

# **COMMENTS and RESPONSES**

**INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**ALISO CANYON PROJECT  
(E1907295)**

The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the proposed Aliso Canyon Park Improvements Project was circulated for public review beginning on July 29, 2010. The public review period, during which interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public were invited to submit written comments, was noticed and conducted in compliance with CEQA Section 21091 and State CEQA Guidelines 15105. The 30-day public review period ended on August 27, 2010. The end of the comment period was later extended to August 31, 2010 due to a delay in delivery to the State Clearinghouse. During the public review period, nine correspondences commenting on the IS/MND and project were received by the Bureau of Engineering of the City of Los Angeles (BOE). These correspondences (in order of receipt) are identified as follows:

1. Native American Heritage Commission (letter dated August 9, 2010)
2. California Department of Transportation (letter dated August 17, 2010)
3. Jack Hovarian (e-mail dated August 17, 2010)
4. Jeannie Plumb (letter dated August 18, 2010)
5. Sue Hammarlund, Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council  
(e-mail dated August 24, 2010)
6. Hugo Serrano (letter dated August 25, 2010)
7. California Department of Fish & Game (letter dated August 26, 2010)
8. Richard Fisk (letter dated August 26, 2010)
9. Ann Ziliak, Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council  
(letter dated August 31, 2010)

Comments and responses to those comments are presented in the following, separate sections. For each comment letter, comments are bracketed and numbered. Corresponding responses can be found at the end of the comment letters section.

# 1. Native American Heritage Commission, August 9, 2010-

rec 8/17/10

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

915 CAPITOL MALL, ROOM 364  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
(916) 653-6251  
Fax (916) 657-5390  
Web Site [www.nahc.ca.gov](http://www.nahc.ca.gov)  
e-mail: [ds\\_nahc@pacbell.net](mailto:ds_nahc@pacbell.net)



August 9, 2010

Mr. William Jones, Environmental Planning Group

### CITY OF LOS ANGELES PUBLIC WORKS – BUREAU OF ENGINEERING

1149 South Broadway, Site 600  
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Re: SCH#2010081005; CEQA Notice of Completion; proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the "Aliso Canyon Park Improvements Project;" located in Granada Hills; Los Angeles County, California.

Dear Mr. Jones:

1A

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) is the state 'trustee agency' pursuant to Public Resources Code §21070 for the protection and preservation of California's Native American Cultural Resources. (Also see *Environmental Protection Information Center v. Johnson* (1985) 170 Cal App. 3<sup>rd</sup> 604). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA - CA Public Resources Code §21000-21177, amendment effective 3/18/2010) requires that any project that causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource, that includes archaeological resources, is a 'significant effect' requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) per the California Code of Regulations §15064.5(b)(c)(f) CEQA guidelines). Section 15382 of the CEQA Guidelines defines a significant impact on the environment as "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of physical conditions within an area affected by the proposed project, including ...objects of historic or aesthetic significance. The lead agency is required to assess whether the project will have an adverse impact on these resources within the 'area of potential effect (APE), and if so, to mitigate that effect. State law also addresses Native American Religious Expression in Public Resources Code §5097.9.

1B

The Native American Heritage Commission did perform a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search in the NAHC SLF Inventory, established by the Legislature pursuant to Public Resources Code §5097.94(a) and Native American Cultural Resources were not identified within the APE identified for the project. Early consultation with Native American tribes in your area is the best way to avoid unanticipated discoveries once a project is underway. Enclosed are the names of the culturally affiliated tribes and interested Native American individuals that the NAHC recommends as 'consulting parties,' for this purpose, that may have knowledge of the religious and cultural significance of the historic properties in the project area (e.g. APE). We recommend that you contact persons on the attached list of Native American contacts. A Native American Tribe or Tribal Elder may be the only source of information about a cultural resource.. Also, the NAHC recommends that a Native American Monitor or Native American culturally knowledgeable person be employed whenever a professional archaeologist is employed during the 'initial Study' and in other phases of the environmental planning processes.

