

North Mountain NM-1

Recommendation

CPG – Semi-Rural 10 (SR-10)

Staff – Rural Lands 40 (RL-40)

Property Description

Property Owners:

Steven Clark, Raymond Malott, Earl Johnson, Carolyn Harvey, Priscilla Eldridge

Property Size:

120 acres; 5 parcels, 2 partial parcels

Location/Description:

North Mountain Community Plan Area;
Palomar Mountain
Near Canfield Rd./East Grade Rd.;
Outside County Water Authority boundary

Existing General Plan:

Multiple Rural Use (1 DU/4, 8 ac) and General Agriculture (1 DU/10, 40 ac)

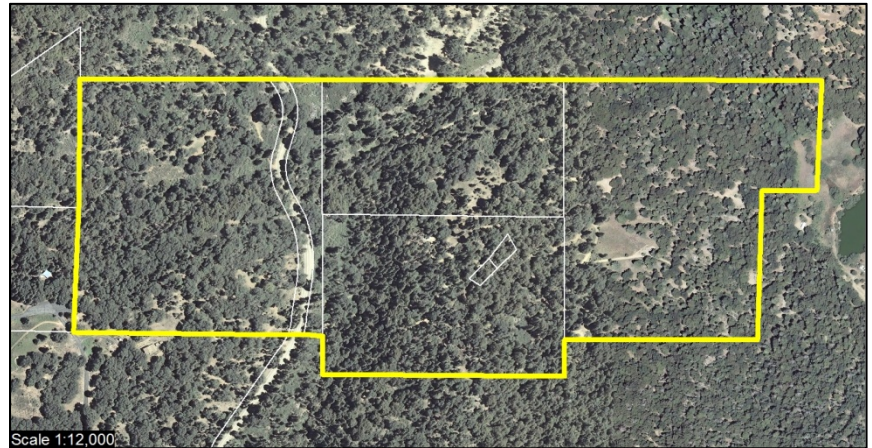
Travel Time (See Safety Element Table S-1):

Closest Fire Station — ≤5 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



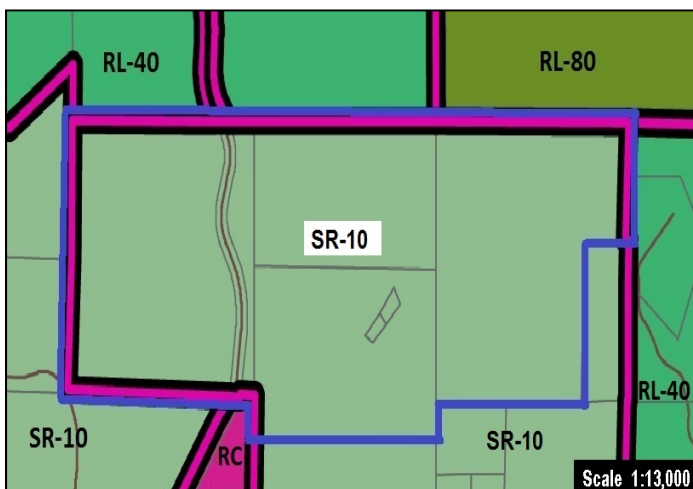
Aerial

Category	Recommendation	
	PMPO	Staff
Designation	SR-10	RL-40
Density	1 DU/10, 20 ac	1 DU/40 ac
Maximum Potential Dwelling Units	10	7
Zoning Use Regulation	A70	A70
Lot Size (acres)	8	8
Spot Designation/Zone	No	No
Opposition Expected	Yes ¹	Yes

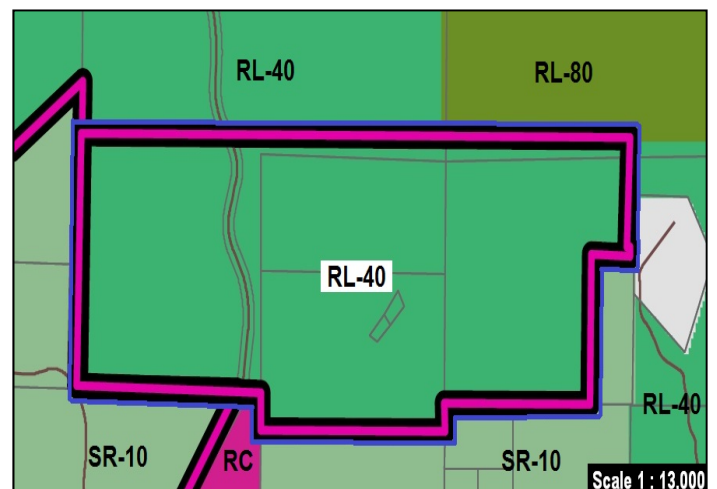
Notes:

