

Descanso FCI-2

Recommendation

CPG–Semi-Rural 10 (SR-10)

Staff–Same as CPG

Property Description

Property Owner:

Various

Property Size:

384 acres; 42 parcels

Location/Description:

Descanso Community Plan Area;

Directly south of I-8 at Japatul Valley Road

Outside County Water Authority boundary

Existing General Plan:

National Forest/State Parks (1 DU/4, 8, 20 ac)

Travel Time (See Safety Element Table S-1):

Closest Fire Station — 10 to 20 minutes

Prevalence of Constraints (See following page):

● – high; ◐ – partially; ○ - none

◐ Steep Slope (Greater than 25%)

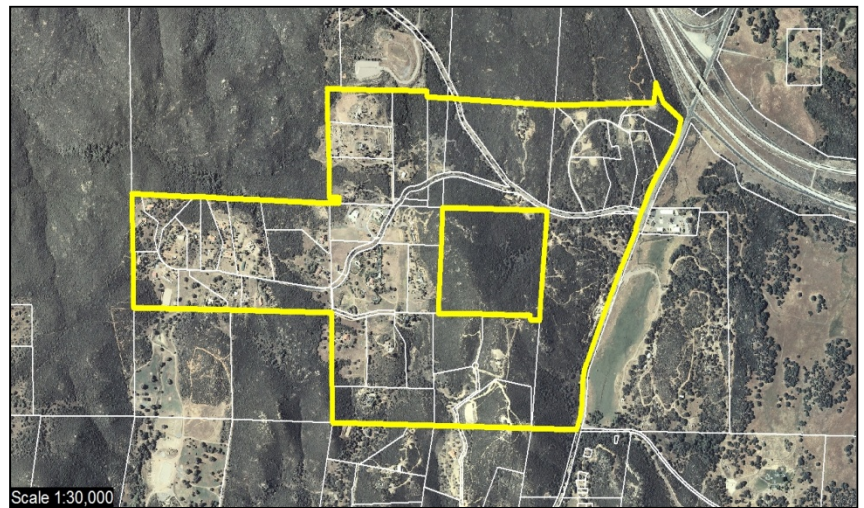
○ Floodplain

○ Wetlands

◐ Sensitive Habitat

◐ Agricultural Lands

● Fire Hazard Severity Zones



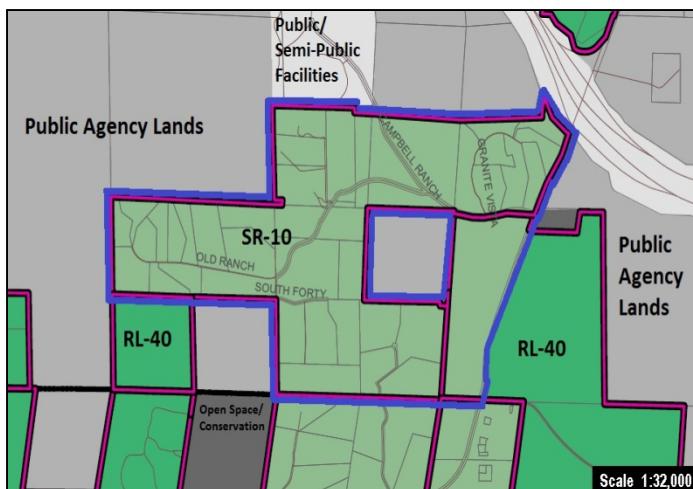
Aerial

Category	Recommendation	
	CPG	Staff
Designation	SR-10	Same as CPG
Density	1 DU/10,20 ac	
Maximum Potential Dwelling Units	45	
Zoning Use Regulation	A70/S92	
Lot Size (acres)	4,8,20 acres	
Spot Designation/Zone	No	
Opposition Expected	Yes ¹	

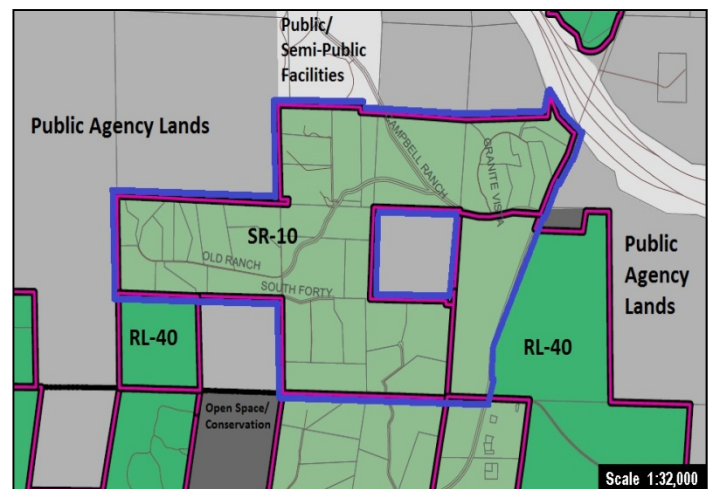
Notes:

