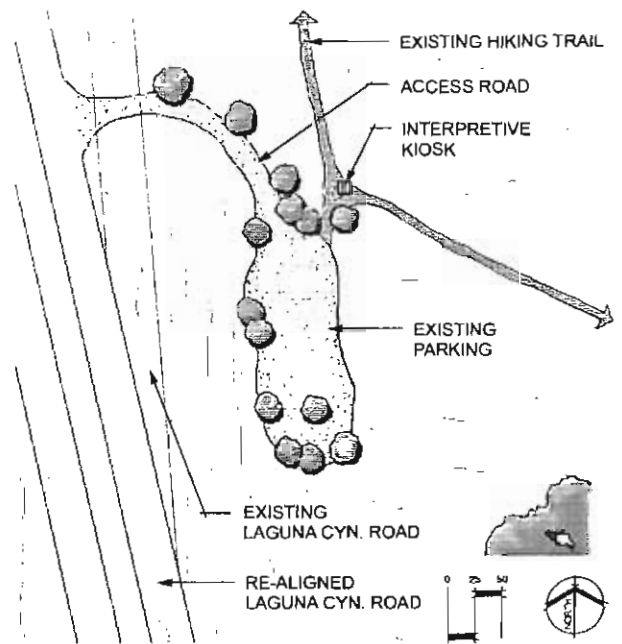


Figure 9B: Plan of James Dilley Staging Area

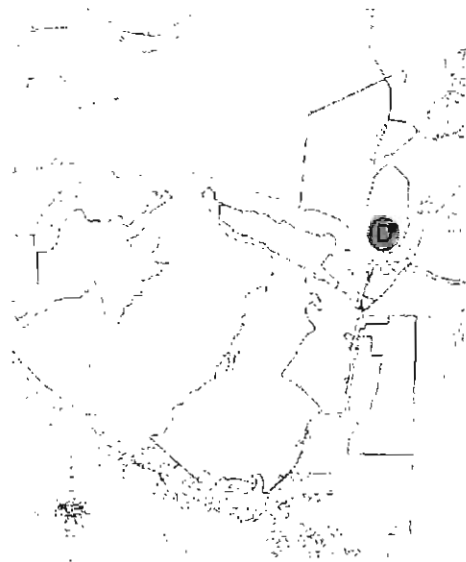
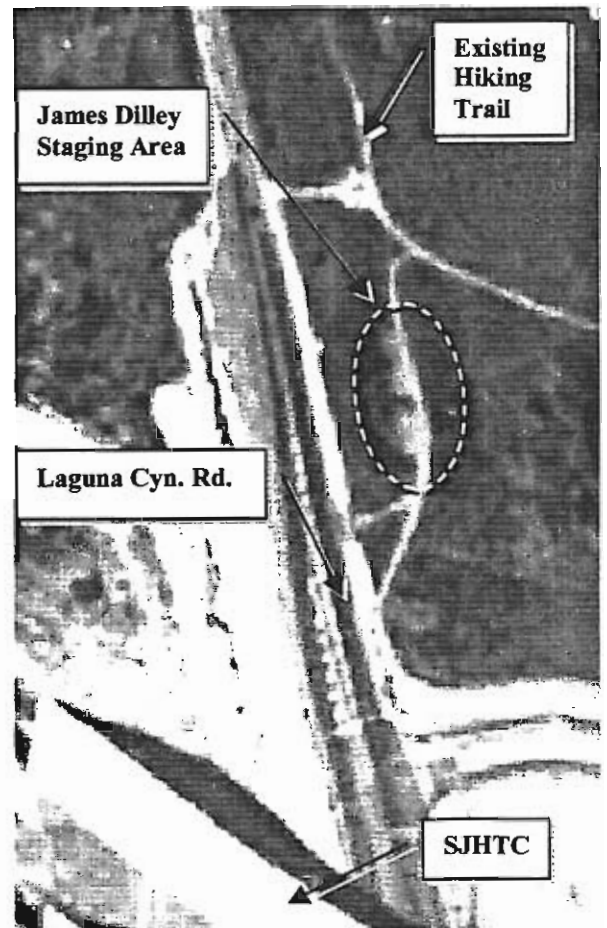


Figure 9A: James Dilley Staging Area



Looking south to James Dilley Staging Area



Aerial view of James Dilley Staging Area

*Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area/
Interpretive Center*

During the workshop presentation of the Draft Plan, participants expressed concern about the Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area because of the area's rich and diverse natural resources. Previous awareness tours had not included Little Sycamore Canyon, so workshop participants requested an opportunity to visit this site and evaluate it as a proposed interpretive center and park entry. Awareness Tour Seven of Little Sycamore Canyon and its related workshop led to a consensus that this area was appropriate in character for a park interpretive center. The park planning team explored several alternative layouts of proposed facilities for this staging area, and these alternatives are contained in the Appendix of this report. The preferred alternative resulting from this study is discussed here.

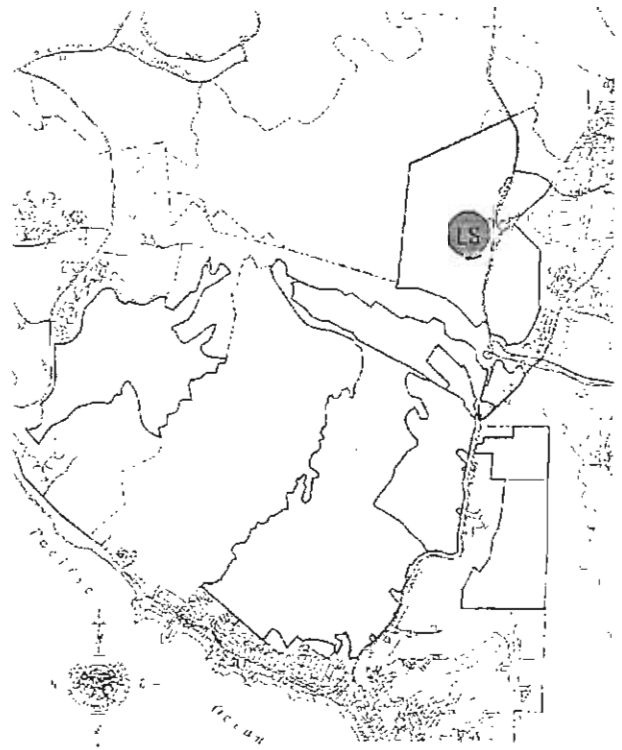
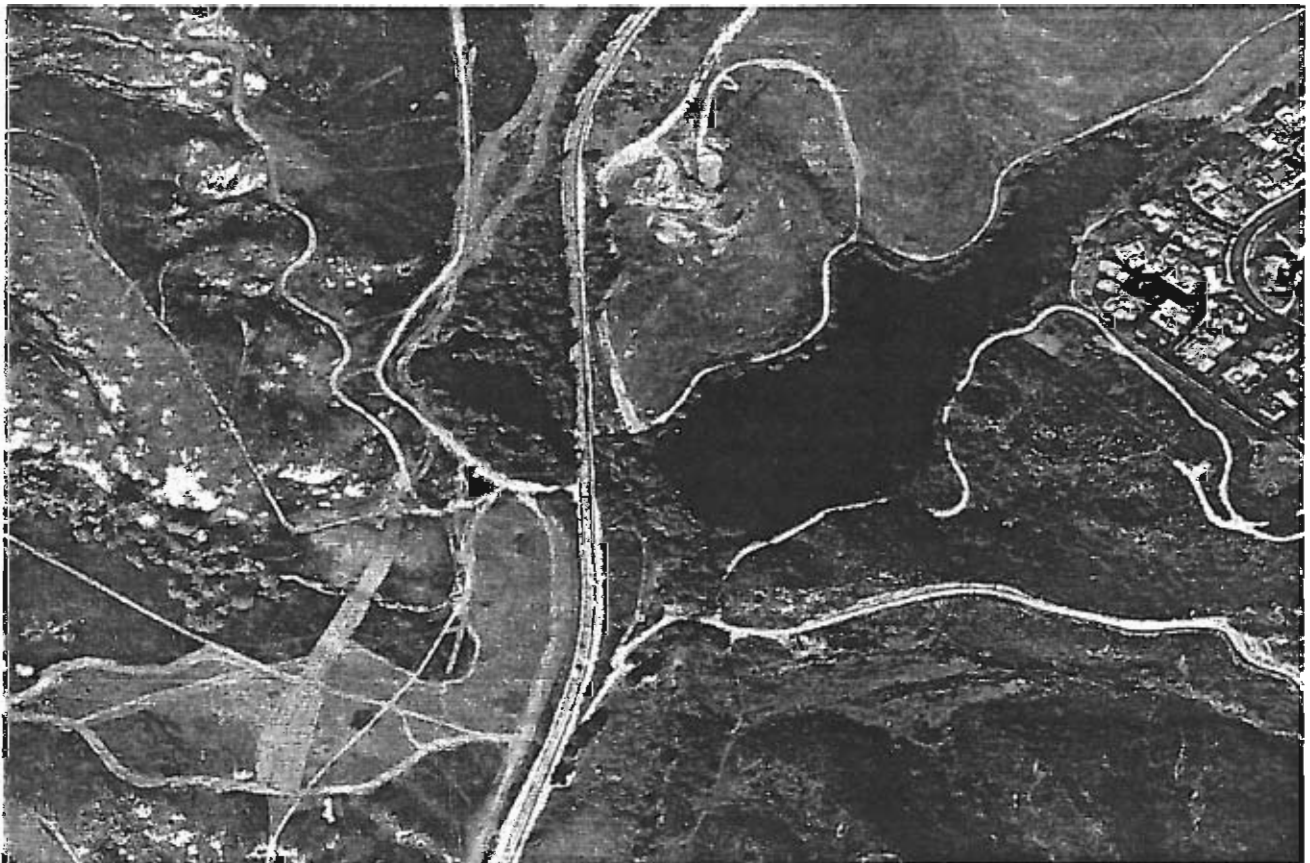


Figure 10: Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area



Aerial View of Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area

The park entry road will provide a pleasant contrast to busy Laguna Canyon Road. The park entry, recognizable from Laguna Canyon Road, will be reached via a gently curving road. Passing through the entry gates, which are nestled in a grove of sycamore trees, the visitor will follow the path of a one way road and cross a vehicular bridge. The bridge will span Little Sycamore Creek and will be designed to complement the rustic setting.

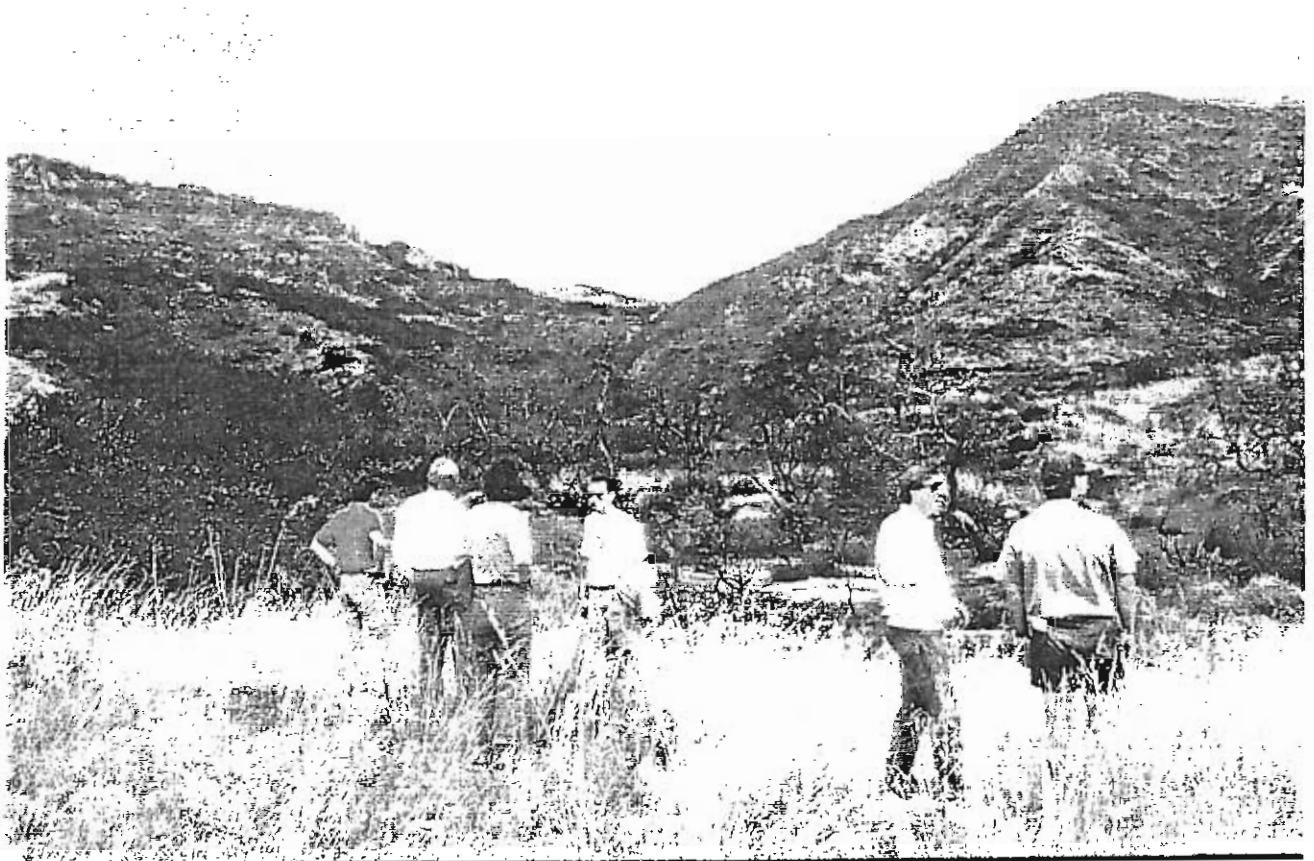
The native sycamores of this area provide significant tree cover, and the riparian setting of the creek creates a diverse natural resource ideal for docent-led tours, environmental education and general interpretation. The topography of the canyon provides natural buffers and visual relief from adjacent development and the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor.

Picnic areas will be located within the groves of sycamore trees and include drinking fountains, hitching posts, and signage for park information and interpretation.

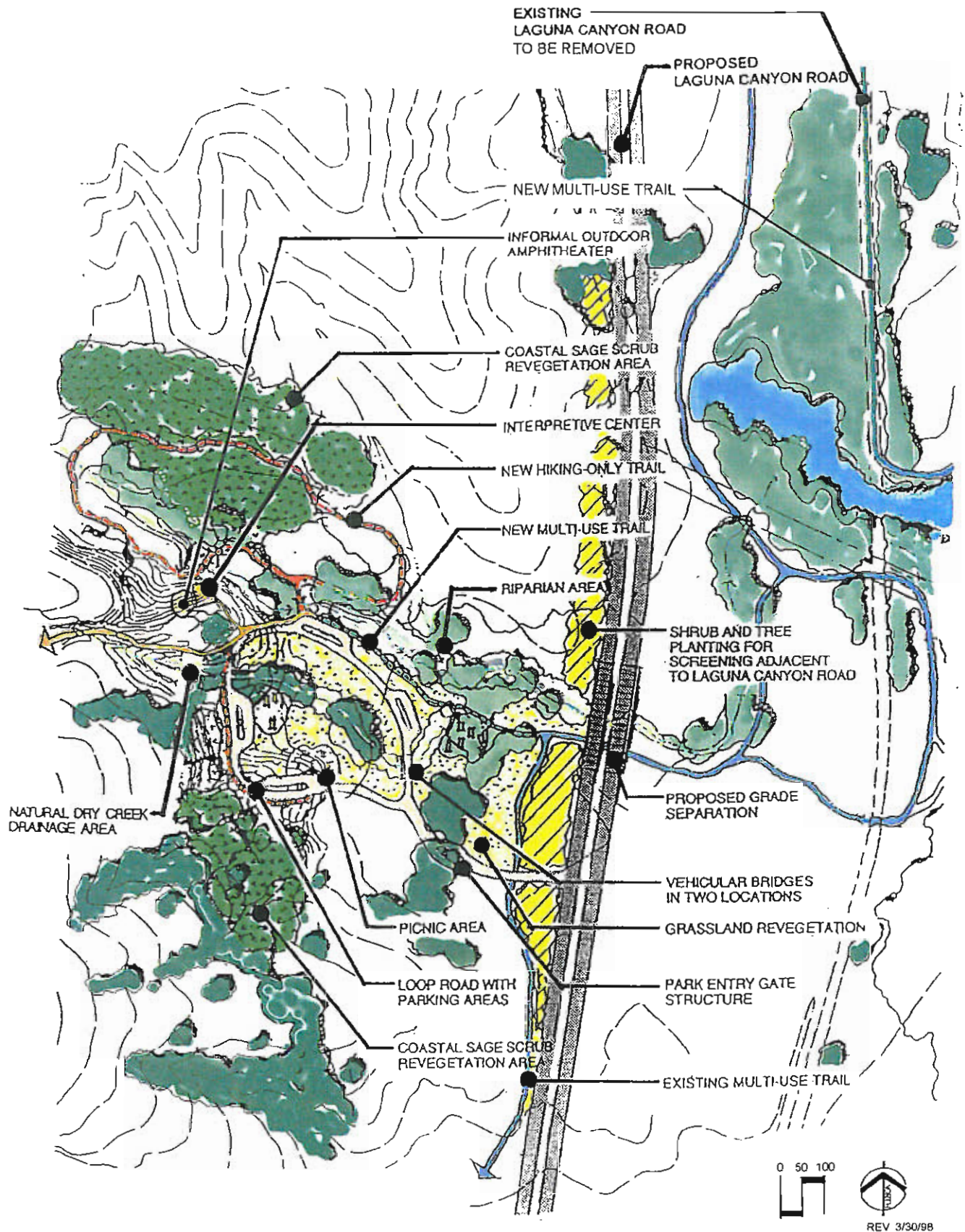


Park Entry

Four parking nodes will be placed in the existing non-native grassland south of the creek. These parking areas will be located along the loop road, and screened with berming and planting. Parking areas and picnic facilities will act as trail heads that support the variety of trail users staging from this location including mountain cyclists, equestrians and hikers. The Laguna Lakes are directly across Laguna Canyon Road and will be accessible via a proposed trail underpass.



Little Sycamore Canyon



LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK

County of Orange
Public Facilities & Resources Department
Harbors, Beaches and Parks

LITTLE SYCAMORE CYN.
STAGING AREA
Figure 11

The park interpretive center will be accessed via a multi-use trail that will wind through groves of trees and indigenous plants. The interpretive center will be sensitively integrated into the slope of a small knoll at the mouth of the canyon. The north side of this building is proposed to be largely composed of glass to reveal majestic views up Little Sycamore Canyon. The building will be a two story structure of approximately 3,000 square feet constructed of materials that blend with the native materials of the site. The building functions will include an interpretive center display area, office space for the park ranger staff, a resource management office, restrooms, and audio visual capabilities.

An informal outdoor amphitheater is sculpted within a nearby natural bowl and used for presentations and campfire talks. This facility acts as a trail head for nature walks and docent-led tours up Little Sycamore Canyon and to the Laguna Lakes.

Design team biologists visited the Little Sycamore Canyon staging area site. David Bramlet identified existing plant material in the area and Richard Erickson assessed wildlife issues. The interpretive center knoll contains needlegrass grassland which is characterized by a cover of purple needlegrass along with a mix of annual grasses and forbs. There are also some areas of scrub oak chaparral, annual grassland and sage scrub-grassland ecotone on this knoll. A potential amphitheater site contains a mixed sage scrub community, currently dominated by lax-flowered bushmallow (*Malacothamnus fasciculatus*).

The proposed parking areas are located in needlegrass and annual non-native grassland. The first site is located in an island of non-native grassland surrounded by coastal sage scrub. The main access road into the staging area is located in the bottom of the canyon, which contains an annual grassland.

The proposed picnic site is found within a sycamore woodland with an annual grassland understory. The proposed trail system extending from this site and the interpretive center is located in annual and needlegrass grassland, coastal sage scrub, mulefat scrub and sycamore woodland vegetation.

Sensitive resources potentially affected by this site include needlegrass grassland, coastal sage scrub, riparian scrub and southern sycamore riparian woodland. A single prostrate spineflower was observed at the interpretive center site and a population of the intermediate mariposa lily was located near the western end of the proposed access road. California gnatcatchers and cactus wrens formerly occurred in the area, but neither are known to have nested in the immediate area since the Laguna Firestorm. As with all staging areas, the Little Sycamore staging area will be designed to minimize disruption of these sensitive resources.

Significant interpretive programs are envisioned for this site including programs that explore the nearby vegetative communities and associated wildlife, such as the coastal sage scrub community, the oak woodland and chaparral communities located higher-up Little Sycamore Canyon, and the riparian corridor associated with the Little Sycamore watershed and the Laguna Lakes.

Laurel Canyon Staging Area

Laurel Canyon contains some of the park's most significant biological and cultural resources. Within this area the California State Department of Fish and Game has ownership of approximately 82 acres that are classified as an ecological preserve. Comprehensive descriptions of these resources can be found in the Existing Conditions Report for the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Generally, significant resources to be found include the Laguna Beach dudleya (*Dudleya stolonifera*), riparian habitat, and many significant archeological and paleontological resources.

Recognizing the significance of this canyon, workshop participants agreed that increased awareness and education of park users should be emphasized in the General Development Plan. Suggestions such as docent-led tours, limited access to sensitive areas and information at trail heads and/or kiosks were common among workshop participants. Primary concerns include protection of natural resources and prevention of degradation of those resources.

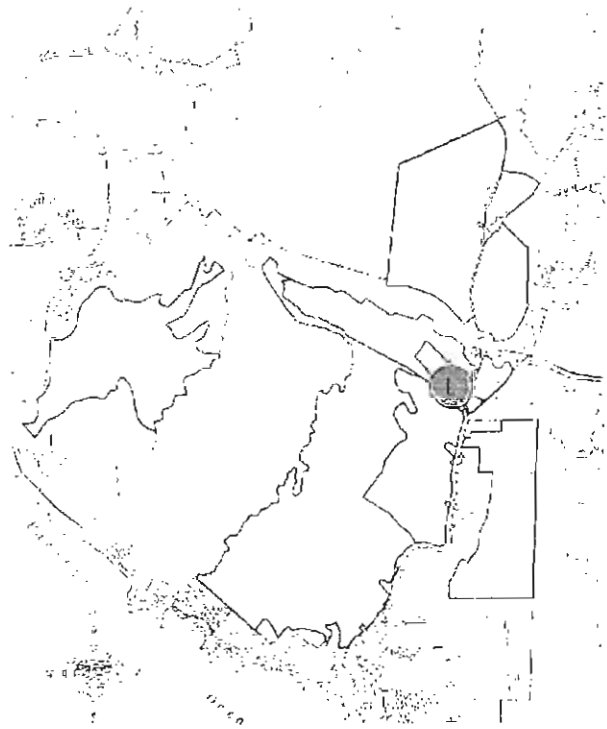


Figure 12: Laurel Canyon Staging Area



Aerial View of Laurel Canyon Staging Area

Laurel Canyon Staging Area will be located in an old walnut grove, which contains English walnut trees and a non-native annual grassland understory. The area north of the grove contains a ruderal grassland with some elements of an alkaline meadow community including curly dock, tall umbrella sedge and western verbena. The pasture to the west contains an annual grassland composed of ripgut brome, wild oat, soft chess, western ragweed and summer mustard.

Sensitive resources include the willow riparian scrub adjacent to Laguna Canyon Road and the mulefat scrub at the southern end of the site. The Laurel Canyon stream channel also contains a sycamore woodland. In the northwest corner of the site a small area of coast live oak woodland is also found. No sensitive plant species were noted in this proposed staging area. Before the fire, cactus wrens were found on the ridges above the site, but California gnatcatchers were unrecorded. Many species of non-sensitive wildlife use the area.

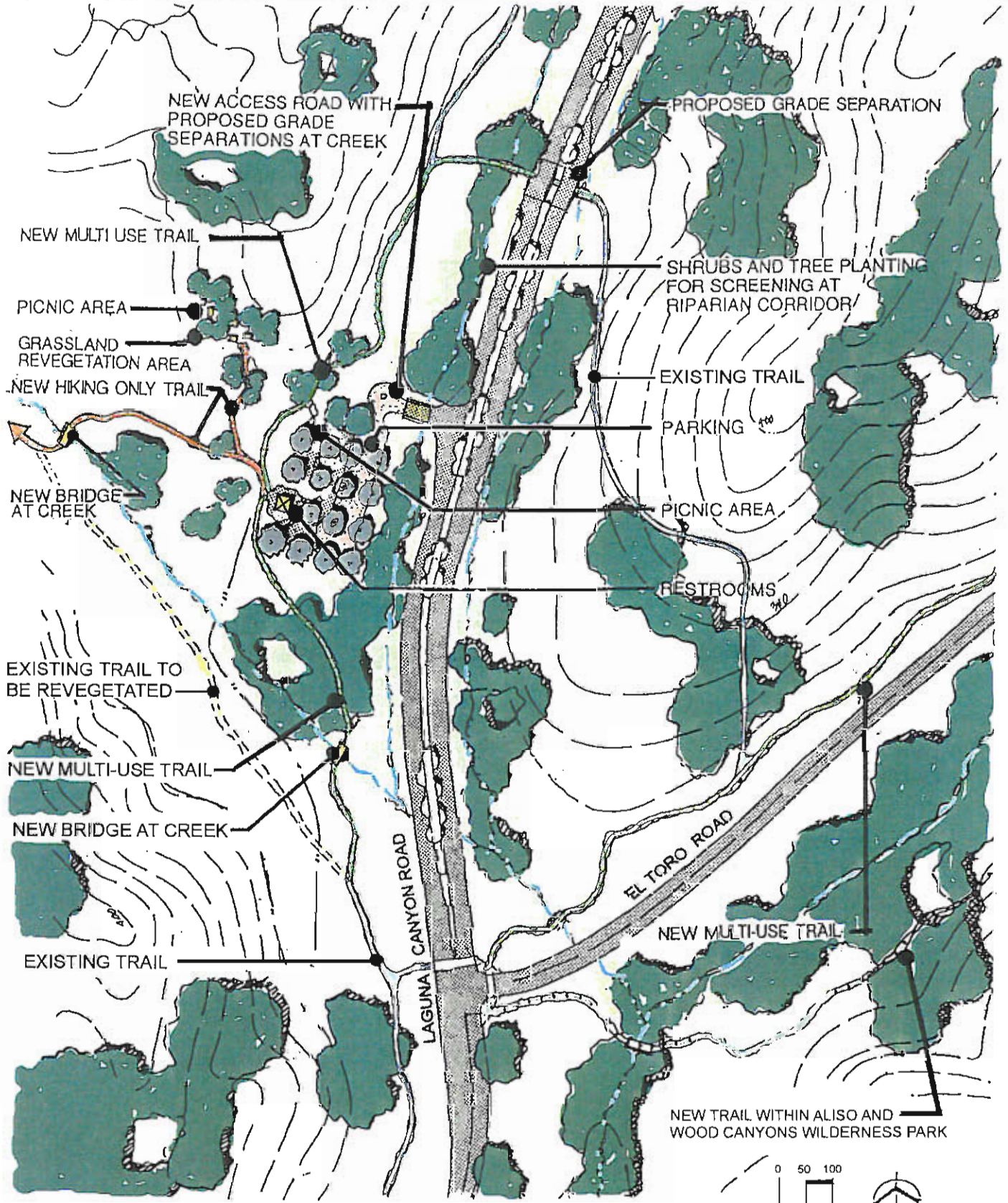
As a staging area, facilities must be carefully sited to avoid unwarranted impacts to the canyon's rich ecology. Facility proposals include a parking area for approximately 50 cars sited within the existing walnut orchard. The parking facility would be composed of natural materials (i.e. decomposed granite) and would provide staging for multi-trail use. The



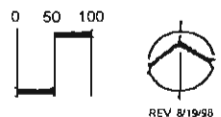
Vehicular Entry into the Park

canyon itself is limited to hiking only, yet staging is provided for mountain cyclists and equestrians to access trails along Laguna Canyon and under Laguna Canyon Road to Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park. All trails would utilize existing trails and truck roads with minimal new trail development to provide necessary linkages. Other facilities would include a picnic area with picnic tables and native tree canopy cover, drinking fountain, interpretive and directional signage, restrooms and natural bridge crossings at existing creeks and drainage courses.





