



REGIONAL TRAILS UPDATE

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

National Park Service
Newsletter #4

California State Parks

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/Mtns Recreation & Conservation Authority

February 2014

Interagency Trail Management Plan

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) / Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Planning Restart – Public Scoping Wrap-up

National Park Service, California State Parks, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority are now officially kicking off preparation of the long-awaited Trail Management Plan (TMP). Adequate funding has been a constant hold-up until recently, when the agencies combined rare funding availability to hire staff and consultants. Based on identified desired conditions for park natural, cultural and recreational resources, the TMP will prescribe a comprehensive plan for circulation, access, and allowable trail uses for trails throughout the national recreation area. The first step now is to restart the process and wrap up the TMP public scoping that started in September, 2005. We invite your participation throughout the coming planning process. In this newsletter, we will:

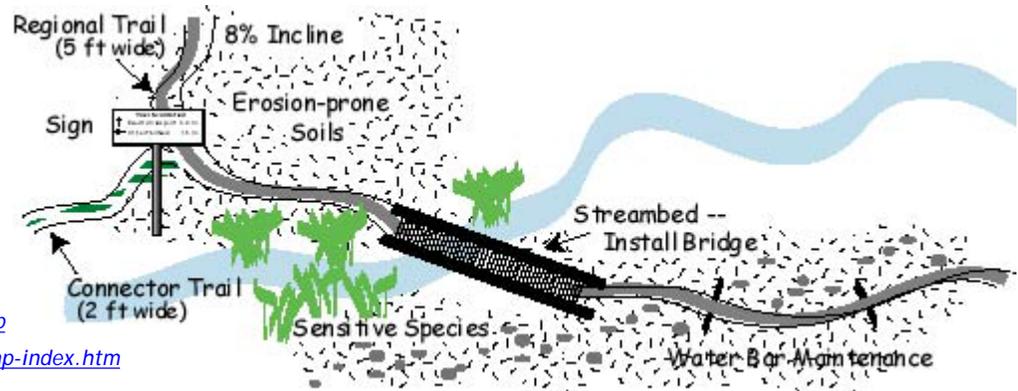
- ✓ Provide a timeline for TMP EIS/EIR preparation.
- ✓ Summarize past work toward the TMP.
- ✓ Note where to find background information.
- ✓ Invite you to the scoping wrap-up meetings.
- ✓ Tell you how to submit comments.

Trail planning work over the past several years examined many aspects of trail management. For more information on past work, please visit the following websites.