1) Endangered Habitats League letter dated September 19, 2012

Recommendations

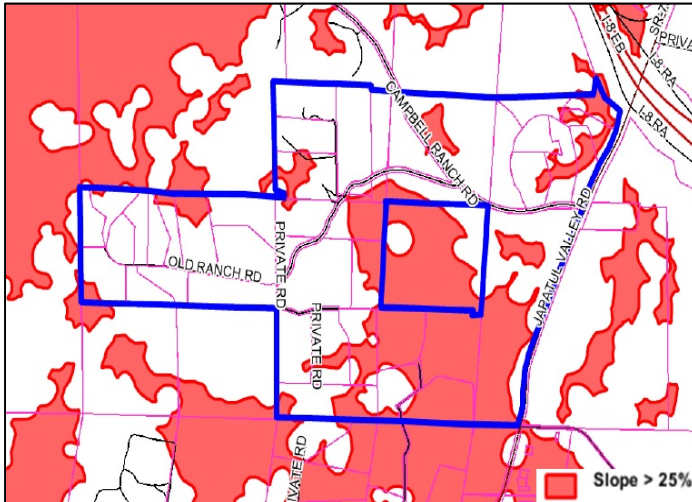


Draft Plan

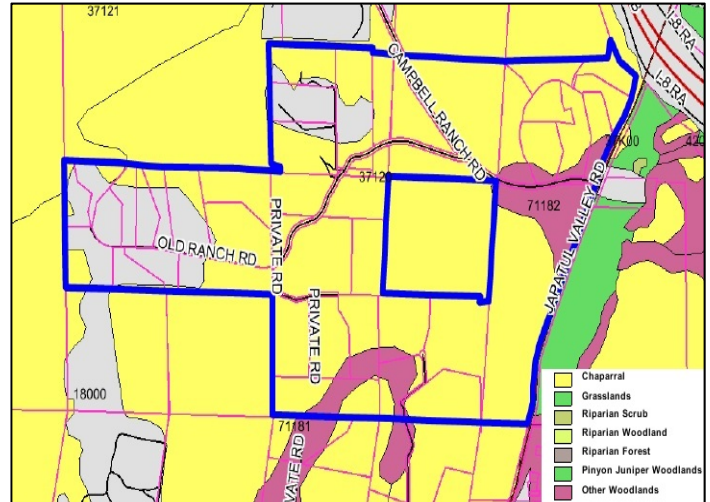


Staff Recommendation

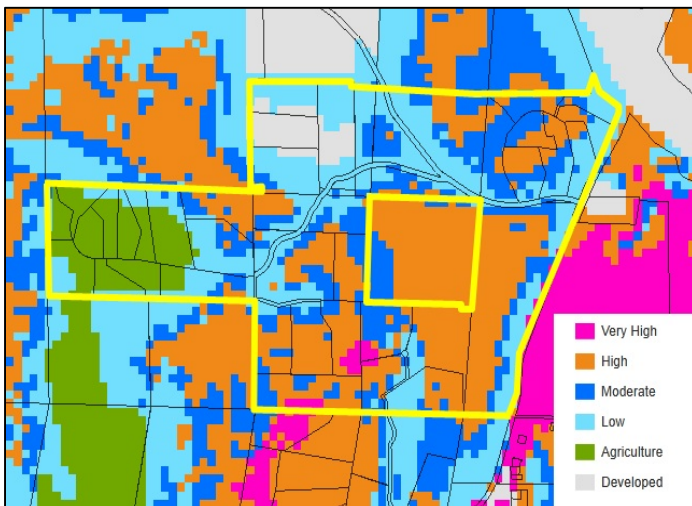
Descanso FCI-2



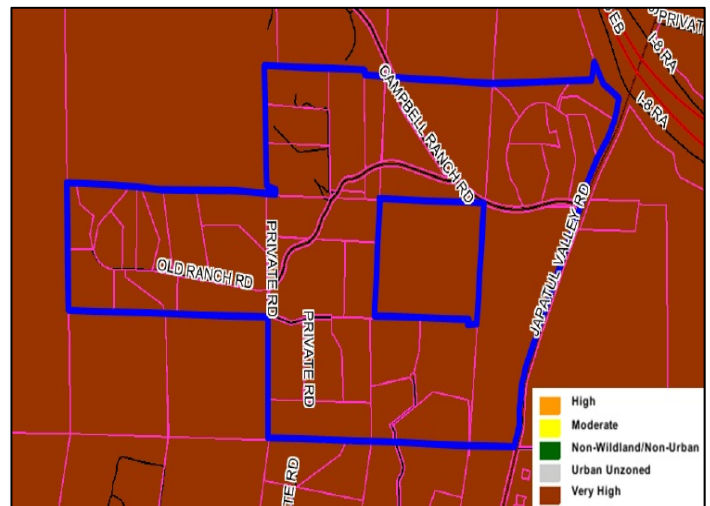
Steep Slope (Greater than 25%)



