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Executive Summary

Joseph D. Grant County Park (Park) is the largest county park in the County of Santa Clara’s park system, located eight miles east of downtown San José in the Western Diablo Range foothills of eastern Santa Clara Valley. In 2012, the County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (County Parks) acquired the 1,155-acre Sulphur Springs Ranch (Ranch) adjacent to the Park’s southeastern boundary. Though the Ranch property has not opened for public use yet, this acquisition has expanded the overall acreage of the Park to more than 12,000 acres.

In 2018, the County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department began planning for the public access and use of the Ranch property. This Master Plan Amendment builds upon the planning work detailed in the 1993 Joseph D. Grant County Park Master Plan by proposing recommendations for public use of the Ranch property and to fold the Ranch into the public parkland.

PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT
This Master Plan Amendment provides planning recommendations to facilitate opening the Sulphur Springs Ranch area, including identification of areas for public use, such as trails, service roads, parking, staging, and backcountry camping. The plan also includes analysis of backcountry camping in Joseph D. Grant County Park as a whole but focuses on the previously unanalyzed opportunities at Sulphur Springs Ranch.

HISTORY AND EXISTING CONDITIONS
The natural landscape of the Park is defined by the broad Halls Valley, San Felipe Creek, and the high ridges that rim the valley. The Ranch is generally characterized by steep-sloping canyons that play host to oak woodland habitat and riparian vegetation growing in the deep ravines. The Ranch is named for the seeps that occur along Sulphur Creek, which flows from Mt. Hamilton through the Ranch property. The cultural legacy of the Park begins with its original inhabitants of the land, the Ohlone People and the Northern Valley Yokuts. In the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century, the Park and Ranch land became privately owned and were used largely for cattle grazing before being acquired by County Parks. The County opened Joseph D. Grant County Park publicly in 1978.

The rugged quality of the Diablo Range defines the topography of the Park with steep ridgelines and narrow canyons. The significant bodies of water and creeks within the Park and Ranch include Grant Lake, McCreery Lake, Bass Lake, Eagle Lake, Pig Lake, stock ponds, Arroyo Aguague, San Felipe Creek, Smith Creek, Sulphur Creek and their tributaries. The Park provides habitat for an abundance of local wildlife and plays a critical role in conservation as a regional wildlife corridor connecting the Bay Area with open space areas south of Santa Clara County. Sensitive natural communities occurring within the Park include the oak woodland habitat, the bushy spikemoss mats, native grasslands, and California bay forest (Nomad Ecology, 2012).

The rural Halls Valley features large, open space grasslands and topography similar to its neighboring ranches and ecological reserve. Land use within the Park tends to concentrate human use centrally within the Snell Trail Loop that encompasses group picnic areas and the
campgrounds. The Park currently offers 51 miles of hiking trails (with 46 of the total 51 miles also open to equestrians and 41 of the 51 total miles open to mountain bikes), several campgrounds, and serves as the setting for adventure races and astronomy events. Points of interest in the Park include the complex of historic buildings located around the main ranch house near the Stockman's Group Area, Snell Barn, the Scenic Overlook along the Dutch Flat Trail at the western boundary of the Park, Grant Lake, and views of Lick Observatory as seen from Isabel Ridge.

DEVELOPING THE RECOMMENDATIONS
The research and development of the recommendations was conducted by the Project Team in close collaboration with the Consultant Team. Research efforts during the planning process included a literature review of previous master planning documents, environmental assessment documents, property-related legal documents, historic structures reports, resource management and conservation plans, and cultural records. Additionally, engaging the public in the Master Plan Amendment process was a critical component of the planning approach and the foundation on which the design alternatives for consideration were developed. Public input methods included stakeholder interviews, a community open house event, an online survey, and a community meeting.

Following the research, the Project Team identified the opportunities and constraints of the Park and analyzed the site conditions. Potential locations for backpack camps, staging areas, a backcountry toilet, and trail connections were identified and selected for further analysis. Possible locations were assessed using the following criteria: consideration of environmental or cultural resources; the quality of the users' experience; ease of implementation; and operational viability. From the analysis, two sites emerged as recommendations for backpack camp locations, one location for a backcountry toilet, one staging area (for overnight visitors), and several miles of trail improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERNIGHT USE
The two backpack camps are to be located within the Ranch and will offer basic camping amenities. The first backpack camp, officially named hereto as Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp, will be located approximately one mile from the existing vehicular gate on Mt. Hamilton Road. The second site, officially named hereto as Valley Oak Backpack Camp, will be located approximately one mile east of the first camp area. The Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp will offer seven campsites, six individual sites and one group site, and a backcountry toilet. The Valley Oak Backpack Camp will include five individual sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCESS, TRAILS, AND CIRCULATION
The existing Park trail network and staging will provide connection for overnight and day-users seeking to access the Ranch. Day-use visitors may use any parking lot within the Park for staging, with the suggestion of using Stockman’s Group Picnic Area parking for those day-users seeking a longer journey or Twin Gates for those day-users seeking a shorter one. The Stockman’s Group Picnic Area parking lot will be utilized as the staging area for overnight visitors with reservations at one of the backpack camps.
The layout of the existing ranch roads forms the backbone for the recommended trail network within the Ranch. Several of the ranch roads will be repurposed as trails for public use while other roads will be converted to operations and maintenance access roads or decommissioned. The trail recommendations in this Master Plan Amendment include the addition of two new trails to the network, officially named hereto as Sulphur Springs Ranch Trail and Isabel Ridge Trail, which will be developed through combination of new trail construction and repurposing of ranch road. Trail improvements also include extensions of two trails currently part of the Park trail network, Smith Creek Trail and Manzanita Trail.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS
Park staff will utilize all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility task vehicles (UTVs) for maintenance, patrol, and emergency access of the trails and camps. Periodic or seasonal mowing of the trails as well as mowing or weed whipping the camps will be required to improve wayfinding and define camping areas.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CONSTRUCTION
BUDGET SUMMARY
The recommendation of this Master Plan Amendment is to fully implement all backpack camps, trail improvements, and vault toilet improvements as detailed in this document. The construction budget for implementation has been estimated to be approximately $1.9 million (2020). In the case it is not feasible from a budgetary and scheduling standpoint to fully implement all recommendations in one phase, this Master Plan Amendment identifies four construction phases; each phase containing improvements that could be reasonably built independent of the other phases, so long as constructed sequentially, with each phase building upon previously completed improvements.

FUTURE STEPS
The next steps in fulfilling the vision of this Master Plan Amendment will be to determine the order of implementation of the phases. Additional efforts will be needed for design development and construction planning. Trail construction and construction of the backpack campsites can be implemented by County Parks staff and crew members as schedule and budget permit. The new bridge, access road, and backcountry toilet facility, or any work that is to be published for competitive bid, may require design development and preparation of construction documents.
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1 Introduction and Project Overview

Joseph D. Grant County Park (Park) is the largest park in County of Santa Clara’s park system, stretching over 10,882 acres and offering a variety of recreational activities to visitors. In 2012, the County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (County Parks) acquired the 1,155-acre Sulphur Springs Ranch (Ranch) adjacent to the Park’s southeastern boundary. Though the Ranch property has not opened for public use yet, this acquisition has expanded the overall acreage of the Park to just over 12,000 acres.