Furthermore the NAHC recommends that you contact the California Historic Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP)

1C

Coordinator's office (at (916) 653-7278, for referral to the nearest OHP Information Center of which there are 10.

1D

Consultation with tribes and interested Native American tribes and interested Native American individuals, as consulting parties, on the NAHC list, should be conducted in compliance with the requirements of federal NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321-43351) and Section 106 and 4(f) of federal NHPA (16 U.S.C. 470 [f] *et seq.*), 36 CFR Part 800.3, the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CSQ; 42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*) and NAGPRA (25 U.S.C. 3001-3013), as appropriate. The 1992 *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* were revised so that they could be applied to all historic resource types included in the National Register of Historic Places and including *cultural landscapes*. Consultation with Native American communities is also a matter of environmental justice as defined by California Government Code §65040.12(e).

1E

Lead agencies should consider avoidance, as defined in Section 15370 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) when significant cultural resources could be affected by a project. Also, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 and Health & Safety Code Section 7050.5 provide for provisions for accidentally discovered archeological resources during construction and mandate the processes to be followed in the event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a project location other than a 'dedicated cemetery. Discussion of these should be included in your environmental documents, as appropriate.

1F

The authority for the SLF record search of the NAHC Sacred Lands Inventory, established by the California Legislature, is California Public Resources Code §5097.94(a) and is exempt from the CA Public Records Act (c.f. California Government Code §6254.10). The results of the SLF search are confidential. However, Native Americans on the attached contact list are not prohibited from and may wish to reveal the nature of identified cultural resources/historic properties. Confidentiality of 'historic properties of religious and cultural significance' may also be protected under Section 304 of the NHPA or at the Secretary of the Interior's discretion if not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Secretary may also be advised by the federal Indian Religious Freedom Act (cf. 42 U.S.C. 1996) in issuing a decision on whether or not to disclose items of religious and/or cultural significance identified in or near the APE and possibly threatened by proposed project activity.

1G

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(d) requires the lead agency to work with the Native Americans identified by this Commission if the initial Study identifies the presence or likely presence of Native American human remains within the APE. CEQA Guidelines provide for agreements with Native American, identified by the NAHC, to assure the appropriate and dignified treatment of Native American human remains and any associated grave liens. Although tribal consultation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; CA Public Resources Code Section 21000 – 21177) is 'advisory' rather than mandated, the NAHC does request 'lead agencies' to work with tribes and interested Native American individuals as 'consulting parties,' on the list provided by the NAHC in order that cultural resources will be protected. However, the 2006 SB 1059 the state enabling legislation to the Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005, does mandate tribal consultation for the 'electric transmission corridors. This is codified in the California Public Resources Code, Chapter 4.3, and §25330 to Division 15, requires consultation with California Native American tribes, and identifies both federally recognized and non-federally recognized on a list maintained by the NAHC

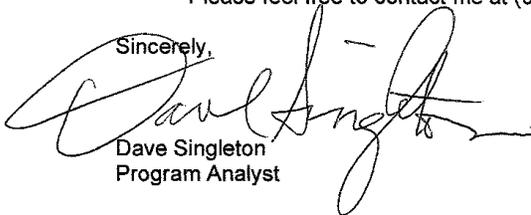
1H

Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98 and Sec. §15064.5 (d) of the California Code of Regulations (CEQA Guidelines) mandate procedures to be followed, including that construction or excavation be stopped in the event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery until the county coroner or medical examiner can determine whether the remains are those of a Native American. . Note that §7052 of the Health & Safety Code states that disturbance of Native American cemeteries is a felony.

Again, Lead agencies should consider avoidance, as defined in §15370 of the California Code of Regulations (CEQA Guidelines), when significant cultural resources are discovered during the course of project planning and implementation.

