



NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Sections 15072 and 15073, this is to advise that the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA), which is the lead agency overseeing this project, has completed a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed project described below.

PROJECT TITLE: Steele Peak Inaugural Trail

PROJECT LOCATION: Latitude: 33.787731000, Longitude: -117.283188000; Steele Peak Reserve, northwest of the intersection of Forrest Road and San Jacinto Avenue, in unincorporated Riverside County, near the communities of Good Hope and Gavilan Hills, west of the City of Perris. The Project site is not located on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (hazardous waste sites).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: RCHCA proposes to create a 1.2-mile sustainable trail loop with associated fencing and signage for the public to enjoy while also preserving and restoring disturbed areas outside the proposed trail. The trail will utilize existing roads that are between 10 and 12 feet wide within the Steele Peak Reserve (Reserve) of the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan (SKR HCP). The Project would narrow these disturbed existing roads in the Reserve to approximately six (6) feet by installing fencing on both sides of the trail. The fencing and narrowed trail would also help prevent current unauthorized off-highway vehicle (OHV) use of the roads and dumping of trash within the Reserve. Narrowing of the roads to fenced trails would also keep users on the designated trail and result in approximately 0.48 to 0.73 acre of area that can revegetate to become viable Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) habitat. Fencing on the trails would consist of a composite rail with splitting (Trex composite). Perimeter fencing would also be added or replaced along the east side of the Reserve and Forrest Road to help prevent unauthorized entry into the Reserve.

Parking for up to 10 cars would be established outside of the Reserve, at the end of Forrest Road, on a portion of a landfill site owned by the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources (RCDWR). RCHCA would lease this portion of this decommissioned landfill from the RCDWR to allow parking, a gate and new fencing meant to control access and allow RCHCA to enforce operational hours to the trail. Access to the trail from the parking lot would occur via an existing Southern California Edison (SCE) easement that runs directly west from the parking area. The proposed trail would only be open to hikers. Other amenities are minimal and would include basic wayfinding, interpretive signage, seating boulders, and a trash receptacle to help minimize waste along the trail. The gate to the parking area would be locked outside of hours of operation (daylight hours). Day-to-day operations would be handled by a full-time patrol that would be present during the hours of operation to encourage appropriate use of the trail and amenities and discourage unauthorized/illegal use.

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: The Mitigated Negative Declaration is available for public review and comment pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15072 and 15073 (California Environmental Quality Act). Your comments may be sent as soon as possible, but **no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, November 8, 2021**. All comments must be submitted in writing to the email or address below. Please refer to this project by the project title listed above. If you have no comment, no reply is necessary. The comment period during which RCHCA will receive comments on the Mitigated Negative Declaration is:

Starting Date: October 8, 2021

Ending Date: November 8, 2021

PUBLIC HEARING: The RCHCA is tentatively scheduled to make a decision regarding this project and the associated Mitigated Negative Declaration on **November 18, 2021**, or a later date at the RCHCA Board of Directors Meeting, at 11:30 am, located at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, CA 92501.

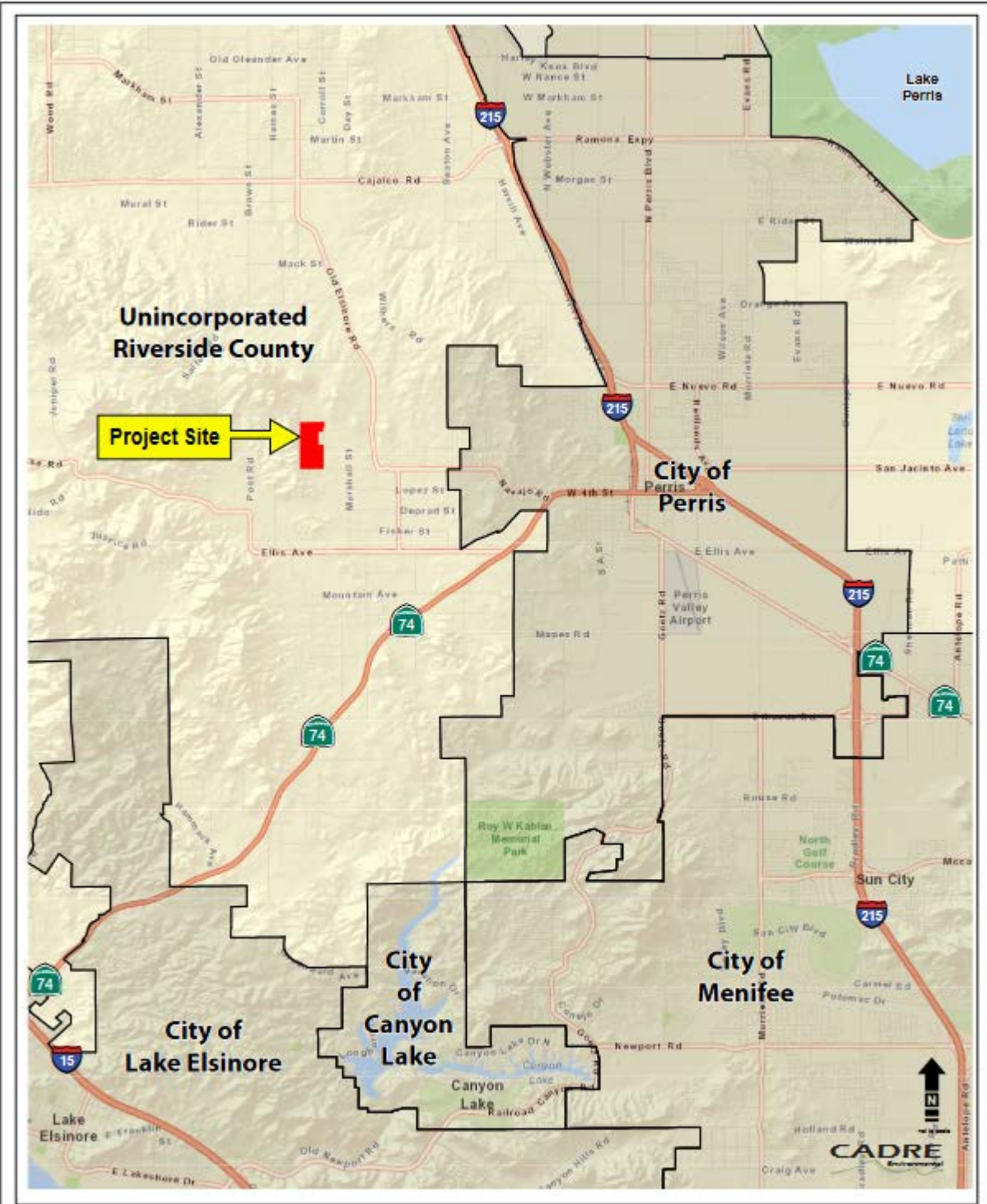
RESPONSES AND COMMENTS: Please send your written comments to:

Riana Fisher, Program Manager
Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA)
3390 University Avenue, Suite 200
Riverside, California 92501
Phone: (951) 405-6708
Email: rfisher@wrcog.us

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: A copy of the Mitigated Negative Declaration is available for public review on RCHCA's website at <https://rchca.us/194/Steele-Peak-Public-Access-Plan> and at the Mead Valley Library, 21580 Oakwood Street, Perris, CA 92570.

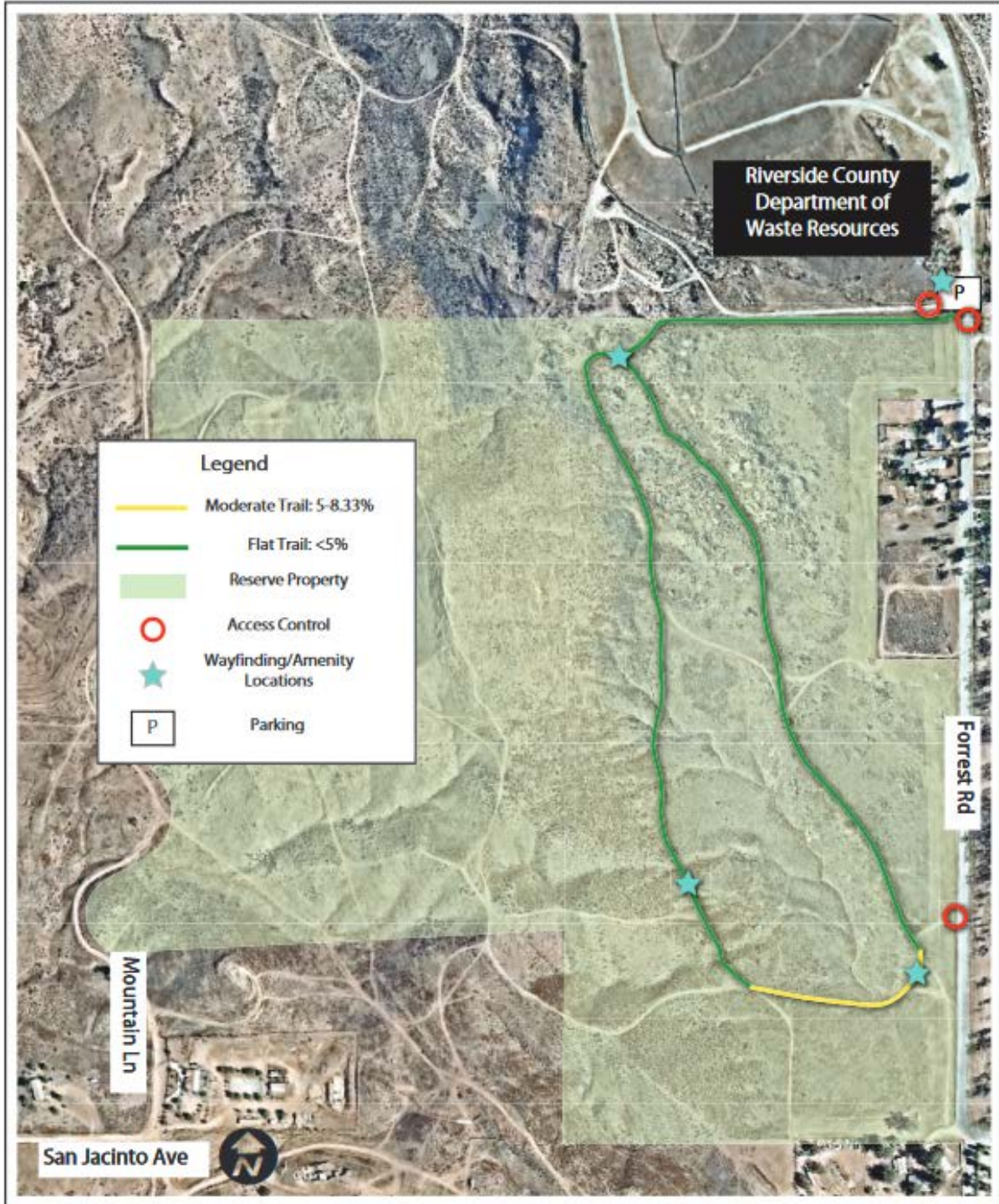
If you require additional information, please contact Riana Fisher at (951) 405-6708.

Regional Map



Steele Peak Inaugural Trail Project

Regional Map
Figure 1



Steele Peak Inaugural Trail Project

Project Site Plan

Figure 2