In 2018, County Parks began developing an amendment to the 1993 Joseph D. Grant County Park Master Plan to study and propose recommendations for public use of the Ranch property and provide plans for trail and road circulation, parking, staging, and backcountry camping.
1.1 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Joseph D. Grant County Park is located eight miles east of downtown San José in the Western Diablo Range foothills of eastern Santa Clara Valley, a subsection of the California Coast Ranges (Figure 1). Nearby landmarks include Mt. Hamilton and the University of California’s Blue Oak Ranch Reserve and Lick Observatory. The Lick Observatory property borders the Ranch to the north and east. The elevation at the Park entrance is approximately 1,600 feet with the valley floor sloping down to 1,240 feet at the southern park boundary and rising to a height of 3,960 feet at the most eastern park boundary. The local climate is characterized as Mediterranean with cool wet winters and hot dry summers. Annual precipitation is 25-27” (Nomad Ecology, 2012). Winter temperatures typically reach a low of 30 degrees Fahrenheit while summer months reach highs above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.
The natural landscape of the Park is defined by the broad Halls Valley, shaped over time by the flow of San Felipe Creek, and shaded by the high ridges that rim the valley. Several historic structures remain from the period when the land was used exclusively for grazing cattle and recreational hunting.

Sulphur Springs Ranch is generally characterized by steep sloping canyons that host oak woodland habitat and riparian vegetation in the deep ravines. Referred to as the Nolan Ranch at the time of acquisition, the property has since been renamed Sulphur Springs Ranch for the seeps that occur along Sulphur Creek, which flows from Mt. Hamilton through the Ranch property. A primary geographic feature of the Ranch property is Isabel Ridge, a moderately sloping ridge that rises between the canyons of Smith Creek and Sulphur Creek to a height of 4,200 feet at Mount Isabel (the peak is beyond the property boundary).

1.2 PURPOSE OF MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT
The purpose of this Master Plan Amendment is to fold the Ranch into the public parkland. This Master Plan Amendment provides planning recommendations to facilitate opening the Sulphur Springs Ranch area, including identification of areas for public use, such as trails, service roads, parking, staging, and backcountry camping. The plan also includes analysis of backcountry camping in Joseph D. Grant County Park as a whole but focuses on the previously unanalyzed opportunities at Sulphur Springs Ranch.
The existing Park Master Plan was approved in 1993, several decades before the acquisition of the Ranch property. The intent of this Master Plan Amendment is to add to the previous work included in the Master Plan by providing background information on the Ranch and recommendations for the incorporation of the property into the public parkland. The approach of this Master Plan Amendment is to expand on the information and recommendations previously included in the 1993 Master Plan and limit the duplication of text and information.

1.3 A DEFINITION FOR BACKPACK CAMPING
This document discusses backcountry uses such as backpack camping. For purposes of this planning effort, the Project Team defined backpack camping as a “remote campsite location that cannot be accessed by motor vehicle, requiring more than one mile’s travel by foot or other non-vehicular means to access and which offers a limited number of typical campsite amenities.” This document employs this definition from here forward.
1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL
The goals of this Master Plan Amendment are to: (1) provide planning recommendations to incorporate and connect Sulphur Springs Ranch into the existing Park by identifying areas for public use, trail and road circulation, parking, staging, and backcountry camping, and (2) analyze opportunities and constraints of a backcountry toilet.

To accomplish these goals, this Master Plan Amendment: (1) reconsiders the location of backcountry camping sites listed in the 1993 Master Plan, (2) considers the existing ranch roads and other landscape features within the Sulphur Springs Ranch boundaries in the analysis of access, circulation, and staging, and (3) considers the feasibility of installing and maintaining a backcountry toilet in the Park near a backpack camping site.

OBJECTIVE
The project objectives were to:

- Plan for public security and safety.
- Engage the public and community in the planning process.
- Preserve the cultural and environmental heritage of the Park by identifying and locating resources and adhering to setbacks for location of improvements.
- Plan for improvements that can accommodate a range of abilities and that have the broadest appeal to the most users.
- Seek opportunities to facilitate and expedite implementation of recommendations.
- Plan for operational viability by considering park operations and maintenance procedures, staffing, and funding during the planning process.
- Comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.
2 History and Existing Conditions

2.1 HISTORY OF THE PARK
The cultural legacy of the Park spans the range of California history beginning with its original inhabitants, the Ohlone People and the Northern Valley Yokuts, moving through private ownership during the Mexican land grant period (much of the park was once part of the Rancho Cañada de Pala land grant) and the American Ranching period, and into the modern period as a publicly owned regional asset.

In 1880, Joseph D. Grant began acquiring the rancho lands (Carey & Co., Inc., 2012). Grant used the property for grazing cattle and recreation such as hunting game and fishing. After Grant’s passing, his daughter, Josephine Grant McCreery, took full ownership of the land by buying her siblings’ interests and it was Josephine who set in motion the course towards future public access when she bequeathed the land to Save the Redwoods League and Menninger Foundation. Each organization agreed to sell the property to the County of Santa Clara Department of Parks and Recreation in 1975 with deed restrictions to ensure future park development would “not impair the natural and scenic character of the land and its environs.” (Amphion Environmental, 1993). The park opened to the public in 1978.
The Ranch was purchased from Owen Nolan in 2012 by the County of Santa Clara with assistance from The Nature Conservancy and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, the former as an Easement Holder. Prior to Mr. Nolan’s purchase, the property was in private ownership used for annual cow-only cattle grazing (Nomad Ecology, 2012).

2.2 PREVIOUS PLANNING WORK
This Master Plan Amendment document is preceded by a legacy of work over the decades to plan for and implement improvements at the Park since the original property acquisition in 1975. Following is a condensed list of the planning studies to date:

1. Master Plan, prepared by EDAW, 1976
3. Preliminary Master Plan, the Amphion team, prepared by Amphion Environmental, Inc. & 2M Associates, March 1991
4. Environmental Initial Studies, prepared by EIP, July 1991
5. Joseph D. Grant County Park Master Plan, prepared by Amphion Environmental, Inc. & 2M Associates, July 1993

2.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS
The following section summarizes the environmental conditions and built infrastructure occurring at both the Park and the Ranch property. Further analysis and detailing of the information that follows can be found in the Joseph D. Grant County Park Master Plan and Joseph D. Grant and Ed R. Levin County Parks Resource Management Plan for the Park and the 2012 Sulphur Springs Easement Documentation Report and the 2012 Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Update of Nolan Property for the Ranch.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The geomorphology of the land is shaped by several creeks. Significant creeks include Arroyo Aguague, San Felipe Creek, Smith Creek, Sulphur Creek and their tributaries. The significant bodies of water within the Park and Ranch include Grant Lake, McCreery Lake, Bass Lake, Eagle Lake, Pig Lake, and stock ponds. In addition to the mentioned hydrological features, several seasonal wetlands occur within the property boundaries. Water quality varies by hydrological feature due to local disturbances such as erosion from grazing, seasonal run-off, non-native plants, feral animals, or human use. Arroyo Aguague and San Felipe Creek drain through the Coyote Creek Watershed and Smith and Sulphur Creek drain through the Alameda Creek Watershed.

The Park provides habitat for an abundance of local wildlife and is home to a variety of special-status plant and wildlife species. The Park plays a critical role in conservation as a regional wildlife corridor connecting the Bay Area with open space areas south of Santa Clara County. This
connectivity fosters migrating species as well as plants and smaller animal species that benefit from an unfragmented landscape, supporting ecological diversity in the region.

The Park mainly contains mixed oak woodland habitat and the rolling hills display a variety of native and non-native species of vegetation. Mixed riparian vegetation including white alder (Alnus rhombifolia) and associated herbaceous vegetation are associated with the aquatic features in the Park.

Sensitive natural communities occurring within the Park include the oak woodland habitat, bushy spikemoss mats, native grasslands, and California bay forest (Nomad Ecology, 2012). Sensitive or locally rare species observed during the 2012 Ranch property assessment include the Santa Clara thornmint, California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, sharp-shinned hawk, and San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (Nomad Ecology, 2012). It is worth noting that suitable habitat for other sensitive species exists on site so there is the possibility a number of sensitive species greater than those listed here may occur.

