

Red Rock Canyon State Park

General Plan and Environmental Impact Report

Addendum to the Final General Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report

State Clearinghouse # 20008121026

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Addendum to the Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan and Environmental Impact Report, March 2023

Introduction

State Parks prepared a General Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Red Rock Canyon State Park (the Park). General Plans are subject to a comprehensive and programmatic environmental review according to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines in PRC Section 21000 et seq. The EIR prepared for the General Plan provides the basis for future second-level environmental reviews, providing more detailed information and analysis for site-specific developments and projects.

The General Plan was approved and the EIR certified by the State Parks and Recreation Commission at a public meeting on March 3 in Lancaster, CA. The General Plan and EIR can be accessed at <https://www.redrockcanyongp.com/resources>.

Red Rock Canyon State Park comprises approximately 25,325 acres and is 80 miles east of Bakersfield in Kern County (Figure 1). The City of Ridgecrest is located 35 miles northeast, and the City of Lancaster is approximately 50 miles to the south. Cantil's small, widespread community is closest to the Park, approximately six miles south, and California City lies 17 miles southeast. State Route (SR) 14 provides direct access to and bisects the Park north-south (Figure 1). The Park is in the center of many acres devoted to recreational vehicle access.

The land use designations of the General Plan are shown in Figure 2 (below). General Plan Section 4.5.1.1 recommended that non-street-legal vehicles registered as off-highway motor vehicles (OHVs) per California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 38006 be allowed ingress and egress on Sierra View Road. Sierra View Road is a well-traveled dirt road through the Park's northwest corner. OHV recreationalists frequently use it to access the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) OHV Areas west and north of the Park. Sierra View Road is accessed via the only legal (approved by the California Department of Transportation) OHV crossing of State Route 14 and thus is an important link in the local road network. Sierra View Road is also frequently used by non-OHV traffic.

The General Plan designates one additional route through the Park for maintaining access to adjacent recreation land, a 1.6-mile segment of Red Rock Wash connecting the Ricardo Campground to adjacent BLM lands (Figure 2).

Shortly after project approval (on March 9, 2023), State Parks received correspondence from an interested party questioning the accuracy of the length of Sierra View Road through the Park, as described in the planning process. In response to the inquiry, this Addendum provides

additional information regarding Sierra View Road. No comments were received with regards to the second access route via Red Rock Wash. Thus, it is not addressed in this Addendum.

CVC Section 38026 allows State Parks to designate three miles of a highway within a State Park classified unit, providing a connecting link between OHV trail segments. This designation was used in the General Plan for Sierra View Road (and Red Rock Wash). While no specific length of this road segment is provided in the General Plan, State Parks stated during the planning process and at the March 3 commission meeting that the segment of Sierra View Road through the Park measures 3.1 miles. In support of the planning process, the length of this route was measured using recent aerial imagery (January 2023) and ESRI software while preparing the final EIR. Once determined in GIS, these data were also verified with the District superintendent and State Park staff. The planning team determined 3.1 miles to be sufficiently close to the 3 miles stated in the CVC to allow the designation of this segment of Sierra View Road for continued OHV use in the General Plan.

Upon receiving the comment on March 9 stating that the commenter believes the segment was significantly longer than the 3.1 miles stated during the commission meeting and thus included in the approved General Plan, State Parks reexamined the GIS data for Sierra View Road and park boundaries and determined that minor errors occurred during calculations. Figure 3 shows Sierra View Road through the Park, and Figure 4 and Table 1 show the corrected Sierra View Road segments and mileage, which were determined to add up to 3.86 miles.

In response to this re-calculation, this Addendum to the Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan and EIR revises the length of Sierra View Road that would allow continued OHV travel through the Park from 3.1 miles to 3.86 miles. The change in length of Sierra View Road does not necessitate any changes to the EIR analysis or its impact conclusions. Vehicle travel on Sierra View Road is currently occurring and will continue to occur with General Plan implementation. The EIR did not identify any significant impacts resulting from General Plan Implementation, including continued vehicle travel on Sierra View Road. The length change merely conflicts with the CVC, which states that only three miles shall be designated in a State Park Unit to allow OHV access, and the 3.86 miles are beyond those limits.