1) Endangered Habitats League (see letter dated March 18, 2013)

Recommendations

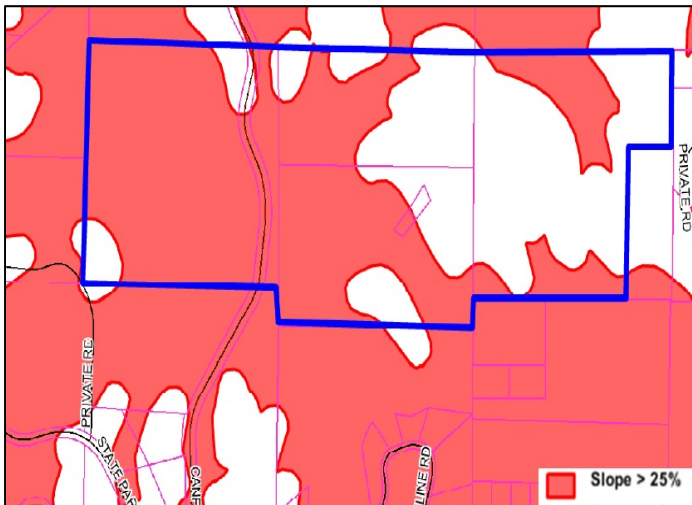


Draft Plan

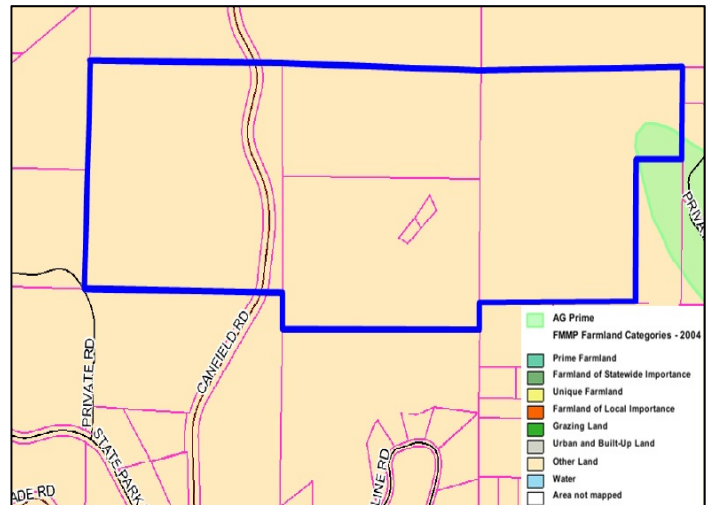


Staff Recommendation

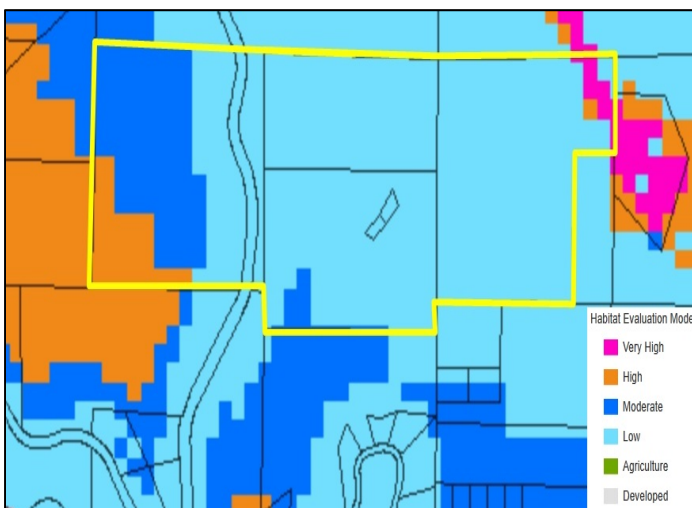
North Mountain NM-1



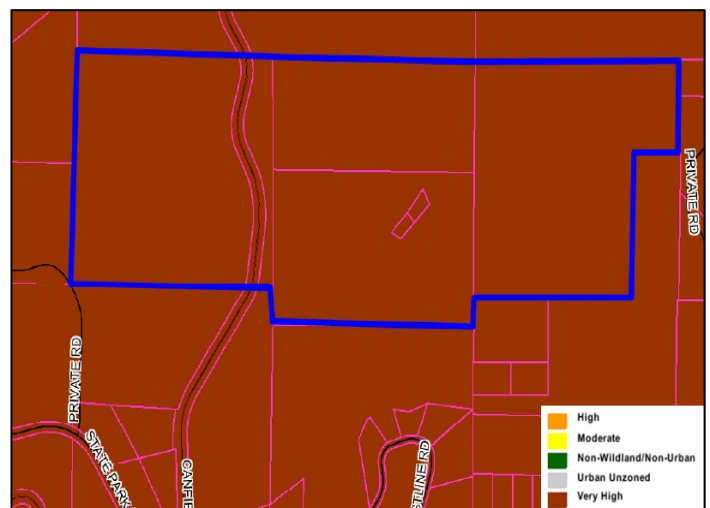
Steep Slope (Greater than 25%)



Agriculture



Habitat Evaluation Model



Fire Hazard Severity Zones

Context

North Mountain NM-1 totals 120 acres ranging in size from 0.3 to 34 acres and consists of 5 parcels and portions of two larger parcels. Two of those parcels under the same owner are approximately one-quarter acre each, but are located entirely inside a larger parcel and are only accessible through that parcel. This area of consideration is located on Palomar Mountain near the intersection of Canfield Road and East Grade Road. Currently, all of the parcels are undeveloped and located outside of the County Water Authority boundary. The majority of the area is covered by slopes greater than 25% and contains mixed evergreen forests. The property is also located entirely within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. This area is groundwater dependent with a mean annual precipitation of 33 to 35 inches which, according to the San Diego County Groundwater Ordinance, gives it a minimum lot size of four acres.

Staff Review: Rationale for RL-40 Designation

- The RL-40 designation is more consistent with the Community Development Model than a SR-10 designation because these parcels are located outside of the Village and are generally 20 acres or larger.
- With the exception of the two westernmost parcels, most of the parcels are not directly accessible from a public road.
- More than one-half of the area is constrained by slopes greater than 25%.
- The area is located entirely within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

North Mountain NM-1: Correspondence Received

Comments from Endangered Habitats League opposed to PMPO recommendation

March 18, 2013

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mindy Fogg
Dept. of Planning and Development Services
County of San Diego
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123
mindy.fogg@sdcounty.ca.gov