Vegetation



Habitat Evaluation Model



Fire Hazard Severity Zones

Context

Descanso 2 consists of 42 parcels ranging in size from less than one to 49.6 acres for a total of 384 acres. The parcels, located outside the County Water Authority boundary in the southern portion of the Descanso Community Planning Area at the Japatul Valley Road off-ramp for I-8. Most of the parcels are generally developed with single family residences. The area is surrounded by either National Forest, other privately-owned lands although with a RL-40 designation, or Interstate 8. Approximately one third of the area is composed of High Sensitivity Biological Habitat. The majority of the parcels contain chaparral, and the eastern and southern regions contain woodland. Steep slopes exist on approximately one-third of the area, and the entire area is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. This area is groundwater dependent with a mean annual precipitation of 21 to 24 inches which, according to the San Diego County Groundwater Ordinance, gives it a minimum lot size of four acres.

Staff Review: Rationale for SR-10 Designation

- Based on existing parcel sizes, the SR-10 designation would only allow two parcels to subdivide further. Both of these parcel have excellent access and are within 10 minutes to the nearest fire station
- Although the westernmost parcels have dead-end road issues, they are not large enough to subdivide under the SR-10 designation
- The Community Planning Group supports the SR-10 designation
- This area is adjacent to Interstate 8 on/off ramps

Descanso 2: Correspondence Received

Comments from Endangered Habitats League supporting Rural Lands 20 designation

September 19, 2012

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Mindy Fogg
Dept of Planning and Land Use
5201 Ruffin Rd Suite B
San Diego, CA 92123

RE: Notice of Preparation for the Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI) Lands General Plan Amendment (GPA)

Dear Ms Fogg:

The Endangered Habitats League (EHL) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI) Lands General Plan Amendment (GPA) NOP. It is our expectation that the amendment will fully conform to the Guiding Principles of the General Plan and its objectives of *reducing* fire hazard, impacts to habitat, and infrastructure and service costs.

Forest inholdings are generally remote locations, removed from urban services and urban infrastructure, with high ecological integrity and high fire risk. Therefore, intensities of use (as reflected in assigned densities) should be at the *lowest* levels the Land Use Element allows, consistent with underlying parcelization. In other words, the number of potential new parcels should rarely increase above the baseline number of parcels, and then only in locations already substantially committed to such parcelization, so as to avoid "spot zoning." Mere adjacency to areas of existing higher density, or proximity to a roadway, is *not* sufficient rationale for up-planning. The needs to reduce fire hazard, preserve the environmental, and reduce service costs remain paramount. The current General Plan's limits of estate, semi-rural, and village development should be respected. Absent a demonstrable objective need to increase the housing capacity of the General Plan, there should be *no* expansion of Village or Semi-Rural densities into the former FCI lands. A density of 1:40 or less dense should be the default unless unique circumstances compel otherwise.

After reviewing maps produced by the Community Planning Groups (CPGs) and labelled as "May 2012 Draft Land Use Maps" on the DPLU FCI documents page, we are concerned over potential inconsistencies with the General Plan and its objectives. These mainly involve areas given a 1:10 density when 1:20 (or occasionally less) is more appropriate. SR-10 will inevitably produce a high degree of habitat fragmentation and habitat loss, especially considering the mandatory vegetation clearing – often acres – around each structure.

Descanso: The area around Verna Road should be 1:20 rather than 1:10. The area around Old Ranch, South Forty, Campbell Ranch, and Granite Vista should be 1:20 rather than 1:10. South of the Commercial district and south of Old Ranch are three large blocks of unparcelized land that should be 1:40 or 1:80. (Note: This last area may be in Alpine.)

In conclusion, the "May 2012 Draft Land Use Maps" maps contain unwarranted expansion of estate and ranchette parcelization. In the context of the DEIR, the May 2012 Draft Land Use Maps should be considered an alternative with greater impacts than the proposed project, which should better conform to the General Plan.

It is our privilege to work with DPLU toward a successful FCI Lands Amendment. Also, it would be appreciated if you could acknowledge receipt of these comments by a reply to this message.

Yours truly,
Dan

Dan Silver, Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League
8424 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite A 592
Los Angeles, CA 90069-4267