State Parks will address this inconsistency issue in the Roads and Trails Management Plan called for in General Plan Section 4.7.1 to address this code inconsistency. The inconsistency will be addressed through one of the following alternatives:

- Seek variance for the code, similar to the one allowed for a pilot study in Inyo County;

- Identify a route that maintains the legal crossing/use of Sierra View Road but does not exceed 3 miles (this may necessitate the use of segments of other existing routes maintained under the General Plan); or
- Work with the State Legislature to seek a change to the CVC that allows more flexibility in the length of road designation allowable in a State Park.

Any of these alternatives would bring the ultimate road network and therefore, the General Plan into compliance with the CVC. Until the Road and Trail Management Plan is prepared and one of these solutions (or variance thereof) is finalized, Sierra View Road will remain open to access as it currently is. It should be noted that the District superintendent has the authority to close any road in the park, regardless of designation, to vehicle traffic should any unforeseen impact occur and closure be deemed necessary for resource protection.

CEQA Guidelines Regarding an Addendum to an EIR

An EIR prepared by state and local governments (lead agency) is usually a freestanding document intended to meet the requirements of CEQA. However, CEQA encourages streamlining using combined general plans and EIRs (CEQA Guidelines Section 15166) and tiering. Tiering is a process where a lead agency prepares a series of environmental assessments, progressing from general concerns at a programmatic level to more site-specific evaluations, preparing subsequent environmental documents for detailed projects (CEQA Guidelines Section 15152). When the lead agency combines a general plan and an EIR, all CEQA requirements must be covered, and documents must identify where the requirements are met.

The EIR for the General Plan serves as a first-tier EIR defined in Section 15166 of the CEQA Guidelines. The analysis of broad environmental issues found within **Chapter 5 – Environmental Impact Report** of the General Plan will serve as a reference for future environmental documents that will provide more detailed information and analysis for site-specific developments and projects.

Public Resource Code Section 15164 - Addendum to an EIR or Negative Declaration

This section of the PRC states that:

- a) The lead agency or a responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.
- b) An addendum to an adopted negative declaration may be prepared if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary or none of the conditions described in

Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred.

- c) An addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the final EIR or adopted negative declaration.
- d) The decision-making body shall consider the Addendum with the final EIR or adopted negative declaration prior to making a decision on the project.
- e) A brief explanation of the decision not to prepare a subsequent EIR pursuant to Section 15162 should be included in an addendum to an EIR, the lead agency's required findings on the project, or elsewhere in the record. The explanation must be supported by substantial evidence.

State Parks has prepared this Addendum according to PRC Section 15164 subsection a). The minor change that occurred is the change in the length of the segment of Sierra View Road in the Park that allows OHV travel.

State Parks determined that the change in length of Sierra View Road designated as an OHV access route does not warrant the preparation of a subsequent EIR because the change is minor. Neither results in new previously unidentified impacts nor impacts substantially more severe than presented in the EIR. The minor change results in a temporary inconsistency with the CVC. This Addendum identifies three alternatives to resolve those inconsistencies while preparing the Road and Trails Plan already called for in the General Plan. State Parks further determined that allowing the 3.86-mile segment of Sierra View Road open to vehicle traffic until the inconsistency between the allowed length and the CVC can be resolved does not result in any new or more severe impacts than those previously analyzed in the EIR. No further action is necessary at this time. This Addendum will be filed with the State Clearinghouse, and the State Parks and Recreation Commission will be briefed.

Modifications to the General Plan and EIR Resulting from this Addendum

The General Plan and DEIR did not include any specific mention of the length of segments of Sierra View Road (or Red Rock Wash) that would be designated. No changes to the designation of the routes or any other language are proposed as a result of this Addendum. Thus, no changes to the General Plan or DEIR are necessary.

