



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
401 West Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, California 91360-4207

In reply refer to:
L76

January 17, 2006

Susan Villain, Associate Planner
City of Malibu
23815 Stuart Ranch Road
Malibu, CA 90265

Dear Ms. Villain:

The National Park Service has received the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for proposed Coastal Development Permit Nos. 05-016 and 05-017, Initial Study No. 05-005, and Negative Declaration No. 05-004. The proposed project includes construction of two residences with swimming pools, alternative wastewater treatment systems, 10,000-gallon water tanks, guesthouses, and on-site fire hydrants, retaining walls, and grading for the approximately 1,500-foot access road and driveway.

The National Park Service appreciates the opportunity to participate in the public review process for the subject Coastal Development Permits (CDPs). We provide comments on the effects of private and public land development in the Santa Monica Mountains at the invitation of state and local units of government with authority to prevent or minimize adverse uses. We respect the rights of landowners to develop their properties in a manner consistent with federal, state, and local laws. In providing comments, we assume a neutral position and do not support or oppose land development. To this end, we offer the following comments on the proposed CDPs.

The National Park Service was not able to thoroughly review the subject project because we did not have convenient access to Initial Study materials. We received the project site plan and MND description through communication with another commenting agency in the Santa Monica Mountains. For future projects, we suggest uploading Initial Study documents to the Internet and publishing the web location on the Notice of Intent. We also prefer the standard 30-day review period, rather than the abbreviated 20-day period.

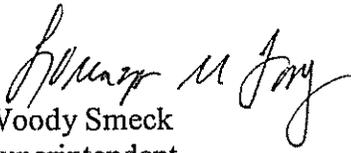
We understand the City has acknowledged in the MND the nearby alignment of the Coastal Slope Trail, a regional trail proposed in draft trail plans for the City of Malibu and for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. We appreciate the City's consideration of this long-envisioned regional trail. The Coastal Slope Trail has been envisioned since the early 1980s as a trail featuring spectacular coastline views along its full length, from Topanga State Park to Point Mugu State Park. The trail also would serve as an alternate to the California Coastal Trail when high tides prevent trail use along the coast. The subject area is

one of the most challenging stretches of the proposed trail, owing to private landownership between Malibu Creek State Park and Tuna Canyon parkland. We strive to use existing public parkland for trail alignments, although this area will require trail easements to secure public access. We have included a map depicting the proposed alignment of the trail in relation to Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 4452-025-001. The draft trail alignment is located approximately 300 feet north of the parcel. We have also illustrated a 1,000-foot buffer on either side of the rough alignment, owing to the need for flexibility in determining the final alignment of the Coastal Slope Trail. The topography through this area is very mountainous, and a long-term, sustainable alignment of the Coastal Slope Trail cannot not be finalized until field survey work is done. We suggest the proposed residential structures be situated to reduce viewshed impacts from the future trail by moving development to the southern side of the knoll located in the upper reaches of the parcel. Development should also be low-profile, and grading should be minimized to avoid the appearance of manufactured topography within view of the Coastal Slope Trail. We appreciate that one proposed residence is a single story home. We suggest all other structures be single story and situated low on the coastal slope to minimize obstructions to trail views of the coastline.

The City's draft Trail Map also includes a north-south trail alignment to allow connection from the coast up to the Coastal Slope Trail. We ask the City to consider providing for public access along this north-south proposed trail, owing to the demand for connections from the Malibu coast to the greater, interior parkland trail network.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have questions, please call Ray Sauvajot at (805)370-2339.

Sincerely,

for 
Woody Smeck
Superintendent

cc: Joe Edmiston, Executive Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Ron Schafer, Superintendent, Angeles District, State Department of Parks and
Recreation

Enclosure: Coastal Slope Trail Map - Vicinity of Proposed CDP #05-016, #05-017