NEW TRAIL WITHIN ALISO AND WOOD CANYONS WILDERNESS PARK



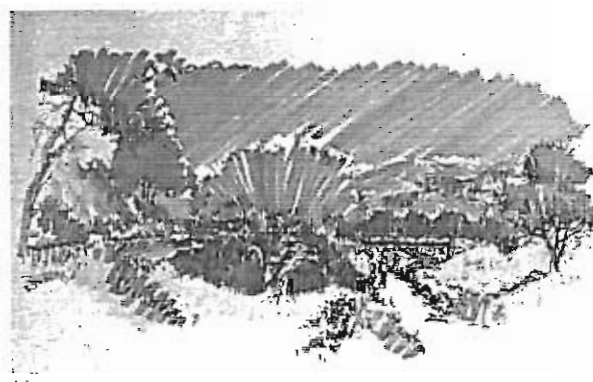
LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK
 County of Orange
 Public Facilities & Resources Department
 Harbors, Beaches and Parks

LAUREL CANYON STAGING AREA
 Figure 13

The entry drive for Laurel Canyon Staging Area will be located as far north as possible from the intersection of Laguna Canyon Road and El Toro Road without encroaching into the wetlands area north of the staging area. For safety reasons, only right turns in and out of this drive will be allowed.

Trails at this staging area provide access to:

- The staging area to the south (at Big Bend).
- A major crossroads of trails at the top of Laurel Canyon.
- Hiking-only access to the James Dilley Preserve with multi-use access to the future Aliso and Wood Canyons staging area along El Toro Road.
- A multi-use trail along Laguna Canyon that travels north to Little Sycamore Canyon.



Park Entry with Bridge over Trail and Creek



Laurel Canyon from the Top of Cathedral Rock

Big Bend Equestrian Staging Area

The Big Bend Equestrian Staging Area is located west of Laguna Canyon Road and north of the "big bend" in the road. The staging area would include parking for vehicles and horse trailers, restrooms, tie posts, and access to multi-use trails. This proposed parking and entry site for the park is currently a gravel parking lot. The proposed uses are similar to the existing uses, therefore no impact to existing plant and animal species is anticipated. The site is comprised of a disturbed annual grassland. The most common species on this site included wild oats, fox-tail barley, soft chess, ripgut brome, summer mustard, dove weed, fennel and tumbling pigweed. No sensitive resources were noted on the project site, however, coastal sage scrub, purple needlegrass grassland and coast live oak woodland were found on the western boundary of this staging area. In the winter of 1996, volunteers planted approximately 150 Live Oaks from liners north and south of the staging area.

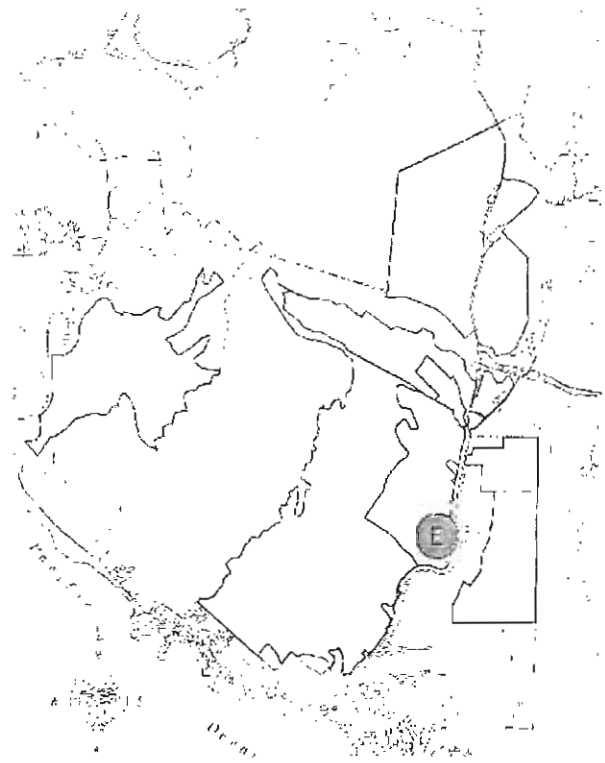
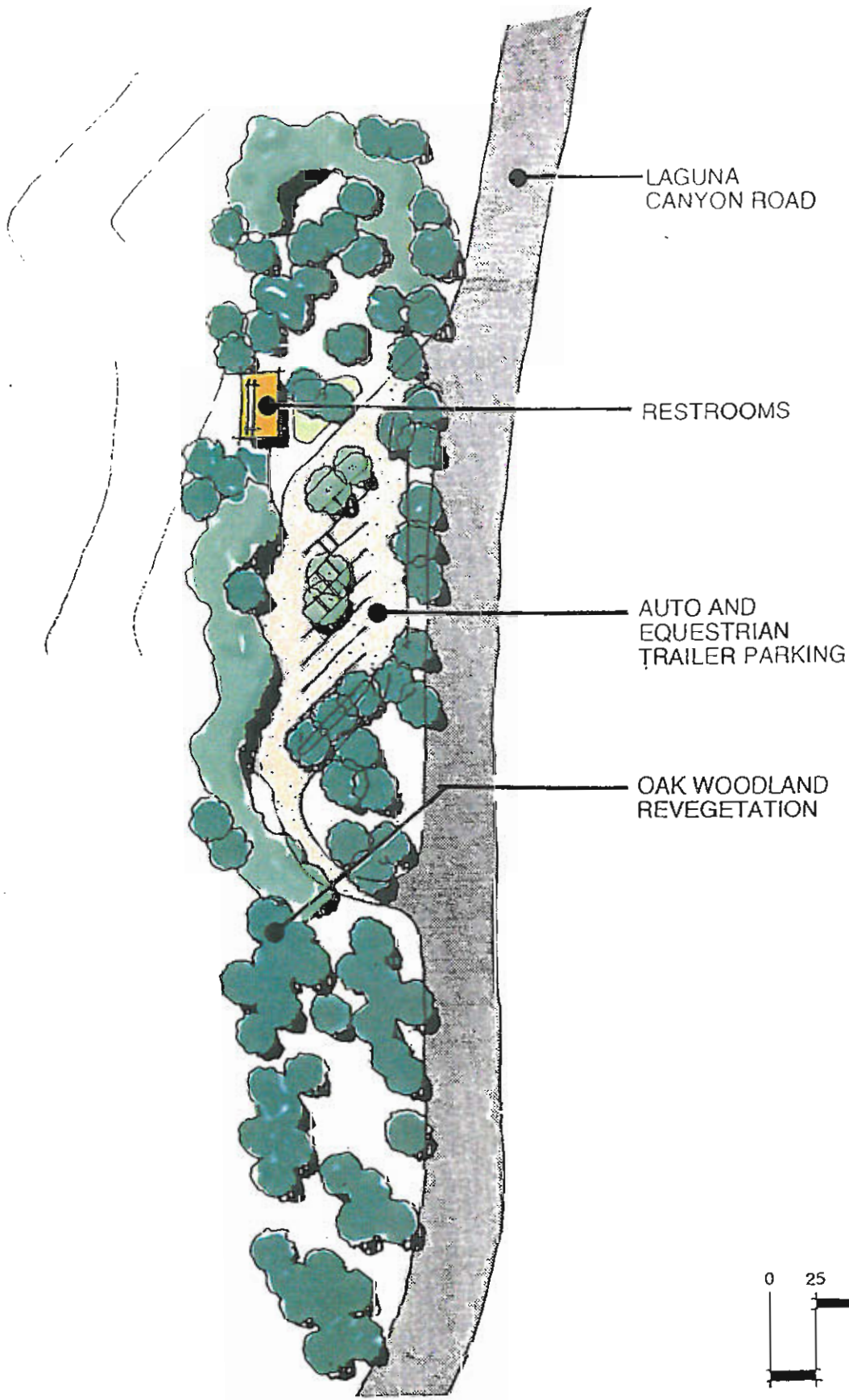


Figure 14: Big Bend Equestrian Staging Area



Aerial View of Big Bend Equestrian Staging Area



LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK
 County of Orange
 Public Facilities & Resources Department
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BIG BEND
 STAGING AREA
 Figure 15

Irvine Bowl Staging Area

The Irvine Bowl Staging Area is located west of Laguna Canyon Road and north of Irvine Bowl where the Laguna Festival of the Arts is held. Existing parking in the downtown area minimizes the need for construction of new facilities and the use of precious park resources for staging facilities.

A control gate at this access point prevents unauthorized vehicles from entering the park. From the entry gate, users will travel up the existing Laguna Bowl truck trail to the network of ridgeline trails.

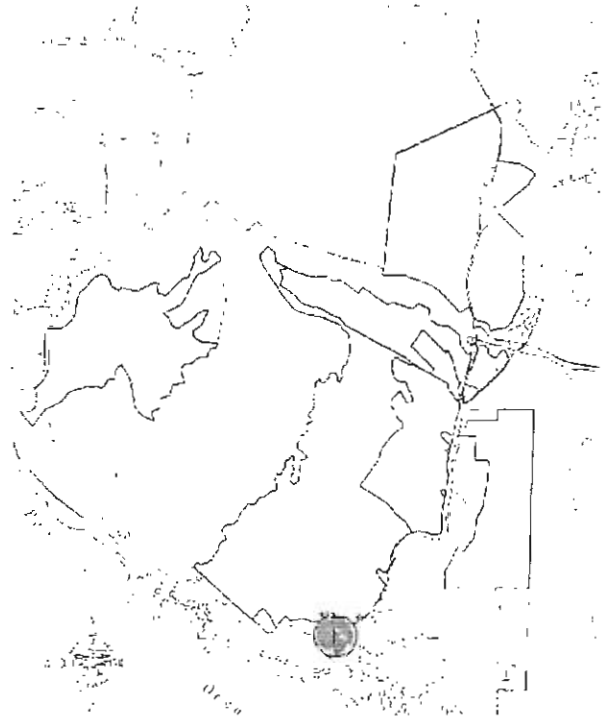


Figure 16: Irvine Bowl Staging Area



Aerial View of Irvine Bowl Staging Area

Crystal Cove State Park Staging Area

Crystal Cove State Park is owned and operated by the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation. The State Park was included in the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park study area because the two parks share common boundaries and together comprise a large ecosystem.

The existing Crystal Cove State Park headquarters and parking facilities offer the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park a major staging opportunity for southern access to the park. Existing staging facilities could be utilized to facilitate access from communities to the southeast and southwest of the park boundaries. The Crystal Cove headquarters staging area currently is a full service staging facility for hikers, mountain cyclists and equestrians. Crystal Cove State Park also offers hike-in remote overnight camping sites as a current recreation program.

A joint-use agreement will be necessary between the State and County agencies to allow access from the State Park into Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Coordination of a user fee structure, use regulations and maintenance responsibilities will also be necessary to facilitate this joint-use agreement.

Beyond overnight camping, the Crystal Cove State Park currently offers picnic opportunities, hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trail use and beach access. The headquarters at the bottom of Moro Canyon offers parking, restrooms, interpretive programs and exhibits, trail connections, drinking fountain and informational/directional signage.

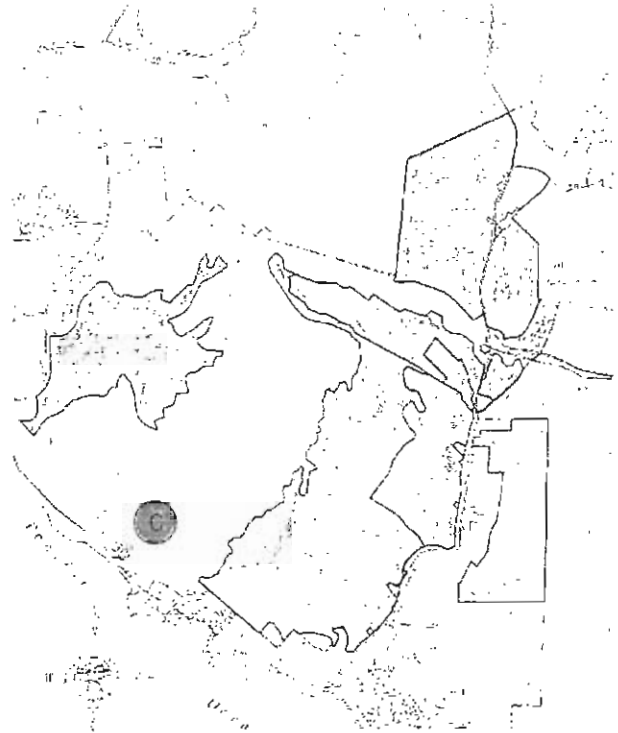
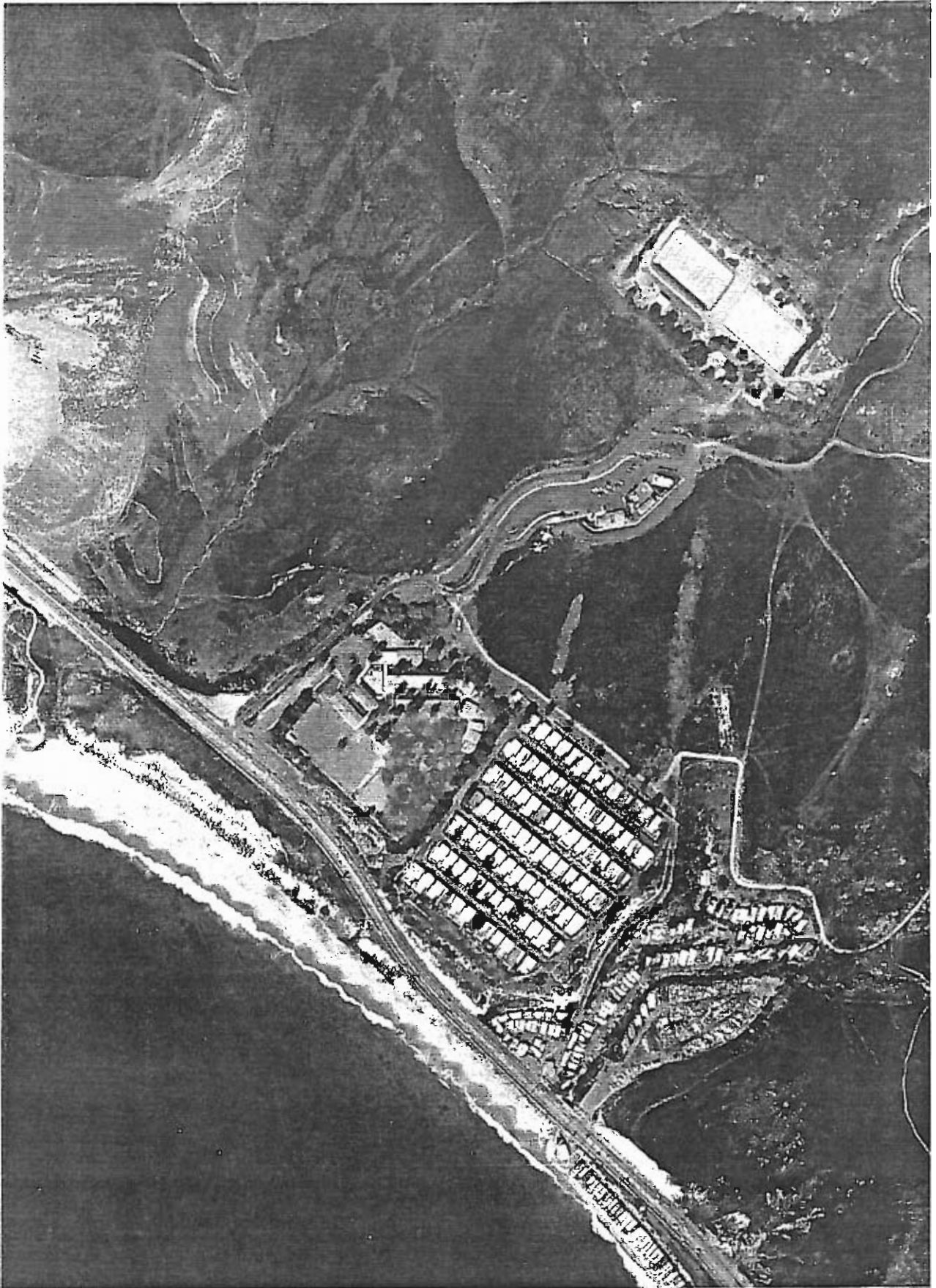


Figure 17: Crystal Cove State Park Staging Area



Crystal Cove State Park Headquarters



Aerial View of Crystal Cove State Park Staging Area

PARK IMAGE/EDGES

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is a vast and contiguous area of open space that has long provided a very desirable native wilderness buffer to a number of communities in the South County region. Of major concern to the community workshop participants was that the park not only be perceived as a wilderness area from within the park, but that the park perimeters continue to convey the sense of a vast wilderness area. Therefore, the quality of the park's edges with respect to plant composition, topography and overall viewshed is very important.

Careful selection of plant materials will be required to insure that ecological and environmental conditions such as moisture, drainage, exposure and habitat value are matched between site conditions and proposed plant materials. In all cases where additional plant materials are proposed, native plant materials shall be used that compliment and fit within the context of the existing natural plant communities. Where the park interfaces with road conditions, the use of native plant materials and naturalized topography is encouraged. Special effort shall be taken to eliminate non-native invasive species and re-plant with native vegetation, especially in areas that have been disturbed due to ranching and farming activities. A plant list for the park's staging areas is included in the Appendix of this document.



Park Edges

Park edges are primarily composed of three conditions: upslope, downslope and flat conditions. Where grading occurs at the park edges, contour grading variation from straight 2:1 grades will be required to achieve a more gradual transition from the "natural" to the "man-made".

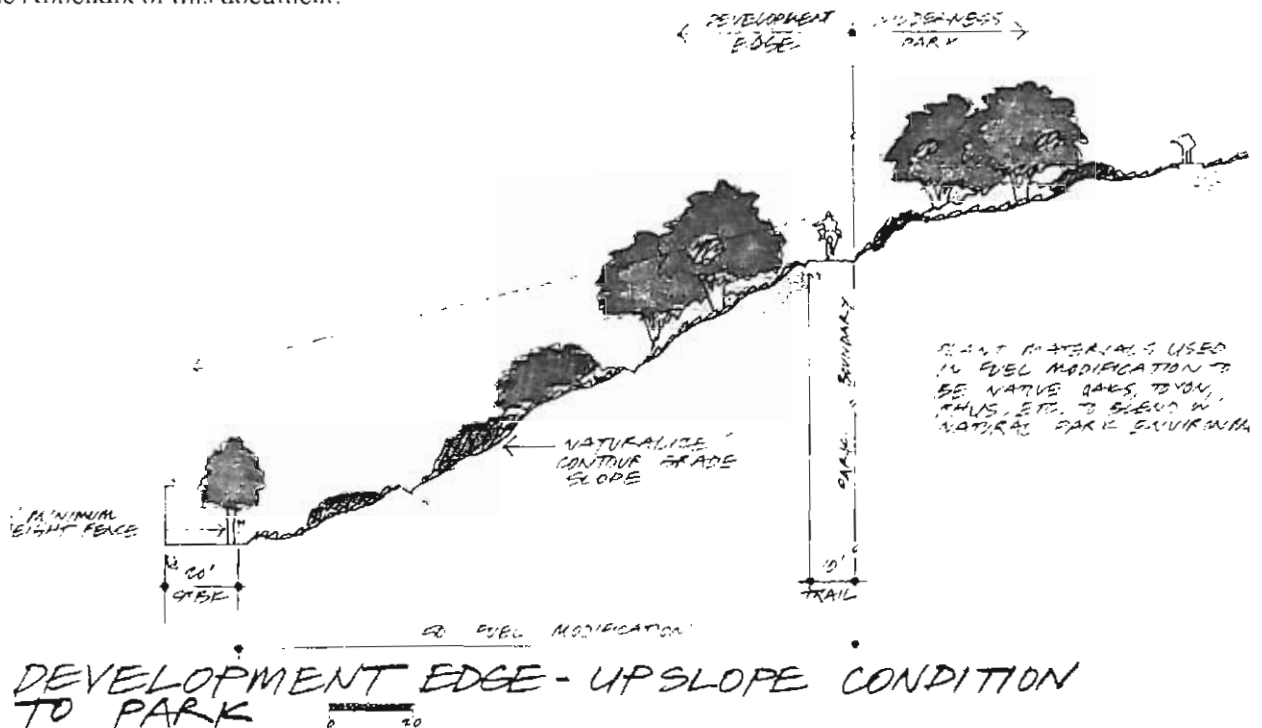


Figure 18: Section of Development Edge - Upslope Condition to Park

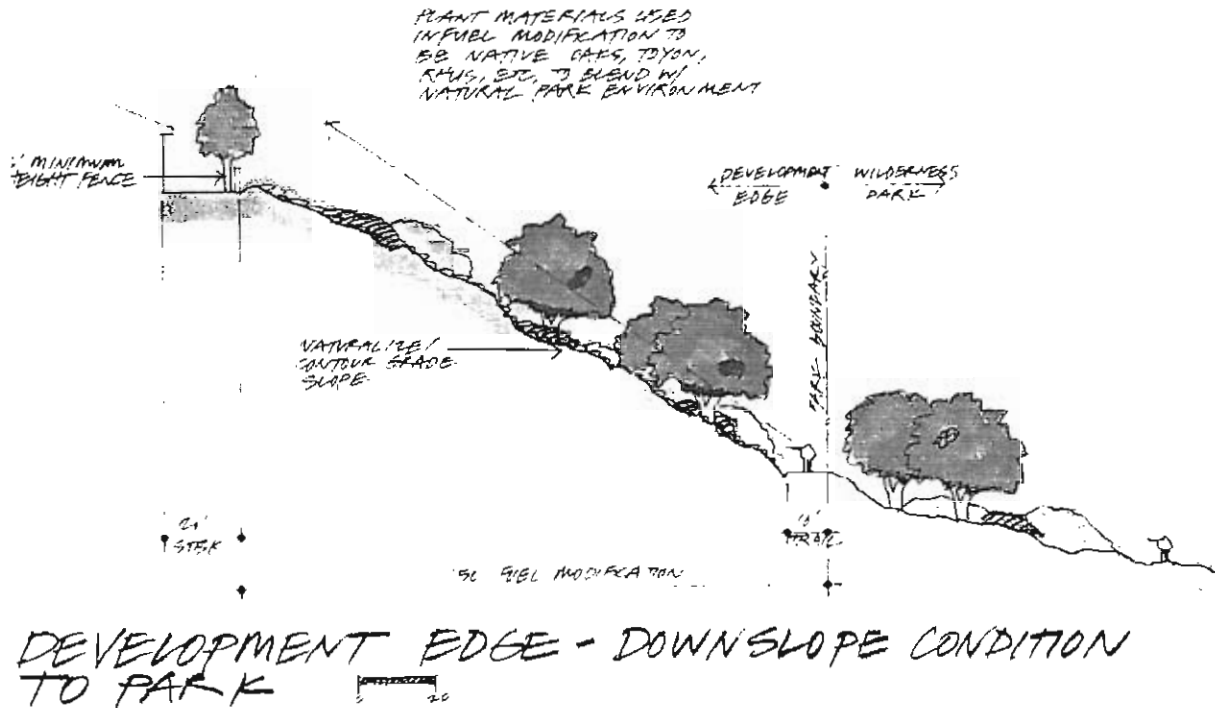


Figure 19: Section of Development Edge - Downslope Condition to Park

Viewsheds to new development from park view points should be mitigated to maintain a wilderness experience and protect viewsheds within the park. Where new development is proposed at the park edges, fuel modification, visual screening and trail development

should be consistent with the General Development Plan proposals, the Orange County Fire Department and the Harbors, Beaches and Parks Department requirements and regulations.

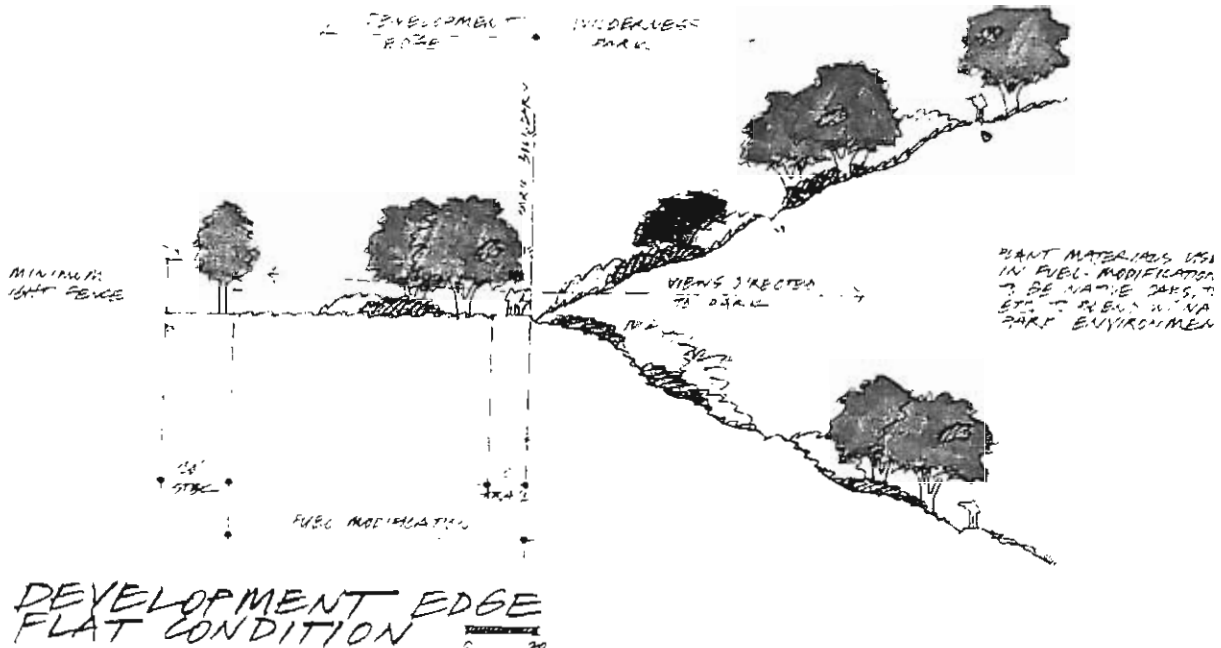


Figure 20: Section of Development Edge - Flat Condition

TOLL ROAD

The San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor (SJHTC) is a multi-lane toll road that runs from existing Route 73 near John Wayne Airport to I-5 near San Juan Capistrano. Its path cuts through the middle of the wilderness park. Prior to the construction of the corridor several studies were conducted to explore ways to mitigate the impact of the corridor on the park. The mitigation program for the SJHTC includes: revegetation/restoration/preservation of 262 acres of CSS; revegetation of 27.7 acres of riparian willow woodland and salt water marsh; a \$3.6 million Coastal/Central NCCP conservation fund; construction of four wildlife bridge crossings; operation of 20 cowbird traps in perpetuity; and \$600,000 in habitat studies.

Conclusions resulting from this process indicated that construction of the SJHTC and the proposed toll plaza as designed by the (TCA) would have an impact on the wilderness park. The corridor alignment cuts across the ridge line between the coast and the inland valleys and effectively cuts the park into two separate areas.

Orange County Harbors, Beaches and Parks Department has been working closely with the Transportation Corridor Agency to develop solutions to impacts on trail connections and wildlife crossings.

LAGUNA CANYON ROAD

Laguna Canyon Road is an existing two-lane road with an alternate passing lane extending from Pacific Coast Highway to the I-405 freeway. The road's relationship to the park and effects on existing conditions are summarized below.

- Laguna Canyon Road is the only feasible vehicular access to the proposed park headquarters
- The existing road alignment bifurcates the park and runs between the two southerly Laguna Lakes (Lakes Nos. 2 and 3), which were historically a single water body.
- The road restricts movement from one side of the canyon to the other. Park users have no currently designated way in which to cross the

road. It poses a danger to wildlife attempting to cross it, and possibly has acted as a physical deterrent to wildlife movement between open space areas on either side of the canyon.

- The road adversely impacts the environmental quality of the lakes. The large lake (Lake No. 3) has been fragmented, diminishing the exchange of water and nutrients. The smaller lake (Lake No. 2) has dried out more frequently than would have occurred with a clear connection to Lake No. 3.
- The environmental quality of the area in and around the lakes is also degraded by noise from the roadway, seasonal flooding and runoff (which carries pollutants from cars on the road).

The County of Orange and Caltrans have been studying potential improvements to Laguna Canyon Road since 1982. The County has taken the lead in the most recent planning effort for the realignment and widening of the road, documented in EIR No. 556. Several alternative alignments and the "no project" alternative were studied as part of that process. The Laguna Canyon Road Oversight Committee was established by the Laguna Beach City Council, in cooperation with the County of Orange, to refine the Locally Preferred Alternative.