**RE: GPA 12-004; Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI) Lands General Plan
Amendment (GPA) – Map Comments**

Dear Ms. Fogg:

The Endangered Habitats League (EHL) appreciates the opportunity to supplement its main comment letter (submitted under separate cover) with these comments on specific map issues. For your reference, EHL is Southern California's only regional conservation group and has been a stakeholder in County of San Diego planning efforts since 1993, serving on advisory committees for the MSCPs and the General Plan Update.

As a rule, the *lowest* rural densities should be applied to former FCI lands. Because these forest inholdings are often the most remote, most poorly served by infrastructure and services, most hazardous for fire, most GHG-intensive for auto use, and most ecologically intact, the Guiding Principles¹ direct development elsewhere. The

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- . Support a reasonable share of projected regional population growth.
- . Promote health and sustainability by locating new growth near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs in a compact pattern of development.
- . Reinforce the vitality, local economy, and individual character of existing communities when planning new housing, employment, and recreational opportunities.
- . Promote environmental stewardship that protects the range of natural resources and habitats that uniquely define the County's character and ecological importance.
- . Ensure that development accounts for physical constraints and the natural hazards of the land.
- . Provide and support a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports community development patterns and, when appropriate, plan for development which supports public transportation.
- . Maintain environmentally sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

former FCI lands exemplify the need to strictly limit “rural residential” subdivision so that the Guiding Principles are achieved and taxpayer subsidies for far-flung scattered housing are minimized. That said, the GPA has to respect areas of *existing* parcelization with appropriate designations. But additional subdivision outside of established rural residential enclaves should be avoided.

