



NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION LONG CANYON TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) has prepared an Initial Study (IS) and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Long Canyon Trail Improvement Project (proposed Project). The Conservancy will act as the Lead Agency under CEQA and proposes to fund improvements to an existing trail corridor. The IS/MND details the proposed Project; evaluates and describes the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed Project; identifies those impacts that could be significant; and presents mitigation measures which avoid, minimize, or mitigate these impacts. As provided for by CEQA Section 21064.5, an MND may be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when the project will not result in significant environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated to a level below significance.

Proposed Project Description

The Conservancy, a California state agency established in 1991, proposes to fund improvements to an existing National Park Service (NPS) Trail Corridor that runs in a north-south direction in the western portion of Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP), and establish a new trailhead and parking area at each end of the trail on private lands just outside of JTNP. The new southern trailhead would be located in the Coachella Valley near Desert Hot Springs in Riverside County, and the northern trailhead would be in Yucca Valley in San Bernardino County. The recreational trail would be 9.1 miles long, the majority of which is within JTNP. The Project is a joint venture among the Conservancy, the Friends of the Desert Mountains (FODM), JTNP, the Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT), the Palm Springs-South Coast Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the City of Desert Hot Springs.

The proposed Project is not located on any hazardous waste sites listed under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

Public Review

The public review period of the IS/MND lasts for 30 days, beginning on October 3, 2019 and concluding on November 2, 2019.

In accordance with CEQA, a good faith effort has been made during the preparation of this IS/MND to contact affected agencies, organizations, and individuals who may have an interest in this Project. In reviewing the IS/MND, affected public agencies and the interested public should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects on the Project area are proposed to be avoided or mitigated.

Comments may be made on the IS/MND in writing before the end of the comment period. Following the close of the public comment period, the Conservancy will consider this MND and comments thereto in determining

whether to certify the environmental document. Written comments shall be submitted no later than November 4, 2019 to:

Jim R. Karpiak, Executive Director
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
73-710 Fred Waring Dr., Suite 112
Palm Desert, CA 92260
jkarpiak@cvmc.ca.gov

Document Availability

The IS/MND is available for public review on the Conservancy's website: www.cvmc.ca.gov

Copies of the IS/MND are also available at the Conservancy's office:

Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
73-710 Fred Waring Dr., Suite 112
Palm Desert, CA 92260
(9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday)

Public Hearing

The proposed Project and the IS/MND are tentatively scheduled for consideration by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Board on Monday, November 4, 2019 at 3:00 p.m. The Board Meeting will be in Conference Room 115, 73-710 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert, CA 92260. Interested parties may review the meeting agenda posted ten days prior to the meeting on the website listed above. For further information, contact the Conservancy at (760) 776-5026.