The County Board of Supervisors adopted a Locally Preferred Alternative and certified EIR No. 556 on October 18, 1994. This Alternative was endorsed by the Laguna Canyon Road Oversight Committee and later approved by the Laguna Beach City Council in December 1994.

In planning the park, the road realignment studies were taken into consideration. Coordinating the enhancement of the Laguna Lakes area with the preferred realignment of the road was one of the workshop consensus items (Resource Management Plan Framework, 1996). The preferred alignment is shown in this GDP as being the alignment recommended for approval by the park planning workshop process.

A right-of-way reservation along the existing road was included in the dedication of land for the park to allow widening the road in its present alignment

if agreement could not be reached on an alternative alignment. This reservation will be released to the park if the preferred alignment is constructed.

The realignment planning/permitting is expected to be complete by August, 1998 with award of construction contract by February, 2000.

The park was established to protect this large area of open space (with its physical, biological, cultural and recreational attributes) in perpetuity. The planning process for the park established two key goals or functions: 1) resource protection, restoration and enhancement; and 2) public access for recreation and interpretation. The Laguna Canyon Road realignment and widening contributes to both of these functions as described below.

The Draft GDP recognized the road realignment/widening planning process, and recommended that the road be moved to the location of the preferred alignment, for the following reasons:

- Moving the road is recommended by the Laguna Lakes Enhancement Management Plan, prepared by Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. This recommendation was supported during the park workshop process.
- The quality of the lakes for recreational use is improved with the road moved away from the lakes.
- Water quality in the lakes will be improved by reconnecting Lake Nos. 2 and 3.
- Undercrossings constructed with the road provide good access for park users and wildlife, and help reconnect the park on both sides of the canyon. The proposed vertical alignment of the road facilitates construction of an undercrossing.
- The proposed alignment improves the access to the park headquarters in Little Sycamore Canyon.

As part of the Laguna Canyon Road (LCR) realignment and widening, the old LCR pavement will be removed north of Laguna Lake No. 3. A new multi-use trail will be developed north of

Lake No. 3 within the old road alignment. South of Lake No. 3, the road alignment and widening project will include removal of old LCR pavement, habitat restoration and enhancement. Access to existing utilities along old LCR will be resolved during preparation of the LCR Resource Enhancement Management Plan.

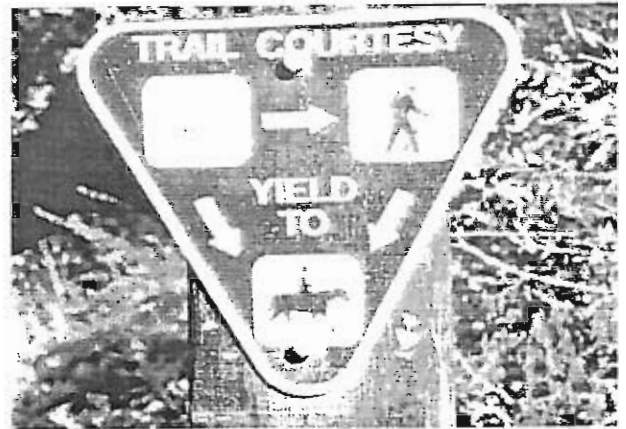
PARK INFORMATION AND SIGNAGE

Park use information is offered in three ways: park brochures/literature; interpretive programs; and signage. A park brochure will be developed by the County at a future date in response to this General Development Plan and the scheduled park opening. Four different types of signs are planned for the park: identification signage, directional signage, regulatory signage and interpretive signage. Identification signage involves three distinct levels of message.

Identification Signage - Primary

Primary signage identifies the park location and its facilities from a regional scale including adjacent neighborhoods, roads, arterials and freeways. Primary identification signage identifying the park is planned for the following locations:

1. Adjacent the northbound San Diego freeway prior to the Laguna Canyon Road off-ramp.
2. Along the southbound Laguna Canyon Road near the northern park boundary informing the visitor that they have entered the park.



County Park Signage



Docent-Led Tour

Identification Signage - Secondary

Secondary identification signage will occur along local roads and highways and identify individual park staging area locations. Secondary signage is planned for:

1. The northbound and southbound approaches along Laguna Canyon Road to Little Sycamore Canyon, Laurel Canyon and the equestrian staging area near Big Bend.

Identification Signage - Tertiary

Tertiary information signs will occur at the park, interpretive/office center staging areas and trail heads and will inform the visitor of park programs, facilities and features. Signage will be composed of natural materials with primary signs and road signs conforming to appropriate highway and road way regulations.

Directional Signage

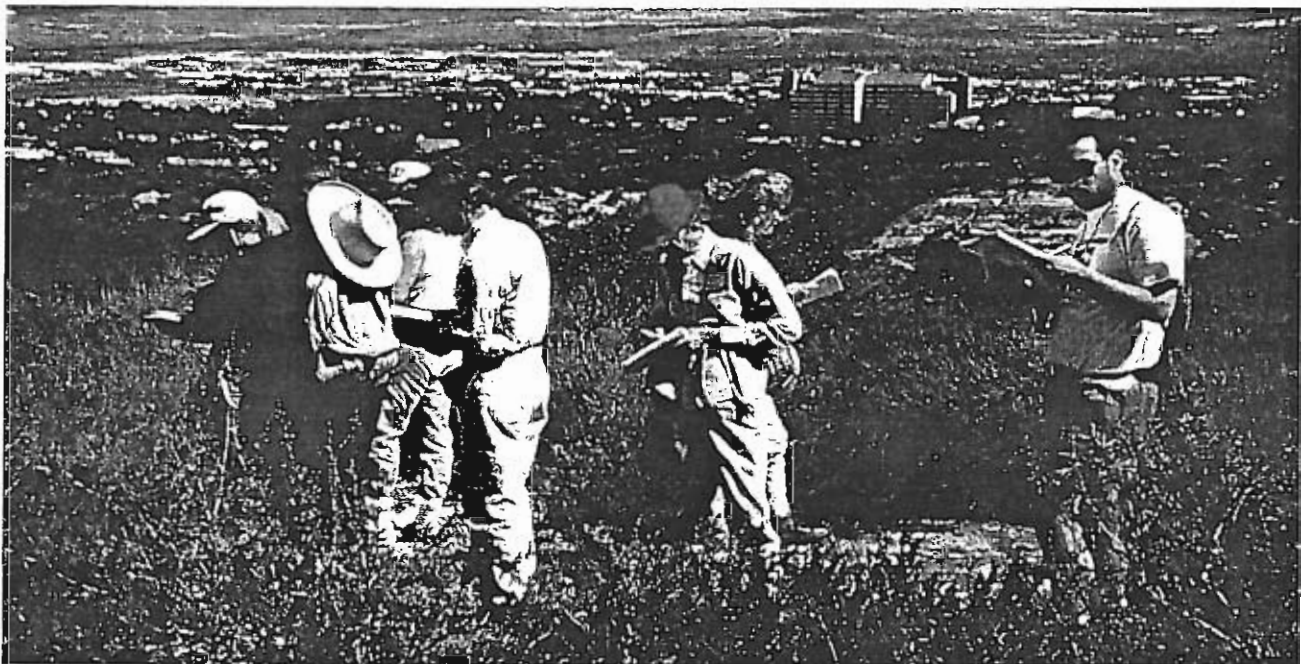
Directional signage will be placed as necessary to convey trail and park facility locations and will also be composed of materials consistent with the natural/wilderness character.

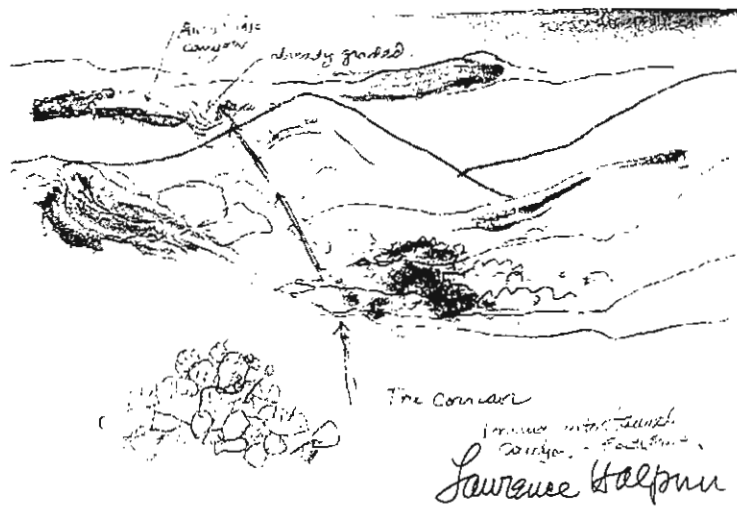
Regulatory Signage

Regulatory signage will define the rules and regulations of the park and will convey allowable and restricted uses within the park. As with directional signage, the signs will be placed at access points and trail heads to minimize clutter within the park. Consistent with informational and directional signage, materials will be natural. Signs will be low profile and of a color that is complementary with the park's wilderness character.

Interpretive Signage

Interpretive signage will be a key component in delivering the interpretive program to park visitors. Signage will be low in profile, of natural materials and colors that blend with the park environment. Interpretive signage will use graphic symbols to convey information as simply as possible. Park brochures, educational materials and interpretive center exhibits such that there is a family of interpretive materials that is consistent and thematic in message, color and overall presentation. Signage should also address the visually disabled visitor.





VI. IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION

The improvements proposed in the General Development Plan were developed in response to the consensus items resulting from the community workshop process. These improvements are structured to meet the project goals of protecting valuable resources of the park and providing access points and trails so that the public can enjoy the park.

The costs for implementing the various proposed improvements is significant; therefore, a phasing plan based on priorities was essential for spreading costs over time. Crystal Cove State Park is included in Phase I even though it is an existing facility. Trail connections to State Park trails and camping facilities are a top priority. Implementation of each staging area includes all proposed trails associated with that staging area.

The following list and the graphic phasing plan describe the development priorities. Table 1, structured to reflect the priorities of the phasing plan, details the proposed improvements for each staging area and tabulates costs.

- Phase 1. Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area
Crystal Cove State Park
(currently developed)
Irvine Bowl Staging Area
- Phase 2. Laurel Canyon Staging Area
- Phase 3. Big Bend Equestrian Area
James Dilley Staging Area

The final portion of this Chapter discusses park administration, management and operations.

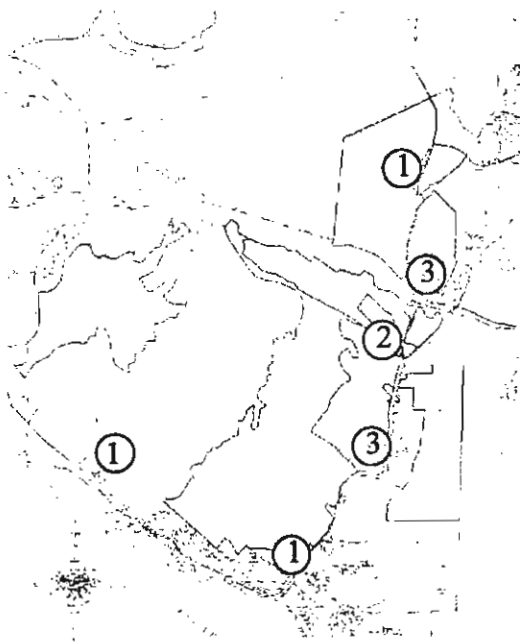


Figure 21: Phasing Plan

Table 1-- Probable Construction Costs for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
Phase 1 - Little Sycamore Staging Area.

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
<u>Hardscape Elements</u>					
Grading	1	ALLOW	30,000	30,000	
Utilities	1	ALLOW	50,000	50,000	
Interpretive center	3,000	S.F.	200	600,000	
Interpretive exhibits		ALLOW	250,000	250,000	
Acceleration and deceleration lanes on Laguna Canyon Rd.		ALLOW	50,000	50,000	
Entry and loop road	30,600	S.F.	2	65,790	
Parking	17,200	S.F.	2	36,980	
Park entry structure	200	S.F.	200	40,000	
Vehicular bridge	2	EA.	50,000	100,000	
Pedestrian bridge	1	EA.	20,000	20,000	
Picnic tables	12	EA.	330	3,960	
D.G. paving at picnic areas	20,460	S.F.	2	33,554	
Outdoor amphitheater	1	ALLOW	10,000	10,000	
Signage		ALLOW	75,000	75,000	
New hiking-only trails	9,510	S.F.	2	15,596	
New multi-use trails	6,600	S.F.	2	10,824	
Bike racks	2	EA.	850	1,700	
Lakes enhancement (Includes benches and trail renovation)	1	ALLOW	50,000	50,000	
Drinking fountain	2	EA.	2,750	5,500	
Trash can with holder	10	EA.	500	5,000	
Subtotal - Hardscape					\$ 1,453,904
<u>Softscape</u>					
Site preparation	753,959	S.F.	0	113,094	
Tree planting		ALLOW	10,000	10,000	
Shrub and tree planting for screening at Laguna Canyon Rd.	135,470	S.F.	2	203,205	
Shrub planting (Interpretive Center)	34,100	S.F.	1	17,050	
Groundcover planting (Interp. Center)	34,100	S.F.	1	17,050	
Shrub screening at parking lot	4,185	S.F.	1	2,093	
Revegetation of riparian areas	93,000	S.F.	0	18,600	
Revegetation of dry creek drainage area	46,074	S.F.	0	9,215	
Revegetation of CSS	306,900	S.F.	0	46,035	

Revegetation of grassland (Seed and container planting)	138,415	S.F.	0	8,305	
Temporary irrigation at Interp. Center	34,100	S.F.	1	34,100	
90 Day Maintenance	753,959	S.F.	0	60,317	
Subtotal - Softscape					\$ 539,064
Subtotal - Hardscape and Softscape for Little Sycamore					\$ 1,992,968

Phase 1 - General Park Improvements

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
<u>Hardscape Elements</u>					
New multi-use trails	63,000	S.F.	2	103,320	
Fencing at prohibited access areas (3.5' high 2 strand fence)	33,000	L.F.	6	198,000	
Subtotal for General Park Improvm't					\$ 301,320
Subtotal for Phase 1					\$ 2,294,288
Contingency 15%					\$ 344,143
Total for Phase 1					\$ 2,638,431

Phase 2 - Laurel Canyon Staging Area

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
<u>Hardscape Elements</u>					
Grading	1	ALLOW	20,000	20,000	
Utilities	1	ALLOW	25,000	25,000	
Entry road	11,160	S.F.	2	23,994	
Parking	19,065	S.F.	2	40,990	
Vehicular bridges					
Access road to staging area	1	EA.	100,000	100,000	
Laguna Canyon Road	1	EA.		N.I.C.	
El Toro Road	1	EA.		N.I.C.	
Pedestrian bridge					
Hiking-only	1	EA.	20,000	20,000	
Multi-use trail	5	EA.	20,000	100,000	
Interpretive kiosk	1	EA.	10,000	10,000	
Picnic tables	12	EA.	330	3,960	
D.G. paving at picnic areas	13,640	S.F.	2	22,370	
Signage		ALLOW	50,000	50,000	

Restroom	1	ALLOW	100,000	100,000	
New hiking-only trails	2,400	S.F.	2	3,936	
New multi-use trails	35,500	S.F.	2	58,220	
Bike racks	2	EA.	850	1,700	
Drinking fountain	2	EA.	2,750	5,500	
Trash can with holder	6	EA.	500	3,000	
Subtotal - Hardscape					\$ 588,670
Softscape					
Site preparation	252,495	S.F.	0	37,874	
Tree planting		ALLOW	10,000	10,000	
Shrub and tree planting for screening at Laguna Canyon Rd.	155,310	S.F.	2	232,965	
Revegetation of riparian areas	33,480	S.F.	0	6,696	
Revegetation of grassland	63,705	S.F.	0	9,556	
90 Day maintenance	252,495	S.F.	0	20,200	
Subtotal - Softscape					\$ 317,291
Subtotal - Hardscape and Softscape for Laurel Canyon					\$ 905,961
Contingency 15%					\$ 135,894
Total for Phase 2					\$ 1,041,855

Phase 3 - James Dilley Staging Area

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
Signage		ALLOW	5,000	5,000	
Bike racks	2	EA.	850		
Trash can with holder	2	EA.	500	1,000	
Interpretive kiosk	1	EA.	10,000	10,000	
Total for Phase 3					\$ 17,700

Phase 3 - Big Bend Staging Area

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
Hardscape Elements					
Grading	1	ALLOW	10,000	10,000	
Utilities	1	ALLOW	20,000	20,000	
Parking	14,835	S.F.	2	31,895	

Railroad tie wheel stops	10	EA.	50	500	
Equestrian corral fencing	240	L.F.	10	2,340	
4' equestrian gate	1	EA.	200	200	
3 rail fence adjacent street	240	L.F.	10	2,340	
Signage		ALLOW	5,000	5,000	
Restroom	1	ALLOW	100,000	100,000	
Horse tie-up rails	2	EA.	550	1,100	
Bike racks	2	EA.	850	1,700	
Drinking fountain	1	EA.	2,750	2,750	
Water guzzler	2	EA.	200	400	
Trash can with holder	2	EA.	500	1,000	
Subtotal - Hardscape					\$ 179,225
Softscape					
Site preparation	17,012	S.F.	0	2,552	
Tree planting		ALLOW	2,500	2,500	
Shrubs and groundcover	17,012	S.F.	1	12,759	
90 Day maintenance	17,012	S.F.	0	1,361	
Subtotal - Softscape					\$ 19,172
Subtotal - Hardscape and Softscape					
for Big Bend					\$ 198,397
Contingency 15%					\$ 29,760
Total for Phase 3					\$ 245,857

Probable Construction Cost Summary

Phase	Projected Costs
Phase 1	2,638,431
Phase 2	1,041,855
Phase 3	245,857
Total	\$3,926,143

PARK ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

Administration and operation of the park shall be under the purview of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority (Authority) which was established on June 25, 1991. The Authority's membership includes representatives from all current park land owners, from the public and from ex-officio membership, including future land owners within the park. As part of its duties, the Authority is responsible for park monitoring, park operations and fostering volunteer assistance.

Park administrative operations will be conducted from the park office in Little Sycamore Canyon. This office will be the center of control for all park operations and resource management operations, except for maintenance. Maintenance operations will be conducted from the Mason Regional Park maintenance facility. People hiking, riding horses, or bicycling into the park are not charged an admission fee. However, a fee will be charged to drive into and park at any of the proposed staging areas. Fees will be collected through use of pay boxes. Park patrolling activities will operate from a four-wheel drive vehicle using existing truck roads.



Scientists in the Field

Park Resource Management

A Resource Management Plan Framework has been prepared concurrently with this General Development Plan. It is intended to provide guidelines for further research and development of management actions. In addition, resource management goals, objectives and actions must be consistent with the NCCP Program.



Ranger patrolling in the Park

Operations

Park Hours

Park hours are 7:00 a.m. to sunset. Closure of trails and roads for a period of time may occur following heavy rains or when fire officials request closure due to high fire danger.

Special Permits

Special permits will be issued by the Park Ranger's office for organized groups, i.e., school groups for educational purposes, research by authorized groups or individuals, and fund-raising efforts. Special permits will be issued in accordance with Section 7.0 EMA Policy 7.1.401.

Prohibited Activities

Prohibited uses within the park include any activity that results in loss or degradation of park resources and facilities. Artifact, plant and animal collecting is prohibited (OCCO 2-5-27; 2-5-38).

- Motorized vehicles—Operation of motorized vehicles within the Park beyond the designated roads of the staging areas is not permitted. Exceptions are those authorized to access the park for purposes of management, maintenance, police and fire service, by easement or special permit.
- Boating—Public boating is not permitted. Exceptions are those authorized to access the lakes for the purpose of management, maintenance, police and fire services, by easement or special permit.
- Swimming and wading.

- Domestic animals.
- Cattle grazing.

Law and Ordinance Enforcement

Applicable local, state, and federal laws and/or ordinances pertaining to the protection and use of this park, whether originating at the local, regional, state, or federal level will be in effect and enforced.

Administration and Management

Park administration and management will be the responsibility of the County of Orange, Public Facilities and Resources Department, Harbors, Beaches & Parks, Regional Parks Operation staff.

1. Permanent staffing for the park at build-out is recommended to include:

- Senior Park Ranger (1 person)
- Park Ranger II (1 person)
- Inmate Supervisor (1 person)
- Groundskeepers (2 people)
- Office Technician (1 person)

The Senior Park Ranger will coordinate all administrative services including budget preparation, purchase requests, work requests, contract services, maintenance projects, park amenities inventory, reports, coordination of environmental studies, and development of interpretive programs.

The inmate supervisor will be a key staff person in accomplishing resource management and maintenance projects in the park. This position can coordinate CWP workers, jail crews as well as volunteers.

In addition, the creation of a new full-time staff position for a Natural Resources Specialist is recommended and described fully below.

2. Park Headquarters

The Laguna Coast Wilderness Park headquarters will be located at the interpretive center at Little Sycamore Canyon Staging Area. In advance of construction of the interpretive center, an interim park headquarters has been established at Willow Canyon, south of the intersection of El Toro Road and Laguna Canyon Road on the west side of Laguna

Canyon Road. A trailer currently functions as an interim headquarters for staff and docents and includes a small interpretive center. A small picnic area has been established adjacent to park headquarters. A staging area for equestrians is located 3/4 mile south of Willow Canyon on the west side of Laguna Canyon Road at Big Bend Equestrian Staging Area.

Resource Protection

The most important activity of park staff is resource protection. County park rangers will work cooperatively with the Nature Conservancy and the Irvine Company, California Fish and Game, and other resource agencies. In order to effectively manage the resources of all wilderness and natural parks in the County system, a new full-time staff position, Natural Resources Specialist, is recommended to be responsible for overseeing and implementing the recommendations and guidelines of all Resource Management Plans (RMP) for County of Orange parks.

The Natural Resources Specialist will:

- Have detailed knowledge of park resources, goals, and objectives;
- Review all habitat enhancement plans and specifications to ensure conformance with NCCP/HCP, park goals and objectives and the park's RMP;
- Review all monitoring reports; and
- Oversee all maintenance activities performed by maintenance personnel.

All maintenance activities will occur in an environment of respect and awareness of their direct and indirect impact upon the natural resources. All maintenance activities and projects will be properly planned, prepared, and supervised to ensure the protection of park natural and cultural resources. They will be placed on the Coastal Greenbelt Authority agenda when appropriate.

Park staff will develop a set of guidelines for maintenance action within the park. This will contain basic "do's" and "don'ts" of habitat protection and low impact maintenance. These maintenance guidelines will be consistent with the RMP.

Public Safety

The park is a wilderness area and is, therefore, subject to certain inherent public dangers. The public will be informed of these dangers by posting standard "Wilderness Warning" and/or other public safety signs where appropriate.

Budget

Appropriations for park operations are incorporated in the Harbors, Beaches and Parks/Regional Park Operations section of the County of Orange budget with funding from Harbors, Beaches and Parks County Service Area No. 26.

Volunteer Programs

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park had strong support groups even before the Park was created. Laguna Greenbelt, Inc., in conjunction with The Nature Conservancy and the County of Orange, started in 1992 docent and stewardship training and certification programs available now through a community college curriculum. Over one hundred and fifty trained docents have led tours in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and The Irvine Company Open Space Reserve during the Interim Operations period. The trained volunteers will continue to provide an extraordinary amount of support for the park and its operations.

Laguna Canyon Foundation, a 501(C)(3) nonprofit corporation, is dedicated to preserving, enhancing, and protecting Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The Foundation has provided funding and will continue to raise funds for park improvements.

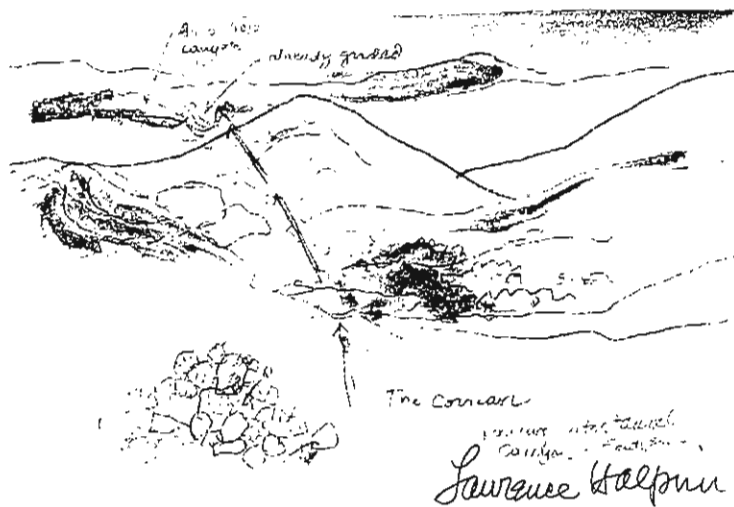
Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. and Laguna Canyon Foundation are both part of the County's Adopt-A-Park program.

Volunteer programs will provide the best opportunity for public outreach and involvement. By building on the County's existing Adopt-A-Park program, volunteers can be used for a variety of services at the wilderness park, such as interpretive programs, maintenance projects, research, etc.

- Docent Program - The park ranger will continue to work with volunteer organizations on the training and certification of volunteer docents to lead nature tours. Harbors, Beaches and Parks Ranger Reserves will be utilized for park patrols, public relations, and interpretive programs.
- Maintenance - Many individuals and groups such as Laguna Greenbelt's Stewardship Committee will continue to work in resource protection and restoration projects which will be identified and supervised by park rangers.
- Research - Many individuals and groups are interested in the more scientific (naturalist) aspects of volunteer work, i.e., bird counts, habitat evaluation, collection and cataloging of plants and insects. The park ranger will supervise and monitor these activities.

Liability Issues

Public information, park regulatory, and "Wilderness Warning" signs will be installed at appropriate locations.



VII. APPENDIX

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The County would like to thank the following people who contributed their time and expertise during the park planning process.

Manuel Ackerman	Ken H. Bruner
Lynne Dunn	Dave Alkema
Ilse Byrnes	Leslie Ernest
Tom Ash	Eric Fegraus
Jeff Byron	Kandy Byron
Wayne Baglin	Kimberly Bixler
Bob Borthwick	Ann Christoph
Harriet Behrens	Debra Conkey
Paul Coulter	Jack Cotter
Barbara Doerr	Mary Fegraus
Johanna Felder	Robert G. Fisher
Louise Fleenor	Dr. Elizabeth Brown
Irma Franklin	Max Brown
Linda Donnelly	Tito Fuentes
Nancy Graves	Jackie Kaagan
Niles Mackrell	Lawrence Halprin
Beverly Kelly	Patrick Marr
Eva Hodjera	Steve Kirby
Elizabeth Kirby	Ross Martin
Jack Housden	Steve Kirby
Kathie Matsuyama	Page Huyette
Steve Koch	Gary Medeiros
Jean Jenks	Chuck La Flamme
Ed Merrilees	Jeanette Merrilees
Eric Jessen	Lida Lenney
Jim Meyer	Marvin Johnson
Michael Lindsey	Tim Miller
Bob Joseph	Stuart Love
Patrick Mitchell	Bob Mueting
Kathie Reynolds	Aniko Sherry
William Naylor	Len Ridder
Trish Smith	Cindy Nickerson
Jenifer Rice	Alice Sorenson
Julie Thomas	Kari Rigoni
Gene Stone	Anne Whiston Spirn
Mark Petersen	Don Pendergast
Betsy Pendergast	Jeff Powers
Michelle Rainville	Debra Raeber
Mark Sanderson	Grace Secketa
Anne Secketa	Ernie Seidel
Teri Sforza	Kevin Sullivan
Barbara Stewart	Larry Sweet
Paul Sue	Niko Theris
Scott Thomas	Ute Wirth
Frances Tong	Peter Wisebrod
Ann Wisebrod	Scott Truesdall
Ron Yeo	Denton Turner
Patricia Young	Lance Vallery
Petra Velter	Cheryl Vind
Mark Weber	Sandy Willis

WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

WORKSHOP #1

The Information Fair was the first community participation aspect of the planning process. The intent of the Fair was to introduce the County staff and the Park Planning Team to the community and to present basic background information on the park. The Fair also presented the planning team with an opportunity to gain initial insight into issues, ideas, and visions for the park from the community.