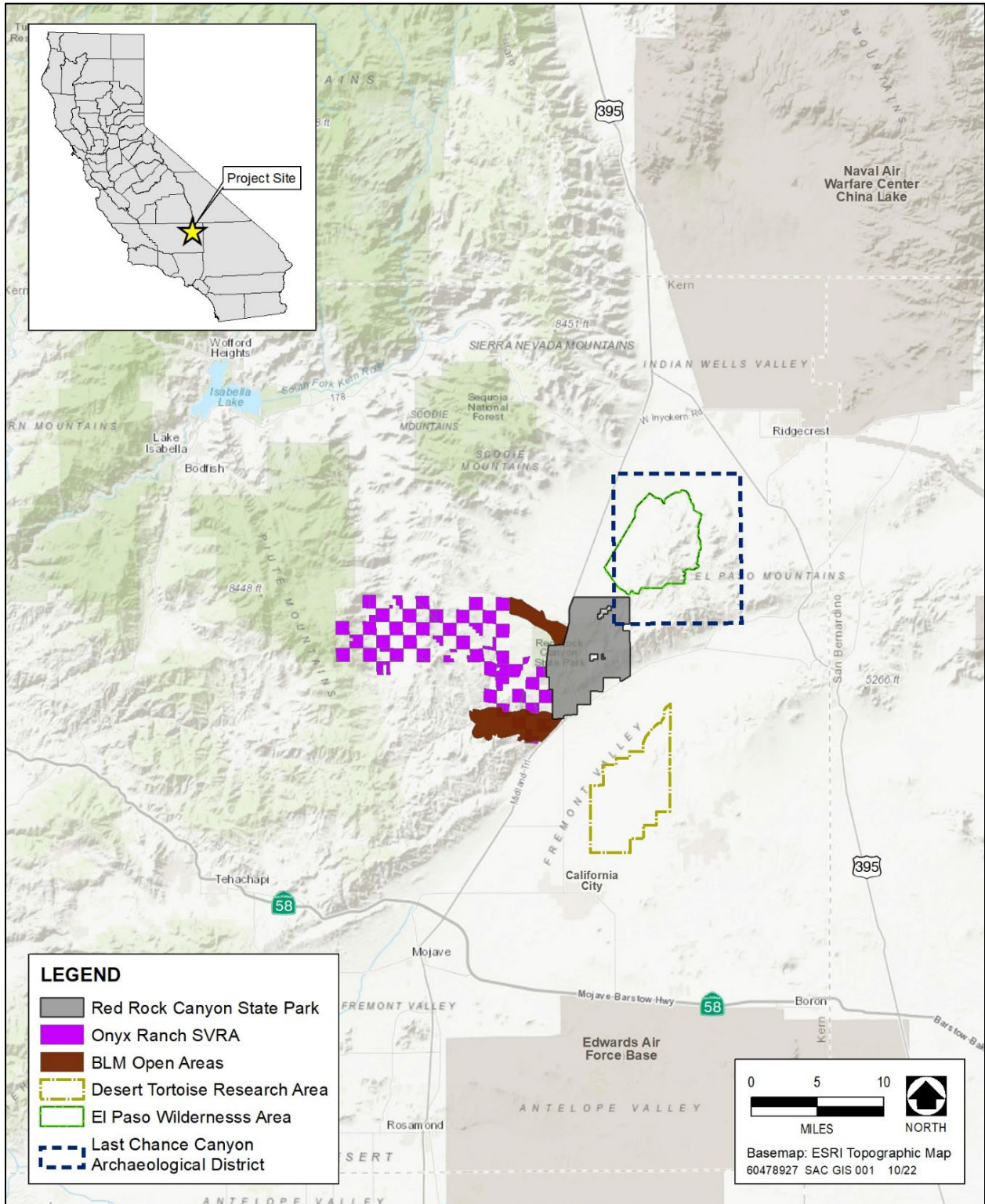


Figure 1. Red Rock Canyon State Park Vicinity Map

General Plan Revision - Preferred Concept

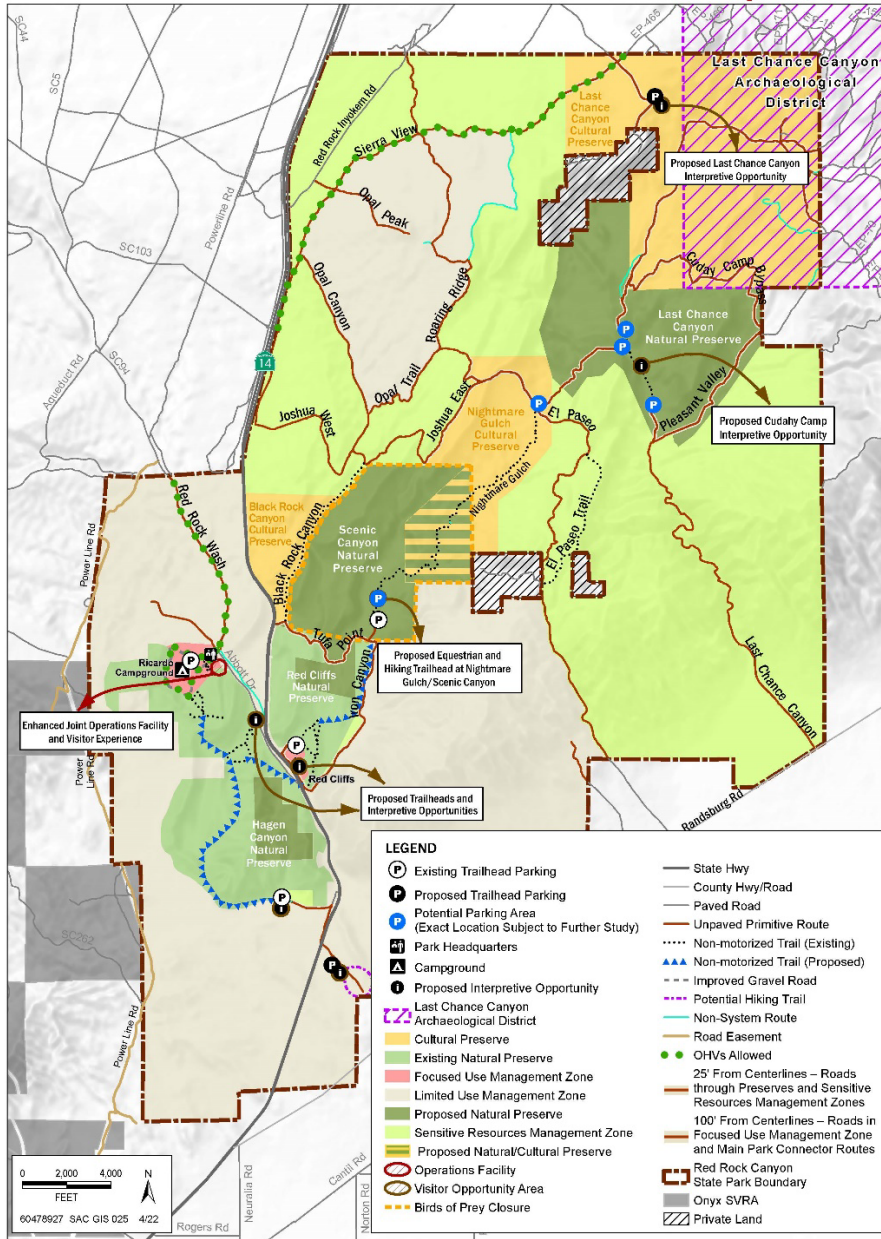


Figure 2. Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan Preferred Concept Map. Sierra View Road is in the north-central section of the map, designated by green dots; Red Rock Wash is shown with the same designation.