EXISTING STRUCTURES AND PARK USE
The rural Halls Valley features large, open space grasslands and topography similar to its neighboring ranches and ecological reserve. Prior to acquisition as public parkland, the Ranch had primarily been used as rangeland. Land use within the greater Grant County Park concentrates human use centrally within the Snell Trail Loop where the Park’s group picnic areas and the campgrounds are located (Figure 3).

The Park consists of historic structures and ranch roads associated with the former owners, open meadows and oak woodland expanses, and sweeping vistas of Halls Valley. The Park currently offers 51 miles of hiking trails (with 46 of the total 51 miles also open to equestrians and 41 of the 51 total miles open to mountain bikes), several campgrounds, and serves as the setting for adventure races, astronomy events, and
other programs. Camping is offered at the Snell Campground (closed in winter), the Halls Valley Campground, the Equestrian Campground, and the Woodland Youth Camp. Both the Halls Valley and Snell campgrounds have fully developed restrooms and showers. Day use areas within the Park offer a variety of activities including multi-use trails, group picnic areas, historic interpretive exhibits at the Cook House, Ranch House, and Rose Garden, and areas for weddings and special events at the Ranch House and Rose Garden. Vehicular access to the Park and Ranch is via State Highway 130/Mt. Hamilton Road. Parking is available in the interior of the park as well as at two trailhead staging areas located along State Highway 130, which bisects the Park in a northwest/southeast direction.

Existing improvements within the Ranch property include a concrete pad and picnic table, a small livestock corral, a man-made stock pond, and unpaved access roads and trails. The Environmental Site Assessment document, completed as part of the Ranch property acquisition, found no evidence of significant improvements on the Ranch dating back to 1897 (Diablo Green Consulting, 2012). Vehicular access from State Highway 130 is via the vehicular gate approximately one half-mile east of the CalFire Smith Creek Station. Pedestrian access to the Ranch from the Park’s main parking and use areas can be gained by hiking the Smith Creek Trail, an existing trail within the Park network.

Points of interest in the Park include the complex of historic buildings located around the main ranch house near the Stockman’s Group Area, Snell Barn, the Scenic Overlook along the Dutch Flat Trail at the western boundary of the Park, Grant Lake, views of Lick Observatory as seen from Isabel Ridge, and the many vistas of Halls Valley or Deer Valley as observed from the network of trails. In addition, there are known artifacts related to the residence and use of the land by indigenous people prior to the public use and, therefore, activity and construction within the Park must comply with federal and local regulations for disturbance, or inadvertent discovery, of human remains or cultural
resources. For security and preservation concerns, these locations will remain undisclosed in this document.

Existing utilities within the Park have been developed in its central areas and provide service to the ranger station, campgrounds, restroom facilities, the ranch complex, and other such amenities. Utilities include domestic water supply, electricity, propane gas system, and septic drain field for the restroom facilities (Amphion Environmental, 1993). Two electrical transmission lines and associated easements cross the Park—the first crosses in the western portion and the second transmission corridor traversing from the southwest corner to the middle eastern boundary. An overhead electrical line is installed within the Ranch property near the vehicular gate entrance though no additional utility services exist. Local emergency services are available at the park ranger station or CalFire Smith Creek Station at 22805 Mt. Hamilton Road.

Grazing is an integral component of the vegetation management program within the Park. Grazing infrastructure is found throughout the Park, including cattle gates, fencing, and troughs, and can be encountered along trails. Stock corrals and ponds are also located within the parkland, though are more dispersed than other grazing features.

Fig. 3 Map of Park
The red hatch area indicates higher use areas within the park.
3 Design Concept Development

This chapter describes the planning process, the Project Team and role, research conducted, public outreach, and site analysis.

3.1 PROJECT TEAM
The Project Team was formed to assist in the planning process and provide direction on the development of the site plans and Master Plan Amendment. The project team included Department staff, a representative from the Parks & Recreation Commission, and the consultant team (RRM Design Group). The Project Team members participated in the planning process from August 2018 through October 2019 and provided oversight of the analysis and input at each step of the planning process. Project team meetings were held onsite at the Park.

The consultant team included the design team, RRM Design Group, who prepared the site improvement recommendations in consultation with Department staff and the Project Team, and the environmental consultant firm FirstCarbon Solutions who conducted the environmental review of the Master Plan Amendment recommendations.

3.2 RESEARCH
Research efforts during the planning process included a literature review of previous master planning documents, environmental assessment
documents, property-related legal documents, historic structures reports, resource management and conservation plans, and cultural records. Geographic information systems (GIS) databases were employed in the research of existing conditions and in the development of site improvement recommendations. Other parks and open space agencies, for example MidPeninsula Regional Open Space District and East Bay Regional Park District, were consulted about current recreational trends as well as comparable uses and practices.

Several site visits were conducted by Project Team members over the course of a year, covering environmental conditions for all four seasons. Goals for the field research included examining the Park setting, site context, topography, terrain, and existing Park amenities; identifying and documenting the various biological communities on-site; gaining a sense of the potential cultural resource impacts; and identifying potential locations for improvements. Field research included hiking miles of existing trails within the publicly open park areas as well as the ranch roads currently closed to public access.

3.3 SOLICITING INPUT
Engaging the public in the Master Plan Amendment process was a critical component of the planning approach. Stakeholders, park volunteers, visitors to the park, neighbors, outdoor enthusiasts, and members of the general public shared their personal knowledge of the site and its history and provided key insights on preferences for potential trail development and campsite amenities. This input was the foundation on which the design alternatives for consideration were developed. A variety of methods were used to capture public input, including several stakeholder interviews, a community workshop event, an online survey, and a community meeting on the project alternatives.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS
Stakeholder interviews were held on February 12, 2019 at the County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Administration Building in Los Gatos. The invited stakeholders were representatives of neighboring properties, members of organizations involved in the 2012 acquisition of the Ranch property, representatives of organizations offering possible partnership opportunities, and historians of the Park and Ranch. The interviews were conducted in a group format.
Participants included volunteers from Joseph D. Grant County Park, a representative from a neighboring property, and an ecologist and conservationist involved in the acquisition of the Ranch. Collectively, these stakeholders hold a deep familiarity with the Sulphur Springs Ranch property, as well as knowledge of the local ecology and history of Halls Valley, Mt. Hamilton, and the Western Diablo Range.

In addition to sharing their knowledge of the existing conditions of the Ranch, stakeholders expressed:

• Support for opening Sulphur Springs Ranch to public use.
• The belief human activity on the property should be controlled and/or the public should be educated about the sensitive habitats of the site as well as the best practices they can employ while visiting the site to help protect the ecology.
• The suggestion camping should be confined to the western areas of the Ranch property, near the existing park boundaries.
• An interest in an all-weather access road through the Sulphur Springs Ranch property to Joseph D. Grant County Park to be used by firefighters to gain access to Lick Observatory and as an alternate evacuation route for residents.

PUBLIC OUTREACH
A goal for the public outreach process was to reach as many members of the public as possible – particularly potential park users - using traditional and contemporary engagement techniques. Given the remote location of the park, the few neighbors residing in the rural area, and the regional scope of the park’s service area, the Project Team determined providing multiple means of engagement would result in a higher participation rate. Three methods of public engagement were selected. The first was a conventional open-house format event with a set time and location, which provided the community an opportunity to communicate in-person with the Project Team. The second method was an online survey utilizing social media platforms to provide the public flexibility to participate in the planning process at a time convenient to them. Those who could not attend the workshop could participate in the online survey and invite others, by sharing the weblink, who may be interested in the project to participate. The third method involved a traditional community meeting in which the Project Team’s draft recommendations were presented to the public.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE EVENT
The first public workshop was held on February 12, 2019 at Alum Rock Branch Library in San José. Notice of the event was posted to the County Park’s dedicated project website, mailed and emailed to contacts on file, mailed to neighboring properties, provided to each Board of Supervisors’ office, and promoted via County Park’s social media websites.