Please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-6251 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Dave Singleton  
Program Analyst

Attachment: List of Culturally Affiliated Native American Contacts

Cc: State Clearinghouse

Native American Contacts  
Los Angeles County  
August 9, 2010

✓ Charles Cooke  
32835 Santiago Road  
Acton, CA 93510  
(661) 733-1812 - cell  
suscol@intox.net

Chumash  
Fernandeno  
Tataviam  
Kitanemuk

Tongva Ancestral Territorial Tribal Nation  
John Tommy Rosas, Tribal Admin.  
tattnlaw@gmail.com  
310-570-6567

Gabrielino Tongva

✓ Beverly Salazar Folkes  
1931 Shadybrook Drive  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362  
805 492-7255  
(805) 558-1154 - cell  
folkes9@msn.com

Chumash  
Tataviam  
Fernandeno

✓ Kitanemuk & Yowlumne Tejon Indians  
Delia Dominguez  
981 N. Virginia  
Covina, CA 91722  
(626) 339-6785

Yowlumne  
Kitanemuk

✓ Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians  
William Gonzales, Cultural/Environ Depart/Rudy Ortega  
601 South Brand Boulevard, Suite 102  
San Fernando CA 91340  
rortega@tataviam-nsn.us  
(818) 837-0794 Office  
(818) 837-0796 Fax

Fernandeno  
Tataviam

✓ San Fernando Band of Mission Indians  
John Valenzuela, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 221838  
Newhall, CA 91322  
tsen2u@hotmail.com  
(661) 753-9833 Office  
(760) 885-0955 Cell  
(760) 949-1604 Fax

Fernandeno  
Tataviam  
Serrano  
Vanyume  
Kitanemuk

✓ LA City/County Native American Indian Comm  
Ron Andrade, Director  
3175 West 6th Street, Rm.  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
randrade@css.lacounty.gov  
(213) 351-5324  
(213) 386-3995 FAX

Randy Guzman - Folkes  
655 Los Angeles Avenue, Unit E  
Moorpark, CA 93021  
ndnRandy@yahoo.com  
(805) 905-1675 - cell

Chumash  
Fernandeno  
Tataviam  
Shoshone Paiute  
Yaqui

*Robert Dorn, Tribal Admin. Rep.  
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of  
Calif. Tribal Council  
P.O. Box 490  
Bellflower, CA 90707*

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. Also, federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and federal NAGPRA. And 36 CFR Part 800.3.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans for consultation purposes with regard to cultural resources impact by the proposed SCH#2010081005; CEQA Notice of Completion; proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Aliso Canyon Park Improvements Project; located in Granada Hills: Los Angeles California.

## 2. California Department of Transportation, August 17, 2010-

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
DISTRICT 7, OFFICE OF PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION AND REGIONAL PLANNING  
IGR/CEQA BRANCH  
100 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012  
PHONE (213) 897-6696  
FAX (213) 897-1337



*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

August 17, 2010

IGR/CEQA CS/100816, MND  
City of Los Angeles  
Aliso Canyon Park Improvement Project  
Vic. LA-118-6.22, SCH# 2010081005

Mr. William Jones  
City of Los Angeles  
Department of Public Works  
Bureau of Engineering  
1149 S. Broadway, Suite 600  
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Aliso Canyon Park Improvement Project. The project site is located at 18041 Rinaldi Street. Based on the information received, we have the following comments:

2A

We recommend that truck trips on State Highways be limited to off-peak commute periods. The contractor should avoid platooning of trucks on mainline freeways, on freeway on/off-ramps, at freeway ramp intersections and on conventional State Highways. Transport of over-size or over-weight vehicles on State Highways will need a Caltrans Transportation Permit.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, you may reach me at (213) 897-1726 and please refer to our record number 100816/CS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carl Shiigi".