Presentations on the park included: site context; biological resources; wildlife and cultural resources; San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor (SJHTC); and the Natural Communities Conservation Planning Program (NCCP). Information booths were set up by various groups involved with park preservation, acquisition and general interest.

Lawrence Halprin described the workshop process and its application to the planning of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Lawrence Halprin gave the following exercises to the group.

S1. Draw your image of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

The audience went right to work drawing and writing down their current impressions and images of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. It was often graphically depicted as an island within an encroaching urban fabric, a retreat, a wild place with wildlife, a wilderness challenge, a place to escape to and enjoy the serenity of a natural environment. Graphics included those that place the park within a greater urban context. Some graphics demonstrated how the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor would cut across and bisect the wilderness park with graphic emphasis on the detrimental effects of the road on the natural characteristics of the park. Other images focused on smaller scale drawings of the animals and vegetation which make it a unique environment.

S2. Give three words that characterize the park.

Many of the groups and individuals were not satisfied with only offering three words, they produced lists that contained five or more. Several people

continued drawing and annotated their graphics with adjectives. The general consensus was that the Wilderness Park is recognized as a sanctuary for both human life, wildlife, and plant life. It is considered an escape from the urban experience into a personal experience with nature with broad vistas to the surrounding natural and urban landscape.

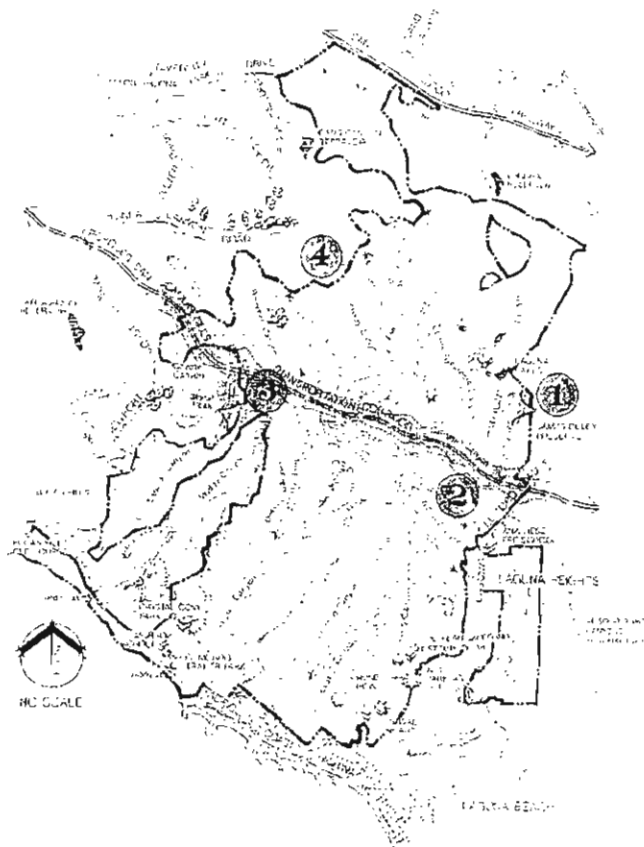
The words used created a cognitive image of the park and the issues that people believe will affect the planning of the park as they would like to see it planned. The main interests were retention, protection, or enhancement of the park as a:

- shared natural wilderness and community resource
- human refuge from the surrounding daunting urban development
- human and personal connection to nature
- life inspiring and free environment where personal rejuvenation and awareness are possible
- natural sanctuary where human senses can wander unrestricted throughout the plunging canyons and expansive vistas
- recreational resource with multiple use opportunities

WORKSHOP #2

“Taking Part” Awareness Tours One, Two, Three and Four (Bus Tour)

The Awareness Tours were developed to bring the workshop participants into contact with areas of the park which exemplify potential opportunities and alternatives for present and future change. These areas included the Laguna Lakes area, the James Dilley Preserve, Laurel Canyon, Crystal Cove State Park, San Joaquin Point area and Shady Canyon. Workshop participants were asked to interact with the sites utilizing all senses including sight, sound, touch, imagination, etc. The groups were also asked to answer questions and respond with comments, feelings and drawings to a number of directives or “Scores”. Answers, feelings and drawings were recorded in workbooks that each participant was given. The workbooks were collected and then summarized by the Park Planning Team.



AWARENESS TOURS 1,2,3,4 - SCORE LOCATIONS

Figure 22: Map of Awareness Tours One, Two, Three, & Four

BUS TOUR SUMMARY

TOUR ONE - Laguna Lakes and James Dilley Preserve

- S1a. Look at the color of Lake No. 3.
Make a sketch of the lake.**

Most workshop participants set right to work sketching the lake. Sketches focused on the storm water outlet culvert. Some sketches included notes about the native and non-native vegetation in the area and the decreased value of the lake because it is so near Laguna Canyon Road (LCR).

- S1b. What is your impression of the quality?**

SUMMARY: Poor water quality.

With few exceptions everyone made comments about the green algae, the stagnant water or the general poor water quality. Many workshop participants mentioned urban runoff as the cause for the eutrophic nature of the lake. One participant commented that he pities the animals that drink it. Positive comments included that the main portion of the lake looked good from a distance, the native vegetation is still OK. A few thought the color indicated it was rich with life and a good food resource for wildlife.

- S2a. Stop at the grassy open area, close your eyes for a few minutes and listen. What sounds do you hear?**

SUMMARY: Traffic, Birds.

The top two sounds heard were traffic and birds with air traffic falling close behind. Several people noted the frogs and the wind as it rustled the leaves of nearby trees.

- S2b. Does this seem, look, feel, smell, sound like a Wilderness Area?**

SUMMARY: Feels like a Wilderness Park but does not look or sound like one.

Very few people said yes or no without qualifying their thoughts. Traffic noise and the utility lines and poles were almost always listed together and noted as significantly decreasing any sense of wilderness.

The adjacent homes were noted by some to be intrusions and led some people to make a distinction between what they sense as a true wilderness and an urban wilderness. Many people commented on the smell of sage while the participants who toured after a night rain remarked on the wonderful fresh smell.

S2c. As you walk further along this trail what are your impressions of Laguna Canyon Road from this area?

SUMMARY: You can't see LCR but you can hear it. One participant commented that Laguna Canyon Road "Sounds like a freight train." The vast majority of workshopers followed with similar comments many also noting that you can't see it but you can hear it. Another person stated that Laguna Canyon Road is one of the nicest, most scenic roads in Southern California.

S3a. Look around you. What evidence of man's presence is noticeable? Make notes and drawings.

SUMMARY: Leisure World, fuel modification zones, terrace drains, traffic noise, utility lines.

Very few participants overlooked the nearby Leisure World development, they noted the buildings themselves and the urban edge they create. The associated landscaping and fuel modification zones which include exotics were mentioned, as well as, the terrace drains for runoff and the terrace blockwalls, fences and grading. Traffic noise and the utility poles were right up at the top of the list again. Other comments included the traces of cattle grazing, beer cans and the murky water of the lake.

S3b. There are proposals for a potential visitors center and parking area in the Lakes vicinity.

Can you picture one across the lake near this location?

SUMMARY: No, with concern expressed about visual and additional ecological impact.

Twice as many people noted an unequivocal "no!" than those who noted an unequivocal "yes". The negatives also commented that the area is already impacted by too much development.

The few people who noted "yes", qualified their answer by noting that it should be hidden on the other side of the knoll or sensitively designed. Several people thought where they were standing would be a better location because the immediate area was already impacted and it would not disrupt the views toward the hills. Other comments included that there should only be parking and unobtrusive kiosks, or just parking for handicapped. Only one person thought the visitor center should be placed on top of the knoll.

S4a. A large water tank is located beneath your feet.

Does this facility fit into the Wilderness Park.

SUMMARY: Yes

Most people thought that this facility did fit into the Wilderness Park but also thought it needed more vegetation to disguise it and the pump station. Some said it did fit but it didn't belong there. The participants that commented negatively noted that it appeared dry, desolate and barren. People in both categories thought it provided good views to the surrounding areas.

S4b. Aliso Creek Road may come through this area along the alignment of the trail that the bus came up.

What impact would this have on visitors and wildlife in the area.

SUMMARY: A negative impact; Pollution, Fragmentation.

Few people noted specific impacts on visitors to this area. Everyone focused on the impacts of developing a road through this area. There wasn't one positive comment regarding the impacts of introducing a developed road. The division and fragmentation of the land was the most commonly noted impact followed by the consequences of the disturbance or destruction of wild-life habitat and movement. Noise and air pollution were among the other comments which included concern about the visual impacts caused by increased and severe grading required to increase road width. There was also concern about increased runoff into the lakes, as well as, litter and road kill. Several people noted simply that it was a terrible

idea and that there were already too many roads and too little wilderness area.

S5a. Look to the North at Laguna Canyon Road and the Lakes. Note that two of the three lakes are on the other side of the road. A number of alternatives are being proposed for the potential re-alignment and/or widening of Laguna Canyon Road. Look at the panoramic photographs for reference. Would you change the alignment or leave it as is?

SUMMARY: Change alignment.

The majority of people wanted to change the alignment, primarily to allow all the lakes to be on one side. Other benefits such as reduced flood hazard and traffic safety were also pointed out. There was concern expressed over the number of lanes and road width and wildlife corridors from LCWP to the lake area. Several people indicated that it should be moved west to the other side of the hill.

The people who wanted to leave it as it is, cited that a new alignment might cause more environmental damage. There was also concern over any new alignment becoming another freeway.

S7a. What are your thoughts about a self guided Nature Trail?

SUMMARY: Participants supported the idea of a self-guided nature trail.

One person commented "I have wanted to come up on this ridge for over 30 years. It's great to be here at last!"

There was similar overwhelming enthusiasm from just about everyone. Some participants wanted to return to complete the self guided tour with the accompanying field guide. Others thought a simple field guide without the station markers would be preferable. Comments included remarks about the great vistas from the ridge trail and how the varying terrain added to the experience. Some commented that the terrain distracted them from the vistas.

S7b. Do you consider self guided trails appropriate for other locations in the Wilderness Park?

SUMMARY: Yes.

Almost everyone said yes adding other positive remarks about how it increased their awareness of the natural environment. It was generally thought that the self guided and interpretive trails should be restricted to areas near access points and trail heads; should not be combined with other trail uses such as bicycle trails; should be in areas of accessible terrain; and only in areas with dissimilar environments.

S7c. Note the width, gradient, and surface of the trail.

Should emergency vehicles be able to access this area? How?

SUMMARY: No. alternate means: helicopter, horse or bike.

It was thought that emergency vehicles should not be allowed to enter this area by way of a widened path because the narrow treacherous character of the trail is what gave it so much appeal. Most people thought that emergency access should be made by helicopter, horse, bicycle or other means that would not require extension of roads into this area. It was repeatedly pointed out that the roads were close enough and that the narrow trails should be preserved.

S7d. As you look out across Laguna Canyon Road, note that the James Dilley Preserve is separated from the rest of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park by the roadway.

What impact does this have on the James Dilley Greenbelt Preserve and Laguna Coast Wilderness Park?

SUMMARY: Access problems for people and wildlife corridors.

It was generally noted that there are access problems between the two park areas. Equal attention was paid to pedestrian and wildlife access and the need for special corridors for both. It was noted that without connections, island habitats would be created.

Visitors may be inhibited from going from one area to the other, making them distinct and separate parks. Some people felt that the two park areas should be connected but pointed out that different uses would still develop in part because the James Dilley Preserve wasn't burned. There were a few who commented that Laguna Canyon Road should "go away."

S8a. What are the park planning issues associated with the proposed corridor once it is built?

SUMMARY: Fragmentation/associated access problems. Pollution (visual, audio, ecological)

The main concern is fragmentation of the park and the resulting access problems, primarily for wildlife, secondarily for people. There is great concern about the effectiveness of wildlife corridors. Pedestrian crossings, trail connections and safety followed suit. A lot of energy was spent noting all types of sensory pollution. Air pollution, increased traffic noise, and the negative visual impacts of the proposed corridor were noted. The severe road cuts and grading was mentioned repeatedly with added notes on how the corridor further diminished the value of the Wilderness Park by further fragmenting its parts. Light from headlights and roadway lights were noted as problems, followed by safety issues like traffic accidents and toxic highway spills. Some people got very specific and pointed out that the old sycamores should be saved.

S8b. What impacts will SJHTC have on park visitors and wildlife in this area?

Describe the changes that will occur in this area as a result of the building of the corridor.

SUMMARY: Fragmentation / associated access problems. Pollution: visual, audio, ecological. Decreased sense of wilderness. Focus on big picture impacts: land form, hydrologic, and ecological cycles.

Many of the concerns expressed in S8a were repeated here, however notes of a more general and larger scale were made. More people responded noting the decreased "sense of wilderness." People's concern changed from focusing on the specific impacts of grading, terraces and runoff to the magnitude of the changes to the natural land forms of the

area and impact on the natural hydro-logic processes and water quality that are critical not only for wildlife but also humans. Comments on the fragmentation of the park were repeated. Interrupted views and introduction of non-native vegetation was also pointed out. Safety issues, such as traffic accidents and the interchange at Laguna Canyon Road, were mentioned. Several noted that the entire canyon would be destroyed. One participant summed it up by saying "This beautiful natural spot will be gone forever."

TOUR TWO - LAUREL CANYON

S1a. Look at the parking lot area. It is approximately 1/3 acres and holds 35 cars. Cars require about 350 square feet for parking and access.

How many cars would you imagine should be accommodated at Laguna Coast Wilderness Park staging areas?

SUMMARY: Unresolved, 35-40 and 50-100 Dependent on number of other lots and uses allowed in the area.

There were two size ranges for parking lots identified. Many people thought that the existing lot as large enough allowing 30 - 40 car spaces. Another group thought that 50 - 100 car spaces would be more appropriate. Both groups tended to qualify their statements by remarking that the size would depend greatly on the number of other parking lots and the uses intended for the area.

For example, it was pointed out that if equestrian uses were allowed then the parking area would need to accommodate horse trailers.

S2a. A pedestrian signal has been installed at the corner of Laguna Canyon Road and El Toro.

What are your feelings about this as a park entrance?

SUMMARY: Yes. Logical with some safety concerns.

The majority of responses favored an entrance here, many without further comment. Others added that an entrance at this location would be logical and easy to find in part because of the existing traffic signal. There was concern expressed about pedestrian crossing and general safety near this busy intersection and roadway. Several people thought parking should be located on the wilderness park side of LCR.

Most workshoppers reacted to the score as if the Anneliese's Preschool parking lot was going to be a staging area.

S2b. Note the trail (new fire road) adjacent Laguna Canyon Road with hay bales for erosion protection. This trail runs down Laguna Canyon Road to the south.

What significance do you perceive with this trail?

SUMMARY: Good connection to other access points and multi-use potential.

People thought it should be retained for fire and emergency access. Most people thought it would be a good connection to other access points that lead into other canyons along accessible routes, maybe even a gateway. There were few negative remarks about this trail. A couple of people thought it would be unsafe and uncomfortable to walk so close to Laguna Canyon Road. In general, people thought it would make a good multi-use trail for bicycles and horses alike. Those opposed to active use cited the steep terrain and potential erosion problems.

S3a. State Fish and Game has acquired a portion of Laurel Canyon due to the presence of rare plant species and riparian habitat that drains directly into the ocean.

Would you extend new trails for visitors to see the rare plants? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

SUMMARY: No. Provide examples or info at trailhead.

The advantages and disadvantages were clearly noted in the notebooks. Increased awareness and education were the major advantages while destruction of the habitat, collecting rare plant specimens and vandalism were noted as disadvantages.

There was a general trend in the responses against access to areas with sensitive plants. Both positive and negative responses were qualified with statements about only docent led tours into sensitive areas or keeping visitors in limited areas or existing trails. There were a lot of good suggestions on providing information at trail head kiosks or planting specimens at accessible interpretive areas or along existing trails so as to satisfy curiosity.

S4a. An old Black Walnut grove is located north of the stream near Laguna Canyon Road.

What park uses do you think are appropriate in this area?

SUMMARY: Access and staging area with an information kiosk.

There were a handful of participants that thought this area should be restored to a natural state. The overwhelming response was to use this area as an access point and staging area complete with parking. There were accompanying activities suggested ranging from passive to very active. Many people proposed a picnic area while others thought it was too close to Laguna Canyon Road.

Other suggestions included functional facilities such as restrooms, information kiosks, and a ranger station while the more active uses included a museum, visitor center, performance stage, children's play area and camping. Others noted how nice the trees and grass were and thought that alone was fine.

S5a. Sketch the most visually prominent element at the entry to Laurel Canyon.

The ridge line and the interesting rock outcroppings were the element sketched.

S5b. There are prominent rock outcroppings in this area and throughout the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Some have caves with evidence of recent habitation and some with evidence of much earlier use. Imagine yourself as an early Native American.

Note your feelings and imagine yourself here at that time.

Workshoppers imagined this area to be a rich source of food and shelter. They imagined it to be a secure location with many places to hide from predators. The beautiful, peaceful surrounds and mild climate was also noted.

S5c. Would you extend trails for park visitors to see these areas?

What are the advantages and disadvantages?

SUMMARY: Provide access primarily to the area with limited access to caves.

Most people said yes, citing the educational advantages but strongly qualified their statement with concern about controlling visitors, perhaps through docents, or limiting access to fringe areas because of the potential impacts to this area. Specific disadvantages were pointed out by both those advocating and those opposed to intrusion into this area. It was repeatedly pointed out that inviting visitors into this area could lead to the eventual degradation, if not destruction, of these natural features and their use as wildlife habitat if there was no active control on access.

S6a. Note the width, gradient and surface of the trail. Imagine yourself as a teenager, how would you use this trail?

Mountain biking was the activity of choice for the imaginative teenagers. This was followed by hiking/exploring, horseback riding, social gatherings/hanging out and running. There was not much concern noted about the impacts of these activities beyond restricting some active uses.

S7a. Imagine yourself as one of the wildlife inhabitants and describe your experience in this habitat.

Food, shelter and water were again pointed out as being important to wildlife inhabitants. These creatures feel safe because there are many hiding places when their vegetation isn't burned but now they feel a bit vulnerable and in a panic to find or build a new home. Those who became birds found the burn to be an advantage to finding prey in the vast open areas. Some of the wildlife felt inhibited by the fences and were not initially happy to see visitors but soon found that they brought tasty treats in their lunches.

S7b. Look up at the north and south facing slopes above you. What differences do you notice? What similarities? Draw a cross-section of the canyon.

No one missed the stark differences between the north slope being more heavily vegetated and the south being less vegetated and rockier. Differences in soil color and apparent degree of slope were also noted.

People also noted that the north face seemed to be recovering from the burn faster than the south face. It was noted that both slopes had Laurel Sumac and Wild Cucumber.

S8a. Oak Woodland - First stream crossing. The trail crosses the stream several times in this canyon. Sketch different types of stream crossings you think are appropriate in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

SUMMARY: Wooden or stepping stone wooden bridges were the most commonly specified with an alternate stepping stone type. Many people thought there shouldn't be any bridge.

S9a. At the third stream crossing...close your eyes and listen.

What sounds do you hear?... What do you feel?

Generally people felt a sense of calm and were relaxed. They listened to the breeze and the rustling of the leaves, the trickling water and the birds. A few noted the absence of traffic noise while others were distracted by an airplane. A couple of people noticed their stomachs growling in concert with the frogs.

S10a. What natural hazards should a visitor be aware of on this trail?

SUMMARY: Loose and falling rocks, steep cliffs, erosion.

Loose and falling rock, cliffs, steep and undercut trails and poisonous plants were at the top of the lists. Mud slides, erosion and animals were also mentioned.

S10b. Should new trails be built in steep terrain?...How? Make drawings.

SUMMARY: No.

More participants said "No" to new trails in this area citing increased erosion, high maintenance and liability. Those participants who said "Yes," typically qualified their statement with concerns about erosion or to limiting development to new trails that have distinct destinations such as ridge trails or vista points.

The solution to decreasing the impact of new trails was to use switch backs in combination with stepped ramps.

S11a. As you walk out of the canyon, please note when you first hear traffic on Laguna Canyon Road. Also note when you feel the "air-conditioning" effect of the ocean.

Most workshopppers noted that some traffic noise could be heard above station 10 then it disappeared until breaching the throat of the canyon near station number 7.

Workshopppers responses to the "air conditioning" where dependent on which day they took the tour. One tour group consistently said that the weather was so cool that it was difficult to tell when one felt the "air conditioning effect." Those who could feel it noted the cool air as one left the open meadow and went beyond station number 7.

S11b. What evidence of animals do you see?...animal prints?

Animal tracks, scat, fossils, habitat holes and nests were primary evidence. Some people spotted browse vegetation.

S11c. What evidence of man do you see?

Footprints, litter, fences and mountain bike tracks were at the top of this list with hay bales, sandbags, roads and exotic plants following. The burn was also seen as evidence of man.

TOUR THREE - SIGNAL PEAK

S1a. Los Trancos Canyon...What uses do you think are appropriate for this area?

SUMMARY: Passive uses, hiking / trails, vistas.

Everyone noted the grand vista from this vantage point but it was clear that the activities thought of as most appropriate were passive ones. Hiking was the main activity noted. The creation of a wildlife preserve open space was also mentioned many times. More active uses such as equestrian and mountain biking were often mentioned.

S1b. How would you access this area?

SUMMARY: There was no consensus on how to access this area. All routes were mentioned. Many people preferred access from Signal Peak as the tour groups had entered. Newport Coast Road and Pacific Coast Highway were mentioned equally but there didn't seem to be suggestions on more specific locations or methods.

S1c. How will the future development affect this area of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park?

SUMMARY: Disaster.

It was overwhelmingly felt that development in this area would be a disaster. Access was the largest problem identified with this area. Further fragmentation and the resulting destruction of wildlife corridors were paramount in peoples minds. The peripheral development was viewed as an impervious layer for both park visitors and wildlife. Noise and the visual impact where also cited.

S1d. Wishbone Hill Drive...What impact will this have on Laguna Coast Wilderness Park?

SUMMARY: Big impact, further fragmentation of the park into quadrants.

People unanimously indicated that it would cut the wilderness park into quadrants, further destroying natural wildlife corridors and creating more interrupted views. Several participants said that there should not be a road while a few mentioned the possibility of this road becoming an access route.

S1e. Edison service road...What impact will this have on the canyon?

SUMMARY: OK, not so bad, low impact.

It was repeatedly pointed out that Edison should continue to access this utility pole as they have in the past. Others were condemning the visual impact of yet another ridgeline road.

It appeared most people didn't mind the road as long as it remained a narrow dirt road that wasn't accessible to other vehicles. Many thought the road would serve well as a ridgeline trail and a excellent view point to the ocean.

S2a. Walk out to the high point beyond the water tank. Watch your step.

What evidence of recent cattle grazing do you notice in this area?

Pies, meadow muffins, road apples, pods, chips, patties, puckies and dung where the most noted indication of recent grazing. Everyone noticed the impact on the vegetation. The severely grazed open grassland, compacted and eroding soil and weedy plants were specific indications mentioned. The more obvious things like fences, the ranch compound in the canyon below and the distant and occasional cow calls were noted.

S2b. Should the water tank and stock tanks remain?

SUMMARY: Yes.

Yes. A few of the positive responses noted that it is a part of the cultural history of the area. The few who said no gave no reason.

S2c. Should alternate water sources be provided for wildlife?

SUMMARY: Yes.

Yes was the overwhelming response. Some felt that additional water sources should only be provided for emergency situations. Those who noted no felt that the animals should not rely on artificial water sources.

S2d. Should there be a fence or other barrier between Crystal Cove State Park and Laguna Coast Wilderness Park?

SUMMARY: No

Overwhelming no. Some participants were even appalled at the thought of presenting the question.

S2e. Should there be a fence or other barrier between the residential development and Laguna Coast Wilderness Park?

SUMMARY: Yes. Control access, contain animals.

One participant noted the need for a psychological separation. More participants noted existing wildlife. There was some concern about what form the barrier would take. Block walls were noted as inappropriate and others suggested hiding the barrier like a fence in a swale that would hide the fence yet provide an uninhibited view to the beyond...a "ha ha"

S2f. What impact will SJHTC have on park visitors and on wildlife here?

SUMMARY: Total Devastation. Further fragmentation of the park, sensory and environmental pollution, wildlife concerns.

Total devastation, destruction of the visual serenity, and further fragmentation of the park and the natural wildlife corridors were noted. Traffic noise and the impending pollution never failed to be mentioned. Several people mentioned that it is unfortunate that it may be built and that they prayed that it wouldn't happen while other people questioned whether it could be stopped completely.

S2g. Regional trails along Sand Canyon Road...Should these trails be adjacent to the roadway or separated.

SUMMARY: Separated.

Separated. Just about everyone noted that they should be separated. Some noted screening as a necessary ingredient. Some people said that there should be both types. Passive uses to be separated from adjacent trails requiring paving for bicycles etc.

TOUR FOUR - SHADY CANYON

S1a. Is access to Shady Canyon from Irvine important? If so, what are your thoughts regarding public access through a private golf course? Make drawings of your ideas.

SUMMARY: Yes. Access here is very important.

Access to Shady Canyon was of paramount importance. Everyone was enthusiastic about this prospect and were not shy to draw ideas showing trails skirting the golf course, wire mesh tunnels with vines or simple fencing.

S1b. Imagine yourself as a child visiting Shady Canyon - How do you feel? What would you want to do?

Kid things mostly...running around through the grass, playing amongst the trees and in the creek.

Total freedom under the vast sky to explore the rocks and hidden oasis in this magical space. Picnicking, playing with other kids, and resting to listen to the rustle of leaves or even a story be told.

S2a. Find a place to sit down, close your eyes and listen, be quiet, relax and absorb the surroundings.

Birds were an important ingredient in this experience. The lack of traffic noise and the silence that allowed one to feel the rocks and hear sounds you hadn't noticed before. One person noted that it was the quietest part of the tour.

S3a. The utility lines in this area are away from the trail. Sketch your view of the utility lines.

Views were sketched and notes were added. Some people were not disturbed by the utility lines, feeling that they created a pleasant "rural" look. Some suggested hiding them while others thought they should be removed.

S4a. The trail runs parallel to the overhead utility line in this area. Sketch your view of the utility line here.

Similar responses as above for S3a.

S4b. What are the alternatives to overhead utilities?

SUMMARY: Underground.

Underground was the most immediate and unqualified statement made. A few people suggested moving the trail. While others thought the poles should be the thing to move.

S4c. Draw a cross-section of Shady Canyon.

All the drawings indicated or noted the broad canyon floor and the adjacent rock out-croppings. One participant thought this was the appropriate place to point out the importance of protecting ridgelines from development.

S4d. What uses might be appropriate on this trail?

SUMMARY: Passive recreational.

Hiking and biking were the uses that dominated this score. Equestrian use was also mentioned. All uses pointed out seemed to be very passive recreational. Some thought dogs should be restricted from this area.

S4e. What evidence of animals do you see?

Birds were always mentioned but habitat holes and animals tracks followed suit indicating that this area is home to a lot of wildlife.

S4f. What evidence of man do you see?

Utility lines, not surprisingly, were on the top of peoples lists. Bike and automobile tracks and garbage were followed by footprints and the culvert in the creek bed.

WORKSHOP #2

“Taking Part”- Awareness Tour Five

Where Tours One, Two, Three, and Four got participants in touch with important areas within the park, Tour Five concentrated on familiarizing participants with park edges, land uses, views and conditions along the park’s perimeters. Tour Five also was a driving tour, where Tours One, Two, Three, and Four, were walking tours. Participants were given a Tour Five workbook that included station points along the park perimeter where they were asked to leave the car and again answer questions, provide feelings, observations and drawings that respond to various directives or “Scores.” Participants were led to station points along the park perimeter by odometer readings, allowing each participant to begin and end the tour at any of the eleven station points identified. Upon completion of Tour Five, workbooks were collected and then summarized by the Planning Team.