The purpose of the workshop event was to: (1) introduce the project to the public, (2) gather the public’s knowledge of the site, (3) listen to concerns, (4) suggest planning alternatives and solicit feedback, (5) launch the online survey, and (6) provide an opportunity for the public to meet with the Project Team face-to-face.
The format for the workshop was an open-house style event. A series of exhibits were displayed for attendees to peruse, and facilitators were available to answer questions and participate in discussion. The exhibits provided a summary of the project, including the purpose of the Master Plan Amendment, the project goals, and background information. Representative campsite amenities and backcountry toilet images, aerial imagery, trail alternatives, photos from the site, and a map of existing trails in both the Park and Ranch were also available.

Participants engaged with the Department staff and Consultant Team and each other in discussions about the materials presented and other topics related to the Park, including trails, habitat and ecology, and concerns regarding access. Several people provided recommendations on their favorite areas of the Park. Dot stickers were placed on workshop boards to mark suggestions for backpack campsites, favorite vista points, or particularly scenic areas of the park.
Common themes provided by workshop participants are listed below and reflected in the word cloud (Figure 4):

- General support for the trail development options as presented. One person expressed concern the trail option that includes a strenuous hiking route, proposed at approximately 6 miles, was too great a distance.
- Participants expressed different preferences for the trail uses within Sulphur Springs Ranch. Support for mountain bike and equestrian trail use were voiced as was accommodating bike-in camping. Others countered these comments by requesting trail access at Sulphur Springs Ranch be limited to hiking only.
- Several people shared thoughts on the uses of the existing Park trails: some wanted trails to continue to be multi-use, while others expressed an interest in limiting bikes or equestrians. Other suggestions for existing Park trail improvements included reducing existing trail widths to single track and recommendations for trail connections.
- The theme of restricting access to some locations of the park was echoed in several of the comments. Workshop participants expressed concerns about locating a backpack campsite in environmentally sensitive areas of the Park or an interest in locating a backpack campsite in a remote location in an attempt to reduce the number of users, another community member felt the backpack campsite should not be located near creeks or ponds.
- A comment was received expressing concern that camping could lead to the ignition of wildfires.
- Several people stressed the importance of ranger surveillance of the backpack campsites.
- Several community members stated cattle grazing should be eliminated at the Ranch.
- A community member felt potable water should be provided at the backpack campsite.
Following the community workshop, all workshop materials were made available on the County Park’s website for the public to view (see Appendix). After reviewing the posters and engaging in discussions with the Project Team, participants were encouraged to take an online survey.

**ONLINE SURVEY OVERVIEW**

An online survey was developed to complement the in-person community workshop. The goal for the online survey was to gather public input to determine the type of backpack campsite that most appeals to the public, the necessity of having potable water and toilet facilities near a backpack campsite, and the public’s opinions on the level of difficulty appropriate for the trail accessing a backpack campsite. The aim was for a high rate of participation from constituents across Santa Clara County and the Bay Area.

The launch of the online survey was synchronized with the community workshop event, and the survey link went live the evening of Tuesday, February 12, 2019. Participants gained access to the survey using a custom weblink. The survey ran for three weeks, through March 5, 2019.

In total, 414 people responded. A map of the residential zip-code data provided revealed people from across the greater Bay Area and beyond participated in the online survey. Though a few individuals submitted survey responses from as far away as Texas and Washington states, most respondents were within a reasonable “weekend trip” driving distance of the project site (Figure 5).
The survey was promoted by the following methods: fliers with the QR code and website link to the survey domain address were provided at the community workshop; a weblink to the survey was posted on the County Parks website dedicated to the project (www.parkhere.org/jdgrantmpa); the survey weblink was emailed to contacts on the project distribution list; and the weblink was posted to County Parks social media Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor pages.

To increase the participation rate, the survey was designed to be brief and easily completed. A total of ten closed-ended questions were included which typically took less than five minutes to finish. Questions were developed by the Consultant Team in consultation with Department staff using straight-forward common language that would be familiar to people with backcountry hiking experience as well as those without. Only zip code demographic information was collected during the survey. For the list of questions and brief summary of responses, see Appendix.

In summary, the majority of the survey respondents:

- Prefer the hike to a backpack camp be a moderate distance and elevation gain.
- Prefer a toilet near a backpack camp.
- Are comfortable with group camping being available at a backpack camp.
- Are comfortable filtering water from a creek or carrying in water.

**COMMUNITY MEETING**

On September 25, 2019, a community meeting was held at the Alum Rock Branch library in San José. Attendees received a brief update of the project goals and objectives as well as a description of the analysis conducted for potential locations of backpack camps, staging areas, and toilets. The meeting concluded with the Project Team’s draft recommendations, explanation of the next steps in the planning process, and a question-and-answer session about the project.

Common questions voiced by meeting attendees included:

- Emergency services accessibility to the backpack camps,
- Proposed reservations systems, and
- Operational considerations, such as closures due to inclement weather.

**SUMMARY OF OUTREACH PROCESS**

A few common themes emerged through the public engagement process. First, there is generally an appreciation for the feeling of remoteness the Park and Ranch provide, despite its proximity to the San José metro area. A second theme is the Park is seen as a treasured but underutilized amenity. Third, there is general support and enthusiasm for opening the Ranch to public access, but access should be limited. And lastly, people feel that the natural features and wildlife, as well as the history of the Park and Ranch, are unique assets that are important to preserve and protect.
3.4 SITE ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The opportunities and constraints were identified through various research methods previously described. Opportunities to reuse existing infrastructure were identified, including the extensive Park trail network, the unpaved road network at Sulphur Springs Ranch, parking lots at Stockman’s Group Picnic Area, Grant Lake, and Twin Gates, and restroom facilities. Potable and non-potable water sources were located and identified as opportunities. On the Ranch, Smith Creek upstream of the confluence with Sulphur Creek was identified as one such potable water source. The sheer remoteness of the outer reaches of the Park was also identified as an opportunity to experience open space as a contrast to the typical daily life of most Bay Area residents.

Constraints identified included the rugged and steep terrain of the upper areas of Sulphur Springs Ranch as well as the Cañada de Pala and Deer Valley areas of the Park where providing daily ranger access, emergency access, or toilet infrastructure would overburden staffing resources or be prohibitively challenging to implement or maintain. Other constraints included:

1. Visual nuisances, such as views to man-made structures or infrastructure, including overhead transmission lines;
2. Areas with little tree canopy cover;
3. Nearby streams that become too arid and hot in late season conditions to provide a reliable potable water source;
4. Proximity to cultural resources or sensitive habitat; and
5. Areas deemed less scenic, such as Pig or Eagle Lake.

IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

With opportunities and constraints identified, the Project Team began exploring sites within the Park and Ranch as potential locations for backpack camps, staging areas, toilet locations, and the trail routes to connect these three amenities. There is an obvious relationship between these amenities so the analysis of these three components of the project occurred in tandem with each other.

Given that a significant part of the visitors’ experience hinges upon the character and quality of the camp location, the analysis began with assessing potential camp location’s scenic quality and remoteness. Other considerations included trail difficulty (the majority of the input indicated the public is seeking a moderate level of trail difficulty), and the proximity to a creek or water feature where campers can pump and filter water. The analysis also prioritized utilizing existing infrastructure wherever possible, including existing parking lots, trails, buildings, roads, and utilities.
Another top consideration important to mention included the feasibility of locating a backpack camp site which could be accessible by a service truck. This consideration was driven from the online survey data which indicated the majority of respondents prefer a backpack camp to have a backcountry toilet. However, due to constraints regarding maintenance access and road infrastructure requirements, providing a toilet in the backcountry near a remote campsite proved to be one of the greater challenges of this analysis.