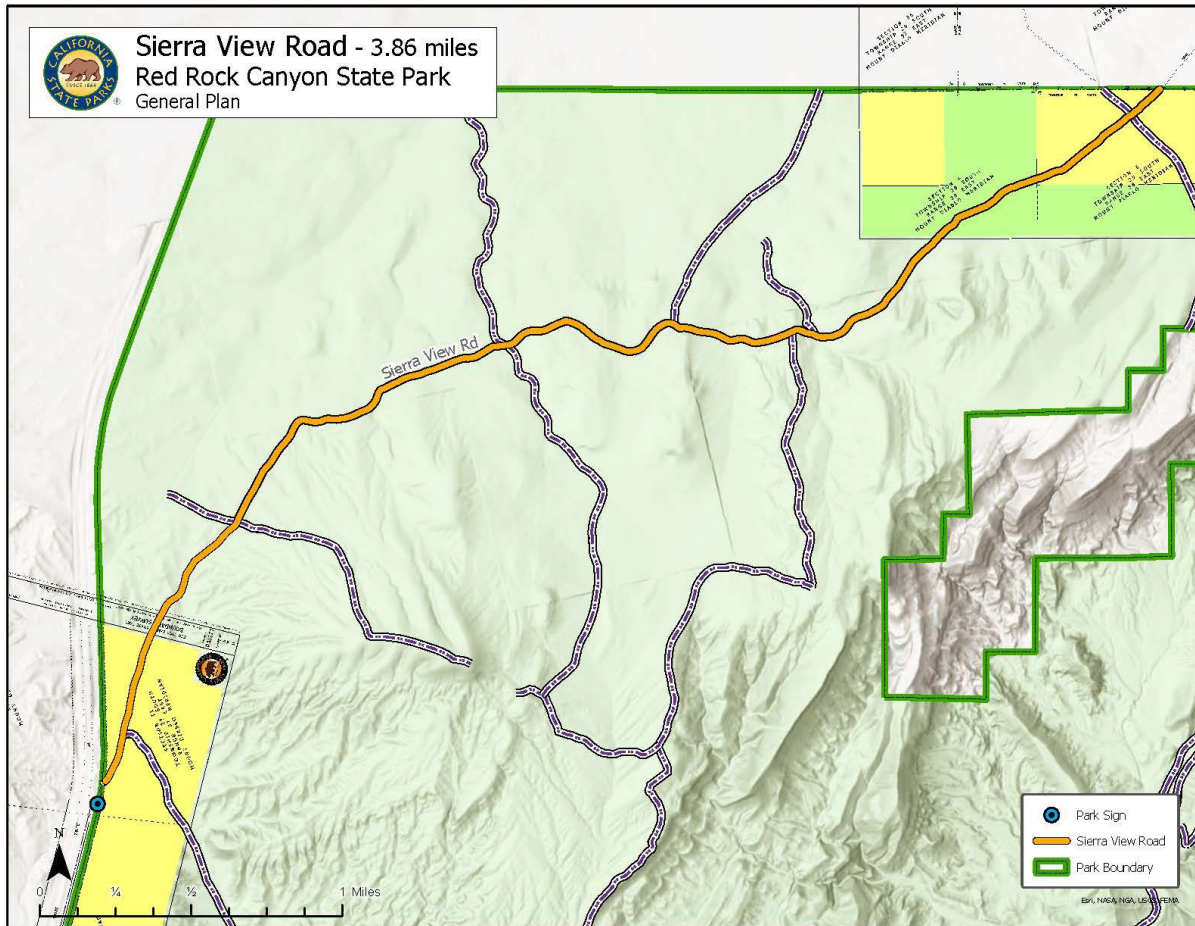


Figure 3. Closeup of Sierra View Road through the Northwest Corner of the Park; SR 14 legal crossing is at the blue dot location.