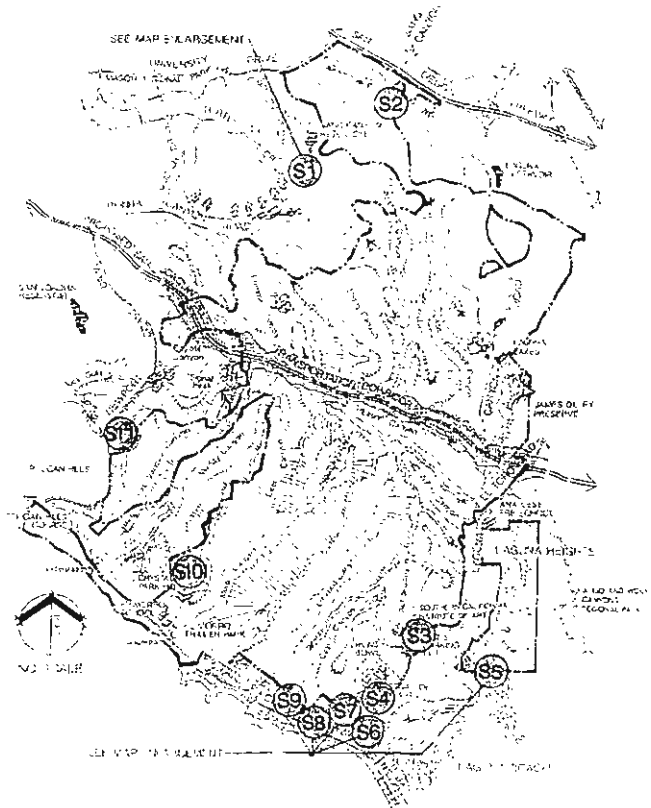


Figure 23: Map of Awareness Tour Five

PERIMETER DRIVE TOUR SUMMARY

S1. Location: Morning View Street at Eucalyptus trees.

Walk over to the grass area at the eucalyptus opening. Look at Sand Canyon Reservoir, the Park boundary is just beyond the reservoir and includes Quail Hill. The flat area at the bottom of this slope and the adjacent low hills beyond are planned for development. What are some of the issues related to planning Laguna Coast Wilderness Park this area?

SUMMARY: Access and degradation of natural environment and vistas.

Access is the main issue that comes to people's attention at this location. Habitat loss, pollution, storm water runoff and intrusions into view sheds were noted as what would occur as a result of the proposed development. An immediate concern was the cattle grazing in the area.

S2. Location: Sand Canyon Avenue at dead end.

Look at the "saddle" in the hillside straight ahead, Sand Canyon Avenue may extend into Laguna Coast Wilderness Park in this area.

What impact will this have on Laguna Coast Wilderness Park visitors? and wildlife?

SUMMARY: Fragmentation, destruction of wildlife habitat and natural land processes.

The predominate view was that an extension of Sand Canyon Avenue would further cut the park into numerous pieces thus destroying the wilderness feeling and also disturbing the wildlife by altering natural life patterns such as habitat and migration habits. Some people simply stated that the wildlife would disappear. On a more positive note many pointed out that this area could provide access to the center of the park, however, it was almost concurrently noted that visitors to this area would experience traffic noise and pollution.

S3. Location: Art Institute of Southern California.

Walk around the site and buildings. This has been suggested as a possible visitor's center for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

Sketch and describe the architectural character of the buildings.

People described the architectural character of the buildings in writing and with graphics as modern wood structures, with others noting that it blends with the trees and slopes and had a rustic or natural feeling.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this site?

SUMMARY: Limited parking and access but with existing building in beautiful setting.

The most often mention disadvantage was the limited parking and the poor trail access from this area. Several people felt that this was a hazardous and noisy entry point. The major advantages listed focused primarily on the fact that this is an existing building in a beautiful, rustic setting that could provide a link and staging area close to the city.

What is traffic like in this area?

SUMMARY: Congested.

Congested was a word often use to summarize the traffic situation with additional notes on the noise and the difficulty of crossing the road. Several people who felt it a dangerous area suggested the addition of a traffic signal or cross walk in this area.

S4. Location: Festival of Arts parking area.

There is a trail access point into Laguna Coast Wilderness Park at the north end of the site next to the tennis courts.

Is there sufficient parking here for a staging area?

SUMMARY: No.

It was clear that few people thought that there was sufficient parking. A bicyclist noted there was plenty of parking for bikes.

Is parking available on a year-round basis?

SUMMARY: No.

There is typically no parking available on a year-round basis due to Art Festivals.

What is traffic like in this area?

SUMMARY: Congested, heavy.

S5. Location: Alta Laguna Park.

From the parking lot, walk between the tennis courts, around the baseball field to the right and on the unpaved trail around the perimeter of the park.

Look at Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park below. Sketch the most prominent feature of the park area.

Bulldozed and graded knolls with occasional mention of the open rolling green hills and Saddleback on the horizon.

Sketch and describe the restroom building.

SUMMARY: California State Park architecture. A lot of people noted the rock veneer and green roof, some also adding that it is the typical park architecture. There were no strong negative opinions or descriptions other than one person who noted that the stone veneer did not use local stone.

Walk over to the Laguna Heights sign. Walk along the trails in this area.

Laguna Heights is adjacent to Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park. It is separated from Laguna Coast Wilderness Park by Laguna Canyon Road to the left below.

Locate on the map where the panoramic photo was taken. Note the width, gradient and condition of the trails.

Are fences an effective control in this area?

SUMMARY: No.

Most people noted that the fence was not an effective control while others were not sure or wondered what the fences were intended to control. Some people thought that they are effective in controlling access to an area that is undergoing habitat restoration.

S6. Location: Poplar Street at dead pine tree.

Look below to the Festival of Arts and across the canyon to the ridgeline trail. Sketch the trail.

Most of the drawings and written descriptions noted that the gently rising trail would be appropriate for walks and it seemed to have a natural character as it followed the ridgeline. Some noted that it seemed a bit wide due to recent use as a fire road and that there were few trees along its length.

S7. Location: Poplar Street dead end.

What are the advantages / disadvantages of park access at this location?

SUMMARY: Good access, limited parking, residences disturbed, access point unclear.

The three major concerns were; disturbing the residents of this area, parking limitations, and access points being unclear. Some people noted no parking while others pointed out this would be a good access point with a great view, especially for the local residents. Although this access point is at a higher elevation and saves a people a difficult hike from below, the steep trails in this area may limit user types.

S8. Location: Riddle Field.

Look at Riddle Field and up Boat Canyon.

What are the advantages / disadvantages of a staging area for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park in this location?

SUMMARY: Parking is available but there is no developed trail.

It seemed as if a lot of people felt the parking was limited but concurrently many thought it was a great advantage that some parking was already available. A small number of people viewed it as a potential small staging area where traffic and noise were not a problem. There was more concern about parking conflicts with Riddle Field users. The trail was often noted as rugged and not well defined which could lead to misuse or destruction of the canyon. Given the lack of a defined trail some felt a visitor could actually get a close view of wildlife.

S9. Location: Pinecrest Drive dead end.

What are the advantages / disadvantages of park access at this location?

SUMMARY: Good access point but maybe just for locals given lack of parking and road width.

It began to be apparent that a major concern for all potential access points is the issue of parking. Parking was noted as limited and probable cause of inconvenience to the residents. The narrow streets influenced people's responses regarding local access. Good trail connections were also noted.

S10. Location: Crystal Cove State Park Headquarters.

Sketch and describe the park headquarters building?

SUMMARY: Ugly. Split-face concrete block construction.

Estimate the size of the parking area.

SUMMARY: Estimates ranged from 75 to 150 spaces.

S11. Location: Utility Road.

Walk out to the point overlooking Los Trancos Canyon.

Sketch the most prominent features.

SUMMARY: Natural features of context.

The natural features of this area and the surrounds were described. Undulating ridge tops, rolling hills, deep canyons, high points covered with rocks, and bright yellow flowers, are examples of prominent features listed. Several people noted the terrace drains adjacent to development at the boundaries of the park.

S12. After you have complete the awareness tour, take some time to reflect on what you have experienced and describe / sketch on the following pages your impressions of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

WORKSHOP NO. 3
BOOMER CANYON WORKSHOP
SUMMARY
4/15/94 THROUGH 4/17/94

FRIDAY NIGHT SUMMARY

7:00 PM TURTLE ROCK COMMUNITY CENTER

On Friday evening, and all day Saturday and Sunday, a "Take Part" Workshop was conducted by the Park Planning Team to develop ideas, feelings, drawings and models of what participants felt the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park should be like.

Friday evening, at Turtle Rock Community Center, a slide show was given by the County of Orange, that described the County regional park system and defined the different levels and character of parks within the County system. This slide show was followed by another slide show given by the Park Planning Team that conveyed results of the Awareness Tours and summarized and further clarified various park issues and conditions in preparation for the following Saturday all-day design workshop. The following is a summary of that presentation.

The Park Planning Team presented a slide show summary of the Workshop No.1, (Info Fair), Workshop No.2 (Bus Tour and Perimeter Drive).

This slide show recapped the bus and perimeter tour scores and stopping points to refresh workshopers images of the area before beginning Workshop No.3. Lawrence Halprin summarized the major areas of consensus and concern noted in the tour notebooks: Access, Park Program, Users, Lakes, LCR Alignment, and the SJHTC. The presentation included slides of the existing park area including those through which the SJHTC will pass, as well as a scale site model which indicates the extent of the impact from the SJHTC.

People were invited to ask questions regarding their experience or to add to the summary presentation. The questions brought forward centered around the issue of proposed roadways in the area including the SJHTC. People wanted to know how they could affect change to the existing plans for development of roadways into or through the park.

Bob Fisher, County of Orange Director of Harbors, Beaches and Parks clarified concerns about the SJHTC and the ownership and management of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

Bob Fisher also clarified the sequence of events that led to the development of the Corridor Design studies carried out by Office of Lawrence Halprin and RJM Design Group. Larry followed by describing the lack of response and interest in these studies. People asked to see the design change proposals and drawings at the workshop the following day.

SATURDAY MORNING

9:00 BOMMER CANYON

Lawrence Halprin began the morning with the following score exercises:

S1. Look at the information posted. Bus Tour summary scrolls. County of Orange, Environmental Management Agency information; regional, local Master Plan of Arterial Highways, and the requested Corridor Design Studies.

Make notes and list questions about the information you see. What areas of consensus and what challenges do you see.

S2. In groups, and using the resources you have looked at arrive at a consensus on the major park planning issues. Have people in your group play the role of an engineer, county planner, environmentalist, or special interest group to arrive at consensus.

List areas of consensus and challenges.

● **PRESERVE THE LAKES** - something must be done to preserve / unify Laguna Lakes. More study on how to do it.

This was a different response from the Bus and Perimeter Tour Booklets. which indicated a consensus on realigning Laguna Canyon Road to the west to allow re-unification of the lakes. People pointed out that they needed additional information about the affects and alternatives of re-alignment of LCR.

- **HOW TO ACCOMMODATE ACCESS** - a major issue.

Where ?

Who?: different users needs
including senior and disabled

Means: trail types, roadways

- **WHAT PARK FACILITIES ARE NEEDED?**

Carrying capacity

Trail uses, users, compatibility, character.

Character

- **PARK EDGES ARE IMPORTANT** - interfaces, treatment. (see Unification)

From the park to context.

From context to park.

- **THE PARK IS FRAGMENTED** - major challenge

How to unify all the park areas and uses.

- **PROTECTION AREAS ARE NEEDED**

Interior vs fringe

Sensitive plant and animal life and habitat

Supervision of users, including domestic animals and children.

- **SAN JOAQUIN HILLS TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR IS A CHALLENGE TO ACCEPT**
Won't accept point blank, but will need to be looked at.

- **ROADWAYS FRAGMENT THE PARK**

Do they unify or fragment the park?

- **MANAGEMENT IS AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT TO A SUCCESSFUL PARK PLAN.**

City, County, State, Federal.

Who is going to manage the park in an effective holistic way?

- **UNIFICATION OF THE VARIOUS AREAS AND USES OF THE PARK IS A CHALLENGE**

Unification of all parts.

How to convey unified image of the Wilderness Park.
Views in and out.

- **THE IMAGE OF THE PARK IS IMPORTANT**

Retaining image of vast wilderness.

The role of education to form a foundation of knowledge to solve incompatibilities to ensure politeness about park.

- **EDUCATION IS A IMPORTANT ASPECT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP.**

Incompatibility between complete use, sensitive areas, and education.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

It was requested that the workshop resource base; maps, models and charts, be interpreted and explained by RJM and the County of Orange; Harbors Beaches and Parks.

Bob Mueeting and Kevin Sullivan began by describing the individual maps and answering questions. Kari Rigoni provided an update on the status LCR realignment proposals. Dr. Elizabeth Brown reviewed the Laguna Lakes Enhancement Plan and sensitive vegetation map.

Lawrence Halprin continued with the following scores:

- S3. **On a regional basis; How does all the given information fit together and into the Wilderness Park. Draw and write down your conceptual plan. How does this park fit regionally? How does it look from the inside out and outside in?**

Groups produced maps and illustrative graphics to describe their conceptual plan of how the park fits into the surrounding regions. The resource material that had just been explained was often used by the groups at their table to enhance their dialogue and debate of issues.

All the points found in the summary of S2 were reinforced by their reiteration in graphic and written material produced. Everyone pinned up their work and presented it to the others.

SUNDAY

S1 In groups, make a master plan for the future of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park using the information and resources that you've gained throughout the workshop.

Present your master plan and consensus on the issues to the other groups.

TABLE 1.

Description: drawn on the base map provided, orange and green markers, 5 use areas, legend with parking types.

Participants: Ann Christoph, Lance, Eric Jessen

Aspects of the plans:

Identifies islands of activity in the park
Use existing parking below Laguna Heights
Concerned about access to Los Trancos Canyon.
Proposed access across or under SJHTC at top of Los Trancos.

Park headquarters at Anneliese's Preschool with picnicking there instead of disturbing Laurel Canyon, but needs pedestrian crossing.

Proposed screening of SJHTC (fill side) and portions of Laguna Canyon Road.
Proposed wildlife and pedestrian corridor through re-alignment of LCR to access Laguna Lakes. Not sure how to do it.
Bommer Canyon is major access point.
Bommer Canyon workshop site demonstrates the scale of interpretive center.
Sand Canyon is access
Two types of parking lots. Rustic and not so rustic.
CHARTS to accompany plan.

Parkwide Guidelines
planning
visual
building.
entrance types
trail types and character

L.H. Summary

Multiple access points of varying character

TABLE 2

Description: fluorescent green with pink bubbles
Dark Green = heavy use,
Light Green = passive use

Lists of: Image
Management
Legend

Participants: Bob Joseph, Patty Young, Cheryl Vind, Kari Rigoni, Peter Weisbrod, Aniko Sherry, Kathie Matsuyama.

Backbone trail that unifies all parts of the park identified existing and proposed access points and linked to the backbone trail.

Trail types:

Primary: backbone, up from Crystal Cove to Corridor then splits east / west with spur to Shady Canyon.

Secondary: Perimeter, very important for multi-use, would help keep intruding development outside of park. Similar to Mason Park.

Trails are unified at SJHTC.

Satellite Resource Centers that highlight unique features.

Indicates areas for "cut and cover" tunneling technique for wildlife and pedestrian passage. One at top of El Toro one at Laguna Canyon Road realignment.
Uses old LCR alignment for access to lake area.

Image:
breathing organism, lungs for Orange County.
spiritually renewing
active areas
education

Management - participation and part of managing board with balanced and equal voting power.

Includes representative from all user groups.

L.H. Summary:
major staging areas (including camping)

TABLE 3

Description: Vertical plan map
green with magazine images
star legend
incl. supplemental map for roads
and trails .
purple lines with orange asterisks.
purple trails are multi-use

Participants: Elizabeth Brown, Mark Sanderson,
Kevin Sullivan, Scott Thomas

Grappled with the complexities of the issues.
Three major staging areas:

Primary - Walnut Grove, Ranger Station Parking,
Hikes for Laurel and only staging for
biking and equestrian in Willow Canyon.

Secondary - Sand Canyon, Bommer Canyon,
(Signal Peak)

Local - Pine Crest, Water Tank, Boat Canyon.

Laguna Lakes and the Art Institute would have
interpretive resources.

Trails: mostly multi-use, only 5 were restricted to
foot traffic.

1. Los Trancos area may best be left to foot traffic
2. Emerald Canyon, foot traffic only because of
residents
3. James Dilley Preserve, Foot only
4. Little Sycamore, foot only
5. Crystal Cove State Park. only location with
camping.

If there are special trails for hikers then there
should be special trails for equestrian, etc.

L.H. Summary:

didn't propose additional camping
multiple use / access
major entrance at Laurel Canyon.

TABLE 4

Description: yellow hills and green borders
6 lane corridor overlay and LCR alignment overlay.

Multiple use areas but no consensus on location.

Participants:

Two roadway changes: re-alignment of LCR with
old LCR as parking.

Against road intrusions.

Cultural Center - north of Laguna Lakes and east
of LCR includes art institute, museum,
parking, interpretive, restrooms, major staging
and access.

LCR re-alignment helps.

Lake became key focus as an area of low difficulty
especially for Leisure World residents, senior
and disabled. Easy grades.

Anneliese's Preschool remains an entry with
interpretive kiosks.

Education is major focus.

Art Institute becomes Park Headquarters with
interpretive gardens, disabled access and docent
training.

Concern about access across LCR.

Access Points included:

1. Boat Canyon - access through parking behind
Bonn, use restroom at Riddle field.
2. Pine Crest and Poplar - local access with few
changes, a small kiosk.
3. Crystal Cove - access of all kinds
4. Signal Peak - Access of all kinds
5. Bommer Canyon - kiosk hike, bike, equestrian.
6. Shady Canyon - " "
7. Sand Canyon - " "

TABLE 5

Description: Vertical fluorescent green with black
border, dashed corridor, green title, magazine cuts

People: Niko Theris, Paige Huyette, Tito Fuentes,
Kimberly Bixler, Denny Turner
Unification - is focus one large park.

Designated existing trailheads

Major access - James Dilley, (w/ LCR realignment), Bommer (equestrian focus) Canyon, Art Institute as Interpretive Center.

Multi-use staging and Ranger Station at access points

Concern about traffic speed / safety, esp. at LCR. Restoration Projects in areas disturbed
Shuttles into park to reduce traffic and parking issues.
Lease existing commercial parking areas on weekends.

TABLE 6

Description: 3-D pop-up with straws

People: Bob Fisher, Bob Borthwick, Eric Jessen, Sharon Heider, Jack Housden, Kathie Reynolds, Connections across LCR below heights (somewhere) through Los Trancos under corridor and at Buck Gully
Trail Types; regional plus those noted.

Primary - Sand Canyon, Ranger station with RV camp.

Secondary - Bommer Canyon w/ equestrian, Crystal Cove, Walnut Grove w/ interpretive center.

Tertiary - Alta Laguna, Boat Canyon and Riddle Field

Local - neighborhood access.

Background screening of 405 and portions of Shady Canyon and (Laguna Canyon Road)
Hike in camping at Emerald Canyon Group and RV. Camping
Designated Dog Walking Areas - esp. loop trail from Riddle field to Festival Canyon.
Relocates Art Institute to 5 year option area.
Converts old Art center to headquarters.

Nothing done to Laguna Lakes...tight re-alignment of LCR to reunite lakes.

SJHTC has 4 passage corridors and are planted to give drivers alternating vistas into park.
Rustic Architecture, like Alta Laguna Park

Reintroduction of native animals
Eradicate non-native plants.

TABLE 7

Description: yellow triangles, red trucks at SJHTC

Participants:

Unable to resolve LCR alignment - if so remove old asphalt.
Generally less developed than other plan proposals
questions of park capacity.

Access and Transition Points - special arrangements required for access from secondary points.

No Laurel Canyon development that may cause overuse.

No access from El Toro crossing down LCR across PCH w/ exception of Crystal Cove.

Handicapped view station looking over Los Trancos as NCR (existing in part)

Major Access - Bommer Canyon - good access point with good location and out of congestion. Will focus on youth.

Sand Canyon - active user area keep cars out of park equestrian staging.

Poachers Canyon - hike-in camping.

SJHTC - buffers to protect park users from corridor not to enhance the vistas from the corridor.

Unified park in spite of toll road.

TABLE 8

Description: Lace corridor buffer. straw signal peak

People: Anne Spirn, Tom Ash, Grace Secketa, Patrick Marr, Michelle Rainville, Ann Secketa.

Lots of Consensus

Major Visitor Center at Sand Canyon.

No Sand Canyon Road through the park

Abandon El Toro spur now parking

Southern side of ridge is passive uses

Bommer Canyon - wide easy access nearest devo.

CLOSE TOLL ROAD ON WEEKENDS - for
roller blading all kinds of uses at one time
SJHTC: screen, Sand Canyon too, urban and
suburban areas too.

Access: Sand Canyon, Crystal Cove, Walnut
Grove w/ parking on to be old El Toro connecting
spur.

Educational - links to other parkways and pro-
grams like Mason Park, interpretive center, low key
environmental design - restroom.

Goat grazing instead of control burns.

TABLE 9

Description: yellow trails = illegal.
active passive radiating diagram.

People: Bob Mueeting, Larry Sweet, (Native
American)

Access at perimeter: Crystal Cove, Laurel Canyon,
Sand Canyon.

Sensitive areas - southern ocean side also currently
has most illegal trails.

Docent Training - reps from all user groups

Tight re-alignment with widening of LCR.

TABLE 10

Description: Artistic rendition of one individual's
impression of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

Participants: Beverly Ann Kelly (individual)

Enjoyed the experience of discovering the park with
the tours but was disappointed and disturbed by
last night.

The reality of the SJHTC hit her.

Fragmentation of a very spiritual place. The
fragmentation is an indication of the chaotic state
of the world.

The media needs to be brought into the process.

WORKSHOP #4

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Location: UNIVERSITY PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

Time: 7:00 - 9:00 PM

The Los Angeles Times and The Orange County Register were present.

Kathie Matsuyama gave a brief introduction. A slide presentation summarizing the workshop methodology and the events of previous workshops was given. The Park Planning Team presented the summaries with emphasis on Workshop No. 3 which was held in Bommer Canyon.

The master plans for the park produced by the workshop groups at the Bommer Canyon Workshop No. 3 were presented by individuals that had taken part in their making.

Park Development Consensus Items

In general, all groups agreed upon a variety of issues concerning circulation, access, park sensitivity, park edges and park management. All groups agreed that a variety of access points are necessary to accommodate a variety of park users that will be accessing the park from a wide range of locations. Design of access points should respond to park context and scale, in terms of sensitivity and control.

There was also consensus that circulation within the park should accommodate a variety of trail users, including hikers, mountain bicyclists, equestrians and maintenance/emergency vehicles. Existing trails and fire roads should be used wherever possible to minimize the need for numerous "new" trails. Trails should also remain rustic and natural in character to reflect and maintain a "wilderness" experience. The groups also indicated that some trail improvements such as markers and signage will be necessary, but that there should be minimal impacts on the Park.

Workshop groups identified minimal parking as a need at park access points, but again felt park impacts should be kept to a minimum and improvements be held close to park perimeters. Public transportation should be encouraged where possible. Park edges were also an important component of park design with the workshop groups.

The quality of views, both from within the Park as well as the image of the Park from its perimeter, should remain natural and wilderness-like in character.

Additional issues addressed by the workshop groups included San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor mitigation, Laguna Lakes restoration and park management.

Consensus Summary

The following outlines summarizes consensus items resulting from the workshop process:

A. Laguna Lakes

- Restore through re-unification, the three Laguna Lakes. Plan and coordinate the enhancement of the Laguna Lakes area with the preferred re-alignment of Laguna Canyon Road.

B. Access

1. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ACCESS POINTS

- There will be three major access points: Sand Canyon Road, Little Sycamore Canyon and Bommer Canyon.
- Provide a variety of access points at the perimeter of the park, of varying character and size dependent upon the uses, users and facilities planned for that area.
- Provide major access points with smaller ones in more sensitive areas.
- Provide opportunities for limited low impact and seasonal group camping by special permit or arrangement. Supervised youth and educational/ nature study program groups will be the focus of the facilities. No camping would be planned in environmentally sensitive areas.

2. ROADWAYS, STAGING AREAS AND TRAILS

- Diversity of trail types: hikers, equestrian, and bicycle. Specific trail uses will be specified in the park plan.

- Provide roadways and trail types that accommodate the intended user groups with a variety of challenge levels including those for the physically challenged.
- Keep the character of the trails as rustic as possible while accommodating uses.
- Provide trail markers and signage indicating appropriate use and user groups.
- Keep parking to a minimum and design parking in a character consistent with the type of uses planned for an area.
- Accommodate the use of public transportation, shuttles and off-site parking areas in the planning of access points.
- Limit the use of existing fire and service roads within the park to service vehicles. Abandon or reclaim unused roads for other park uses.
- Plan and enhance existing trails and paths in a manner that reduces their impact on the natural terrain, wildlife and plant habitat, while providing a greater sense of continuity that unifies the park.

C. Sensitive Areas / Special Use Areas

- Provide controlled access to areas containing sensitive wildlife and vegetation.
- Provide special areas for camping, docent-led tours, hiking, equestrian use, mountain bikes, natural history, archaeological field work, and other special tours.

D. Park Edges / Image and Continuity

- Plan the edges of the park in a manner that will support a positive image of a wilderness park from within the park looking outward and from the greater context inward. Use native plantings of trees and lower chaparral to screen out bad views and perimeter developments.

E. Education

- Provide educational opportunities and programs for all ages and user groups with special emphasis on young children. Educational efforts will be near trail heads and access points and emphasize the park's uniqueness, sensitivity and appropriate behavior for visiting the wilderness park.

F. Management

- Provide a management program that will enable the Coastal Greenbelt Authority to manage the park in a manner that protects and interprets the natural resources in the park.
- Maintain the Coastal Greenbelt Authority as the organization to which citizens and special interest groups can voice their concerns with the opportunity for special task forces to be established to look at special issues.

G. San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor

- There is unanimous agreement that the SJHTC should not pass through the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.
- It was also agreed that if the corridor becomes an inevitable reality, then everything possible should be done to affect and mitigate the aesthetic and environmental impacts that it will have on the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. People felt that the SJHTC should be redesigned to accomplish these.

Participant Response to Consensus

In general, the consensus was accurate. The following clarifications/amendments were made to the consensus presented.

Camping

It was stated that there was no consensus regarding hike-in overnight camping. One person pointed out that equestrian users that ride through the park systems from great distances often have LCWP as a destination and require a place to overnight before their return journey. It was pointed out that Crystal Cove State Park has three camp grounds appropriate for this purpose. A person from Coast Walk, an environmental walking tour group, stated that they would enjoy the opportunity of overnight camping in LCWP. He pointed out the group is extremely environmentally conscious and often leaves the area they use cleaner than when they arrived. Another audience member pointed out that it was strongly felt at the workshop that there should be the opportunity for organized youth groups to overnight in a wilderness area. This latter discussion reduced the concern of some.

The rest of the discussion about camping centered around getting beyond the semantics of exactly what type of camping might be appropriate, only to find that the debate was indeed over what type, where and how the camping would be handled.

It was pointed out that there was significant discussion about RV camping at the potential Sand Canyon access point.

Consensus was reached. Limited, low impact and seasonal group hike-in overnight camping will be allowed at specific locations by special permit or arrangement. Supervised youth programs and eco-tour groups would be the focus of any designed facilities. Camping would not be allowed in environmentally sensitive areas. RV camping near Sand Canyon and Interstate 405 will be explored.

Parking

Parking was another issue that needed clarification. People wanted qualification that parking would not only be kept to a minimum, but also that public transportation, shuttles and off-site parking sites should be investigated as methods to reduce parking demands.

San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor

A discussion about the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor began. People were very concerned and wanted guidance on how they could affect change to the point of stopping the project. Suggestions were made from other people in the audience to contact their local elected representative that do have impact on major decisions like the SJHTC. Civil disobedience was mentioned. Getting more of the media involved was also mentioned as it was also pointed out that The Los Angeles Times and The Orange County Register were represented there that night.

It was decided that the Consensus Summary of the SJHTC issue should be amended to read as follows: There is a strong agreement that the SJHTC should not be allowed to pass through the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

It was also agreed that if the corridor becomes an inevitable reality then everything possible should be done to affect and mitigate the aesthetic and environmental impacts that it will have on the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. People felt that the SJHTC should be redesigned to accomplish these goals.

In addition people felt that the costs of these efforts would be incidental in comparison to the potential devastation caused by its construction and use.

WORKSHOP #5

Awareness Tours Six, Seven and Eight

Prior to the generation of the Park Plan and support information, the Park Planning Team presented a consensus plan to the workshop participants. As with all of the workshop gatherings, there was very active participation and input. Most aspects of the Plan (discussed later in this chapter) were felt to be consistent with group consensus, however, many were interested in visiting the Little Sycamore Canyon site (which was the proposed site for the park headquarters) since the site was not a part of the Awareness Tours.