The potential camp locations were assessed on their proximity to currently serviceable roads or existing routes that could be improved through reasonable means. Additional considerations included the frequency and ease with which maintenance crews could access a potential location and ability for rangers to provide emergency response to a location.

Fig. 6 Backpack Camp Alternatives
Eight locations were considered for a backpack camp area.
The initial list of backpack camp locations included two sites from the 1993 Master Plan, four sites identified by stakeholders and Park staff, and two sites identified by the Project Team through site visits to the Ranch. These eight sites, shown in Figure 6, were identified and selected for further analysis.

In addition to potential camp locations, the Project Team identified possible staging areas. The Project Team considered the eight identified possible backpack campsites in the process of considering potential staging areas and assessed whether the locations provided for a moderate hike. In addition, sites with infrastructure such as a parking lot that could be used to service staging uses were given extra consideration. A list of five potential existing staging areas were identified, in addition to one undeveloped site that could be improved to allow staging. Through discussion with Park staff, three sites were eliminated from consideration due to remoteness and the extent of improvements that
would have been required and three were selected for further analysis. These selected three sites are shown in Figure 7.

The three potential sites identified by the Project Team for a backcountry toilet location were analyzed. These sites, shown in Figure 8, were determined based on potential proximity to campground locations with suitable topography and accessible routes for pumper trucks. Environmental context, such as wetlands, creeks, and sensitive habitats, were also considered in the selection of potential backcountry toilet locations.

A matrix, shown in Figures 9-11, evaluates the top criteria and the recommendations derived from the analysis. The columns list considerations and key criteria organized by four categories: 1) consideration of environmental or cultural resources; 2) the quality of the users’ experience; 3) ease of implementation; and 4) operational viability.

Fig. 8 Backcountry Toilet Alternatives
Three locations were considered for a backcountry toilet location.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Trail Difficulty</th>
<th>Creek / water nearby?</th>
<th>What is the overall user experience?</th>
<th>Near Sensitive Habitat or Species</th>
<th>Ranger / staff access?</th>
<th>Toilet truck access possible?</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<td>Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 1</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scenic, remote, moderately strenuous access</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Consider</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strenuous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 2</td>
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<td>Restricted</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strenuous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch Flat Overlook</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>Scenic, not remote. Possibly water from water tank</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Eliminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strenuous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Pala Seca</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Hot, dry &amp; windy. Possible visible man-made structures. May lack water.</td>
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<td>Restricted</td>
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<td>Deer Valley</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Scenic, remote, moderately strenuous access. No Water.</td>
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<td>Restricted</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Eliminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yerba Buena / Canada de Pala</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ease of Access. Hot, dry &amp; windy, roadway noise. No water.</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Eliminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle Lake / Pig Lake</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hot, dry, poor scenic quality, no water.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Eliminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush Field</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hot, dry, compromised views. No water.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Eliminate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 9 Matrix of Backpack Camp Alternatives**
The sites referred to in the analysis as “Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 1” and “Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 2” rated most desirably.

The rows list the potential sites considered and the findings of that site for each criterion listed in the columns. The column on the far right indicates an overall recommendation based on a balance of all the factors.

Of the listed locations, Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 1 and Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 2 were selected as the most ideal for potential camp sites. While scenic areas such as Dutch Flat Overlook and Deer Valley were considered, Dutch Flat Overlook was

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1 To facilitate the planning work, during the site analysis process, these sites were referred to as Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 1 (SSRI) and as Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 2 (SSR2). They were officially named by the Parks and Recreation Commission’s Naming Subcommittee on October 2, 2019 to Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp and Valley Oak Backpack Camp, respectively.
eliminated due to its proximity to developed areas of the Park and Deer Valley was eliminated due to its restricted operational and patrol accessibility. Both were eliminated due to the uncertainty of viable water sources. Pala Seca and Yerba Buena/Canada de Pala, though scenic, did not have reliable water sources. Brush Field and Eagle/Pig Lake locations were limited by their restricted patrol access and unfavorable user experiences that ultimately did not compare to the scenic quality found at other locations.

Of the potential locations for backcountry toilet sites, Sulphur Springs Ranch 1 was rated most desirable due to its remote location, proximity to Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 1, and pumper truck accessibility. SSR Concrete Pad was too near to the highway for a backpack camp and the Deer Valley location would add significant cost to provide the necessary service road improvements.

While each of the potential staging areas were strategically distanced from camp locations, Stockman’s was the most secure and required the least amount of additional staging area infrastructure in comparison to Grant Lake and Twin Gates.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT REVIEW
To be included after CEQA review completion.
This chapter contains recommendations for overnight facilities and amenities that emerged from the planning process. A description of the circulation, trails, and access recommendations for Sulphur Springs Ranch follows.

This Master Plan Amendment considers public access to the Ranch for both day and overnight use. The planning process considered the existing ranch roads within the Sulphur Springs Ranch boundaries in the analysis of access, circulation and staging, and studied the feasibility of installing a backcountry toilet in the Park near a backpack camping site. In addition, the planning process re-examined the suggested backpack camping locations listed in the 1993 Master Plan and reconsidered these locations for overnight use.
4.1 OVERNIGHT USE AT JOSEPH D. GRANT COUNTY PARK

Eight possible backpack camp locations within the Park and Ranch, including the two from the existing master plan, were considered. From the analysis, two sites emerged as the final recommended locations. Both sites are located within the Ranch.

THE BACKPACK CAMPS

Referred to in the site analysis phase as “Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 1”, the first site, officially named and heretofore referred to as the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp, will be located approximately one mile from the existing vehicular gate on Mt. Hamilton Road. The second site, referred to in the site analysis phase as “Sulphur Springs Ranch Site 2” officially named and heretofore referred to as the Valley Oak Backpack Camp, will be located approximately one mile east of the first camp area. Each backpack camping area will offer basic camping amenities.

SULPHUR SPRINGS RANCH BACKPACK CAMP

The recommended Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp site is located on a grassy hilltop in the northwestern area of the Ranch. The site is distinguished by its gentle, rolling topography, blue oak trees, foothill pines, and grassland. As proposed, the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp will offer seven campsites within an approximately 9-acre area (Figure 12). This includes six individual sites and one larger group site. The campsites would be designed to a minimum 180-foot setback from each other to maintain a high-quality user experience.

Individual campsites will feature a flat area of compacted earth, a metal food locker (15-cubic foot volume), a log bench, and an embedded pad for camp stove cooking. Of the six individual sites, five will accommodate up to four people, and are approximately 230-square feet in area each. The sixth individual site will have a concealed location.
Individual Campsite, 4-person
Individual Campsite, 2-person
Group Campsite
Restroom-Vault
Access Road
5' Wide, New Trail
5' Wide, Existing Trail Alignment
Camp Area

Fig. 12 Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp Site Plan
on a terrace along a steep slope beneath a blue oak tree and can accommodate a maximum of two people. This site is 112 square feet in area.

The group campsite will be ADA-accessible and feature a large, flat area (approximately 1,300-square foot) of compacted earth. The group campsite will be designed to accommodate up to ten individuals, three ADA-accessible metal food lockers (30-cubic foot volume), five log benches, and five cook stove pads (one cook stove pad is to be ADA-accessible).

Figure 13 illustrates typical layouts for the three types of campsites within the camping area.