We are also concerned that development – commercial or residential – not “leapfrog” outside of existing villages and water and sewer boundaries. For example, casino facilities – sited without regard to the Guiding Principles – should not trigger such leapfrog.

In general, EHL supports the Environmentally Superior (“Modified”) Alternative. The purpose of these comments is to highlight those select areas where we find the Modified Alternative is deficient in meeting the Guiding Principles. Narrative comments below refer to enclosed exhibits.

North Mountain

Near the Palomar Mountain community, an area now split on the Modified Alternative between RL10 and RL40 should be reconfigured based upon existing parcelization as a split between RL20 and RL40, or less preferably, the whole reconfigured at RL20.

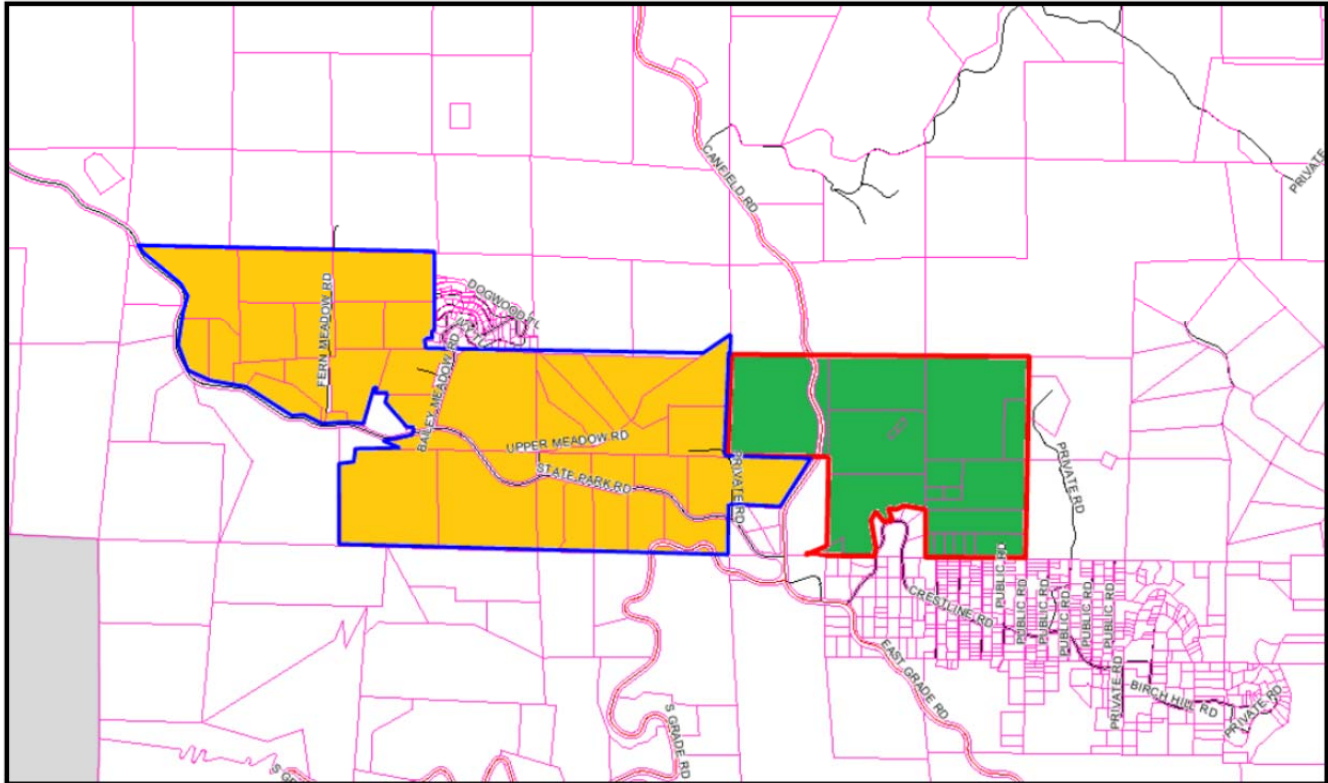
We look forward to continuing to work with the Department on this very important General Plan amendment.

Yours truly,

Dan Silver, MD
Executive Director

North Mountain

This area near the Palomar Mountain community is along State Park Road and Canfield Road. The entire area is proposed for SR10 in the proposed project. In the Modified Project Alternative, the easterly area (in green) was reduced to RL40, but the westerly area (in orange) was inappropriately left as SR10. The orange portion should be changed to RL20 (or alternatively, the entirety could be designated as such).