Carl Shiigi  
IGR/CEQA Coordinator  
Office of Regional Planning

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

### 3. Jack Hovnanian, August 17, 2010-

mhovnanian@juno.com <mhovnanian@juno.com>  
To: william.jones@lacity.org

Tue, Aug 17, 2010 at 9:44 AM

Dear Mr. Jones,

My family and I moved into the Northridge View Estates in October 2009, primarily because of its quite and clean environment, for which we paid a premium purchase price. However, that luxury will soon change when the Aliso Canyon Park is constructed.

3A { My house is located on top of the West-side hill surrounding the Aliso Canyon and my backyard borders that hill. Therefore, when the park is constructed, it will feel like the park is actually in my backyard. As noise travels up, my backyard will be invaded by the traffic, which the park will attract, disturbing the peaceful environment that my family moved into.

3B { We noticed that the hills surrounding Aliso Canyon get significantly dry, creating a significant brush fire condition during the summer months. If we introduce a public park in a middle of such a fragile surrounding, where irresponsible people will inevitably visit, we are increasing the possibilities of fire danger. Our peaceful community does not want to take such a gamble.

3C { There are already two parks located within walking distance of Aliso Canyon and I do not understand the significance of building another one. As the Los Angeles City faces historical financial hardship, allocating vital resources to build this park does not appear reasonable.

Please reconsider your plans to build Aliso Canyon Park and keep our peaceful community as is.

If you want to contact me, please give me a call at (818) 321 – 4598. Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated. Please let me know if this email is sufficient for my complaint or I need to follow it up by sending it through the mail.

Regards,  
Jack Hovnanian

#### 4. Jeannie Plumb, August 18, 2010-

August 18, 2010

William Jones of the Bureau of Engineering  
City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works  
Bureau of Engineering  
1149 S. Broadway, Suite 600  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
([william.jones@lacity.org](mailto:william.jones@lacity.org))

RE: NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION  
FOR ALISO CANYON PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (W.O. 1907295)

Dear Sir,

Upon reviewing the MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR ALISO  
CANYON PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (W.O. 1907295).

I want to bring to your attention the most serious flaw imaginable in your Conceptual  
Plan plate #2, "bike paths, bicycle parking and the cyclist bridge crossing," are  
unacceptable because they conflict with LAMC section 86.06a.b., which states:

SEC. 86.06. POSTING OF SIGNS – DRIVING AND PARKING PROHIBITED.  
(Amended by Ord. No. 168,782, Eff. 7/12/93.)

(a) No person shall drive any vehicle, motor vehicle or motorcycle upon any path, trail,  
bridle path, or in any other area, unless it is posted for parking, within a public park,  
playground or recreation area owned or controlled by the City.

(b) No person shall stop, stand or park any vehicle, motor vehicle or motorcycle upon any  
path, trail, bridle path, or in any other area, unless it is posted for parking, within a public  
park, playground or recreation area owned or controlled by the City.

During my telephone conversation with Mr. Drucker it became apparent to me that he  
was unaware of this prohibition of bicycles in a public equestrian park within the City of  
Los Angeles.

Your conceptual plan seems to encourage cyclists into the equestrian park. This is  
unacceptable. The impact will be dangerous to cyclists, equestrians, pedestrians and  
especially to horses.

Therefore, I request the removal of any references to bicycle use, and parking in this plan.

Thank you,

Jeannie Plumb  
10755 Desoto Ave  
Chatsworth, CA 91311

4A

4B

4C

**5. Sue Hammarlund, Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council, August 24, 2010-**

Hammarlund, Susan <shammarl@lausd.net>  
To: William.Jones@lacity.org

Tue, Aug 24, 2010 at 2:56 PM

5A {  
5B {

Looks good, however will there be parking allowed on Rinaldi for day hikers? 24 parking spaces in the spring when everything is so green does not seem to be enough. I don't want to see more parking at the site, but definitely want it for the street.  
Also, that area is subject to flooding, has this been taken into account?  
Thank you,  
Sue Hammarlund  
PRNC Board Member