The amenities of the individual campsites will be laid out in a rectilinear configuration while the group camp utilizes a circular configuration. All campsites will be oriented towards the view, taking care to install the food lockers to prevent visual interruptions to the viewshed.
Approx. tent area for 2-person tent

Cook pad

Bear resistant locker

2-person Campsite

Tent area, accommodates two 2-person tents or one 4-person tent

Cook pad

Log

Bear resistant locker

4-person Campsite

Approx. tent areas

Logs

Cook pads

Bear resistant lockers

Group Campsite

Fig. 13 Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Campsite Typical Layout
It was evident from the community input that a backcountry toilet facility is a desired amenity for the overnight backpack camp. However, servicing a toilet in the backcountry is a logistical challenge. Fortunately, the existing ranch road infrastructure proved beneficial to provide service access to a toilet facility in the backcountry. The Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp site was selected, in part, due to its proximity to this existing ranch road infrastructure. With some modest upgrades, the ranch road from Mt. Hamilton Road to the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp will accommodate a pumper truck that is necessary for periodic servicing of a backcountry toilet.

The recommendation of this Plan is for the backcountry toilet to be a vault-type toilet. The preferred model is a single-user, waterless facility, housed in a prefabricated ADA-accessible building. The building will rest upon a concrete pad with the waste captured and stored in a vault chamber beneath the pad.

To prevent odor and gas amassing in the building, the restroom will feature a powerless ventilation system that makes use of a wall vent and black vault vent pipe to harness air pressure inside the restroom and force gas and odors out of the vault through the vault vent pipe. Orienting the wall vent into the prevailing wind will increase the air pressure in the building and will drive the ventilation system.

The placement of the vault toilet at the backpack camp will be within a short walking distance of the group camps site. Walking distances to the toilet will range from 300 feet from the nearest campsite up to 2,000 feet from the farthest campsite within Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp. Campers at the Valley Oak Backpack Camp will have an approximately one-mile hike to this toilet. To preserve the visual integrity of the backpack camp and prevent odors from wafting into the camping area, the toilet building has been located away from camp areas and will be screened from direct view from the campsites by the existing tree canopy. The building and toilet vault will be placed beyond
the root zone of the existing trees to minimize impact and beyond the shade of the canopy to allow sunlight to heat the vent pipe and ventilate the vault.

The recommended vault toilet model is a single-user model with a 750-gallon vault. The vault requires periodic pumping to remove waste and will accommodate up to 13,000 uses between pumping. Pumper truck access is via the existing ranch road that connects the Sulphur Springs Ranch vehicular gate to Mt. Hamilton Road. Site improvements will include an 80-foot diameter turn-around to be constructed with a 12” depth of Class II aggregate base rock. A 10-foot wide segment of road would connect the turn-around with the vault toilet building to provide direct access to the facility for service of the vault.

The existing ranch road will also provide maintenance access to the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp. Current road conditions restrict access to dry weather and high-clearance vehicles; however, minimal road improvements will provide access for pumper trucks and service vehicles throughout the year. These improvements will include reinforcement of the 12-foot wide road with a 12” depth of Class II aggregate base rock, and would reduce the grade of the road in two short sections, particularly a segment of road near the Mt. Hamilton Road gate.

**VALLEY OAK BACKPACK CAMP**

The Valley Oak Backpack Camp site will be more remotely situated and located approximately one mile directly east of the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp. This camp would be located on a terrace nestled into a steep hillside approximately 250 feet above Smith Creek and distinguished by the valley oaks for which the camping area is named. The site is a long, narrow, relatively flat terrace nearly 900 feet in length and approximately two acres in area. As shown in Figure 14, the Valley Oak Backpack Camp would include five individual sites. The campsites will be a minimum of 100-feet from each other with at least two hundred feet between the farthest two sites.

The backpack campsites at Valley Oak will feature a flat area of compacted earth (230-square feet in area), a metal food locker (15-cubic foot volume), and an embedded pad for camp stove cooking (see Figure 15 for a typical campsite layout). Each site is designed to accommodate up to four people.
Fig. 14 Valley Oak Backpack Camp Site Plan
CAMPsite MATERIALS

The campsites at Sulphur Springs Ranch and Valley Oak Backpack Camps are to have a flat pad of compacted native soil gently sloped to drain in the downhill direction and cleared of vegetation. The cook stove pad may be of concrete or log material, should be a minimum of 18 to 24 inches in height, 18-inches in diameter, and embedded a minimum of 16-inches (a cook pad of log construction should be embedded a minimum of 16-inches which includes 4-inches compacted aggregate base). Food lockers are to be of prefabricated metal construction and installed with a subgrade concrete footing. Logs for cook stove pads or benches may be sourced from material on-site or sourced from other parks within the County.

OPERATION OF THE CAMPS

The Sulphur Springs Ranch and Valley Oak Backpack Camps will be open for reservations and use year-round but may close occasionally pursuant to standard County Parks policy due to instances such as inclement weather or other unsafe conditions. Campers will be required to reserve a campsite in advance through County Parks’ reservation system. The campsite permit will list important information, such as the lack of potable water; food storage guidelines; hikers must pack out their trash; and campfires are prohibited. No trash receptacles, picnic tables, or potable water will be provided. Campers may hike potable water in with them or filter water from Smith Creek for drinking or use.

4.2 ACCESS, TRAILS, AND CIRCULATION

ACCESS AND STAGING AREAS

The existing Park trail network and staging will provide connection for overnight and day-users seeking to access the Ranch. Day-use visitors may use any parking lot within the Park for staging. The Stockman’s Group Picnic Area parking lot is suggested for those seeking a longer journey (approximately a six-mile distance starting at Stockman’s Group Picnic Area via the Hotel Trail to the Sulphur Springs Ranch and Valley Oak backpack camps, as shown in Figure 16) or Twin Gates for those seeking a shorter one (approximately a two-mile distance starting at Twin Gates Staging Area via the Smith Creek Trail to the Sulphur Springs Ranch and Valley Oak backpack camps). The Stockman’s Group Picnic Area parking lot is centrally located near the Park main entrance with
Fig. 16 Trail Route to Backpack Camps
Trail route shown from Stockman’s staging area to backpack camp areas
a permanent restroom building and numerous parking stalls while the Twin Gates staging area has a portable restroom and fewer parking stalls.

The Stockman’s Group Picnic Area parking lot will be utilized as the staging area for overnight visitors who have reservations at one of the backpack camps. Upon arrival to the Park, campers should check-in with a ranger to register their vehicle to park at the Stockman’s Group Picnic Area overnight and review their itinerary as well as the park, trail, and backcountry rules. Campers arriving after hours will follow existing park protocol. Operations and maintenance staff access to the Ranch will be via the existing Park trails and Ranch access roads.

TRAILS AND CIRCULATION
The layout of the existing ranch roads forms the backbone for the trail network within the Ranch. Several of the ranch roads will be repurposed as trails for public use while other roads will be converted to operations and maintenance access roads or decommissioned. Nearly two miles of new trail will be constructed, three miles of existing ranch roads will be repurposed as multi-use trails, over one mile will be repurposed as an operations and maintenance access only road, and two miles of ranch road will be decommissioned. All trails within the Ranch will comply with the County’s Uniform Inter-jurisdictional Trail Design, Use, and Management Guidelines (1999). Figure 17 illustrates the location of the new trails as well as existing trails and ranch roads that are to be repurposed as multi-use trails or decommissioned.

Most of the existing trails are sufficient to support immediate implementation of the backpack camps. Existing ranch roads being repurposed for trail use will be narrowed to a five-foot tread width, an appropriate width to accommodate the various permitted trail uses as well as a standard four-wheel drive off-road utility vehicle or small tractor for patrol and maintenance. Existing roads that are recommended to be decommissioned and repurposed as access roads will be restored and reseeded with a native plant mix appropriate to the area.

TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS
Sections of the existing ranch roads are too steep to serve as multi-use trails so County Parks will construct three segments of new multi-use trail and one bridge to improve the trail network within Sulphur Springs Ranch. New trails to the Park network will be Sulphur Springs Ranch Trail and Isabel Ridge Trail; Smith Creek Trail and Manzanita Trail are currently open for public use but will be extended as part of the Master Plan Amendment improvements. Each of these multi-use trails will be five feet in tread width and comply with the trail guidelines. Following is a description of the location and improvements for each trail.

The Sulphur Springs Ranch Trail will be a new addition to the Park’s trail network. This trail will connect Smith Creek Trail to the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp and will be developed from a segment of repurposed ranch road and two segments of newly constructed trail. This trail is approximately one-half mile.

Smith Creek Trail is an existing trail in the Park’s trail network. This trail will be extended into the Ranch to connect to Valley Oak Backpack
Fig. 17 Map of Trail Improvements
Illustrates the backpack camp locations, new trails, new bridge, and repurposed and decommissioned existing ranch roads.
Camp. This trail extension will be developed from a segment of new trail that connects to a new bridge over Sulphur Creek and a segment of repurposed ranch road. The trail extension alignment follows Smith Creek on the northeast bank of the creek for a section and then climbs the slope terminating at the Valley Oak Backpack Camp. The segment of new trail and the extension is over one-half mile.

The Isabel Ridge Trail will be a new addition to the Park’s trail network. The trail begins at the junction with Smith Creek Trail and climbs the Isabel Ridge offering visitors sweeping views of the Western Diablo Range. Isabel Ridge Trail will be developed from repurposed ranch road, is nearly 2 miles in length, and terminates at a scenic overlook.

Manzanita Trail is an existing trail in the Park’s trail network that will be extended into the Ranch to connect to Smith Creek Trail. A segment of the Manzanita Trail will be decommissioned from public use and converted to access road. From the junction with the access road, the alignment of Manzanita Trail will be extended in a southeasterly direction toward the southern boundary of the Ranch at which point it will cross Smith Creek as a wet crossing. From Smith Creek the trail will continue northwesterly until it connects at the junction with Isabel Ridge Trail. The Manzanita Trail extension is over one mile of new trail construction.

In addition to these multi-use trail improvements, new trails will be constructed to provide the internal trail connection between campsites within each backpack camp. The total length of new internal trail connections at the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp will be approximately 2,800-feet, while approximately 200-feet of total new internal trail will be added at the Valley Oak Backpack Camp. These new internal trails will be five feet in tread width to comply with the trail guidelines.

TRAIL PATROL AND MAINTENANCE

Park staff will utilize all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility task vehicles (UTVs) for maintenance, patrol, and emergency access of the trails and camps. Periodic or seasonal mowing of the trails as well as mowing or weed whipping the camps will be required to improve wayfinding and define camping areas.

4.3 IMPLEMENTATION

The recommendation of this Master Plan Amendment is to fully implement all backpack camps, trail improvements, and backcountry toilet improvements as detailed in this document. Complete construction would allow for an efficient, cost-effective project schedule to complete improvements at one time. However, in the case that it is not feasible from a budgetary and scheduling standpoint, this Master Plan Amendment identifies various construction phases to be implemented in sequential order. Careful consideration was taken to strategically identify phases that are logical in the context of the overall plan to minimize disruption and the need for demolishing parts of the new work to build certain adjacent areas later. This approach also considered which of the improvements should be implemented first to facilitate as much public access as possible to the Ranch in a timely manner.

Four phases have been identified, each phase containing improvements that could be reasonably...
built independent of the other phases so long as constructed sequentially, with each phase building upon previously completed improvements.

CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCING

The following numbered list details the amenities and aspects of the plan as assigned to four phases. Figure 18 illustrates the location of the four phases.

1. **Phase One**: Installation of the Sulphur Springs Ranch Backpack Camp (group site, individual sites, and connector trails), backcountry vault toilet, access road with truck turnaround, and Sulphur Springs Ranch Trail

2. **Phase Two**: Installation of the access road from Sulphur Springs Ranch Trail to Sulphur Creek, Sulphur Creek bridge, installation of Smith Creek Trail from current terminus to new bridge, Smith Creek Trail from the bridge to Isabel Ridge Trail, Isabel Ridge Trail
3. **Phase Three**: Installation of the Manzanita Trail extension to the junction with Isabel Ridge Trail, decommission of southern Manzanita Trail segment and conversion to access road

4. **Phase Four**: Installation of the Valley Oak Backpack Camp and the extension of Smith Creek Trail from the junction of the Manzanita Trail to the Valley Oak Backpack Camp by repurposing the ranch road

It is important to note, Phases Two, Three, and Four construction cannot precede Phase One construction as trail network construction will extend with each phase and Phase One provides proper vehicular access to facilitate construction and maintenance for the following phases. In the case that Phase Four must be built independently, Phases Two and Three may be constructed concurrently following Phase One to alleviate total costs.

**CONSTRUCTION BUDGET ESTIMATE**

A construction budget has been prepared to assist in the planning and implementation of the improvements proposed in this amendment document for Joseph D. Grant County Park. Construction costs for parks can vary significantly from estimations made from preliminary plans. Costs are highly variable depending on the market conditions at the time of construction, materials, quality of amenities, phasing, number of bidders, and current labor supply. The Bay Area in particular has witnessed construction cost escalation in recent years.

The construction budget for implementing the improvements detailed in this document has been estimated to be approximately $1.9 million (2020). This preliminary opinion of cost was calculated at a planning level only and does not account for costs and fees related to site conditions that are unknown currently.

This cost projection was prepared using standard cost and/or quantity projection practices. Cost data for construction, materials, furnishings, and labor were referenced from other recent public park projects and bids from contractors for projects located in the local region and statewide. Recent trends in construction costs were considered as well.

The planning level cost study assumes the project will be competitively bid on a fixed fee cost basis. Without competitive bidding (i.e., a single bid), a contractor’s bid has ranged from 25% to 100% over the estimated cost, depending on the scope of the project. This preliminary construction budget does include annual escalation. Though it is possible the cost of construction could come down with time, the cost is more likely to increase. Delaying implementation of the improvements will likely result in an increase to construction cost above the budget. Annual escalation has been included in the construction budget. Operations and maintenance as well as construction management costs have not been included in the summary (see Figure 19 for the Opinion of Construction Budget).

Without competitive bidding, Contractor bids can, and have, ranged from 25% to 100% over the estimated cost, depending on the size of the job (see Figure 20).
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<th>TOTAL PRICE</th>
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<td>LF</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$36,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Repurpose Ranch Road as Trail - Sulphur Springs Ranch Trail³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$11,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Construct Access Road⁴</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$324,000.00</td>
<td>$324,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Hydroseed decommissioned Ranch Road⁶</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>$0.25</td>
<td>$7,500.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTAL: $610,750.00**

Design Contingency (20% of subtotal): 20% $122,150.00

General Conditions, Bonds, Contractor Fees (20% of subtotal + design contingency): 20% $146,580.00

Construction Contingency (15% of subtotal + design contingency): 15% $109,935.00

**ROUND TOTAL: $990,000.00**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Phase: Access Road and Trail Improvements</th>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>QTY</th>
<th>UNIT PRICE</th>
<th>TOTAL PRICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>New 60' Pre-fabricated Pedestrian Bridge</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Construct New Trail - Smith Creek Trail³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$9,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Repurpose Ranch Road as Trail - Smith Creek Trail³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$9,750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Repurpose Ranch Road as Trail - Isabel Ridge Trail³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>10,300</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$154,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Signage for Access Road Conversion - Sulphur Springs Ranch Trail to Bridge⁵</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Hydroseed decommissioned Ranch Road⁶</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>$0.25</td>
<td>$75,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTAL: $400,250.00**