This interest in Little Sycamore Canyon led to Awareness Tours Six, Seven and Eight. Expanded beyond just the Little Sycamore Canyon Site, Tours Six, Seven and Eight also exposed Workshop participants to the Sand Canyon Staging Area and Option Parcel 5 -

the last option parcel yet to be purchased from the Irvine Company. Option Parcel 5 had been identified by some workshop participants as a possible park Interpretive Center opportunity.

Tour Six

The first area visited on this Awareness Tour was the proposed Sand Canyon Staging Area site. Workshop participants were first asked for their impressions of the site as a potential park access point. Responses ranged from good trail linkages to minor impact upon park resources, to lack of freeway noise. In general, most felt it was an acceptable point of transition from the built environment to the wilderness experience. However, most did not feel that the area itself felt like a wilderness area primarily due to sounds generated from the built environment such as cars and planes. The group's second stop took them closer to the Sand Canyon Reservoir. Workshop participants were asked to take note of man's presence, vegetation types and the reservoir itself. Observations of this site included viewshed impacts from development and city sounds. While most felt the views of the reservoir were desirable, most preferred the first site as less impacted by homes, city buildings, and disturbed landscapes.

Tour Seven

Tour Seven dealt with a number of issues including the Laguna Canyon Road Realignment, wildlife undercrossings, and the proposed park interpretive center site at Little Sycamore Canyon.

Workshop participants were asked to describe the preferred route for Laguna Canyon Road, which was field surveyed and indicated by a series of P.V.C. poles located along the centerline and edges of the proposed alignment. Observations regarding vegetation types, topography, viewsheds, and general park character were made along the preferred alignment of the road. With respect to vegetation types, most observations included coastal sage scrub, grasslands and riparian/lush vegetation around the lakes. Observations of topography varied from flat areas to rolling hillsides and rock outcroppings.

Viewsheds included nice views up Little Sycamore Canyon, ridgelines and trees. Positive observations regarding the proposed alignment included protection of the wetlands, unification of the lakes and more visibility of the lakes. Negative observations regard-

ing the new alignment included possible loss of tree buffer, alignment of the road too close to Little Sycamore Canyon. The need to fine tune the alignment to take advantage of "saddles" as opposed to hilltops was also expressed.

The workshop participants were also asked about their ideas regarding wildlife undercrossings. Consensus of this issue revolved around "open" and "airy" undercrossings with adequate light, height, width and water (guzzlers). In addition, the undercrossings should be non-threatening, graffiti-proof and to the extent possible, conform to natural topographic features with adequate understory for wildlife protection.

Workshop participants then visited the proposed site in Little Sycamore Canyon for picnicking, parking, park nature center and interpretation. While most felt Little Sycamore Canyon was an appropriate location for the park nature center (in terms of feeling like a wilderness area) and an appropriate welcoming for park visitors, some felt the knoll is a unique and important feature to the canyon and that alternative sites should be explored. Some were also concerned about the proximity of the proposed realignment of Laguna Canyon Road to this site. The group was asked to walk down into the canyon from the headquarters site at the knoll and experience the creek bed. Most felt this to be a positive experience conducive to trails, interpretation, picnicking and passive uses.

Tour Eight

The last tour of the day took the group to Option Parcel 5, on the east side of Laguna Canyon Road. Identified by some workshop participants as a site to be considered for a park headquarters, Parcel 5 and an area just south of Parcel 5 were explored for potential park use.

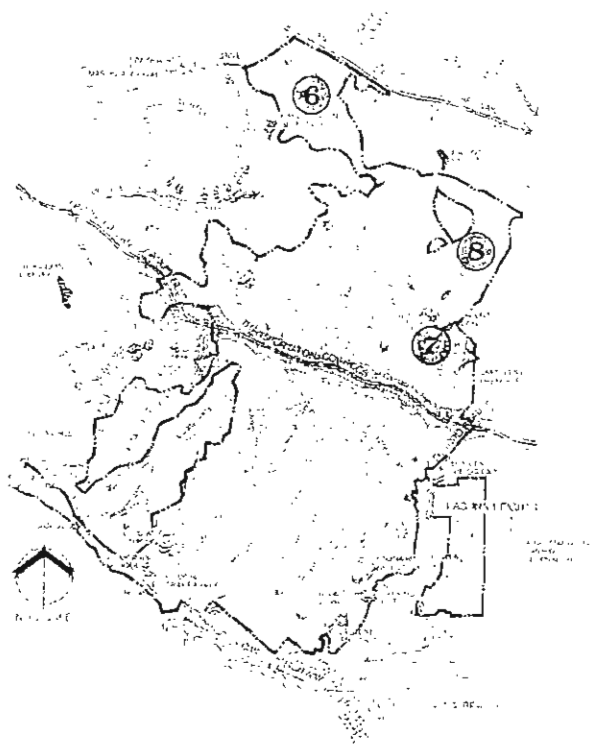
The group was first directed to an area adjacent to Lake #3 and asked to consider the site as a potential park headquarters site. There was general consensus by the group that this site was less desirable than the Little Sycamore Canyon site due to its lack of forestation. It was also described as less welcoming and with less character than Little Sycamore Canyon. Advantages of the site included capabilities for a hilltop location, and ability to conceal park development.

Most of the group felt Parcel 5 was less desirable as a park center site due to its close proximity to Leisure World, lack of access to areas of interest, lack of vegetation and difficult access from Laguna Canyon Road. Advantages to the site that were mentioned included good viewshed of lake #3, sweeping vistas, as well as hilltop building sites.

In summary, most observations yielded support of the first Sand Canyon Site as a northerly staging area and of Little Sycamore Canyon as an appropriate "wilderness park setting" for a small park interpretive center and interpretive program. There was general consensus that careful site planning should accompany a Little Sycamore site selection to avoid undue impact to its wonderful and diverse resources.

WORKSHOP #6

Little Sycamore Canyon Design Workshop



AWARENESS TOURS 6, 7, 8 - SCORE LOCATIONS

Figure 24: Map for tours 6, 7, and 8

Following Awareness Tour Six, Seven and Eight, the group assembled together at University Park Community Center for a design workshop to arrive at a park headquarters location, program and character consensus.

The afternoon began with the group's identification of what they felt to be appropriate uses and functions associated with the park interpretive center.

The workshop group divided into five groups and was asked what they felt to be the function of a park interpretive center. Below is a summary of those results.

<u>Group Agreement</u>	<u>Facility Function</u>
4 groups	Ranger Office
4 groups	Docent Office
4 groups	Information/ Interpretive Ctr.
4 groups	Restrooms
4 groups	Limited Parking
3 groups	Assembly Area
3 groups	Amphitheater
3 groups	Viewing Platform
3 groups	Storage
2 groups	First Aid Station
2 groups	A.D.A. Access
2 groups	Water
1 group	Public Phone
1 group	Signage
1 group	Interpretive Walk
1 group	Indoor/Outdoor
1 group	Mechanical(energy efficient underground utilities)
1 group	Cabinet /Counter sales
1 group	Donor Area
1 group	Picnic Area
1 group	Comfortable seating /Fire Place

All groups agreed the park interpretive center should include a ranger office, docent office, information/interpretive center, restrooms, and limited parking.

There was also general consensus that an outdoor amphitheater, a viewing platform, an assembly area and signage area are appropriate for this facility.

When asked what the character of the facility should be, the responses were:

Alternative A

<u>Group Agreement</u>	<u>Facility Character</u>
2 groups	Simple
2 groups	Small
2 groups	Planting screen to blend with environment
2 groups	Indoor/Outdoor (retractable roof)
2 groups	Decomposed Granite
2 groups	Fireproof
1 group	Remote
1 group	Serpentine
1 group	Anti- Architectural
1 group	No Asphalt
1 group	Low Profile
1 group	Rustic/Stone
1 group	Dirt
1 group	Shade
1 group	Lots of Glass

There was general agreement among all groups that the facility should be small and simple with an indoor/outdoor character. Natural materials such as plantings, decomposed granite and stone should be used as appropriate. The overriding concern is that the facility “fit” within its environmental context and with as little site disturbance as possible take place.

Lastly, the group was asked to discuss pros and cons associated with both the Little Sycamore Canyon and the Parcel 5 site and to reach group consensus as to which site is preferred. Groups one, two and three all agreed that the Little Sycamore Canyon site was the preferred choice primarily due to its entry experience and trail accessibility. Group four indicated there were pros and cons to both sides and that no consensus was reached. Group 5 preferred the Lake #3 site above both Little Sycamore Canyon and Parcel 5.

For Alternative A see discussion of Little Sycamore Staging Area in the General Development Chapter.

Alternative B

Alternative B relocates the park headquarters building (ranger office, educational programs and restrooms only) to the proposed picnic site near the large stand of sycamores. This positions the park ranger office closer to the park entrance and also minimizes potential impact to the "knoll" at the Preferred Alternative site. Park interpretation will still occur at the "knoll" site in the form of a small viewing platform, and information kiosk. The natural amphitheater and trail head facilities (i.e. drinking fountain, etc.), and parking will be slightly modified to accommodate this redistribution of facilities. A park entry guard shack and gate is positioned near the picnic facility and becomes an automated (unmanned) facility for auto fee collection and park entry.

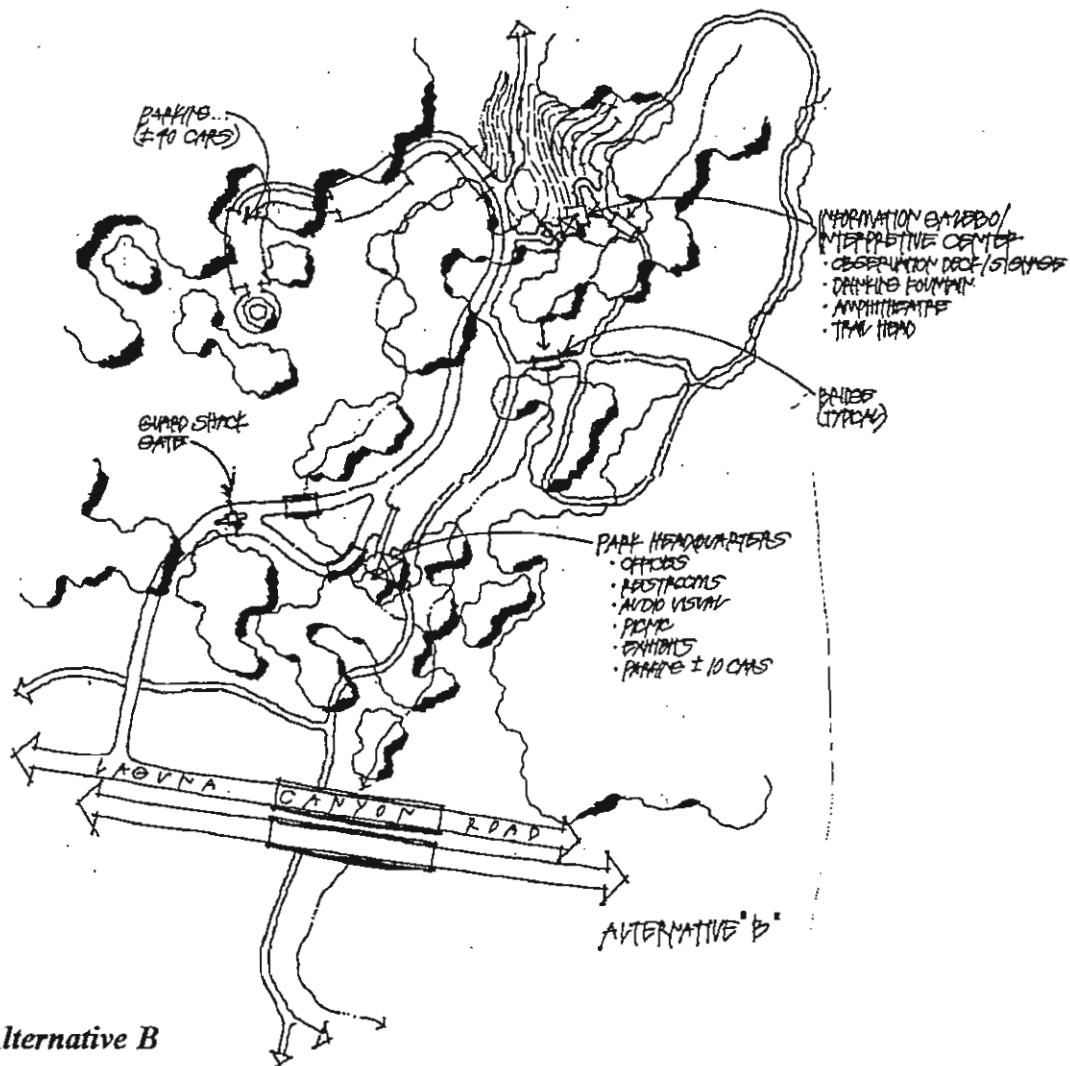


Figure 25: Alternative B

Alternative C

Alternative C is a slight modification of the Preferred Alternative and functions similar to Alternative B. The Park ranger office is separated from the interpretive center and moved slightly to the east adjacent to the main creek. This alternative keeps the interpretive center and picnic facility separate from the ranger office functions and attempts to minimize impact to the knoll.

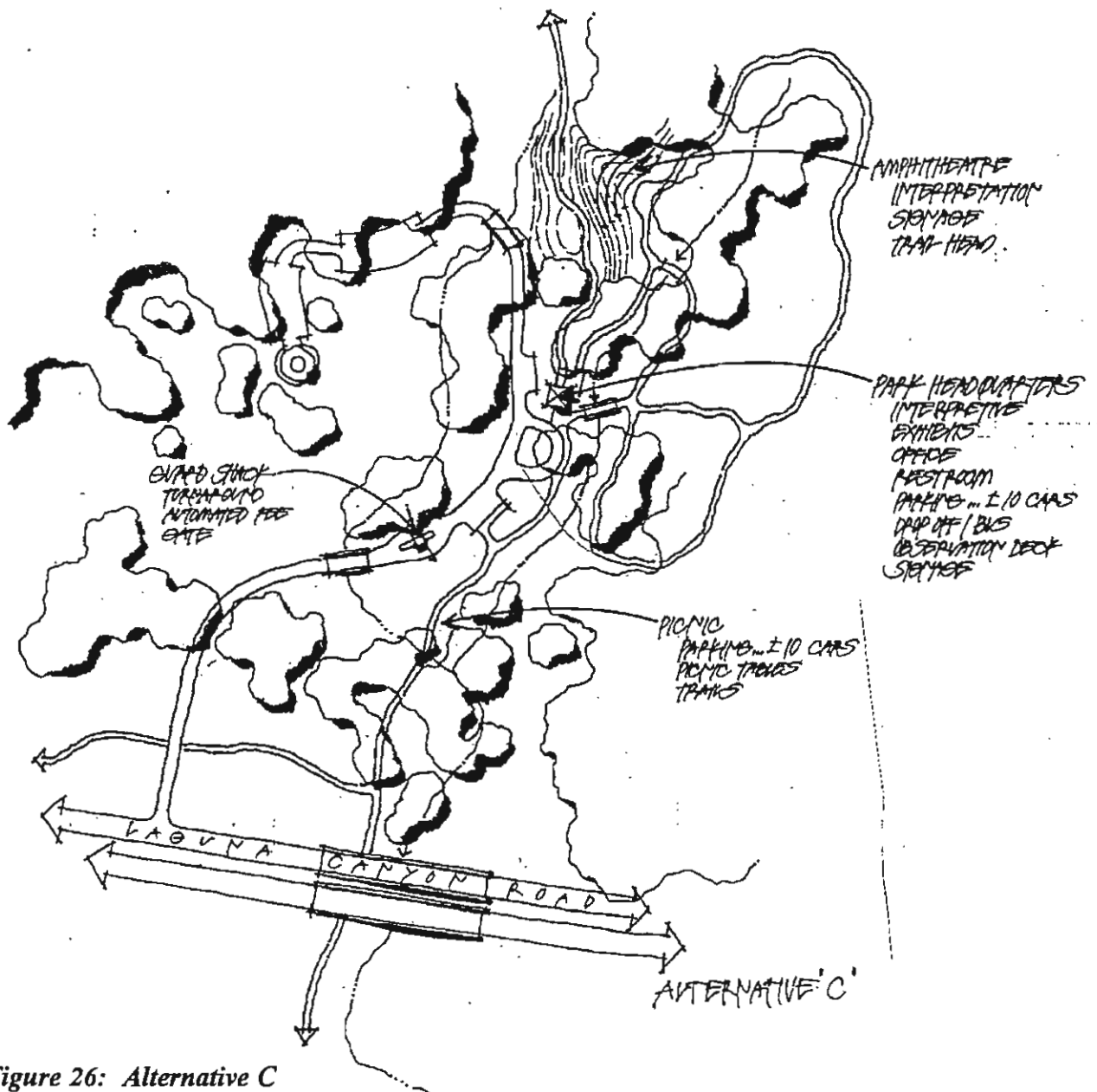


Figure 26: Alternative C

Alternative D

Further analysis of site conditions revealed three distinct characteristics of the site and three distinct functions of park facilities and “resources node,” an optimal “visual surveillance node” and a logical “recreation node.” Associating park facilities with these nodes yields a plan that features three separate centers of activities within the floor of the canyon. A knoll to the south of the park headquarters location in the Preferred Alternative becomes a new site of the park ranger office in that it positions the building in an optimal location for park visual surveillance and nearby primary parking facilities. The interpretive center remains in its location at the Little Sycamore Canyon mouth “knoll” and becomes a central focal point of converging natural systems. The picnic facility becomes the main trail head for this site as it is located near the intersection of a variety of trail uses and destinations.

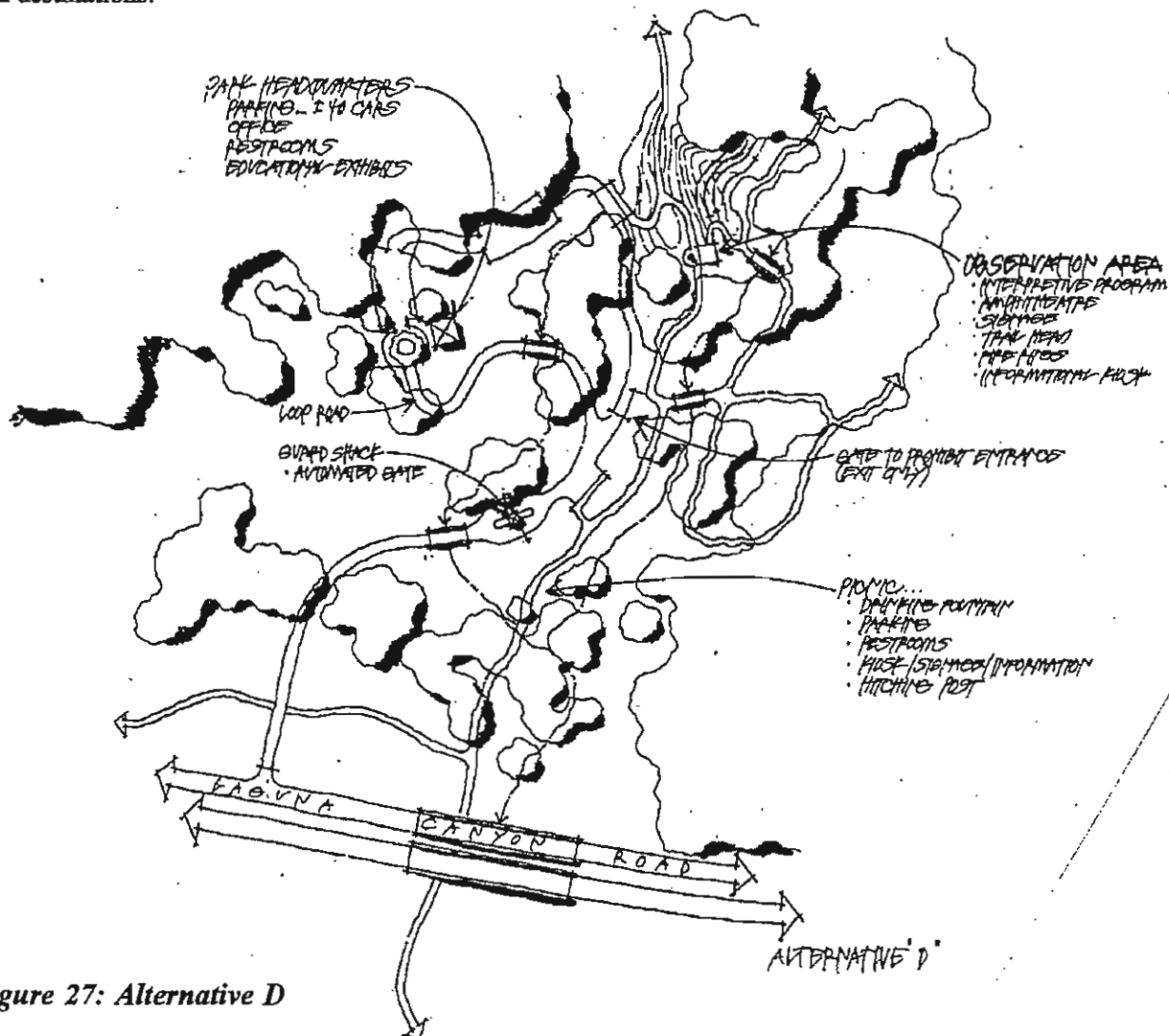


Figure 27: Alternative D

**LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Plant List for Staging Areas**

This plant list is provided as a general guide for development of the staging areas for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Additional study of each site by a specialist in native plant revegetation will be needed prior to final design to determine specific recommendations for seed mixtures and plant palettes.

LITTLE SYCAMORE STAGING AREA

Shade Trees for Picnic Areas

Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore
Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry

Screening at Parking Lots

Eriogonum fasciculatum	California Buckwheat
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon
Quercus berberidifolia	Scrub Oak
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonade Berry
Rhus laurina	Laurel Sumac
Ribes speciosum	Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass

Native Grassland Meadow at Picnic Areas

Container Plants

Bloomeria crocea	Golden Stars
Calochortus splendens	Lilac Mariposa Lily
Calochortus catalinae	Catalina Mariposa Lily
Chlorogalum pomeridianum	Wavy-leaved Soap Plant
Dichelostemma capitatum	Blue Dicks
Eriophyllum confertiflorum	Golden Yarrow
Nassella lepida	Foothill Needlegrass
Nassella pulchra	Purple Needlegrass
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass

Seed

Amsinckia intermedia	Fiddleneck
Bromus carinatus	California Brome
Camissonia bisorta	Southern Suncup
Ericameria palmeri ssp. pachylepis	Box Springs Goldenbush
Eriophyllum confertiflorum	Golden Yarrow
Gnaphalium bicolor	Bicolored Cudweed
Gnaphalium californicum	California Everlasting
Grendelia robusta	Gum Plan
Hemizonia fasciculata	Fascicled Tar Weed
Isocoma veneta	Coastal Goldenbush
Lasthenia californica	Goldfields
Lotus purshianus	Spanish Lotus
Lupinus bicolor	Lupine
Lupinus truncatus	Collar Lupine
Melica imperfecta	Coast Melic
Nassella lepida	Foothill Needlegrass

Nassella pulchra	Purple Needlegrass
Orthocarpus pupurascens	Owl's Clover
Phacelia parryi	Parry's Phacelia
Phacelia ramosissima	Branching Phacelia
Poa secunda	Malpais Bluegrass
Salvia columbariae	Chia
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass

Screening at Laguna Canyon Road

Trees

Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore
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Shrubs

Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonade Berry

Interpretive Center and Informal Outdoor Amphitheater

Trees for the Interpretive Center

Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak
Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry

Trees for the Informal Outdoor Amphitheater

Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore
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Shrubs and Groundcover

Baccharis pilularis	Coyote Brush
Eriogonum fasciculatum	California Buckwheat
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon
Mimulus aurantiacus	Monkey Flower
Quercus berberidifolia	Scrub Oak
Ribes speciosum	Fuchsia Flowering Gooseberry
Rhamnus ilicifolia	Holly-leaved Redberry
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonade Berry
Salvia mellifera	Black Sage
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass

Riparian Vegetation for the Creek North of the Picnic Area

(List is provided in case supplemental planting is required, but this area currently contains well-established riparian vegetation.)

Trees

Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore
Salix gooddingii	Godding's Willow
Salix lasiolepis	Arroyo Willow
Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry

Tall Background Shrubs

Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon
Rhamnus ilicifolia	Holly-leaved Redberry
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonade Berry
Rhus laurina	Laurel Sumac

Medium Foreground Shrubs

Eriogonum fasciculatum
Baccharis pilularis
Ribes speciosum

Interior Flat-topped Buckwheat
Coyote Brush
Fuchsia-flowering Gooseberry

Perennials/Annuals

Corethrogyne filaginifolia
Dryopteris arguta
Eriophyllum confertiflorum
Leymus condensatus
Mirabilis californica
Thalictrum polycarpum
Zauschneria californica

Cudweed Aster
Wood Fern
Golden Yarrow
Giant Wild Rye
Wishbone Bush
Common Meadow-rue
California Fuchsia

Riparian Vegetation for the Dry Creek Drainage Area South of the Amphitheater
(Field studies will be required if revegetation is needed for this area.)

Coastal Sage Scrub Revegetation

Artemisia californica
Encelia californica
Ericameria palmeri ssp. pachylepis
Eriophyllum confertiflorum
Eriogonum fasciculatum ssp. foliosum
Isocoma veneta
Mimulus aurantiacus
Mirabilis californica
Nassella lepida
Opuntia littoralis
Opuntia prolifera
Rhus integrifolia
Salvia mellifera

Sage Brush
Bush Sunflower
Box Springs Goldenbush
Golden Yarrow
Interior Flat-topped Buckwheat
Coastal Goldenbush
Monkey Flower
Wishbone Bush
Foothill Needlegrass
Prickly Pear
Coastal Cholla
Lemonade Berry
Black Sage

LAUREL CANYON STAGING AREA

Riparian Vegetation

(List provided in case supplemental planting is required, but this area currently contains well established riparian vegetation.)

Trees for Bench Areas Above Creekbed

Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore
Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak
Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry

Tall Background Shrubs

Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon
Rhamnus ilicifolia	Holly-leaved Redberry
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonade Berry

Perennials/Annuals

Artemisia douglasiana	Mugwort
Baccharis pilularis	Coyote Brush
Baccharis salicifolia	Mulefat
Mimulus aurantacus	Sticky Monkey Flower
Ribes speciosum	Fuchsia Flowering Gooseberry
Zauschneria californica	California Fuchsia

Screening at Riparian Corridor Adjacent to Laguna Canyon Road

Bench Area Above Creekbed

Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore
Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak
Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry

Creek Channel

Baccharis salicifolia	Mulefat
Salix gooddingii	Godding's Willow
Salix lasiolepis	Arroyo Willow

Picnic and Parking Area

Trees

Juglans californica	California Black Walnut
Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak

Native Grassland Meadow at Picnic Area

Container Plants

Bloomeria crocea	Golden Stars
Calochortus splendens	Lilac Mariposa
Calochortus catalinae	Catalina Mariposa
Chlorogalum pomeridianum	Wavy-leaved Soap Plant
Dichelostemma capitatum	Blue Dicks
Eriophyllum confertiflorum	Golden Yarrow
Nassella lepida	Foothill Needlegrass
Nassella pulchra	Purple Needlegrass
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass

Seed

Amsinckia intermedia	Fiddleneck
Bromus carinatus	California Brome
Camissonia bisorta	Southern Suncup
Ericameria palmeri ssp. pachylepis	Box Springs Goldenbush
Eriophyllum confertiflorum	Golden Yarrow
Gnaphalium bicolor	Bicolored Cudweed
Gnaphalium californicum	California Everlasting
Grendelia robusta	Gum Plan
Hemizonia fasciculata	Fascicled Tar Weed
Isocoma veneta	Coastal Goldenbush
Lasthenia californica	Goldfields
Lotus purshianus	Spanish Lotus
Lupinus bicolor	Lupine
Lupinus truncatus	Collar Lupine
Melica imperfecta	Coast Melic
Nassella lepida	Foothill Needlegrass
Nassella pulchra	Purple Needlegrass
Orthocarpus pupurascens	Owl's Clover
Phacelia parryi	Parry's Phacelia
Phacelia ramosissima	Branching Phacelia
Poa secunda	Malapais Bluegrass
Salvia columbariae	Chia
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass

Trees for Area Near Cathedral Rock

Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak
Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry

BIG BEND EQUESTRIAN STAGING AREA

Trees

Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak
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Shrubs and Groundcover

Baccharis pilularis	Coyote Brush
Mimulus aurantiacus	Monkey Flower
Quercus berberidifolia	Scrub Oak
Rhamnus ilicifolia	Holly-leaved Redberry
Rhus laurina	Laurel Sumac
Ribes speciosum	Fuchsia-flowering Gooseberry
Salvia mellifera	Black Sage
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass

Vines

Keckiella cordifolia	Heart-leaved Bush Penstemon
Marah macrocarpus	Man Root

LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK

INTERIM OPERATIONS PLAN

October 13, 1992

COASTAL GREENBELT AUTHORITY

PREPARED BY
COUNTY OF ORANGE

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AGENCY

HARBORS, BEACHES AND PARKS

REGIONAL PARKS OPERATIONS DIVISION

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PREFACE

The establishment of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (LCWP) has long been a goal of the County of Orange. The County's General Plan identifies the Laguna Greenbelt, of which Laguna and Laurel Canyons are a part, as a high-priority open space valued for its outstanding scenic and conservation aspects, valuable wildlife and vegetation habitats, and for the regional recreational opportunities it offers.