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6. Hugo Serrano, August 25, 2010-

25 August 2010

William Jones,

I am writing to you in regards to the proposed plan in Aliso Canyon Park. I live right on Newcastle Ave, so I have a nice view of the trails. I am very concerned over the letter I received in the mail over the proposed construction on this site. 1) The plans to construct a parking for 24 vehicles aside from the truck & trailer parking, 2) Bridges, both for pedestrians and vehicles, 3) picnic areas, 4) bathrooms!! 5) Bleachers, 6) Future buildings!

6A

It is understood how important it is to have parks but, we have many parks within driving or walking distance. I'm concerned about the noise level when it comes to powerful vehicles needed to move such trailers around. Music levels which never seem to go out of style.

I understand that CEQA has identified

6B

"no significant impacts" but, how useful would it be to nature if you flatten everything out in order to have parking, bleachers, bridges, and restrooms?

6C

I have two children ages 4 and 5. We do anything from walk, jog, or bike ride them. On occasion we walk through the trails and pick up trash. It hasn't been excessive but, I can only imagine what it will look like ~~at~~ once developed. Paths already exist and don't understand the need for development. They're already big mature trees they know the no compromise mentality when it comes to nature. To be clear, what is meant is the finding a pole, a wire, asphalt or a wall more important than a Tree that's been their 60 or 70 years.

6D

would love to know Mr. Jones if they're will be a community meeting or if this already a done deal. Please, would love to know if this letter is good for something

or just wasted paper. Thank you very  
much for your time and hope to hear  
from you soon.

Sincerely,

Hugo Serrano

P.S. My address is 11547 Newcastle Ave  
Granada Hills, Calif. 91344.

## 7. California Department of Fish & Game, August 26, 2010-

Daniel Blankenship <DSBlankenship@dfg.ca.gov>  
To: William.Jones@lacity.org

Thu, Aug 26, 2010 at 12:13 PM

Mr. Jones,

The above referenced MND has been reviewed and the Department concurs with the biological mitigation measures BR-1-16 with the following comments. The Department appreciates your thorough approach to minimizing potential biological impacts.

- 7A { 1. BR-04: Please add CDFG to agencies notified if least Bell's vireo are observed, as they are also State listed endangered.
- 7B { 2. Please include the conservation recommendations listed on page 10 of Attachment B, Biological Resource Assessment, as mitigation measures.
- 7C { Also, the Department understands that you will be submitting a Streambed Alteration Agreement notification.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Dan

Daniel S. Blankenship  
Staff Environmental Scientist  
CA Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 221480  
Newhall, CA 91322-1480  
phone/fax (661) 259-3750  
cell (661)644-8469  
[dsblankenship@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:dsblankenship@dfg.ca.gov)

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order S-12-10 ( <http://www.gov.ca.gov/executive-order/15692/> ), beginning August 1, 2010, and until a state budget is enacted and the Director of Finance certifies there are sufficient funds to meet the state's financial obligations, DFG offices will be CLOSED on the second, third and fourth Fridays of each month:

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## 8. Richard Fisk, August 26, 2010-

Los Angeles Department of Public Works;  
Bureau of Engineering

Mr. William Jones  
Environmental Specialist II

RE: Aliso Canyon Park Improvements Project (W.O. 1907295)