Design Contingency (20% of subtotal): 20% $80,050.00

General Conditions, Bonds, Contractor Fees (20% of subtotal + design contingency): 20% $96,060.00

Construction Contingency (15% of subtotal + design contingency): 15% $72,045.00

**ROUND TOTAL: $649,000.00**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Phase: Manzanita Trail Improvements</th>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>QTY</th>
<th>UNIT PRICE</th>
<th>TOTAL PRICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Construct New Trail - Manzanita Trail Extension³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>6,800</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$102,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Repurpose Ranch Road as Trail - Smith Creek Trail³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$15,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Signage for Access Road Conversion - Manzanita Trail Junction to Property Line⁵</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTAL: $119,000.00**

Design Contingency (20% of subtotal): 20% $23,800.00

General Conditions, Bonds, Contractor Fees (20% of subtotal + design contingency): 20% $28,560.00

Construction Contingency (15% of subtotal + design contingency): 15% $21,420.00

**ROUND TOTAL: $193,000.00**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Phase: Valley Oak Backpack Camp</th>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>QTY</th>
<th>UNIT PRICE</th>
<th>TOTAL PRICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>4-Person Campsite²</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$3,100.00</td>
<td>$15,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>New Connector Trails within Camp Area³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Repurpose Ranch Road as Trail - Smith Creek Trail³</td>
<td>LF</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$29,250.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTAL: $47,750.00**

Design Contingency (20% of subtotal): 20% $9,550.00

General Conditions, Bonds, Contractor Fees (20% of subtotal + design contingency): 20% $11,460.00

Construction Contingency (15% of subtotal + design contingency): 15% $8,595.00

**ROUND TOTAL: $78,000.00**

**SUBTOTAL OF PHASES (4): $1,910,000.00**

Annual Inflation Escalation Factor 6% $114,600.00

**TOTAL: $2,024,600**

---

Fig. 19 Opinion of Construction Budget
Budget Estimate Detail

1. Vault toilet includes design, supply, freight, delivery, and installation of a prefabricated restroom kit to be constructed and assembled on site by a local contractor.

2. Campsite budget line item includes materials and installation of site furnishings, and labor cost to prepare campsite pad including removal of vegetation, manual grading of pad, and pad compaction.

3. New trail and repurposing of existing trail budget estimate assumes implementation using mechanical trail dozer equipment with brush clearing and finishing work completed manually.

4. Access road budget line item includes installation of 12” class II aggregate base over length of existing road and minimal regrading work at locations with existing ruts.

5. Access road conversion budget assumes construction cost for new signage only.

6. Decommissioning of ranch road budget assumes construction cost for hydroseeding only.

Budget Estimate Notes

- The purpose of this planning estimate is to serve as a basis for establishing a reasonable budget for construction.
- This projection was prepared using standard cost and/or quantity projection practices. It is understood and agreed that this is a projection only, and that the architect shall not be liable to the owner or to a third party for any failure to accurately project the cost and/or quantities for the project, or any part thereof.
- This architect’s projection is prepared as a guideline and does not constitute the basis for bid. The contractor is to perform his/her own quantity take-off and to bid accordingly. If errors or omissions are encountered through the bidding process, please contact the architect for clarification.
- Competitive Bidding
  - The prices in this Estimate are based on competitive bidding. Competitive bidding is receiving responsive bids from at least five (5) or more General Contractors and three (3) or more responsive bids from Major Subcontractors or Trades (if applicable). Major Subcontractors are: Structural Steel, Plaster / EIFS Contractors, Mechanical, Plumbing and Electrical Subcontractors.
  - Without competitive bidding, Contractor bids can, and have, ranged from 25% to 100% over the estimated cost, depending on the size of the job, per the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Bids Received</th>
<th>Potential Percentage Differential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>+25% to +100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>+10% to +25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>+0% to +10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>+0% to -10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 or more</td>
<td>-10% to -20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 20 Competitive Bidding Percentage Differentials
4.4 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

After extensive analysis of the site conditions followed by design study, the *Joseph D. Grant County Park Master Plan Amendment* proposes recommendations for integrating the recently acquired Sulphur Springs Ranch into the existing parkland and lays the groundwork for future public use of the property. This Master Plan Amendment document builds upon the work begun in the 1993 Master Plan document by analyzing and recommending locations for backcountry camping within the Park, as well as recommending adding over five miles of multi-use trails to the Park for public use and enjoyment.

The next steps in fulfilling the vision of this Master Plan Amendment will be to determine the order of implementation of the phases. Once phasing has been determined, additional efforts may be needed for design development and construction planning. Trail construction and construction of the backpack campsites can be implemented by County Parks staff and crew members as schedule and budget permit. The new bridge, access road, and toilet facility, or any work that is to be published for competitive bid may require design development and preparation of construction documents.
INTENTIONALLY BLANK
References


Appendix

The following pages contain the imagery of the posters with the input received during the Community Open House Event and the online survey results.
COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE EVENT: BRAINSTORMING SESSION

JOSEPH D. GRANT COUNTY PARK
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trails to be open to maintain bike use</td>
<td>Need water!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike in Camping</td>
<td>Connect Washburn Trail and dead end roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single track trails</td>
<td>Retire some fire roads in favor of single track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equestrian Trails in SSR + winter trail needed</td>
<td>Connect Edwards Trails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park access: Camp needs to be a use challenge, ramp up access</td>
<td>Ensure gates not being used are left open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger surveillance of camp important</td>
<td>Tamien to Bernal connector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for fire hazard from camp fires</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site camps as remote as possible so no one has to walk to get water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No camping near water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the name of Joseph Grant Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Joseph Grant County Park” = should place the camping area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop cow grazing ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes all 8 options - final length optional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staging area behind Cat Fire Station</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also grazing, especially near water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan staging area for biking only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail option 3 too far from nearest trailhead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No roads or trails in remote area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build all 3 options, disc multi-use, bike, hound trails</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve Soda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE EVENT: BRAINSTORMING SESSION

[Map of Joseph D. Grant County Park & Sulphur Springs Ranch]
ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Q1 Have you backpack camped before?

Answered: 414   Skipped: 0

- Yes 67% (276):
  - Beginner (76)
  - Moderate (143)
  - Advanced (45)
- No 33% (138)

Q2 What is your experience level?

Answered: 264   Skipped: 150

- Advanced 17% (45)
- Beginner 29% (76)
- Moderate 54% (143)
Q3 What type of hike-in campsite appeals to you the most?

- **Basic/Primitive 30% (111)**: A general area in which backpackers are allowed to set-up camp with few to no additional amenities
- **Well-equipped 50% (182)**: A flat tent pad, toilet nearby, water source nearby, bench seating, picnic tables, food locker
- **Some Amenities 20% (72)**: A flat tent pad, log seating, picnic table, but no toilet or water source nearby

Q4 Select the statements you agree with, regarding your preferred hike-in camping experience. (Select all that apply)

- Distant views of cars, buildings, and/or paved roads are acceptable, if unavoidable: 45%
- Distant highway sounds are acceptable, if unavoidable: 41%
- A group campsite should be available: 43%
- I do not agree with any of these statements: 27%
Q5 Rate how strongly you agree with this statement: The backpack campsite must have a toilet nearby.

Q6 It is unlikely potable water will be available at the hike-in backpack camp. Tell us which statements below you agree with (select all that apply):
Q7 What level of difficulty do you think is appropriate to access the hike-in backpack camp?

Q8 If a backpack camp is built at Joseph Grant County Park, how likely are you to use it?
Q9 In what ZIP code is your home located? (Enter 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 00544 or 94305).

Respondents provided zip codes from Bay Area and beyond.

Q10 Would you like to receive project notifications via email? If so, please provide your email address.

Over 140 respondents provided an email address.