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/smmnra-tmp>

<http://www.nps.gov/samo/parkmgmt/tmp-index.htm>

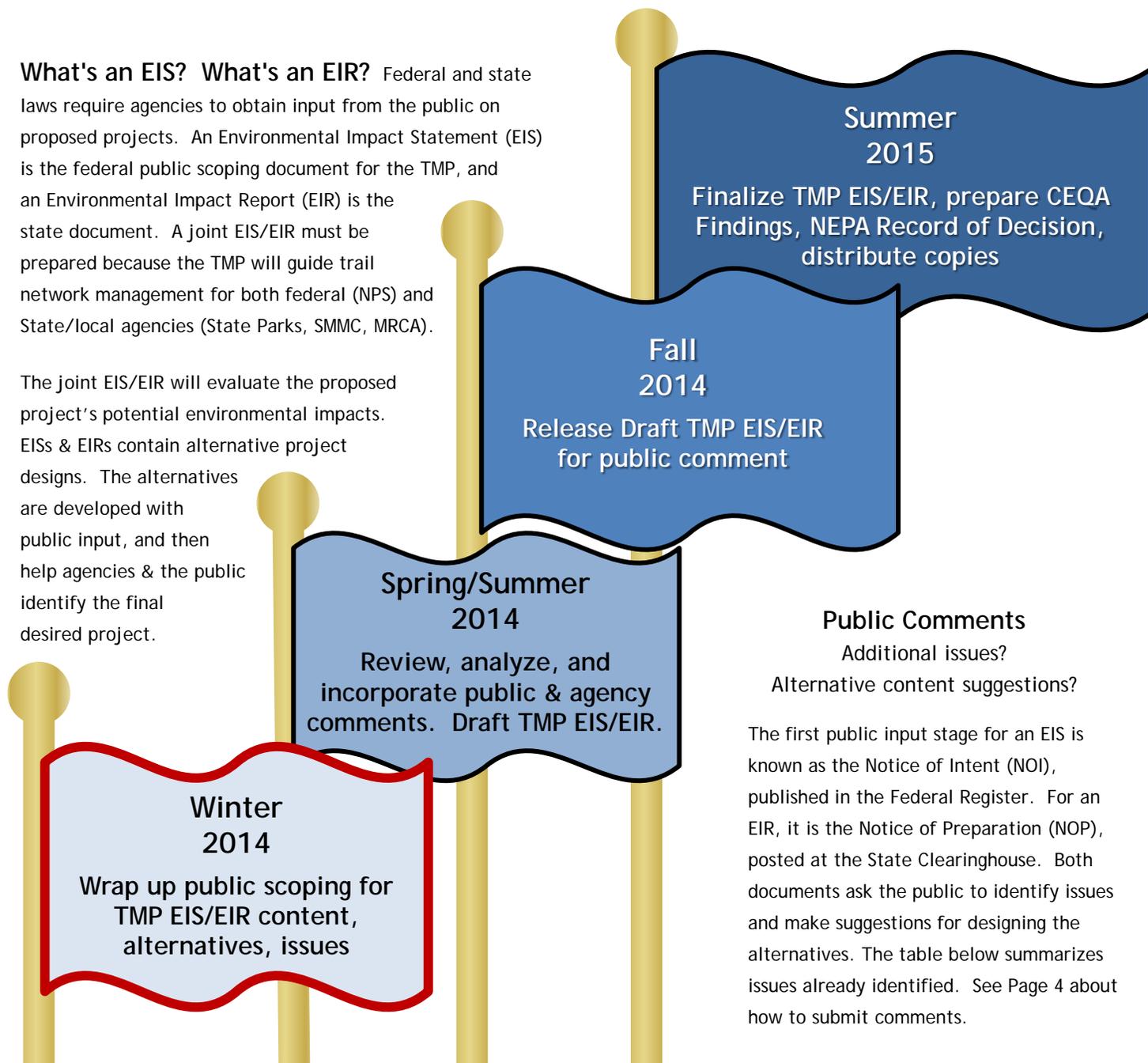
<http://www.parks.ca.gov/trails>



TIMELINE: Trail Management Plan EIS/EIR

What's an EIS? What's an EIR? Federal and state laws require agencies to obtain input from the public on proposed projects. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the federal public scoping document for the TMP, and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is the state document. A joint EIS/EIR must be prepared because the TMP will guide trail network management for both federal (NPS) and State/local agencies (State Parks, SMMC, MRCA).

The joint EIS/EIR will evaluate the proposed project's potential environmental impacts. EISs & EIRs contain alternative project designs. The alternatives are developed with public input, and then help agencies & the public identify the final desired project.



Public Comments

Additional issues?

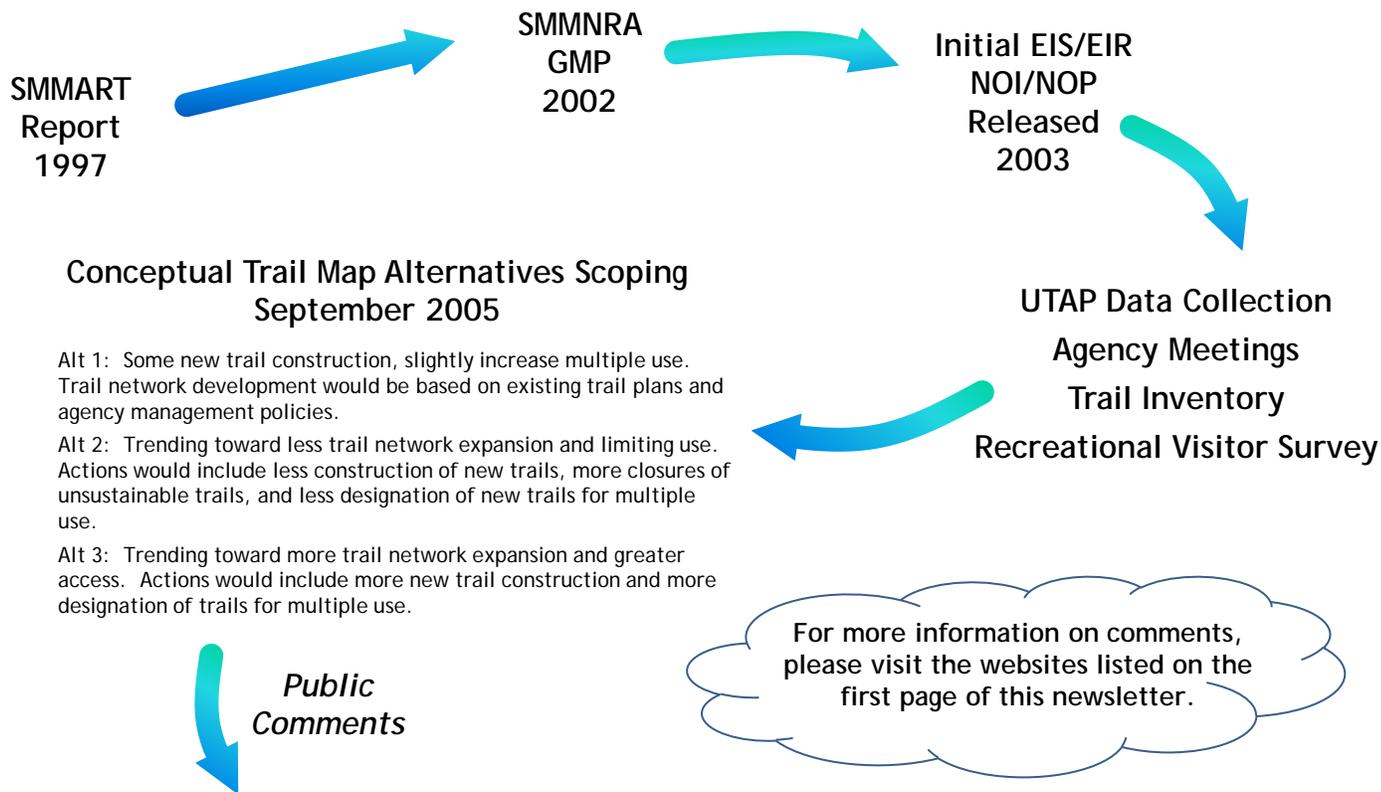
Alternative content suggestions?