August 26, 2010

- 8A [ The reason for the Environmental Study is to validate the proposed project as a primary use equestrian facility. Where is the survey data that would conclude that equestrians are the majority of users, while it is noted, "...providing adequate recreational facilities to correspond with population and service demands"? (section 10 b) Section 15 a, comment states, "respond to a presently existing demand for public equestrian facilities". Where is the data to substantiate that?
- 8B [ If built as proposed and "operated following all applicable laws" (page 3, first full paragraph) it would outlaw what is now and has been, an established use by the community with its mountain bicycles on the unpaved trails. To accommodate the horses, the zoning has to be changed. To accommodate the mountain cyclists, the plan would simply eliminate them.
- 8C [ In the Mandatory Findings of Significance, (section a) sought to determine if the proposed plan would, "... reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal..." Where is the study or concern for the human population that is now using the park area?
- 8D [ There are other references in the Declaration that are contradictory to the proposed plan because they would effectively eliminate mountain bike riding: 14 iv), "... designed to accommodate existing and future regional growth". There is a growing trend in this city to encourage the use of bicycles as a means of transportation and as exercise to promote health and fight obesity. With population growth, the number of horses declines; 18 c) "The proposed project is intended as a public benefit project that would improve the public enjoyment and stewardship of a unique regional recreational facility". The primary benefit is biased to a particular group, while specifically harming another. It is not unique in the fact that it adheres to a Municipal Code that applies to all city parks. What would make it unique, similar to the city's skateboard parks, is to specifically acknowledge and accommodate mountain cyclists on the unpaved trails. Section V, "Improvements are intended to meet the needs of current population, including the existing residential community..." The current population uses the trails with bicycles. There are residents who allow their children to ride their bikes on the trails because it is safer than riding on Rinaldi. "The project would provide recreational improvement function to a public recreational area..." It would not provide improvement if it in fact disenfranchises a population that now uses it.
- 8E [ As an original Aliso Canyon Park Committee member, I was in total agreement with "... potential designs that would accommodate equestrian, hiking, and biking current uses..." (page 1 section 1 B, Purpose). This declaration fails to study the accommodations of current biking uses.

Richard Fisk  
LVNOC member  
17421 Horace St. Granada Hills, CA 91344

# 9. Ann Ziliak, Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council, August 31, 2010-

## BOARD MEMBERS

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Kim Thompson  
VICE PRESIDENT  
Scott Manatt

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Rafael Garcia	William Lillenberg
Sid Gold	Leon Marziller
Edward Headington	Ray Pollok
Gary Holmen	Steven Steinberg
Bill Hopkins	Jan Subar
Wayde Hunter	Anne Ziliak

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
CALIFORNIA



## GRANADA HILLS NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

11862 Balboa Boulevard #137  
Granada Hills, CA 91344  
Telephone (818) 360-4346  
[www.ghnnc.org](http://www.ghnnc.org)

August 31, 2010

City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works  
Bureau of Engineering  
1149 S. Broadway, Suite 600  
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Re: ALISO CANYON PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (W.O. 1907295)

To William Jones:

The Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council (GHNNC) was certified by the City of Los Angeles on September 10, 2002, and has had a duly elected and installed Board of Directors since March 31, 2003. The area it represents and services is bounded by the Los Angeles City/County line and I-5 (Golden State Freeway) to the north, the 405 (San Diego Freeway) to the east, the 118 (Ronald Reagan Freeway) to the south, and to Aliso Canyon in the west. It is composed of 3 districts. District 1 - Sunshine Canyon Landfill, District 2 - DWP/MWD, and District 3 - All Residential Areas to the south encompassing approximately 28,600 stakeholders.

On August 30, 2010 at a duly noticed meeting, the GHNNC Board approved the recommendation from the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee to submit the following comments regarding Aliso Canyon Park improvement (W.O. 1907295):

9A

- Any building other than the modular restroom should be eliminated from the plan
- Bicycle parking in designated public parking only
- Signs should be posted clearly to prohibit wheeled vehicles on the equestrian trail
- Bleachers should be omitted from the plan

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Respectfully,

Anne Ziliak, Planning and Land Use Chair, Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council  
For  
Kim Thompson  
President, Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council

# INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

## ALISO CANYON PARK PROJECT

### RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Nine comment letters were received during the comment period, including residents and representatives of public agencies, and neighborhood organizations.

1. Native American Heritage Commission, August 9, 2010-

A. Comment noted. Please refer to Section 5 (a-c) of the MND and Phase I Archaeological Survey (Attachment D) for pre-historic and historic cultural resources, performed by LSA Associates. The LSA survey found no previously documented, cultural or paleontological resources, within the project boundaries, and identified no such resources during the field survey. However, due to underlying sensitive geological (Saugus) Formation and the proximity of local paleontological fauna discovered within the Saugus Formation, a qualified Paleontologist must be present during any earth moving activities. Additionally, if previously undocumented cultural or paleontological resources are identified during earthmoving activities, a qualified archaeologist/paleontologist shall be retained to assess the nature and significance of the find, diverting construction excavation if necessary.

B. Comment Noted. See Comment 2(A). As part of the CEQA notification process, the Notice of Intent was sent to individuals on the list of Native American consulting parties.

C. Comment Noted.

D. Comment Noted.

E. See Comment 1(A).

F. Comment Noted.

G. See Comment 1(B).

H. Comment Noted.

2. California Department of Transportation, August 17, 2010-

A. Comment noted. Recommendations will be provided to the project design team for incorporated into the plans and specifications.

3. Jack Hovanian, August 17, 2010-

A. Aliso Canyon Park is an existing, 60-acre undeveloped municipal park, managed by the City Department of Recreation and Parks. The equestrian facility will be limited to the southern end of the park site, and will be restricted to day-use only. In addition, the project has been designed to minimize impacts to the existing rustic character of the site, and will be designed in accordance with the *City Municipal Code*, including the *Noise Ordinance*.

B. The development site is currently dominated by weedy exotic non-native annual grasses and other plants, which pose a greater, recurrent fire hazard than native vegetation. Native landscaping is a design element. Since the

site, and surrounding residential area, lie within a designated fire hazard zone, landscaped areas will be designed to meet guidelines of the Los Angeles City Fire Department.

C. See item 3(A), above.

4. Jeannie Plumb, August 18, 2010-

A. The Conceptual Plan as referred to is an earlier version that was included as an attachment to the Geotechnical Study (MND Attachment A). The conceptual plan is not the final design. The MND had stated that one of the bridges would be dedicated to use by pedestrians and cyclists, which incorrectly implied that bikes were to be allowed on trails. The Los Angeles Municipal Code currently prohibits the use of bicycles on unpaved roads and trails in City parks unless designated for bicycle use by the Recreation and Parks Commission - Aliso Canyon Park has not been so designated. Any future use of trails for bicyclists would be a policy decision, made by the City Recreation and Parks Commission.

One design element involves bicyclists; a bicycle rack will be provided for bicyclists to park their bikes in the parking lot. The intent of the bike rack installation is to encourage people to use alternative transportation to get to the park.

B. Comment noted

C. Comment noted.

5. Sue Hammarlund, Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council, August 24, 2010-

A. Existing on-street parking along Rinaldi Street would not be affected.

B. Please refer to Section 9 (d), (h) and (i) of the MND. Since the site is within a 100-year flood zone, flooding was one of the considerations in the design and operation of the facility. This includes providing adequate setback of isolated structures from the creek so as to not impede or redirect flows. The area would also be closed to public access during major storm events.

6. Hugo Serrano, August 25, 2010-

A. Comment noted. The project has been designed to minimize impacts to the existing rustic character of the site, and will be designed in accordance with the *City Municipal Code*, including the *Noise Ordinance*, and *Department of Recreation and Parks Design Standards and Guidelines*. Any vehicle size restrictions will be imposed by the City Department of Recreation and Parks.

B. Comment Noted. The project has been designed to limit visual impacts. The only structure to be constructed will be a small, modular restroom building. Also, the development site is currently dominated by weedy exotic annual grasses and other non-native plants, as well as miscellaneous trash debris. The site will be cleaned up. Furthermore, no mature trees to be removed and the site will be landscaped with native plants, common to foothill and riparian woodland vegetation communities.

C. No mature trees will be removed.

D. Several community meetings have already been held with respect to this project. The initial proposal was developed through local community meetings, organized by Councilmember Smith. A conceptual design was then presented and discussed at three meetings of the local volunteer neighborhood organizing committee. No additional meetings are planned. With respect to CEQA, the MND is based upon the conceptual design. Your comments, and all other submitted written comments, will be incorporated in the final version of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), herein. The final MND and Mitigation Program will be submitted to the Board of Public Works along with the City Council for their consideration. Public comments will also be welcomed during the adoption process.

7. California Department of Fish & Game, August 26, 2010-

- A. Comment Noted. CDFG will be among the state and federal agencies notified if the Least Bell's Vireo is seen.
- B. The recommendations of the Biological (Vegetation) Assessment have been incorporated into mitigation measures BR-01, BR-07, BR-08, BR-11, BR-12, and GS-02. These measures cover fencing of the riparian woodland, eradication of non-native plant species and re-vegetation with native plant species as appropriate. Native plants introduced as part of the landscaping will be maintained per project plans and specifications.
- C. A Streambed Alteration Agreement, Notification Application Package will be submitted, which will include the wetland delineation report.

8. Richard Fisk, August 26, 2010-

- A. The reason for the MND is to disclose and evaluate potential environmental impacts of the project as proposed, not to "validate the proposed project." The project was proposed in response to a lack of equestrian facilities in the area. The demand as noted in the environmental study refers to the recommendations derived from community meetings and from the local volunteer neighborhood organizing committee.
- B. Comment noted. While the proposed project itself does not grant or deny permission to cyclists to use unpaved trails, we agree with the commenter's supposition that increased use of the park by equestrians will probably increase pressure to enforce the current ban on bicycling on the trails. The Los Angeles Municipal Code currently prohibits the use of bicycles on unpaved roads and trails in City parks unless designated for bicycle use by the Recreation and Parks Commission - Aliso Canyon Park has not been so designated. Any future use of trails for bicyclists would be a policy decision, made by the City Recreation and Parks Commission.

As for zoning changes, the MND states that because of zoning conflicts, a variance will be necessary as a condition of approval. As stated in the MND, the site is zoned for either open space or low density residential uses. Since the equestrian area is planned for an area zoned for low density residential housing, a change in land use, or the project meets environmental goals and the number of planned non-residential structures will be less than the criteria

for low density residential. Environmental impacts and utility/public service demands will be less than if the parcels were developed for their zoned uses. Development of the proposed project site would be consistent with the General Plan or zoning designations of the site and surrounding area and would not conflict with any adopted plans, policies, or regulations. The project is consistent with the community plan's policy of providing adequate recreation facilities to correspond with population and service demands. The Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan recognizes the need for the expansion and improvement of needed local parks. The plan states that these parks are to be improved as funds become available. In this situation, improving Aliso Canyon Park with an equestrian facility would further satisfy the goal and intent of the plan.

- C. Concern for people is the primary basis for the California Environmental Quality Act. That concern is expressed in Mandatory, Finding C, "Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?" The MND systematically evaluates potential impacts to the human environment (broken down into seventeen issue areas including population, housing, and recreation) and finds that the proposed project would not have substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Biological resources are just one of the issue areas that require evaluation under CEQA. As required by state and federal laws, project impacts to endangered plant and animal species must be considered in the environmental review process.
  - D. See Comment 8B.
  - E. Comment noted. The commenter provides an argument for retention if not expansion of bicycle use in the park based on popularity and potential health benefits. However, that is not the project that the city is pursuing at this time and therefore is not evaluated in the MND.
9. Ann Ziliak, Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council-
- A. Comments noted. The restroom building is the only structure included in this project. Project elements, including bicycle racks, signage and bleacher elements will follow design guidelines for the City Department of Recreation and Parks.