In November of 1990 the voters of the City of Laguna Beach approved Proposition H which provided for bonds totaling \$20 million to assist in the purchase of the Laguna Laurel Planned Community area.

In April of 1991 the City of Laguna Beach and The Irvine Company entered into a Purchase Option Agreement for the City to purchase the Laguna Laurel Planned Community area (up to approximately 2,150 acres) from The Irvine Company, in five progressive annual purchase options for \$78 million.

In May of 1991 the County agreed to pay up to \$10 million toward the City's acquisition of the Laguna Laurel Planned Community area; \$2.5 million annually for four years. The Nature Conservancy will coordinate environmental programs and manage land earmarked for public acquisition while it is still under Irvine Company ownership.

On June 25, 1991 the County and the City entered into a cooperative agreement, the County/City Agreement, establishing the Coastal Greenbelt Authority to oversee a new regional park which includes lands under the ownership of the State of California Department of Fish & Game, County of Orange, and City of Laguna Beach.

The Laguna Coast Wilderness Park will be managed under the guidelines established by the Coastal Greenbelt Authority and by this Interim Operations Plan. The park will be managed by the County of Orange, EMA/Harbors, Beaches

and Parks. The park's administrative headquarters will be William R. Mason Regional Park. Specifically, the park will be under the responsibility of Mason Park's Senior Park Ranger. A full-time park ranger, with 4x4 truck, is assigned to Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The assigned park ranger will work cooperatively with the State of California, City of Laguna Beach, the Nature Conservancy, and the Coastal Greenbelt Authority to protect and manage the park's resources, and in conducting public interpretive programs.

The prime goal of this Interim Operations Plan is to guide the management of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park for public safety, natural and cultural resource protection, environmental education, and passive recreation.

1.0 Administration

1.1 Policy Statement

The establishment of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park through consolidation of properties owned by the County of Orange and the City of Laguna Beach accomplishes the County's General Plan goal of creating a regional park in the Laguna Canyon area and the City's goal of preserving the Laguna Greenbelt area. The consolidation and preservation of over 2,000 existing publicly owned acres of beautiful natural coastal canyons and wildlife habitat areas provides new passive recreation and environmental education opportunities to residents of Orange County. This Interim Operations Plan will serve to make this new regional park accessible to the public until a Facilities and Resource Management Plan/General Development Plan is approved.

1.2 Governing Documents

There are four governing documents: 1) City of Laguna Beach/Irvine Company Option Agreement, 2) County/City Agreement, 3) County's 55 year lease of City of Laguna Beach property, and 4) Coastal Greenbelt Authority Bylaws.

In addition, there is a cooperative management agreement between the City of Laguna Beach, County of Orange, and California Department of Fish and Game regarding the State Laguna Laurel Ecological Reserve situated in lower Laurel Canyon. State ecological reserves are established to provide protection for rare, threatened or endangered native plants, wildlife, aquatic organisms and specialized terrestrial or aquatic habitat types. Public entry and use of ecological reserves shall be compatible with the primary purposes of such reserves.

1.2.1 City of Laguna Beach/Irvine Company Option Agreement

The City of Laguna Beach, negotiating with a team consisting of representatives of the City of Laguna Beach, local civic and environmental groups, and the County of Orange, successfully reached agreement with The Irvine Company for the City to purchase the Laguna Laurel Planned Community area. The Option Agreement, executed April 16, 1991, allowed for the City to progressively purchase up to approximately 2,150 acres (excluding rights-of-way for the Laguna Canyon Road improvements and the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor) from The Irvine Company for \$78 million over a five year period.

1.2.2 County/City Agreement

On June 25, 1991 the County of Orange and City of Laguna Beach entered into a cooperative agreement, the County/City Agreement, which incorporates the above Option Agreement by reference. In return for a \$10 million County contribution to the City to assist in the purchase of the Laguna Laurel Planned Community area, the County is to receive certain assurances contained in the County/City Agreement. Specifically, the agreement sets forth a number of provisions. A new regional park is to be established combining City and County

lands. A new management authority (Coastal Greenbelt Authority) is to be established. The County is to receive fee title to 308 acres of land within the Laguna Laurel Planned Community area (Parcel A, 208 acres in early 1992, and Parcel B, 100 acres, after the full \$10 million has been paid to City). The City is to lease to the County for 55 years its Laguna Laurel Option parcels, its Laguna Heights property, its Sycamore Hills property, and other appropriate contiguous properties. Correspondingly, the County is to include its Irvine Coast Wilderness Park property and its Sycamore Hills property within this new Laguna Coast Wilderness Park to be maintained and operated by the Orange County Environmental Management Agency/Harbors, Beaches and Parks.

The Executive Director for the Coastal Greenbelt Authority is the Director of the Environmental Management Agency, or designated alternate. The Director of Harbors, Beaches and Parks is the designated alternate.

1.2.3 Lease between City and County

On February 11, 1992 the County of Orange and City of Laguna Beach entered into a 55 year lease which includes the City owned Laguna Laurel Option Parcel One and Cortese properties. Additional City property will be leased to the County in the future pursuant to the cooperative County/City Agreement.

The City of Laguna Beach is to lease to the County of Orange, lands that it acquires from The Irvine Company pursuant to the Option Agreement. As each of the five Option Parcels are acquired, they are to be leased to the County within 90 days after the close of escrow. The lease is to be for 55 years at a cost of \$1.00 for the term of the lease. Additionally, the Laguna Heights property, Sycamore Hills property, and other

appropriate contiguous properties are to be leased to the County to be included in the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

1.2.4 Coastal Greenbelt Authority Bylaws

Bylaws for the Coastal Greenbelt Authority were adopted by the Laguna Beach City Council on October 1, 1991 and by the Orange County Board of Supervisors on November 5, 1991. Amendment No. 1 to the bylaws was approved by both parties respectively on July 21, 1992 and August 11, 1992.

1.3 Governing Agencies

1.3.1 Coastal Greenbelt Authority

The County/City Agreement adopted June 25, 1991 by the Board of Supervisors and the Laguna Beach City Council, creates a cooperative management authority called the Coastal Greenbelt Authority. The Authority is made up of four members: two appointed by the Board of Supervisors (a County official and a public member), one city official appointed by the City of Laguna Beach, and one public member elected by the Laguna Greenbelt, Inc., Laguna Canyon Conservancy, Inc., Village Laguna of Laguna Beach, Inc., and Laguna Canyon Property Owners Association. In addition, there are two ex officio members of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority: the State Department of Fish and Game and the City of Irvine.

The current members of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority are:

Supervisor Thomas F. Riley	County Official
Kenneth H. Bruner	Alternate
Buck Johns	County, Public Member
Andy Crean	Alternate
Lida Lenney	City Official, Laguna Beach
Ann Christoph	Alternate
Elisabeth Brown	Representative for Laguna Beach Environmental and Civic Groups
Peter Bowler	Alternate
Earl Lauppe	Department of Fish and Game Ex officio Member
Robert Johnson	City of Irvine Ex officio Member

The Executive Director to the Authority, as delegated by the Director of the Environmental Management Agency, is the Director of EMA/Harbors, Beaches and Parks. The Executive Director shall exercise those powers given by the Board of Supervisors, and shall report to the Authority on a regular basis.

The Coastal Greenbelt Authority holds its regular monthly meeting at the Irvine City Hall at 6:30 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month. Its first meeting was held in August of 1991.

The Coastal Greenbelt Authority is responsible for the following functions:

- 1) Producing a General Development Plan/master plan for facilities and resource management for the park (a.k.a. Stewardship Plan), which shall be in accord with the

Laguna Laurel Option Agreement, and which shall become effective upon adoption by the Orange County Board of Supervisors and Laguna Beach City Council;

- 2) Monitoring park operations to insure consistency with the adopted GDP or facilities and management plan;
- 3) Fostering volunteer assistance for activities within the regional park;
- 4) Assisting in obtaining financial resources through grants or donations for future acquisition of property, facilities and operations of the regional park; and
- 5) Recommending to the Board of Supervisors and the City Council the ownership interests and parcels to be purchased under the Laguna Laurel agreement by any entity.

1.3.2 Orange County Board of Supervisors/Laguna Beach City Council

The powers and authority of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority are delegated to them by the Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Laguna Beach City Council. Where appropriate and as a part of the normal course of business, County and City Commissions will review Authority actions prior to submittal to the Board of Supervisors and City Council.

2.0 General Park Operations

For the purpose of clarity and in anticipation of the inclusion of additional properties, the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park will be divided into specific geographic areas as follows:

James Dilley (JD) = Cortese, Sycamore Hills including Lake #3
Laguna/Laurel North (LL) = Laguna/Laurel option parcels including
Lakes #1 & #2
Irvine Coast (IC) = Irvine Coast Wilderness Park, including Laurel Canyon.
Laguna Heights (LH) = Carma-Sandling, DeWitt

2.1 Public Access

To avoid disturbance of the park's natural environment during the Interim Operations Plan and prior to the preparation of a General Development Plan, public access will be regulated. However, to provide a means of interim public entry, three of the four geographic areas of the park may be open on a periodic basis. This interim access may involve opening a specific area for one day per weekend per month, rotating through the three geographic areas as follows:

JD - Closed to the public except by special permit or one day per month with docent-led tours.

LL - Closed to the public except by special permit or one day per month with docent-led tours.

IC - Closed to the public except by special permit or one day per month with docent-led tours.

LH - Open Daily - See Section 11 Laguna Heights.

Regularly scheduled weekend openings will be contingent on establishment of a docent program and certification and availability of docents to lead the tours. The public will be notified through news releases and/or local publications when tours are scheduled.

Special permits will be issued by the Park Ranger's Office for weekday access and for organized groups, i.e., school groups for educational purposes, research by authorized groups or individuals, and fund raising efforts. Special permits will be issued in accordance with Section 7.0 EMA Policy 7.1.401, and Section 7 Resource Protection, of this Plan.

The extent of public access to lands ultimately to be included within the park but still owned by The Irvine Company will be determined in a separate plan prepared by the Nature Conservancy. Currently, the Nature Conservancy is proposing to open these lands to public access in the Spring of 1993 with docent-guided tours.

2.1.1 Park Hours

The park hours are 7:00 AM to Sunset, when open daily. Park areas subject to access restriction will have reduced hours. Specific hours by area are as follows unless permission is granted for additional time to accommodate the unique needs of user groups:

JD - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Docent monitored)

LL - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Docent monitored)

IC - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Docent monitored)

LH - See Section 11 Laguna Heights.

Closure of trails and roads for a period of time, usually three days, may occur following heavy rains and, when fire officials request closure due to high fire danger.

2.1.2 Access Locations

Each of the four geographic areas will have a trailhead/staging area to accommodate the arrival of park visitors. Support facilities that may be provided at these locations include: portable toilets, bicycle racks, entry signage and trash bins.

Location of these trailhead/staging areas are as follows:

JD - Existing gate and gravel parking lot on the easterly side of Laguna Canyon Road.

LL - Stagecoach Springs located on the westerly side of Laguna Canyon Road, directly across from the James Dilley parking lot.

IC - Stoneridge gate located on the westerly side of Laguna Canyon Road and south of the intersection of Laguna Canyon Road and El Toro Road.

LH - See Section 11 Laguna Heights.

A shuttle system to these trailhead/staging areas will be utilized. There are several areas available in the vicinity to accommodate parking. Any tour organizer must arrange appropriate shuttle and off-site parking accommodations and coordinate with the park ranger.

When special permits are requested, groups and organizations will be required to make their own arrangements to shuttle users to and from the access locations.

2.2 Recreational Uses

Recreational uses will be regulated during the interim phase with emphasis on preservation and restoration of the natural habitat.

2.2.1 Hiking

Hiking, where and when permitted, is the preferred and recommended mode of transport within the park. The park provides many miles of existing ranch roads for hiking.

2.2.2 Bicycling

During the first year of park operation the Authority will consider docent-led mountain bicycle tours, if bicyclists volunteer to participate as docents. Tours would be conducted within areas of the park where the use is determined to be compatible with existing uses and acknowledged conservation goals. Mountain bicyclists will be encouraged to concentrate their activities on established trails for this purpose in Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park and Crystal Cove State Park.

2.2.3 Horseback Riding

During the first year of park operation the Authority will consider docent-led equestrian tours, if equestrians volunteer to participate as docents. Tours would be conducted within areas of the park where the use is determined to be compatible with existing uses and acknowledged conservation goals. Equestrian access will, of necessity, be limited as there are no adequate parking areas for trailers and other equestrian facilities in or near the park. Equestrians will be encouraged to concentrate their activities on established trails for this purpose in Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park and Crystal Cove State Park.

2.2.4 Picnicking

There is no plan at this time to provide picnicking areas; however, informal picnicking is allowed. Public information and programs will emphasize the importance that park users pack out all trash and other items they pack in.

2.2.5 Fishing

No fishing will be allowed in the Laguna Lakes during the habitat restoration feasibility study which has recently been funded by the State Coastal Conservancy. Following any restoration efforts, this policy will be reconsidered.

2.3 Prohibited Uses

Any activity resulting in loss or degradation of park resources and facilities is prohibited. Artifact, plant and animal collecting is prohibited (OCCO 2-5-27;2-5-38) except as defined in Section 7.2.

2.3.1 Motorized Vehicles

Operation of motorized vehicles is not permitted. Exceptions are those authorized to access the park for purposes of management, maintenance, police and fire service, by easement or special permit.

2.3.2 Boating

Public boating is not permitted. Exceptions are those authorized to access the lakes for the purposes of management, maintenance, police and fire service, by easement or special permit.

2.3.3 Swimming and Wading

Swimming and/or wading is prohibited.

2.4 Domestic Animals

Domestic animals are prohibited within the park except as identified below.

2.4.1 Dogs

Dogs are prohibited within the park with the exception of the Laguna Heights area where leash and clean-up ordinances will be enforced.

2.4.2 Cattle Grazing

Cattle grazing is prohibited on the parkland. As future lands are incorporated into the park, the Coastal Greenbelt Authority may evaluate cattle grazing on a case-by-case basis and exceptions can be allowed by approval of the Authority.

2.5 Group Usage

Group usage, especially hiking, is encouraged and will require a permit. See Section 2.1 Public Access for special permit information.

2.6 Law and Ordinance Enforcement

Applicable local, state, and federal laws and/or ordinances pertaining to the protection and use of this park, whether originating at the local, regional, state, or federal level will be in effect and enforced.

3.0 Park Management

Park management will be the responsibility of the County of Orange, EMA, Harbors, Beaches and Parks, Regional Parks Operations Division.

3.1 Maintenance and Operations

Maintenance and operations will be coordinated through William R. Mason Regional Park.

3.1.1 Staffing

Staffing for the park is currently one (1) Park Ranger II. The park ranger will provide the following services:

- 1) Protection of park resources
- 2) Patrol
- 3) Public relations and fund raising
- 4) Park regulations compliance monitoring
- 5) Public safety
- 6) Response to emergency situations
- 7) Coordination of environmental studies
- 8) Interpretive programming

As additional property is acquired and when public use opportunities are expanded, additional staff may be required. Park ranger reserve volunteers and docents will also be used to supplement staffing requirements; however, they cannot be expected to fill long-term staffing needs.

3.1.2 Vehicles

One 1990 GMC S-15, 4x4, pick-up truck is currently assigned to the park. This is a patrol and maintenance vehicle. A multi-person utility vehicle will be requested through the budget as staff additions are made.

3.1.3 Equipment and Supplies

All equipment and supplies will be purchased by using the following accounting information:

- 1) Timekeeping location 028025
- 2) Responsibility Center.757
- 3) Project Number H21708

3.1.4 Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures (i.e., police, fire, and paramedic response, etc.) will be established and coordinated by the Manager of Regional Parks Operations in cooperation with the appropriate agencies.

4.0 Park Headquarters

During initial stages of the interim operation period, the park headquarters will be at William R. Mason Regional Park. A field headquarters will be required when habitat restoration activities begin, and as public access increases. A satellite Ranger office may be established.

5.0 Interim Improvements

During the interim operations phase of the park it will be necessary to upgrade, repair, replace, and add to the existing facilities (e.g., gates, fences, signs, etc.) to protect the natural resources and to prepare for future public use. Decisions relating to the placement of interim improvements will respect and recognize the importance of wildlife corridors to the long term health of the park ecosystem, and will seek to respect the existing rural character of the area.

5.1 Facility Improvements

5.1.1 Signs

In cooperation with other adjoining agencies, standard park signs including "Wilderness Warning" and public safety signs, will be placed throughout the park. These signs will inform, educate, and encourage the public to use the park in a manner consistent with low-impact wilderness use. All signs, unless otherwise noted, will be developed and maintained by HBP staff. Where applicable, signs will be brief in nature; the language will be simple, and graphic icons (international symbols) will be used.

5.1.1.1 - Fund Raising Sign(s)

This sign will inform the public of the current status of the Laguna Laurel Purchase Option program. The sign will indicate the property that is currently owned, to be purchased in the future, or otherwise dedicated as public open space. This sign will be developed in cooperation with the City of Laguna Beach and the Laguna Canyon Foundation and installed on park property.

5.1.1.2 - Information/Regulation Sign(s)

An information/regulation sign will be installed at each of the major access locations. This sign will display the entire Greenbelt area and highlight the particular canyon or area that the park user is about to enter, i.e., Laurel Canyon. A brief explanation of the "do's and don'ts" of low-impact wilderness access will be standard on all signs. Individual signs may also contain interpretive information pertaining to the highlighted area and a brief explanation of the Greenbelt project.

5.1.1.3 - Site Specific Sign(s)

Public access within the park will necessitate signage in specific areas, i.e., hiking trail directions and information, interpretive point-of-interest, etc. In addition, during certain times of the year, some areas or sites may be closed to public access due to habitat restoration, wildlife nesting activities, etc.

Access Sign(s): A sign will be posted at access/trespass points around the perimeter of the park. This sign will state, in simple language, that access to the park is restricted and that access information is available by contacting William R. Mason Regional Park. The sign will also indicate that the park is a wilderness area and wildlife sanctuary.

Boundary Sign(s): In cooperation with adjacent parks (Crystal Cove State Park) and open space/wilderness areas, a generic boundary sign will be developed for use throughout the area. The sign will contain the phone number for access information to the different areas, i.e., Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, Crystal Cove State Park, State Laguna Laurel Ecological Reserve, or properties operated by the Nature Conservancy.

In cooperation with the Nature Conservancy and the State of California, a standard park identification sign will be placed at all existing park access points. In addition, a sign that clearly identifies publicly owned lands and those to be acquired in the future through offers of dedication or purchase will be placed at conspicuous locations.

5.1.2 Fencing

Existing perimeter fencing will be maintained and repaired as needed. Internal barbed wire fencing is not required once cattle are removed from the park. Removal of fences will be coordinated with the Nature Conservancy which operates adjacent privately owned land.

5.1.3 Gates

Gates required for vehicular access/control will be upgraded to Harbors, Beaches and Parks standards and respect the rural characteristics of the area. A uniform lock control system will be implemented.

5.1.4 Trails

Public use will be restricted to existing dirt roads and suitable trails. Due to rugged terrain, not all trails will be suitable for all park users. This will be indicated when and where possible.

5.1.5 Roads and Trails

The existing network of ranch and utility easement roads provide good access to a large part of the park. Some roads have been abandoned over the years and are being recolonized by native plants merging back into the natural landscape. During this interim phase, roads and trails conforming to Harbors, Beaches and Parks wilderness standards will be maintained. No new roads or trails are required to be constructed at this time.

5.1.6 Restrooms

Portable restrooms will be placed at parking and perimeter trailhead areas and at a few interior destinations. Water will be provided at these sites if a source is available.

5.2 Public Health and Safety Improvements

The park is a wilderness area and is therefore subject to certain inherent public dangers. The public will be informed of these dangers by posting standard "Wilderness Warning" and/or other public safety signs where appropriate.

5.2.1 Water Troughs and Wells

A number of troughs and wells occur on the property and will be maintained. EMA/Environmental Resources Division will be scheduled to periodically test the water and assist staff in posting signs where required.

5.3 Design Criteria

Harbors, Beaches and Parks Design Division will review interim park improvement plans when appropriate. A comprehensive park design and public facilities program will be addressed during the General Development Plan phase.

6.0 Budget

Funding for park interim operations is incorporated in the Harbors, Beaches and Parks/Regional Parks Operations section of the County of Orange budget.

6.1 Administration

All administrative services will be provided by the assigned Park Ranger II to Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and the Senior Park Ranger at William R. Mason Regional Park. Services will include budget

preparation, purchase requests, work requests, park amenities inventory, reports, coordination of environmental studies, and development of interpretive programs.

6.2 Maintenance and Operations

Maintenance and operations functions, i.e., work requests, contract services, purchase requests, maintenance projects, and maintenance activities, will be coordinated by the Senior Park Ranger, Park Ranger II, and the staff of Mason Regional Park.

6.3 Capital Expenditures

Park capital improvements will be identified in the General Development Plan.

7.0 Resource Protection

The most important activity of staff is resource protection. The creation of the park is a direct result of the willingness of the public, particularly the citizens of Laguna Beach, to make a long-term financial commitment to protect the natural and cultural resources of these parklands.

The Irvine Company has retained consultants to research the resources on lands slated for dedication adjacent to the park and is formulating a resource protection, restoration, and preservation plan. County park rangers will work cooperatively with the Nature Conservancy and The Irvine Company, California Department of Fish and Game, and other State of California agencies.

7.1 Maintenance

All maintenance activities will occur in an environment of respect and awareness of their direct and indirect impact upon the natural resources. All maintenance activities and projects will be properly planned, prepared, and supervised to ensure the protection of park natural and cultural resources. They will be placed on the Coastal Greenbelt Authority agenda when appropriate.

7.1.1 Maintenance Guidelines

Park staff will develop a set of guidelines for maintenance action within the park. This will contain basic "do's and don'ts" of habitat protection and low impact maintenance.

7.2 Access for Research, Study and Fund Raising

Access into the park for research and fund raising will be coordinated and monitored through the park ranger. A system of access controls will be established. This system will minimize the proliferation of multiple locks on gates and control who has access to the park.

7.2.1 Permitted governmental agencies, organizations, and individuals may have their own locks on gates to allow access to parklands, and through these lands to adjacent properties, subject to permission of Manager, Regional Parks Operations. However, it is expected that the park ranger will be apprised of activities, projects and studies being conducted on adjacent lands.

7.2.2 It is expected that other groups will want and need access to parklands to conduct fund raising, research and study. These groups will be required to register for an access permit that

will clearly state their intended use of the park, the area to be accessed, period of access (e.g., 1 day, 1 week, 1 year), the number of people to be involved, and vehicular access requirements. All permits will require approval by the Manager, Regional Parks Operations. Permit issuance will be in cooperation with adjacent landowners, and all permittees must be in possession of their permits. Exceptions to Section 2.3 Prohibited Uses (collections of plantlife and artifacts) may be granted by the park ranger for research and study.

8.0 Interpretive Programs

Interpretive programs will be developed and conducted by assigned park ranger and docents.

8.1 Video

A park informational video will be developed by Harbors, Beaches and Parks staff for release to local public access television channels and interested organizations.

8.2 Off-Site Programs

Harbors, Beaches and Parks rangers will coordinate the development of off-site programs. These may include slide shows, videos, traveling exhibits, publications, and inter-active multimedia programs.

9.0 Volunteer Programs

Volunteer programs will provide the best opportunity for public outreach and involvement. Volunteers will be utilized for a variety of services, i.e., interpretive programs, maintenance projects, research, etc.

9.1 Docent Program

The assigned park ranger will train and certify volunteers for docent-led nature tours.

Harbors, Beaches and Parks Ranger Reserves will be utilized for park patrols, public relations, and interpretive programs.

9.2 Maintenance

Many individuals and groups derive great enjoyment and satisfaction from serving and working in resource protection and restoration projects. The park rangers will identify and supervise these projects.

9.3 Research

Many individuals and groups are interested in the more scientific (naturalist) aspects of volunteer work, i.e., bird counts, habitat evaluation, collection and cataloging of plants and insects, etc. The park ranger will monitor and supervise these activities.

10.0 Liability Issues

Public information, park regulatory, and "Wilderness Warning" signs will be installed at appropriate locations. An Access Permit Program will be established.

11.0 Laguna Heights - General Park Operations

The Laguna Heights (LH) area is adjacent to Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park. In order to effectively manage and respond to needs of the Laguna Heights area, field supervision will be based out of Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park.

11.1 Public Access

To avoid disturbance of the natural environment during the Interim Operations Plan and prior to the preparation of a general development plan, public access to the property will be regulated. To accommodate the special needs of fund raising, research and study efforts in the park, access permits will be issued in accordance with section 7.0 Resource Protection of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park Interim Operations Plan.

11.2 Park Hours

Open daily - 7:00 AM to Sunset

Closure of trails and roads for a period of time, usually three days, may occur following heavy rains and, when fire officials request closure due to high fire danger.

11.3 Access Locations

Parking is available at Alta Laguna Park and at curbside. Access at this location will not be advertised except for docent led tours.

11.4 Recreational Uses

Recreational uses will be restricted during the interim phase with emphasis on preservation and restoration of the property.

11.4.1 Hiking

Hiking, where and when permitted, is the preferred and recommended mode of transport within the park. The park provides many miles of existing ranch roads for hiking.

11.4.2 Bicycling

Bicycling has been allowed in the Laguna Heights area. Bicyclists will be required to observe wilderness bicycling regulations as posted in Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park and the Laguna Heights area.

11.4.3 Horseback Riding

Equestrian access will be provided solely at the main parking lot for Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park off Alicia Parkway in Laguna Niguel.

11.4.4 Picnicking

Picnicking facilities are available at Laguna Heights. Public information and programs will emphasize the importance that park users pack out all trash and other items they pack in.

11.5 Prohibited Uses

Any activity resulting in loss or degradation of park resources and facilities is prohibited. Artifact, plant and wildflower collecting is prohibited except as defined in Section 7.2.

11.5.1 Motorized Vehicles

Operation of motorized vehicles is not permitted. Exceptions are those authorized to access the park for purposes of management, maintenance, police and fire service, by easement or special permit.

11.6 Domestic Animals

Domestic animals are prohibited within the park except as identified below:

11.6.1 Dogs

Dogs are allowed within the Laguna Heights area where leash (6-foot maximum) and clean-up ordinances will be enforced. Dogs are prohibited within most of Aliso and Wood Canyons Regional Park; the exception to this is the Aliso Creek Bicycle Trail that passes through portions of the park.

11.7 Group Usage

Group usage, especially hiking, is encouraged.

11.8 Law and Ordinance Enforcement

Applicable local, state, and federal laws and/or ordinances pertaining to the protection and use of this park, whether originating at the local, regional, state, or federal level will be in effect and enforced.

* * *

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is an undeveloped region found within the San Joaquin and Sycamore Hills, comprising some 10,000 acres. The park has a diverse array of plant communities, but is generally characterized by scrub (sage scrub and chaparral) in most of the park. In the northwest and northeast corners, as well as, the Bommer Canyon region grasslands are the dominant plant communities.