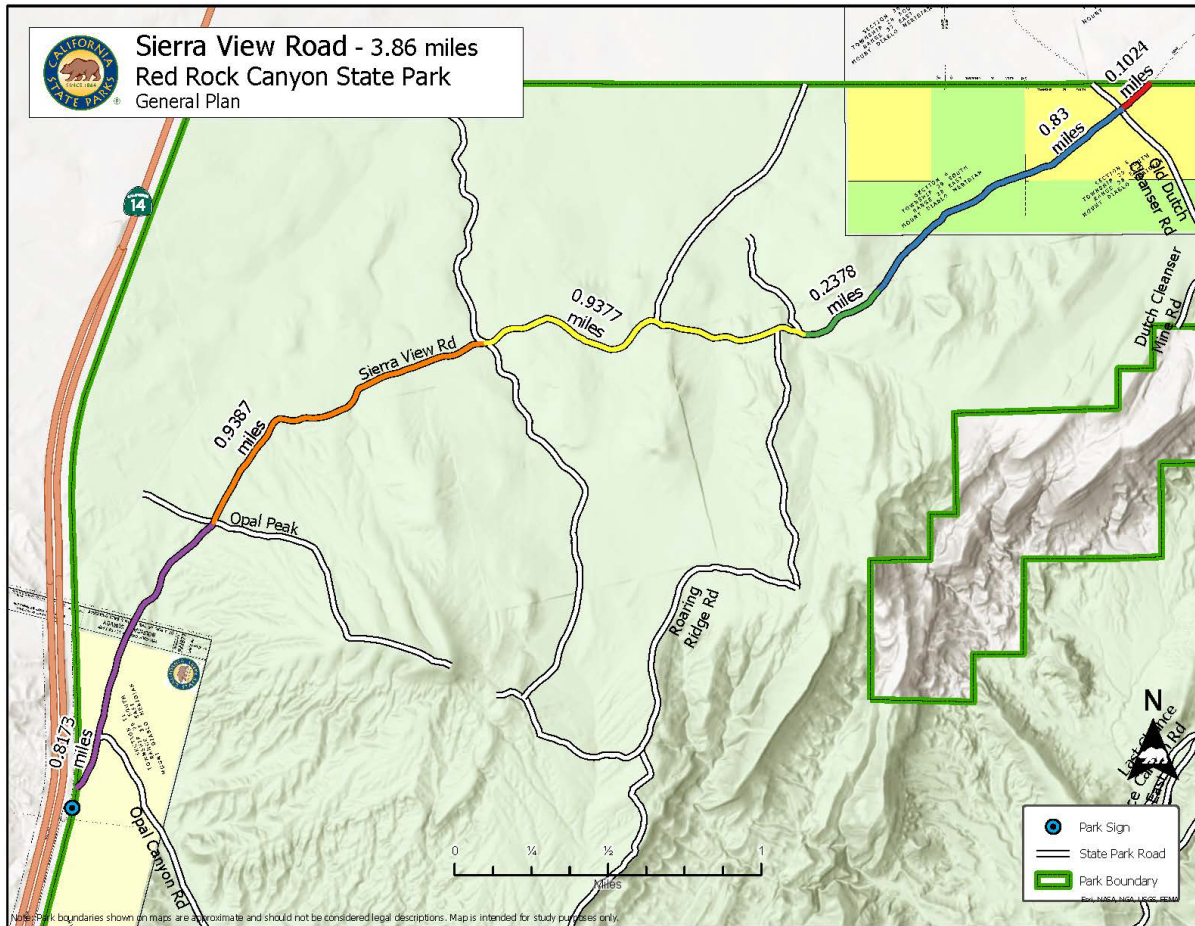


Figure 4. Sierra View Road route segment measurements

Table 1. Sierra View Road GIS Measurements Calculated in Feet and Miles

Route Segment	Calculated Length in Feet	Calculated Length in Miles	GIS Identification Number
Sierra View Rd Segment (purple line in figure 4)	4,950.9297	0.9377	GIS0071006
Sierra View Rd Segment (orange line in Figure 4)	4,956.3037	0.9387	GIS0071013
Sierra View Rd Segment (yellow line in Figure 4)	4,315.4624	0.8173	GIS0071020
Sierra View Rd Segment (green line in Figure 4)	1,255.6355	0.2378	GIS0074485
Sierra View Rd Segment (blue line in Figure 4)	4,382.2831	0.8300	GIS0074486
Sierra View Rd Segment (red line in Figure 4)	540.6449	0.1024	GIS0081463
Total Segment Lengths	20,401.2592 feet	3.8639 miles	N/A

Source: State Parks GIS; March 2023

References

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