Caltech/Palomar Observatory comments concerning retaining density reductions

From: Andy Boden [mailto:bode@astro.caltech.edu]
 Sent: Monday, March 18, 2013 3:53 PM
 To: Citrano, Robert
 Cc: Dan McKenna; Paul Carroad; Alan Rice
 Subject: Palomar Observatory Comments on FCI GPA SEIR

Hi Mr. Citrano,

Andy Boden here from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and Palomar Observatory. Thank you again for your time in our conversation this afternoon, and in being proactive in contacting us at Palomar Observatory concerning this update to the Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI) Lands General Plan Amendment (GPA) Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for regions in North San Diego County that include and surround Palomar Observatory.

We at the observatory are grateful to have had a long and productive relationship with both the communities near the observatory, and with San Diego County in general. The continued sensitivity of our neighbors to environmental effects that might adversely impact our shared quality of life, and the observatory and its research mission is deeply appreciated by all who support and use Palomar Observatory.

In reviewing the materials forwarded by your office, we were particularly looking for items that might be impactful to Palomar Observatory either in compromising our ability to conduct the scientific observations of its core mission, or in items or effects that might adversely impact observatory operations and/or safety. These can broadly be categorized as follows:

1) Items that would contribute to the nighttime light pollution of the North San Diego skies. Aside from compromising the dark-sky appreciation of all San Diego County residents, scattered light from human-made sources such as house lights, street lights, or billboards adversely impacts our ability to observe the astronomical objects that Palomar Observatory was built to study.

2) Items that might compromise our ability to have reliable infrastructure (e.g. utilities, data communication) to support observatory operations.

3) Items that might potentially constitute an increases risk of property incursion and/or safety of observatory personnel.

With respect to specific comments, there were a number of items that we felt it was important to bring to your attention.

1) Section S.1 of the SEIR Executive Summary lists the various environmental impacts considered as a part of the SEIR (e.g. Aesthetics,

Hydrology & Water Quality, Noise, Climate Change). From the perspective of Caltech and Palomar Observatory, a particularly notable absence in this list is consideration of Light Pollution in the SEIR. Obviously considerations of Light Pollution in San Diego County skies are critically important for Palomar Observatory -- as stray light from human sources compromise our ability to continue Palomar Observatory's astronomical research mission. However, beyond our own interests it is clear that many San Diego County residents value the dark nighttime sky and opportunity that provides to enjoy the natural stellar canopy. Because of this common interest, in this matter we think it is clear that the SEIR +should+ be amended to include considerations of light pollution in its assessment and findings.

2) Concerning reductions in the population density zoning being considered for the areas atop Palomar Mountain, we are in complete agreement that summit population density should be carefully assessed in light of retaining the communities rural character and traditions. The Palomar summit is a confined space with limited area and resources, and we would discourage zoning decisions that fundamentally change the character of the area, or significantly strain available resources. Further, it is clear that a significant increase of mountain population would inevitably lead to a higher level of light pollution atop Palomar Mountain, which of course adversely impact's the observatory research mission. For these reasons, we strongly encourage the zoning reductions that we discussed in our phone conversation on 18 March, and as codified in the SEIR document you made available for our review.

3) The provisions in the GPA Appendix A that allow for the establishment of multi-use communication structures in the North Mountain area. We agree that additional communications infrastructure at Palomar could have a significant positive impact for all residents -- ourselves included. And we appreciate the clear thoughtfulness in preparation of the SEIR in terms of protecting Palomar Observatory's interests. However, we at the observatory also heavily rely on microwave data communications equipment for our data infrastructure -- without this equipment we could not support the observatory's research program. So from our standpoint it is imperative that we are able to work with San Diego County and any communication structure proponents to make sure that such proposed developments do not adversely impact observatory data communications. [And we appreciate a cordial and constructive phone conversation with a Ms. Michelle Chan from your office on these points.]

In closing, thank you again for the opportunity to comment in this particular planning and assessment process, for your consideration of our thoughts in these matters, and for the continued productive relationship we enjoy with San Diego County and its residents.

With all best wishes from Pasadena,

- Andy Boden

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Andy Boden
Deputy Director
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