The park contains some 10 "subassociations" of the California sage scrub-sage scrub grouping (Venturan-Diegan transitional coastal sage scrub) and another three "associations" including southern cactus scrub, chenopod scrub and a sage scrub-grassland ecotone. The most common subassociations include the California sagebrush-buckwheat, California sagebrush and the black sage subassociations. The California sagebrush-buckwheat scrub is characterized by stands of California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) and interior flat-topped buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), along with orangebush monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), California bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), coastal isocoma (*Isocoma menziesii*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*) and coastal prickly pear (*Opuntia littoralis*). Occasionally lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*) and laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*) are important elements in this community. Other similar associations include the California sagebrush, in which the cover is almost totally dominated by this species and the California sagebrush-orangebush monkey flower which is co-dominated by these two species and contains other mesic species including coyote bush, fuchsia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*), interior flat-topped buckwheat, giant wild rye (*Leymus condensatus*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*). Occasional chaparral elements included holly-leaved redberry (*Rhamnus ilicifolia*) and Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*). Other less common associations on mesic slopes included the coyote bush scrub and California sagebrush-coyote bush scrub.

Drier slopes often contained black sage scrub, mixed sage scrub, buckwheat scrub and/or southern cactus scrub. Coastal bluff scrub and chenopod scrub were also some uncommon sage scrub types found in the park.

The park also contains sage scrub-grassland ecotones, which are areas of very open shrub cover and common sage scrub species, such as California sagebrush and/or interior flat-topped buckwheat. Other more typical situations contain coastal isocoma, Box Springs goldenbush (*Ericameria palmeri* ssp. *pachylepis*), and/or California matchweed (*Gutierrezia californica*) as the principal shrub species in these grasslands.

The other important scrub community in the park is chaparral. Typically found on north and west facing slopes, the chaparrals found in the park included toyon sumac chaparral, which is composed of lemonade berry, toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), holly-leaved redberry, laurel sumac and Mexican elderberry. Scrub oak chaparral is fairly common in the park and is

comprised of scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*) along with toyon, holly-leaved redberry, Mexican elderberry and lemonade berry. Previous reports of large areas of maritime chaparral in the park were erroneous, as scrub oak not Nuttall's oak (*Quercus dumosa*) is the species found principally within the park boundaries. Many of the areas noted as chaparral in the park are actually ecotones between the sage scrub and chaparral communities and often contain many sage scrub species.

Grasslands are another major community within the park, especially at the two northern corners and in the Bommer Canyon region. Generally these are represented by annual grasslands composed of: red brome (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), slender wild oat (*Avena barbata*), foxtail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum* ssp. *leporinum*), purple false brome (*Brachypodium distachyon*), perennial wild rye (*Lolium perenne*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*) and shismus (*Schismus barbatus*). Common forbs in these grasslands include black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), long-beaked filaree (*Erodium botrys*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), common fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), California popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys collinus* ssp. *californicus*), dove weed (*Eremocarpus setigerus*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), fascicled tarweed (*Hemizonia fasciculata*), wild radish (*Raphanus sativa*), smooth cat's ear (*Hypochaeris glabra*), Spanish clover (*Lotus purshianus*), summer mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), western rag weed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*), tall wreath plant (*Stephanomeria virgata*) and telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*). There also may be minor to dense infestations of artichoke thistle found within these grasslands.

Ruderal grasslands are found adjacent to roadways or in more heavily disturbed areas of the park. These are characterized by weedier non-native species including rip-gut brome, red brome, wild oat (*Avena fatua*), cheese weed (*Malva parviflora*), common horseweed (*Conyza canadensis*), western rag weed, poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), wild radish, tocalote, telegraph weed, fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium album*), western sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), Australian saltbush (*Atriplex semibaccata*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), summer mustard and crystal iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*). Perennial weeds include artichoke thistle (*Cynara cardunculus*), Indian tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*) and pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*).

The perennial needlegrass grassland is a community characterized by the native purple needlegrass (*Nasella pulchra*). Other grass species found in this habitat include: soft chess, nit grass (*Gastridium ventricosum*), San Diego bent grass (*Agrostis diegoensis*), perennial rye grass, Malpais blue grass (*Poa secunda*), slender wild oat and foxtail fescue. Common forbs in these grasslands are the blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), Johnny jump ups (*Viola pedunculata*), Padre's shooting star (*Dodecatheon clevelandii*), long-beak filaree, sapphire woolly star (*Eriastrum sapphirinum*), dove weed, golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*), rattlesnake weed (*Daucus pusillus*), coast jepsonia (*Jepsonia parryi*), blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitata*), splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*) and Pacific sanicle (*Sanicula crassicaulis*).

Seasonal wetlands are found in some of the canyon bottoms and within Laguna canyon and are habitats that are frequently to infrequently flooded by water and are dominated by herbaceous species. The alkali meadows are infrequently flooded areas and are characterized by perennial herbaceous species including salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*), Mexican rush (*Juncus mexicanus*), pale spike rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), fennel and curly dock (*Rumex crispus*). Rabbit's foot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), western ragweed, alkali weed (*Cressa truxillensis*), white sweet clover (*Melilotus alba*), prickly sow thistle (*Sonchus asper*), seep monkey flower (*Mimulus guttatus*), western verbena (*Verbena lasiostachys*) and common plantain (*Plantago major*) are some of the common annuals in these meadows.

Freshwater and brackish marshes are found in sites such as the Laguna Lakes which are flooded for a long period of time. The marshes are characterized by perennial, emergent species including California bulrush (*Scirpus californicus*), narrow-leaved cat-tail (*Typha domingensis*), Olney's bulrush (*Scirpus americanus*), umbrella sedge (*Cyperus eragrostis*) and alkali bulrush (*Scirpus robustus*).

Riparian communities are those found adjacent to stream channels, lakes or ponds. The communities may consist of habitats dominated by herbaceous species to densely layered forests. In the LCWP seven different riparian communities are found and these include:

- o Riparian herb - an herbaceous dominated community found in swales or beside stream channels. Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), white and yellow sweet clover (*Melilotus alba* and *M. indica*), rabbit's foot grass, pale spike rush, salt grass, beggar ticks (*Bidens pilosa*), sprangle top (*Leptochloa uninervia*), curly dock, umbrella sedge, barnyard grass (*Echinochloa crus-galli*), dallis grass (*Paspalum dilatatum*) and Spanish sunflower (*Pulicaria paludosa*) are common species found in this habitat.
- o Bramble thicket- a dense thicket of California wild rose (*Rosa californica*) and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) have been noted in some areas of Laguna Canyon.
- o Mulefat scrub- a riparian community comprised of dense stands of mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) and occasionally arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*). Other shrubs commonly found include coyote brush, castor bean (*Ricinus communis*) Mexican elderberry and occasionally toyon. The understory is composed of western ragweed, yellow sweet clover, curly dock, prickly sow thistle, rabbit's foot grass, cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*), black mustard and soft chess.
- o Southern willow scrub - this scrub community is often found in the larger canyons of the park and is comprised of arroyo willow along with mulefat and occasionally black willow (*Salix gooddingii*) or red willow (*Salix laevigata*). Giant stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*), western ragweed, yellow sweet clover, western verbena, and curly dock are common understory species.

o Southern willow forest - the willow forest is comprised of mature, tree-forming willows, black and red willows, which form the upper and mid-canopy layers. Other forests may be solely dominated by black willow and forms a black willow riparian forest. Arroyo willow occurs in the mid-canopy layers, but is usually found in a scrub layer along with mulefat and sandbar willows (*Salix exigua*). A scattered understory of yellow sweet clover, curly dock, western ragweed and Mexican rush.

o Southern sycamore woodland - sycamore woodlands are found in many of the ephemeral stream channels of the park. It is composed of an open canopy of western sycamore along with coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), Mexican elderberry and occasionally some mulefat or arroyo willow. Scattered shrubs in this woodland include laurel sumac, holly-leaved redberry, toyon, lemonade berry and occasional stands of giant wildrye. The understory is composed of dense stands of annual grasses and forbs.

o Coast live oak riparian forest - this riparian forest is comprised of a dense canopy of coast live oak, along with some western sycamores (*Platanus racemosa*). Underneath the oaks is a shrub layer composed of laurel sumac, holly-leaved redberry, toyon, Mexican elderberry, snowbush (*Symphoricarpos mollis*) and fuchsia-flowered gooseberry, lemonade berry, scrub oak and giant wild rye. Poison oak, heart-leaved bush penstemon (*Keckiella cordifolia*), and man root (*Marah macrocarpus*) form vines which drape through the canopy and understory. The understory contains a variety of forbs including miner's lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata*), chickweed (*Stellaria media*), common eucrypta (*Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia*), fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*), along with a number of annual grasses.

Woodland

o Coast live oak woodland - are open to dense stands of coast live oaks, usually found on mesic facing slopes. Shrubs found in this woodland include Mexican elderberry, laurel sumac, toyon, lemonade berry, fuchsia-flowered gooseberry, and holly-leaved redberry and giant wildrye. The understory is generally characterized by annual grass and forbs, principally rippgut brome, chickweed, miner's lettuce and black mustard.

o Mexican elderberry woodland - is an open woodland of Mexican elderberry along with laurel sumac, lemonade berry, toyon and holly-leaved redberry. The understory is comprised of annual grasses and forbs.

Rock Outcrops and Cliff Faces

Rock outcrops and surface rock exposures is an open habitat with only a scattered cover of interior flat-topped buckwheat, coastal isocoma, coastal prickly pear and coastal cholla (*Opuntia prolifera*). Other species in these outcrops include silver beardgrass (*Bothriochloa barbinodis*), rosin weed (*Osmodenia tenella*), rock rose (*Helianthemum scoparium*), giant

Stipa (*Achnatherum coronatum*), red brome, lance-leaved dudleya (*Dudleya lanceolata*), California croton (*Croton californicus*), littleseed muhly (*Mulhenbergia microsperma*), California plantain (*Plantago erecta*) and fascicled tarweed, telegraph weed and yellow pinchusion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*).

Mesic and xeric cliff faces are important habitat for ferns, live-forevers and other less common plant species. Mesic cliff faces often contain bush spikemoss (*Selaginella bigelovii*), goldenback fern (*Pityrogramma triangularis*), granny's hairnet (*Pterostegia drymariodes*), California polypody (*Polypodium californicum*), coffee fern (*Pellaea andromedaefolia*) and lance-leaved dudleya. In contrast, xeric cliff faces may contain an open cover of interior-flat topped buckwheat, California matchweed, giant stipa and sliver beard grass on less steep portions of the slope. The actual cliff faces often contain lance-leaved dudleya, bird's foot fern (*Pellaea mucronata*), California fluff weed (*Filago californica*), cliff malacothrix (*Malacothrix saxatilis*), shiny pepper grass (*Lepidium nitidum*), shismus and goldentop (*Lamarkia aurea*).

Open Water and Fluctuating Shorelines

The three Laguna Lakes contain a temporary to permanent aquatic habitat. Vascular plant species found in these lakes include horned pond weed (*Zannichellia palustris*), common American pondweed (*Potamogeton nodosus*), lesser duckweed (*Lemna minor*), mosquito fern (*Azolla filiculoides*), and water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*). The shoreline often contains an open cover of wetland species especially sharp-leaved crypsis (*Crypsis vaginiflora*), lythrum (*Lythrum hyssopifolia*), seep monkey flower, common plantain, toad rush (*Juncus bufonius*), soft chess, green willow herb (*Epilobium ciliatum*) and weedy cudweed (*Gnaphalium palustre*).

Other Mapping Units

Other mapping units found within the study area include rural developed areas, which include the existing structures found within the "Cattle camp" at Bommer Canyon and developed areas, which consist of the urban development found outside of the park boundaries. Finally existing stands of planted trees were mapped as ornamental vegetation.

PROPOSED FACILITY SITES

The proposed Laguna Coast Wilderness Park General Development Plan includes development of an interpretive center, equestrian and group camping sites and several parking lots, picnic areas and staging areas in order to provide access to the park. The major proposed facilities include: Little Sycamore Canyon staging area and interpretive center; Laurel Canyon staging and picnic area; Big Bend equestrian staging area; Laguna Bowl staging area and Crystal

Cove State Park staging area.

o **Little Sycamore Canyon**- The proposed interpretive center site is located on a small knoll overlooking the canyon. This knoll contains a needlegrass grassland which is characterized by a cover of purple needlegrass along with a mix of annual grasses and forbs. There are also some areas of scrub oak chaparral, annual grassland and sage scrub-grassland ecotone on this knoll. A potential amphitheater site contains a mixed sage scrub community, currently dominated by lax-flowered bushmallow (*Malacothamnus fasciculatus*).

The proposed parking areas are located in needlegrass and annual grassland with the first site located in an opening of coastal sage scrub. The main access road into the staging area is located in the bottom of the canyon, which contains an annual grassland.

The proposed picnic site is found within a sycamore woodland with an annual grassland understory. The proposed trail system extending from this site and the interpretive center is located in annual and needlegrass grassland, coastal sage scrub, mulefat scrub and sycamore woodland vegetation.

Sensitive resources potentially affected by this site include needlegrass grassland, coastal sage scrub, riparian scrub and southern sycamore riparian woodland. A single prostrate spineflower (*Chorizanthe procumbens*) was observed at the interpretive center site and a population of the intermediate mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii* var. *intermedius*) was located near the western end of the proposed access road.

o **Laurel Canyon Staging/Picnic Area** - This staging area is located in an old English walnut grove, which contains English walnut (*Juglans regia*) and an weedy grassland understory. The area north of the grove contains a ruderal grassland with some elements of an alkaline meadow community including curly dock, tall umbrella sedge, fennel and western verbena. The pasture to the west contains an annual grassland composed of ripgut brome wild oat, soft chess, western ragweed and summer mustard.

Sensitive resources include the willow riparian scrub adjacent to Laguna Canyon road and the mulefat scrub at the southern end of the site. The Laurel Canyon stream channel also contains a sycamore woodland. In the northwest corner of the site a small area of the site a small area of coast live oak woodland is also found. No sensitive plant species were noted in this proposed staging area.

o **Big Bend Equestrian Staging Area** - This proposed parking and entry site for the park is comprised of a disturbed annual grassland. The most common species on this site included wild oats, foxtail barley, soft chess, ripgut brome, summer mustard,

dove weed, fennel and tumbling pigweed (*Amaranthus albus*). No sensitive resources were noted on the project site, however, coastal sage scrub, purple needlegrass grassland and coast live oak woodland were found on the western boundary of this staging area.



Disturbed Annual Grassland at Big Bend Staging Area

SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The plant and animal species of special interest are those defined by the County of Orange in their list of these species (Dames and Moore and Bramlet 1994). This list also noted the communities of significance within the County. The plant species of special interest known to occur within the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park are noted in Table 1.

TABLE 1
PLANT SPECIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST
KNOWN TO OCCUR IN THE
LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK

Species	Status	Known Localities
<i>Atriplex coulteri</i> Coulter's saltbush	CNPS 1B,	Signal Peak, Upper Bommer Cyn., San Joaquin Hills
<i>Brodiaea jolonensis</i> Mesa brodiaea	Locally rare	East of Shady Cyn., UCI Ecological Reserve
<i>Calochortus catalinae</i> Catalina mariposa lily	CNPS 4	San Joaquin Hills, Shady Canyon,
<i>Calochortus weedii</i> var. <i>intermedius</i> Foothill mariposa lily	CNPS 1B	San Joaquin Hills, Little Sycamore Cyn., Emerald Cyn., Ridgeline E. of Bommer Canyon
<i>Caulanthus heterophyllus</i> var. <i>pseudosimulans</i> False Payson's jewelflower	Locally rare	Camarillo Cyn.
<i>Chorizanthe procumbens</i> Prostrate spineflower	CNPS 4	Laguna Canyon Little Sycamore Canyon Spur N. of Camarillo Cyn.
<i>Chorizanthe staticoides</i> var. <i>chrysacantha</i> ² Orange County turkish rugging	Locally rare	Shady Canyon, N. Camarillo Cyn., Ridgeline above Little Sycamore Cyn.
<i>Dichondra occidentalis</i> Western dichondra	CNPS 4	San Joaquin Hills
<i>Dudleya multicaulis</i> Many-stemmed dudleya	CNPS 1B	San Joaquin Hills, Shady Canyon, Spur N. Camarillo Cyn., Laurel Cyn.
<i>Dudleya stolonifera</i> Laguna Beach dudleya	PFE, ST CNPS 1B	Laguna Canyon, Aliso Cyn., Laurel Cyn.
<i>Echinodorus berteroi</i> Upright burhead	Locally rare	Shady Cyn. Reservoir
<i>Hemizonia parryi</i> ssp. <i>australis</i> Southern tarplant	CNPS 1B	Laguna Canyon, Sand Cyn. Reservoir

Species	Status	Known Localities
<i>Hordeum intercedens</i> Vernal barley	CNPS 3	French Hill Area, UCI Ecological Reserve
<i>Marsilea vestita</i> Hairy pepperwort	Locally rare	Laguna Lakes
<i>Microseris douglasii</i> var. <i>platycarpa</i> Small-flowered microseris	List 4	UCI Ecological Reserve W. end of Sand Canyon Ave.
<i>Mullia maritima</i> Rough mullia	Locally rare	San Joaquin Hills
<i>Physalis greeneri</i> ³ Greene's ground cherry	----	San Joaquin Hills Aliso Hills
<i>Polygala cornuta</i> var. <i>fishiae</i> Fish's milkwort	List 4	Laurel Cyn., San Joaquin Hills
<i>Quercus dumosa</i> Nuttall's scrub oak	CNPS 1B	Pelican Hill, Los Trancos Cyn., South Laguna
<i>Quercus lobata</i> Valley oak	List 4	Moro Canyon
<i>Salvia spathacea</i> Hummingbird sage	Locally rare	Moro Canyon
<i>Selaginella cinerascens</i> Ashy spike-moss	CNPS 4	Shady Canyon
<i>Senecio aphanactis</i> California groundsel	CNPS 2	San Joaquin Hills, UCI Ecological Reserve
<i>Suaeda taxifolia</i> Woolly seablite	CNPS 4	Newport-Laguna Coast, Upper Newport Bay

¹ STATUS CATEGORIES:

Federal Status:

FE - Listed as federally endangered.

FC - Candidate for federal listing.

State Status:

- CE - Listed as endangered by the state of California.
CT - Listed as threatened by the state of California.

California Native Plant Society:

- CNPS 1A- Plants presumed extinct in California.
CNPS 1B - Plants considered rare, threatened or endangered
in California and elsewhere.
CNPS 2 - Plants rare, threatened or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.
CNPS 3 - Plants about which we need more information - A review list.
CNPS 4 - Plants of limited distribution - A watch list.

County of Orange:

Locally rare - Rare in Orange County but common elsewhere.

² - *Chorizanthe staticoides* ssp. *chrysacantha* is no longer taxonomically valid (Reveal and Hardham (1989). The species has been retained on the Orange County list of species of special interest, since local botanist are of the opinion that the Orange County turkish rugging may represent a unique form or variety.

³ - *Physalis greenei* is no longer considered taxonomically valid (Skinner and Pavilk 1994) and has been removed from the Orange County list of species of special interest. It has been retained on this list to provide consistency with past studies.

Plant Species of Special Interest

Coulter's saltbush is a low, spreading perennial saltbush species known to occur in coastal bluff and grassland habitats with some alkalinity. The red stems distinguish it from the more common, introduced Australian saltbush. In the LCWP region this species was recently recorded in an area near Signal Peak and a portion of Pelican Hill above Los Trancos Canyon and on the southeast rim of Bommer Canyon.

Mesa brodiaea is a perennial herb with an underground corms, a few grass like leaves and bluish flowers. In the area of the project, this species is currently known to occur in an area northeast of Shady Canyon.

Catalina mariposa lily is a white flowered with a purplish spot at the base and the species occurs on heavy soil in grasslands, coastal sage scrub and chaparral. In the LCWP park this species is known to occur in upper Shady Canyon.

Foothill mariposa lily is a slenderly branched species with pale yellowish flowers tinged with purple. This species is known to occur mostly on sandstone outcrops in coastal sage scrub or grassland or rock outcrop habitats below 2,000 ft. In the LCWP this species has been located in Little Sycamore Canyon, along the Camarillo ridge road, east of the rim of Emerald Canyon, on the ridgeline above Act V canyon, and on the sides of Emerald Canyon. It is also known to occur at several sites in Moro Canyon.

False Payson's jewelflower has cream flowers and is usually found in sage scrub or chaparral habitats following fires or in rocky openings of these habitats. The current distribution of this species in the County is not well known since it has often been confused with *C. h. var. heterophyllus*. In the LCWP approximately 40 plants were observed on a burned east facing slope in upper Camarillo Canyon within the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor right-of-way.

The **prostrate spineflower** is a small, annual, prostrate spineflower has greenish-yellow stems and with yellow or white flowers. In the LCWP this species is known to occur in the Sycamore Hills and in several localities in Laguna Canyon on the west side of Laguna Canyon Road.

Currently, the **Orange County turkish rugging** is no longer recognized as a taxonomic entity and this species has subsequently been dropped from the CNPS inventory and the federal candidate list. However, some botanists feel that this form of turkish rugging is distinctive and should be considered a separate group from the more common *Chorizanthe staticoides*.

In Orange County this species has been reported from Shady Canyon, Laguna Canyon, Sycamore Hills, Pelican Hill (extirpated), Temple Hill, Crystal Cove State Park, Aliso Viejo, Niguel Hills, and Cristianitos Canyon. In the LCWP populations have been found mostly in the Laguna Heights and Sycamore Hills area, but also in Shady Canyon.

The **western dichondra** is a small herbaceous perennial, restricted to coastal areas in the understory of coastal sage scrub or chaparral. In Orange County this species is known to occur in coastal areas, principally in the southern portion of the County. Populations were known to occur at Temple Hill, Pelican Hill, South Laguna Beach, Dana Point, Sycamore Hills and Niguel Hill. In the LCWP this species is known to occur in the Laguna Heights region.

The **many stemmed dudleya** is a small, vernal live-forever is found on rocky outcrops or in clay soils. In the LCWP this species is known from a number of localities including numerous populations in the Laguna Heights and J. Dilley Reserve areas. Other populations include: upper Laurel Canyon, Lower Shady Canyon, Sycamore Canyon, ridge northwest of Sycamore Canyon, and north of Camarillo road. Other populations are found along the ridgeline of Bommer and Shady Canyons and west of Laguna Canyon, but these populations are currently in the alignment of the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor.

The **Laguna Beach dudleya** is known only to occur in the Laguna Beach area and has yellow flowers and flattened leaves similar to *Dudleya cymosa*. The species occurs on cliff faces and on some large boulders, often with other dudleyas. The species is currently listed by the state as threatened and is currently proposed for federal listing. This species has a very limited number of occurrences and is currently known from Aliso Canyon, Laurel Canyon, Laguna Canyon (at Big Bend), and a tributary to Laguna Cyn., north of Act V Canyon.

Upright burhead is a wetland species found on moist shorelines, ephemeral pools, roadside ditches or riparian habitats. This species has been placed on the County's list of species of special interest, due to its limited distribution in the County. It is known to occur in the LCWP at the Laguna Lakes.

The **southern tarplant** is an annual, spiny tarplant with yellow flowers which blooms in the late spring into the summer. The southern tarplant is found in annual grasslands, around the margins of vernal pools, alkaline meadows, brackish marshes and estuaries. Currently, this species has been recorded near the northwest corner of Laguna Canyon and El Toro Road and could potentially occur within other areas of alkali meadow within the park, especially within Laguna Canyon.

The **vernal barley** is found in moist annual grasslands and may be found on the margins of vernal pools or in alkali meadows or grasslands. However, the current distribution of this

species is poorly known since it is often difficult to distinguish the vernal barley from other non-native barley species. This species has only recently been documented in Orange County and is known to occur in Fairview Park in Costa Mesa and the UCI ecological reserve. The only known population in the park occurs at the base of French Hill (Quail Hill region).

The **hairy pepperwort** is a small fern has leaves which are clover shaped and occurs in vernal pools, seasonal wetlands or on the shorelines of shallow lakes. In the LCWP is has been found at the Laguna lakes.

The **small-flowered microseris** is a small annual associated with clay soils. In Orange County this species has only been reported for the UCI campus, although it is known to occur in several localities in Riverside County, including the Lake Mathews area and in the San Jose Hills in Los Angeles County. In the park this speices was recently located in clay soil grasslands on the north facing slope of the Quail Hills, west of Sand Canyon Road.

The **Fish's milkwort** is a slender, sprawling to climbing shrub often found in the understory of oak woodland and chaparral. In Orange County this species is known to occur at a number of sites in the Santa Ana Mountains, all of the coastal populations are known from the southern end of the San Joaquin Hills, in the City of Laguna Beach. In the park this species has been documented from Laurel Canyon in the understory of Oak Woodland and in the Laguna Heights portion of the park.

The **Nuttall's scrub oak** is unique from the commonly distributed scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*). This evergreen shrub is distinguished from the more common species by its by having a thin acorn cup with scales only slightly to moderately tubercled. The Nuttall's scrub oak is a coastal species found sporadically from Santa Barbara County to northern Baja California.

In Orange County this species principally occurs in the maritime chaparral found in the south Laguna area and on Niguel Hill and with a very small population on Dana Point Headlands. Although, a number of areas within the LCWP were mapped as maritime chaparral, dominated by Nuttall's scrub oak, the mapping is incorrect. Robert's (1990, 1994) reports that the only known localities of this species within the park region occur in Los Trancos Canyon and previously on Pelican Hill.

The **Valley oak** is a characteristic part of oak woodlands in central and northern California. Although this species has declined in the region it is still a very widely distributed oak in California. However, its distribution generally ends in Ventura or the northern portions of Los Angeles County. There is a single disjunct population of this species that occurs in Moro Canyon.

The **hummingbird sage** is a rather common sage species of the coastal areas of Central California. However, this species has a single disjunct population in Orange County in Moro Canyon and in Mathis Canyon in Laguna Heights.

The **ashy spikemoss** is a grayish, low growing spikemoss usually found in San Diego County and Baja California where it is found in open areas of Diegan sage scrub and chaparral. It also has a few localities in Orange County, in Shady Canyon and Cristianitos Canyon.

In Orange County this species is limited to two known sites, one near the center of Shady Canyon, where it occurs on a rocky outcrop, with limited vegetative cover. There is also a small population on the Rancho Mission Viejo, just west of Cristianitos Canyon, where it occurs on rocky outcrops, associated with the many-stemmed dudleya.

The **rayless ragwort** small annual occurs in coastal sage scrub and extends from Contra Costa County to Baja California and on the Channel Islands.

This species has been reported from a number of scattered locations in Orange County, but there are very few recent records for this ragwort. The closest known locality to the park is at the UCI ecological reserve. This species is very uncommon in the County, but is highly likely to occur within the San Joaquin Hills.

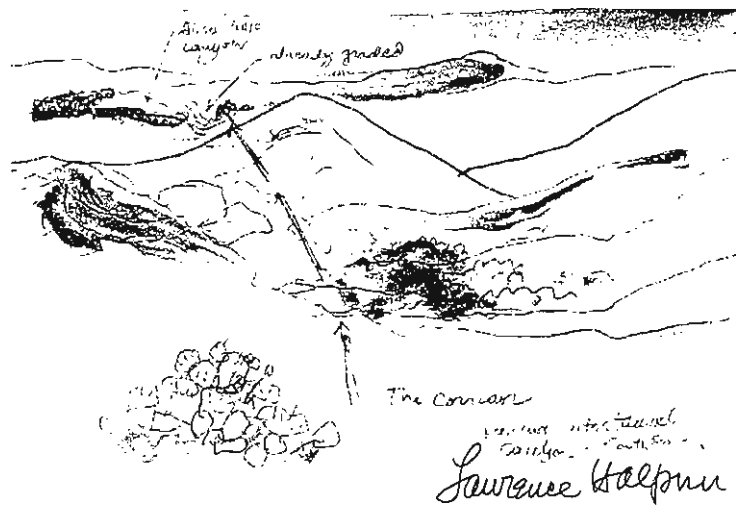
The **woolly seablite** is found in coastal saltmarshes and coastal bluff habitats along the coast of Central and lower (northern Baja) California. In the LCWP, this species is known to occur along the bluffs at Crystal Cove state park and it occurs infrequently in some of sage scrub vegetation at the bottom of several of the canyons, such a Boat Canyon, within the park.

ANIMAL SPECIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Communities of Special Interest

The communities of special interest occurring within the Park include coastal sage scrub, perennial native grasslands, riparian and wetland communities. The open water habitat found in the Laguna Lakes would also be considered a significant habitat within the region.

The LCWP is to be a reserve within the central-coastal subregion of the Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) for coastal sage scrub. The main priority of this reserve will be to maintain viable populations of the three target species in a diverse and functioning sage scrub community. A secondary objective will be to allow for the educational and recreational benefits of these areas, without loss of functional habitat. To



VIII. REFERENCES

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