The first public input stage for an EIS is known as the Notice of Intent (NOI), published in the Federal Register. For an EIR, it is the Notice of Preparation (NOP), posted at the State Clearinghouse. Both documents ask the public to identify issues and make suggestions for designing the alternatives. The table below summarizes issues already identified. See Page 4 about how to submit comments.

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|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Issues of concern to agencies and the public</p> | <p>Environmental sensitive plants/animals archaeological/cultural resources water resources soils and geology fire hazard</p> | <p>Social allowable trail uses trail use designation back country trail camps trail network public access Americans with Disabilities Act</p> | <p>Management new trails, trailheads, signage implementation cost maintenance interpretation/education law enforcement</p> |
| <p>EIS/EIR Alternatives draft, then finalized with input from agencies & public</p> | <p>"No Action" Alternative Policies and trail map reflect continuation of existing conditions</p> | <p>"Action" Alternatives Policies and trail maps reflect contrasting recreational use patterns</p> | <p>Preferred Alternative Policies and trail map reflect 1st choice actions</p> <p>Environmentally Superior Alternative Least environmentally impacting choice, and may or may not be the Preferred Alt.</p> |



Past Trail Management Scoping



Comments on Facilities

Trails: Over 130 trails were mentioned. Suggestions were made regarding use designation, proposed new trails and closures, and corrections to trail maps presented at the meetings.

Trailheads: Comments included the need for restrooms, gates for security, more trailheads, better directional signage, more equestrian parking.

Backbone Trail Backcountry Camps: Comments included requests for adequate equestrian camping facilities and the vision for camps along the proposed Coastal Slope Trail.

Comments on Visitor Experience

Issues

Safety: Issues with startling, speed, near-misses

Tranquility: Desire for tranquil experience, concerns about noise, dust, fear, and tension on shared use trails.

Fairness: Provide adequate opportunities for all users who pay taxes and volunteer their time maintaining and patrolling trails.

Sense of Wilderness: Desire to maintain the Santa Monica Mountains as a quasi-wilderness experience to urban dwellers.

Suggestions for Alternatives

- Keep bikes on fire roads and wide trails.
- Keep some nature/family trails.
- Don't build all new trails for shared use.
- Allow bikes on more trails to disperse use.
- Apply alternate use designation strategies.
- Open full Backbone Trail to mountain biking.
- Keep Backbone Trail sections closed to mountain biking.
- Construct mountain biking bypass around Boney Wilderness.
- Open more unmaintained/unofficial trails to public use.

How/Where to Submit Comments

You are invited to provide comments on issues the TMP EIS/EIR should address or suggestions for the content and design of the alternatives. All comments submitted during the September 2005 scoping period will be considered and do not need to be re-submitted. Please include your address; comments without addresses cannot be considered.

There are several ways to submit comments:

- Attend and submit comments at a public scoping meeting.
- Submit comments online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/smmnra-tmp>.
- Mail comments to:
Management Team
SMMNRA Interagency Trail Management Plan
401 W. Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
- Fax comments to: (805)370-1850

Public Scoping Meetings

February 20, 2014, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

King Gillette Ranch
Dining Hall
26800 Mulholland Highway
Calabasas, CA 91302

February 22, 2014, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Temescal Gateway Park
Woodland Hall
15601 Sunset Blvd.
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

To request a sign language interpreter or other auxiliary aids or services for people with disabilities, please contact Alexandra Stehl at (916)324-0322 or Alexandra.Stehl@parks.ca.gov.

Comments must be
postmarked or transmitted by
April 1, 2014.

Alert!

Required Mailing List Update

If you wish to receive future updates on this project, please send an email to SAMO_Trails@nps.gov and include your email address. Public comments will not be accepted at this email address. The electronic mailing list will be used solely to communicate information related to the Trail Management Plan.



Management Team SMMNRA Interagency Trail Management Plan

401 W. Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED